



A matter of laugh or death

Instead of our regular meeting at Club 19, we invited professional speaker and comedian, Malcolm Dix to present on how to use humour in public speaking. We had a full room of members, visitors and speakers from other clubs, including Freeman Tony Lightman and 2015 Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year, Frank Butler.

It was an interactive session with everything from making paper planes, to answering our questions to changing the titles of love songs and making them slightly offensive. All in the name of humour!

Here were some of the questions that we had for Malcolm:

- How far is too far? (in terms of humour)
- How much humour should you use?
- Is humour necessary and can you avoid it?
- What are the benefits of humour?
- How do you not offend?
- Do you write humour or just riff/ad lib?
- How do you push on after a failed joke?

Malcolm gave a whole range of tips, summarised below:

1. Interact with the audience and get them interacting with one another.
 - Instead of talking “at” your audience
 - By interacting with your audience, people will tell you things that you as a presenter won’t know about but everyone else will. You can use what they tell you.
 - There will be funny people in the audience and this can be a source of humour instead of coming up with everything yourself.
2. Humour is not always necessary, only if you want to be successful – Alan Pease.
 - Malcolm uses humour in all situations and sees humour in everything.
 - Nowadays we find humour in TV shows, theatre, books, family, social media, memes, pets and laughing at one’s self.
 - Benefits of humour are that it is engaging, fun and lively. It can also diffuse tense situations!



- Malcolm ‘tests out’ things in conversations with friends, family and colleagues to find out what they laugh at.

3. Humour is about CONTEXT

- Has to be relevant and useful.
- Think about WHY you are using humour, HOW you are going to do it and WHAT it is going to look like.
- Comedians often work late at night with people who are drinking alcohol and try to do the same thing at a professional conference. This is a different context and material has to be changed accordingly.
- American comedians often wonder why their material doesn’t work in Australia. This is because we don’t understand the context of what they are talking about.



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From the President

Over two-thirds of the year gone. How is that possible? In this issue I want to introduce you to and publicly thank all the hard-working people on the Dais Executive Committee – incidentally we have all agreed that the word ‘Board’ doesn’t sit comfortably with the present ‘administration’.

Freeman Ken Holzman, Secretary, and Freeman Susan L’Herpinierie, Vice-President, work quietly behind the scenes, ensuring that procedures are carried out correctly, and cheerfully taking on extra roles on occasion. Thanks guys.

Freeman Juliet Park has again run a successful Voice of Youth competition and is no doubt busy planning for next year. A committee, led by Ken, has been appointed to explore the ongoing relationship between Rostrum and Voice of Youth.

Rose Fogliani has been producing terrific quality *Informers* on a regular basis and no doubt this issue will be yet another. Please support her by sending in articles. Thanks Rose

Jo Turbett, Director of Training, is another very hard-working Executive member. Jo runs critics’ training courses and the bimonthly Speak Up Speak Out courses. She is also responsible for supplying both topics and adjudicators for the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year competitions. For a couple of weeks recently Jo was out on Rostrum business four nights in a row.

Talking of Speaker of the Year, Patricia Watts from Club 19, Convenor of SOY, has worked extremely hard managing the competition. It is a complex and often thankless task so Patricia I thank you now. Thanks also to the clubs which have hosted heats and those which will be hosting semis. Unfortunately I will miss them as I will be away but I wish everyone well and will look forward to the final. Remember to put Saturday 19 November in your diary!

Freeman Alan Ham, Chairman of Freeman’s Council, keeps a keen eye on the overall running of Rostrum WA, ensuring that the experience and wisdom of our Freeman is put to good use, as well as taking on special projects. Thank you to the numerous other Freeman who help behind the scenes.

Freeman Ruurd Speelman is learning the role of treasurer, helped by Freeman Terry Walker, who has taken on a broader role this year, overseeing our whole financial position and helping to update our systems and procedures. In this *Informer* he tells you about some of the changes that have been made and are being made.

This work has been done in conjunction with Elliott Chipper, Director of Marketing (currently overseas). It has been a complicated and expensive process but well worth the effort and expense. Jay Antunovich (Website) has helped out on the technical side.

We have also had significant help from Freeman Bill Smith, first in liaising with the Australian Rostrum Council who wanted to write a new national constitution. Thanks to Bill’s work (and previously that of Terry) this appears to have been put on hold, as not necessary. Bill has also updated our regulations and is going to investigate how the proposed new online registration and payment system would impact on our constitution and will recommend any potential changes to the constitution.

Thanks also to Luke Matthews, Past President, who has been offering valuable help in various ways.

Debie Brockhoff, who manages our Rostrum Information Centre, does far more for Rostrum than her contract states, including during a recent difficult time for Deb with a family bereavement. We all appreciate what she does for us.

All these people attend monthly Executive meetings when possible and quarterly Dais meetings. And it’s not as though they don’t work or have busy personal and social lives. They do, but they also put themselves out to help Rostrum.

Sincere thanks to you all.

Freeman Sue Hart, President, Rostrum WA
suehart@iinet.net.au

Coming up in ...

SEPTEMBER

- 29 **AGSOY First Semi Final**
Details on page 5

OCTOBER

- 7 **AGSOY Second Semi Final**
Details on page 5
Deadline for submissions for Freemanship
14 **Deadline for submissions for R Alan Crook Award**
Deadline for November *Informer*
20 **Dais Exec Meeting**
6.30 pm
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

Please send your contributions for the *Informer* to:
informer@rostrumwa.com.au

Rose Fogliani (Editor)

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4. How to move on if we fear that we have offended someone or we have made a joke that has failed?
 - Trust your gut instinct on what to do next.
 - Not everyone will find your humour funny; some people are easily offended.
 - Does it feel comfortable to say? If you don't feel comfortable saying your joke, the audience won't be comfortable either.
 - Point out the fact that your joke didn't work, e.g. 'I'll never use that joke again. My sister told me that joke; told her it wasn't funny.' This will often make people laugh.
 - Don't panic or freak out.

5. Other observations that Malcolm had from 20 years of doing comedy/presenting:
 - Speaker Bruce Sullivan stood on a chair to present. It made the audience pay attention as it was different.
 - Comedian Dave Hughes was heckled and was told to stop doing comedy as he was unfunny. Nowadays, he is famous and even has young comedians copying his style and nasal voice.
 - Don't ad lib, riff or make things up on the spot unless you are used to it.
 - Simple things work best. Malcolm did an exercise where he asked us to think of song titles with the word 'heart' in it. He then asked us to change heart to 'arse'. The winning song was 'Arse Shaped Box'!
 - You are not a stand-up comedian. It takes years to be a stand-up comedian, so don't aim for unrealistic goals. You don't have to be super funny, just a few funny lines here and there.
 - Find things that people don't know about. Most people just search on Google but you can find obscure stuff that people don't know about, e.g. books such as 'The Funniest Things You Never Said' and 'Funniest Quotes from History'.
 - Stay away from jokes around race, gender and sexuality, as these are the big areas that will divide an audience.

Overall, it was a very successful workshop with great tips to take away with us. Lastly, Malcolm left us with a quote, which if nothing else, should be a reminder of why we should be incorporating humour into our lives:

“when people are laughing they are generally not killing one another”

You can find Malcolm on <https://www.bullshift.com> or malcolm@bullshift.com

Jason Lim, Club Communications Officer, Club 19

CLUB OF EXCELLENCE –

Is it your Club?

And who is R Alan Crook?

The R. Alan Crook Award is named after the Founder of Rostrum in Australia, Robert Alan Crook (1987-1965).

Like many Freemen of Rostrum, Alan Crook led a full and busy life, growing up in country Victoria. During World War I he served in the AIF for two years, transferring to the Australian Flying Corps. After the war he returned to employment in Victoria.

In August 1921 he left Australia for the USA, and after three years working in the electrical engineering field, he undertook a special course at Metropolitan Vickers in Manchester UK.

It was there that a significant event took place. Alan met Sidney Wicks who had founded the Rostrum movement the previous year. Alan joined Rostrum and in 1925 he returned to Australia with the idea of forming a Rostrum movement here. In May 1930 he was responsible for establishing Australian Rostrum Club No. 1 in Sydney became known as the Foundation Club.

Alan Crook was integral of the establishment of Clubs No. 2 and 3 where he was a Foundation Member and the First President of the first five Clubs formed in Sydney.

He was instrumental in 1934 in establishing clubs in Melbourne and Brisbane and thereafter remained most active and involved in the Rostrum movement, including NSW Dais, until his death in 1965.

Amongst other accolades R. Alan Crook received an MBE and was included in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 1965.

The Australian Rostrum Council provided for a perpetual trophy known as the Alan Crook Award to be awarded by each State Dais to a Club of Excellence each year.

The Award is open to both Metropolitan and Country Clubs, and the period under consideration is from 1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016.

Submissions must comply with the requirements as detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the Regulations (amended 2016), and must reach the President of WA Dais by 14 October 2016.

A submission is an excellent opportunity for individual Clubs to engage their members in documenting the Club's activities for the 12 month period.

All Clubs are urged to enter, and the winner will be announced and presented with the trophy at the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year Gala Event on 19 November.

Freeman Alan Ham, Chairman of Freemans Council

WILD APRICOT?

Some time ago the Dais Executive made a decision to move into the digital age by updating our website to attract new members and utilise an online system to process payments and manage our membership database. The search for an Association Management System led to Wild Apricot. So what is Wild Apricot?

To quote them directly 'Wild Apricot is web-based software for small associations and non-profits to help manage membership, website, events and other activities. It is "cloud" software, meaning it runs through a web browser without needing to install anything on your local computer.' Wild Apricot is a Canadian based company which has over 16,500 associations as clients.

How will Rostrum use this new tool?

Rostrum's website will be fully integrated with the management system which in turn will give the Dais Executive and clubs live information on all aspects of our membership.

Instead of clubs collecting fees and then sending them off to Dais, existing members will be billed directly from our Management System via email or paper invoice each six months for their term fees together with any additional amount requested by their club. Payment will be made via a link to PayPal.

Although the mechanics are still to be worked out we also hope to encourage visitors to our website who want to get into Rostrum to pay their joining fee online and then choose a club to join. Clubs will then have a 'prepaid' visitor who is ready to go.

Clubs will be able to obtain membership reports from the system including information on paid up members and of course members who have yet to pay.

Dais will be able to use the Management System to access live information on member numbers and new members joining.

Event Management

Events such as the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year can be promoted via the Management System and payment accepted online. Organisers of the event will be able to see live how sales are going, what money has been paid and if further promotion is required. An attendee report will be available so that only those who have paid can obtain admittance.

When will the new system be implemented?

The management system should be in place later this year. We may be able to use it for the collection of first term fees for 2017 however there is some testing to be undertaken before we go live.

The Wild Apricot software will provide a powerful membership management tool for what promises to be an exciting time for Rostrum.

Freeman Terry Walker, Club 2230

2017 Subscriptions unchanged

On Friday night 2 September the quarterly Dais meeting endorsed the recommendation from Dais Executive to maintain subscriptions for 2017 at the current levels which are:

City members \$75 per 6 month term

Country members \$55 per 6 month term

The Dais also agreed that the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year event this year should be revenue neutral and not subsidised from reserves as been the case in recent years.

The approved budget for 2017 provides for a small deficit of \$1,270 which will be funded from reserves.

This where your subscriptions are spent (based on the approved 2017 budget):

Income

Subscription	150
Other (interest, new members, SUSO)	37
Total income	187

Expenditure

Secretariat	59
Australian Rostrum Council (incl insurance)	34
Printing & stationery	11
Training & SUSO	9
Monthly Exec & quarterly Dais meetings	9
Voice of Youth	9
Website maintenance	9
Storage (Take the Chair)	9
Marketing	9
Miscellaneous (grants to clubs, death notices, etc)	9
Member badges	7
Postage & freight	6
Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year prizes	3
Syllabus & handbook	3
Other (Freemans Council Meetings, auditor, etc)	5
Total expenditure	191
From reserves	-4
Net result	187

Freeman Terry Walker, Club 2230



2016 Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year Semi Finals

Semi Final 1 Club 50 Canning Speakers

Thursday 29 September

Karyn Cooper (19)

Riley Burkett (19)

Mark Tatam (4+8)

Will Wong (15)

Ellita De Nardi (15)

Derek Sparkes (33)

Venue: Canning Arts Centre, Cnr High and Riley Roads, Riverton

Start time: 6:15 pm

Cover charge: \$20 includes a light meal and refreshments

RSVP: to Susan on 0439 935 808

Semi Final 2 Club 34 Cambridge Speaking Club

Friday 7 October

Nadia Truong (2230)

Katelyn Lane (19)

Lauren O'Neill (19)

Jacqui Holden (19)

Peter Humphreys (4+8) Jeanette Palumbo (11)

Venue: Joan Watters Centre, 40 Alexander Street, Wembley

Start time: 6:15 for a 6.30 pm start

Cover charge: \$15 includes a light meal and refreshments

RSVP: by Thursday 29 Sept to AGSOY2016@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday 19 November

Lake Karrinyup Country Club

*Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year Final
and Rostrum WA Annual Dinner*

Come out and support the finalists,
catch up with fellow Speakers and Freemen
and celebrate another successful year for Rostrum WA!



We are looking for talent for the AGSOY Final!

Seeking all talented Speakers and Freeman!

Can you play an instrument? Sing? Tell a joke?
Stand on your head and whistle a tune whilst texting?

If you can we'd love to hear from you!

This year's **AGSOY Final** and **Rostrum Annual Dinner** on **Saturday 19 November** will have entertainment and what better way to showcase your special talent than at our annual competition and dinner

If you have a talent and would like to entertain us on November 19 at the AGSOY Speaking Final and End of Year Dinner please contact your AGSOY Coordinator Patricia Watts via email: AGSOY2016@gmail.com or mobile: 0447 111 417