



ROSTRUM

INFORMER

May 2018

Newsletter of Rostrum Western Australia

www.rostrumwa.com.au



From the President

I hope everyone is enjoying their Rostrum year – learning and laughing and appreciating everything Rostrum has to offer.

In this, our 70th year, we are celebrating our many achievements while also looking towards the future. In his role as Vice President with particular responsibility for club development Freeman David Price, along with Vice President Carmel Philippe, has put together a group which is investigating ways to reinvigorate Rostrum.

Riley Burkett from Club 19 is part of the group and at the last Dais executive meeting he was appointed as a third Vice President, a decision to be ratified at the Dais meeting in May. When I was elected as President for 2018 I accepted on the understanding that I would stand down after the ARC conference in late July, which coincides with our 70th anniversary dinner. When I resign Riley intends to present as a candidate for the role of President; if he is successful it is assumed that many of the executive will continue to provide background experience and stability.

Others from Club 19 are amongst those keen to examine how Rostrum can improve its product and ultimately attract more members and it is good to see younger people in particular taking such an interest in the organisation.

There will be challenging new ideas put forward and some of us old fogeys may not like them all but we, the members, through Dais, can have our say about them. In doing so, we must remember that any institution needs new blood and new ways of doing things in order to survive and thrive and our membership numbers have been declining for some years. It is a delicate balancing act to cater for the needs of a new generation while not losing the wonderful spirit and culture of Rostrum.

An example of both of those is Club 15's Comedy Night on 8 May which I am, as usual, looking forward to attending. Club 19 are up against Club 5 in a humorous debate – what a treat. Whatever the outcome, the audience will be winners. See you there!

Freeman Sue Hart, President, Rostrum WA
suchart@inet.net.au

Less than ONE WEEK to go!

TUESDAY 8 MAY 2018

Club 15's



'Laughter is the best medicine'

**Laughter can improve serotonin levels, boost the immune system and cheer people up.
Laugh and the world laughs with you.**

**You can join a laughter club.
Or go out for a drink with a friend.
Or catch up for a chat over a cup of tea.
Or watch some comedy re-runs.**

Better still, come to Club 15's Comedy Night and enjoy live comedy and a meal, and reap the benefits of a good laugh with fellow members and friends.

**Don't miss out.
Bookings extended until Friday 4 May**

INTRODUCING THE NEW WEB COORDINATOR

Greg Swensen



I've been an active member of Rostrum for some years, initially at Club 23 in Bunbury before moving to Perth to pursue a qualification in social work. I re-joined Rostrum in the 1990s and am currently a member of Club 19 in West Perth and an accredited critic/coach.

In the past I've worked as a social worker, assisting individuals and families deal with substance abuse and mental health issues and associated concerns about social disadvantage. More recently I've worked in the WA Health Department in roles involving research and data management in epidemiological studies.

My involvement with small community-based organisations, competitive sports and health and fitness-related activities has given me skills in coaching, self-improvement, goal setting and self-evaluation, all of which are useful and relevant to my coaching role at Rostrum.

I've recently also developed a strong involvement with Iyengar yoga and I'm a regular participant in cycling time trials.

At present I'm completing a PhD at UWA, writing a short history of the regulation of alcohol use in Western Australia, particularly the role of the criminal justice and mental health systems in managing problematic users of alcohol.

I've found that experience gained at Rostrum in researching, preparing and speaking on a topic has been useful in participating in a range of presentations at Uni, including the 3 Minute Thesis competition, assuming responsibility for overseeing and organising departmental level working parties and committees, as well as being involved in lectures and seminars. This experience has been built up through attendance and involvement in Club 19, covering both impromptu and prepared speaking over a number of years, as well as holding a number of positions in the club.

With previous experience creating and maintaining my own website, I joined the Dais Executive earlier this year as Web Coordinator. The website has proven to be an important marketing tool for Rostrum WA and I've been adding content and making it more accessible to members and visitors to the site.

Greg Swensen, Web Coordinator

Coming up in ...

MAY

- 4 **Closing date for bookings for Club 15's Comedy Night**
See page 3 for details
- 8 **Club 15's Comedy Night**
6 pm sharp
Eastman Lounge, Perth Hockey Stadium
Curtin University
- 12 **Rostrum Voice of Youth Semi Final**
- 17 **Dais Exec Meeting**
☺ Note new date/time/venue
7 pm
Wembley Community Centre
40 Alexander St, Wembley
- 25 **AGM and Dais Reps Meeting**
6.30 for 7 pm start
Wembley Community Centre
40 Alexander St, Wembley

Information and course registration:

Rostrum Information Centre (RIC)

PO Box 5547

Canning Vale South, WA 6155

Phone 08 9463 6433

Fax 08 9455 1215

Email ric@rostrumwa.com.au

Web www.rostrumwa.com.au

Facebook www.facebook.com/rostrumwa

Thank you for your contributions to this issue. Please send me your notices, photos and articles for the June issue by Friday 25 May.

Rose Fogliani (Editor)

informer@rostrumwa.com.au

ROSTRUM WA

AGM and Dais Reps meeting

Friday 25 May

Wembley Community Centre

6.30 for 7pm

***Have your say on the future
direction of Rostrum in WA***

Members are encouraged to attend

**Presidents: please ensure
your Dais Rep attends**

ROSTRUM CLUB 15 is excited to host its ANNUAL



Come and be entertained by entrants in the

COMEDY SPEECH CONTEST

First prize: \$250 Runner up prize: \$100

WE ARE SEEKING CONTESTANTS NOW!

Enquiries to Jacinth Watson watsonja@iinet.net.au

Plus

COMEDY DEBATE

Will the reigning Champions Club 5
prevail against the Challengers Club 19?

When: TUESDAY 8 MAY 2018
Where: PERTH HOCKEY STADIUM, CURTIN UNIVERSITY
 Eastman Lounge
Time: 6.00 pm – 9.30 pm
Cost: \$30 includes a two course meal plus tea or coffee
 Drinks available for purchase at the bar
Enquiries: Jacinth Watson watsonja@iinet.net.au
Bookings: Group bookings are to be made by Club Treasurers using
 the booking form

Closing date extended to Friday 4 May 2018

Humour

Humour isn't just for comedians, but proceed with care! Humour used wisely and with great skill can turn a good speech into an unforgettable speech.

All speeches have a purpose, one of which is to entertain your audience. Entertainment can come in many forms. To be entertaining, a speech doesn't have to be amusing, but many entertaining speeches will usually incorporate some humour. Many brilliant speakers still have difficulty in handling the humorous speech.

To be amusing throughout an entire five or ten-minute prepared speech is almost impossible. Unless you are exceptionally gifted in this area you should not attempt to deliver a speech that relies entirely on humour. Using humour well comes naturally to some speakers, but not to everyone. Even if you are not a born comedian, you can still learn to use humour effectively, and it can be a powerful weapon in a speaker's armoury.

Points to consider when using humour in your speech

- You don't have to reinvent the wheel. There are many books on humour containing jokes and amusing stories for every occasion. Build up your library.
- Observe how the professionals handle humour. Many television sitcoms can be helpful. Apart from being a source of material that can be adapted for your own speeches, many of the actors make excellent role models. Their delivery and timing is impeccable - two of the most important aspects of using humour effectively.
- Even the most serious speech can benefit from the occasional use of humour, but it is important not to overdo it.
- The humour you inject into your speech must be relevant to the subject matter.
- As in all other aspects of public speaking, it is important when introducing humour to know your audience. Care should be taken not to offend members of your audience or to target individuals without their prior knowledge and consent. Blue jokes are out.
- Rehearsal is a vital element of humour. Humorous passages need to appear spontaneous. If you have to refer to your notes for the punch line, your delivery is likely to suffer and your audience may miss the point altogether.
- Involving your audience by engaging in repartee can be extremely amusing but should only be attempted by the experienced speaker.
- Poking fun at the Establishment is a form of humour often used, e.g. Gilbert and Sullivan and 'Yes Minister'. It needs to be done skilfully and be current. It also needs to be aimed at an area with which your audience is familiar.
- Leading your audience 'up the garden path' can be very effective. Often laughter is generated by the sudden introduction of the unexpected. It may be a

series of very logical arguments followed by a totally unexpected and illogical conclusion.

- Beware of becoming type-cast. Humour should be only one of the abilities you strive to develop as a public speaker. If you only give humorous speeches your audience may have trouble relating to you when you tackle a serious subject.

Beware the pitfalls!

- Recycled jokes and stories – the tried and proven isn't necessarily good. Stories that have been heard many times before become monotonous and boring, and are more likely to elicit a groan than a laugh.
- Shaggy dog stories (long-winded anecdotes with a weak punch line) can fall extremely flat. Wasting the audience's time to deliver a weak pun at the end of your speech is rarely appreciated.
- Laughing throughout your story and especially just prior to delivering the punch line can put your audience off-side.
- Not giving your audience time to savour your punch line is unforgivable. If you are delivering a series of humorous anecdotes, your audience will miss the second and subsequent stories if you don't give them time to settle down after the first.
- Slipping out of character when delivering a story requiring accents or characterisation is a failing of many humorous speakers.
- Delivering your story too quickly, or not loudly enough, will destroy your opportunities to entertain.

In summary

How much humour you use will depend on your skills as a speaker.

Be sure it is relevant, well-rehearsed and be extremely careful to not offend your audience with your humour.

Your delivery has to be excellent, applying all the usual criteria to make a good speech, plus some additional points to make your humorous speech truly effective.

Many efforts have been made to analyse what makes people laugh. If anyone comes up with the definitive answer they will make a fortune. There is no doubt that laughter is the best medicine. People who are able to use humour well are held in high regard.

Humour can make a speech unforgettable. Often your audience may only remember your use of humour or funny stories rather than the content of your speech. However, better they remember that, than nothing you have said. The challenge is to use humour in such a way that, if your audience remembers your humour, they will also remember your message.

It's not necessary to leave your audience rolling in the aisles. Leave that to the stand-up comics. Do, however, use humour to enhance your speeches and presentations.

Adapted from the Rostrum publication 'Tips on Public Speaking and Meeting Procedures. Volume 1', a collection of 30 handouts by Ron Johnson.



SATURDAY 28 JULY ROSTRUM WA'S 70TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER

Join us for an evening to celebrate Rostrum WA's 70th Anniversary! Take a trip down memory lane and celebrate our achievements over the past 70 years. Reconnect with old friends and past members while we look toward the future and the next 70 years!

Tickets on sale in May - be sure not to miss out!



**TICKETS ON SALE
SOON!**

**NO COMPETITION
SPEECHES - JOIN US
FOR AN EVENING OF
SOCIALISING,
ENTERTAINMENT,
PARTICIPATION AND
A CELEBRATION OF
OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

6:30 for 7:00 PM

**THE WESTERN
AUSTRALIAN GOLF
CLUB IN YOKINE**

**KEEP AN EYE OUT
FOR
COMMUNICATIONS
ANNOUNCING
ENTERTAINMENT,
SPECIAL GUESTS
AND TICKET DETAILS
FOR THE EVENING**