



ROSTRUM

INFORMER

October 2017

Newsletter of Rostrum Western Australia

www.rostrumwa.com.au



From the President

During August I attended the four heats of the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year competition, but unfortunately was away for the semi-finals which I understand went well.

It was good to visit four of our clubs and to meet up with old and new Rostrum friends – old as in the sense of long-time Rostrum membership of course. Thanks to all clubs who stepped up to host the heats and semis, especially Club 39 which went out of its way to take part.

Thanks are also due to all the people who entered the competition, some experienced and some newer people. Win or lose, you have all achieved something by speaking at a higher level than your usual club meeting and you will feel the benefit, both in your club meetings and in your professional and social interactions. We were especially pleased to see entries from Club 5, a club which has previously remained a little aloof from Rostrum WA activities but has burst forth this year, taking part in the Club 15 Comedy Night and now the Arthur Garvey. The club has many talented speakers – watch out all other clubs 😊

I wish all the best to the finalists in the competition. After a few hitches in the Sidney Wicks heats we focussed on timing this year. Unfortunately a couple of very good speakers missed out on getting through because they weren't clear on the timing. It was a real pity but the moral of the story is to read the instructions for the competition, and have another go next year!

Freeman Ruurd Speelman was kept busy finding adjudicators for the heats, semis and the finals. Thanks to those who have stepped up to take part.

While I was away, visiting my son in London, I travelled to Exeter for a day to meet with Emily Whitfield-Wicks, the granddaughter of Sidney Wicks. She saw mention of the Sidney Wicks competition on our website and contacted us through the Rostrum Information Centre. See article in this issue.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the final of the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year competition at our annual dinner on 18 November.

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

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## ARTHUR GARVEY SPEAKER OF THE YEAR 2017 AND ROSTRUM WA ANNUAL DINNER

Saturday 18 November  
Lake Karrinyup Country Club  
North Beach Road, Karrinyup

### FINALISTS

Amanda Meloni Club 5  
Jean-Marc Papineau Club 5  
Jacinth Watson Club 15  
Rob Huth Club 19  
Frank Marshall Club 34  
Rachel Ashton Club 63

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

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
Full details and booking information  
will be available shortly

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R Alan Crook Award for Club of Excellence

Did you realise that there are only 74 sleeps until Christmas, 37 sleeps until the AGSOY and Annual Dinner and ... only 8 sleeps until the deadline for submissions for the R Alan Crook Award for Club of Excellence? Written submissions are due on Friday 20 October. Has your club put together a submission? If not, there is no time to waste!

The R Alan Crook Award recognises the best club in WA and is awarded at the Rostrum Annual Dinner each year – this year on Saturday 18 November. All Rostrum clubs in WA are eligible to win the award and country clubs are also eligible for the David Price Award for Best Country Club.

What makes a Rostrum club the ‘best’ in WA? It’s the club that is judged, on the basis of a written submission, to be the most effective in promoting the aims of Rostrum in WA which are to:

- promote the practice of effective speaking;
- defend freedom of speech in the community;
- encourage members to think truly and speak clearly; and enrich fellowship in both the club and the organisation.

Clubs are judged on the following criteria which must be addressed in the submission:

- membership, including net gain in membership, and attendance at meetings;
- completion of PDP, IDP and ADP by members;
- active Critics, accreditations and re-accreditations;
- representation at Dais and support of Dais activities;
- entries and attendance at AGSOY; and
- activities and innovations within and outside the club which promote the aims of Rostrum.

The judging period is from 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017, and the closing date for submissions is Friday 20 October 2017. Note that ‘submissions must be no more than 8 printed pages set in 11 point text with no non-textual enhancements or photographs excluding Rostrum and/or Club logos. The aim is to persuade the adjudicators by cogent argument as to the Club’s worthiness.’ More information and details on how to prepare the submission are in the Rostrum WA Inc. Regulations (Amended 2017) Sections 2.1 and 2.2.

It’s been said before, and it’s still true – clubs that win the R Alan Crook Award or the David Price Award grow and prosper. It’s also true that you have to be in it to win it. Now is the time to gather your team together, consider what your club has achieved, and prepare a submission.

Email your club’s submission by Friday 20 October to Rostrum WA President, Freeman Sue Hart at suehart@iinet.net.au.

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*‘More than mere rhetorical flourish, a good speech marks a mood, an ideal and, most importantly, a call to action.’*  
Antony Funnell, *Life etc.* March/April 2007  
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Critics’ Training

Director of Training Freeman Ruurd Speelman will be running a Critics’ Training Course over two Saturdays, 25 November and 9 December, at the Wembley Community Centre from 9am to 4pm on both days.

Any member who has completed the PDP and is interested in becoming a Critic, or who would like an insight into what it is that Critics look for in a speech or presentation (thereby learning how to ‘do it correctly’), is encouraged to register for the course.

Even if becoming a Critic is not your aim, the course will be invaluable for your growth as a speaker, both within Rostrum and in the community.

Likewise, the course is a great refresher for those accredited Critics who have not been active for a while and wish to get back into it.

The course starts at 9.30am sharp on both days, includes morning/afternoon teas and lunch, and is FREE.

Also free is the opportunity to meet like-minded people from other clubs, the opportunity to get individualised feedback from active, accredited Critics who really know their stuff, and lots of opportunities to put the theory into practice. There are too many opportunities to pass up!

Rostrum is very short on accredited Critics. If you are even vaguely interested to see how this valuable part of Rostrum functions, please consider participating in the course. You will learn a lot and you will not regret it.

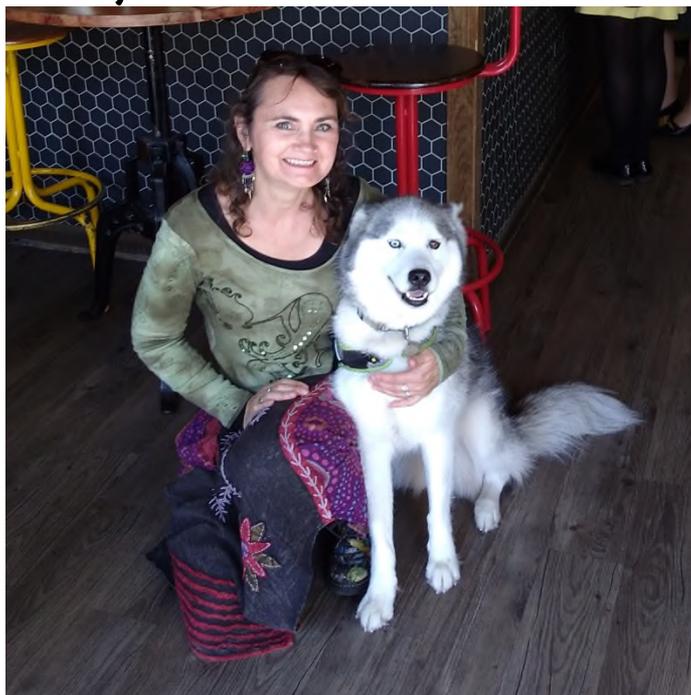
WHAT: Critics’ Training Course
WHEN: 9am-4pm, Saturday 25 Nov and 9 Dec
WHERE: Wembley Community Centre, 40 Alexander Rd, Wembley
HOW: Register with the RIC ric@rostrumwa.com.au
WHY: Why not? You can only benefit from participating.

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
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Rose Fogliani (Editor)
informer@rostrumwa.com.au

Emily Whitfield-Wicks --shedding light on Rostrum founder Sidney Wicks



Emily Whitfield-Wicks and friend (photo Sue Hart)

It was lovely to meet with Emily Whitfield-Wicks in the UK in September 2017. She contacted Rostrum WA after seeing mention of the Sidney Wicks speaking competition on our website.

Emily is the youngest of eight grandchildren of Sidney Wicks, the daughter of Cedric Whitfield-Wicks. Like her father and grandfather and one of her uncles she works in journalism, now freelance, previously as a press photographer for the Cornish Guardian, which her father edited for many years. Unfortunately he died when Emily was only 11, but she is very proud to have worked for the same newspaper.

Sidney Wicks had four sons, one of whom died as a child. Emily said they were all named after the Knights of the Round Table, showing Sidney's love of history and literature.

Emily didn't know her grandfather and it was only when one of her uncles (another of Sidney's sons) died that she found out about Rostrum. She has since sent me a deal of writings by and about Sidney Wicks, which I will collate and share with you in due course. Robert Bicknell, a Rostrum member from Victoria, was pleased to receive copies, as he is compiling a comprehensive Wikipedia entry for Sidney Wicks. He has shared with us a recording of Sidney Wicks sending good wishes to Rostrum in Australia not long before he died.

Sidney lived a successful and interesting life. Born the son of a blacksmith he started his working life as a clerk, and then studied by correspondence to become a minister of religion, where he excelled as a compelling preacher. After serving in World War I he rejected the church – for a time – and turned

to journalism. He worked at the Manchester Chronicle, where Emily's father also began his journalistic career.

Although she didn't know her grandfather Emily has heard anecdotes about him from her older cousins. He was married to Dorothy, nee Whitfield, and all their children took Whitfield as a middle name, while Emily's generation made it a double-barrelled surname.



Dorothy and Sidney Wicks, 1930s

It is surprising to hear that apparently Sidney was something of a womaniser who liked to flirt, but was basically a serious man, although with a dry sense of humour. After a long period of atheism, Sidney returned to religion, becoming a Roman Catholic in later life.

Sidney Wicks wrote several books, including *The Friends of St Francis*, reflecting his faith, and *Public Speaking for Men* and *Public Speaking for Women*. Another book, *Sunwise*, comprised a collection of his newspaper columns, comments on the changing seasons of the year.

Freeman Sue Hart

What is the function of communication?

Until the mid-1970s zoologists thought of communication in terms of information transfer: it was in the interests of both the communicator and the recipient that the message be clear, honest and informative. But, as Lord Macaulay put it, 'The object of oratory alone is not truth, but persuasion.'

In 1978, Richard Dawkins and John Krebs pointed out that animals use communication principally to manipulate each other, rather than transfer information. A bird sings long and eloquently to persuade a female to mate with him, or a rival to keep clear of his territory. If he were merely passing on information, he need not make the song so elaborate.

Animals' communication, said Dawkins and Krebs, is more like human advertising than like airline timetables. Even the most mutually beneficial communication, like that between a mother and a baby, is pure manipulation, as every mother who has been woken up by a desperate sounding infant that merely wants company knows.

Matt Ridley, *The Red Queen* 1993