



ROSTRUM

INFORMER

November 2017

Newsletter of Rostrum Western Australia

www.rostrumwa.com.au

Six of our best speakers vying to be Rostrum WA's Speaker of the Year in AGSOY 2017



Amanda Meloni, Club 5



Frank Marshall, Club 34



Jacinth Watson, Club 15



Jean-Marc Papineau, Club 5



Rachel Ashton, Club 63



Rob Huth, Club 19



From the President

It's not long until the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year final and our annual dinner at Lake Karrinyup Country Club. It's a lovely venue and Club 15 is planning a great night. Hopefully we will see a good turnout to support and applaud the speakers and other award winners, and to celebrate Rostrum, not to mention

catching up with friends.

I hope to visit every club in the next few weeks. I was away and then unwell so haven't been able to get out to see clubs recently. But the plan is to rectify that soon and to meet up with members, see how clubs are going, and answer any queries you may have.

With the end of the year rapidly approaching – it is time to think about renewing your membership. Numbers are down from what they were at Rostrum's peak, but we retain a good solid membership, especially compared to other zones. However, there is certainly no room for complacency and your continued membership matters to us.

I know I say this often but Rostrum is such a wonderful institution and we must make sure it continues and grows. Other organisations, such as service clubs, have lost members and even folded altogether and I want to resist that at all costs. So let's all play a part. Even if you can't commit to attending every meeting of your club, please renew your membership and attend as often as you can. Some people ask to be rostered every second week or so – maybe that would work for you.

But it's not all up to experienced members - we also need new members and it is good to see a couple of strong clubs attracting many visitors and increasing their membership all the time. Well done.

A suggestion was made at the last Dais executive meeting that we make a couple of You Tube videos which I think is a great idea. They must be short and snappy and feature attractive young people! Sorry, but that's a fact. If you can help, please let us know.

Another thought – some of our most successful clubs are based in workplaces. Think about your office – can you see an opportunity to start a new club there, as part of workplace training?

We also need a new Webmaster – it's not a particularly onerous role if that is your forte. Again, please put up your hand if you have relevant skills and a little bit of time.

Let's all get together and make sure Rostrum thrives in the coming years. Next year will be a big year with the Australian Rostrum Council conference and Rostrum Voice

of Youth final being held in Perth in conjunction with our 70th anniversary. I'll speak more about that next month.

In the meantime, I look forward to catching up with you at the AGSOY final and Annual Dinner on 18 November.

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



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.

CLOSING DATE for registration is Monday 20 November.

Meet the AGSOY finalists – 2017 style

FROM SEMI-FINAL 1

Amanda Meloni, Club 5

I joined Rostrum in February this year, as part of the Lavan Graduate Program. Something that you might not know or appreciate about the lawyers at Club 5 is that we can be a funny and engaging lot. Three of our members won the Comedy Night Debate at Club 15 earlier this year so it's probably not surprising that one of the things I like most about our meetings is laughing at our 'comedians'.

In my spare time I like surfing, doing yoga and drinking wine! Something unique about myself is that I have managed to drop not one, not two, but five mobile phones in the toilet – not simultaneously, THANK GOD!

I entered the AGSOY competition after reading an article about how continually getting out of your comfort zone helps you to grow professionally and as a person. It caught my attention. Five minutes later I received an email about the AGSOY competition, so I felt obliged to enter.

Frank Marshall, Club 34

I first joined Rostrum in the 1980s, and again in 2014, to improve my ability to stand and speak sensibly in public, and to gain self-confidence doing so. I like the constant speaking challenges, and admire the great skills and talents of my fellow members at Club 34, who have proven their vast oratory skills and who continue to inspire me, not only by their relaxed and fun approach to public speaking and meetings, but also to life.

Surfing, and keeping fit and healthy are priorities in my spare time, along with a bit of travel, interest in local government, and staying away from newspapers, commercial TV, and droll modern pursuits such as social media. I also enjoy spending time with my great and sensible wife, two large Maine coon cats which run rampant throughout our house, bush walking and walks in exotic countries and locales, and trying to find the perfect restaurant. I pretend I can still cut it as a rock climber...but it's only in my mind; other passions include reading mostly overseas magazines, buying books from The Book Depository, and planning long holidays in Europe. You could say I take the business of enjoying life quite seriously!

I entered the AGSOY competition because it was there, and to get my lazy self off my lazy butt, and participate by being active and involved. In essence, I'm pretty tired of the pathetic presentations, boring public talks, poorly chaired meetings and uninspired presenters boring me. I thought I'd better get off my behind and walk the walk, along with all my talk. It was time to put action ahead of talk, become involved, and participate in public speaking, the forgotten modern art so much needed in today's flat world.

Jacinth Watson, Club 15

I joined Rostrum Club 15 in February 2015. My work role requires me to present information and updates to students and colleagues. Providing information in a matter of course manner was relatively easy, if I was prepared; but I found that nerves would impact me if I was asked to speak 'off the cuff'. Joining Rostrum has helped to overcome nerves and improve my presentation skills.

Club 15 is like an extended family! Members, established and new, are friendly and extremely supportive both personally and professionally. Club members provide informal mentoring to one another. Club 15 is an active club that provides its members opportunities to challenge themselves with activities such as the Comedy Night, Visitors' Night and Club 15 competitions.

Because I am now recently semi-retired I have some spare time available, but sometimes I feel I'm so busy I wonder how I ever worked full time! I can now spend more time with and spoil my three granddaughters. Over the last few years I have been a recipe tester for a wonderful Perth woman who has written several cook books to promote healthy eating; I test the new recipes she creates, I ensure the ingredients and method work well together, identify if the instructions easy to follow and most importantly that the recipes are tasty. I feel so skilled I may have a second career as a professional food critic!!

As a migrant from the UK, most overseas holidays have been back to the UK to visit family. But when my husband turned 60 we decided we should do something different. Many of our friends had raved about cruising and to be honest we couldn't understand why. But, we decided to try something new and booked an 8-day cruise. Wow! We had a wonderful time and realised it is a great way for us to combine both of our holiday requirements – my husband likes to enjoy a complete break from work and relax while I like to experience new places. Cruise number five has just been booked.

I entered the AGSOY this year for the very practical reason of completing my IDP. I entered the AGSOY competition in 2016 as well, and in the first heat I experienced my first and only panic attack as I began my speech. Naturally, I needed to challenge myself this year to get through a speech without a panic attack, which thankfully I did with the support and encouragement of Club 15 members.

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*'Speak not about what you have read  
but about what you have understood.'*

Azerbaijani proverb  
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Meet the AGSOY finalists – 2017 style

FROM SEMI-FINAL 2

Jean-Marc Papineau, Club 5

I attended my first Rostrum meeting at Club 5 on Thursday, 23 February this year. It is a requirement of junior members at our law firm to attend Rostrum to refine our speaking ability, gain an understanding of general meeting procedures and etiquette and to become more proficient in speaking confidently about topics 'off the cuff'.

Club 5 is inundated with amazing and very talented speakers. We are constantly challenging ourselves and each other in new ways in order to refine our overall speaking skills, whether by increasing the frequency of impromptu topics, introducing debate-style arguments or increasing the time allowed for general business. Club 5's Committee is continually thinking of new and innovative ways to make the weekly meetings interesting and stimulating.

Away from work and Rostrum I am blessed to have great family and friends in my life. As such, my spare time is happily occupied with either catching up with friends over a meal or through sporting activities, going to the park for running races with my too-smart-for-her-own-good two-year old niece or my favourite activity, putting my feet up on the couch and spending time with my amazing partner.

I have two addictions in my life, Sport and Wikipedia! It is not uncommon for me to start reading a Wikipedia article on 'Barcelona', click on a hyperlink to another article, then another, then another and 20 clicks later end up reading an article about the 'highest grossing movie of all time adjusted for inflation'. Silver lining – if you ever need someone to fill a spot in a pub quiz, I am your guy!

I love a challenge and the AGSOY competition provided a great opportunity to not only test my skills but also to meet and get to know fellow members of the Rostrum community. The competition has been everything that I hoped it would be and more.

Rachel Ashton, Club 63

I joined Southern Star Rostrum Club 63 in Albany in February this year. I did the graduation speech for my nursing course and uploaded the footage onto YouTube for friends and family. My boss watched it and said I should join Rostrum. I'd never heard of Rostrum so googled it. I then rang the number and was invited to come along to a meeting.

What I love most about Rostrum is the supportive environment to get up and talk about anything you want. Club 63 has amazing members who all genuinely care about each other and what we want to individually achieve from Rostrum. We all enjoy listening to each other each week and give hearty applause at the end of each speech. Club 63 is one of the most remote clubs in WA and we are proud of each other and the quality of each meeting. Each member is unique and contributes wonderful content each week.

In my spare time I love being outdoors whether it is at the beach or exploring the bush. Geocaching is a fantastic hobby which takes us to amazing places. I also like to catch

up with friends, watch TED talks and paranormal sightings plus, of course, attend our weekly Rostrum meetings.

I currently work as an Enrolled Nurse in Mental Health while studying for my Bachelor of Nursing which I'll finish next year. Mid next year my partner and I will be leaving Albany to travel around Australia towing our camper-trailer (and visit parts of the world). We have no set destination and plan to follow the sun! I am pursuing a career as a Remote Area Nurse and also a promotional/public speaking career incorporating MC gigs, public talks, education sessions, team building workshops and much more.

To be very honest, I had no intention of entering the AGSOY competition. I received an email encouraging me to enter because I had entered the Sidney Wicks so I assumed they were scraping for contestants! But that wasn't the case and there are, and were, incredible speakers who competed. I am deeply honoured to be one of the final six. Good luck to my competitors! Regardless of whoever wins, you are all extraordinary public speakers and should feel very proud of yourselves. Can't wait to see you all!

Rob Huth, Club 19

I joined Rostrum in June this year purely for the fun of getting back into public speaking. I did some public speaking 20 years ago at school and enjoyed the challenge of preparing a speech.

Rostrum is a great way to engage in speaking across many formats – readings, speeches, demonstrations, and the like. Club 19 is a dynamic club with a wonderful range of ages, broadly 20 to 80, and some genuine embedded wisdom. We have an enormous amount of fun while developing our speaking skills. Frankly, I am endlessly surprised by how enjoyable Club 19 is.

In my spare time I enjoy reading, being outdoors and going on adventures with my two sons aged 10 and 12, except for the crazy theme park rides they convince me to try. I am an over competitive tennis player and an enthusiastic but clumsy stand up paddle boarder, which is the closest I like to get to physical danger without coercion. I love exploring new cities and this year I had some amazing experiences in the US including hiking the Grand Canyon, walking the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco and cruising on Elliot Bay in Seattle. I am an investment analyst by profession (Research Director at Viburnum Funds) and my favourite academic field is behavioural economics.

I entered AGSOY as a sacrificial lamb for Club 19 but also for the fun and challenge of the competition.

[A BIG thank you to the finalists for giving up some of their preparation time to write about themselves for the *Informer*; it is much appreciated—Ed.]

The authentic speaker

Have you ever listened to someone giving a speech and found that it fell flat? That even though the speaker appeared confident, knew their material, told a story to illustrate their message, and punctuated their narrative with pauses and animated gestures, the presentation lacked something? It was somehow neither compelling nor inspiring.

Non-verbal communication is powerful. When a speaker's body language doesn't match what is being said, the audience will instinctively respond to the non-verbal message first: gestures speak louder than words.

Recent scientific research has shown that non-verbal communication or body language starts when an emotion or impulse fires in the brain, before even a thought has formed or the words are articulated. Natural gestures happen before anything is said, and are an indication of what the speaker is thinking and what they will say. For example, in a typical conversation, we nod vigorously, shake our heads, or roll our eyes to convey a response before we speak.

Using gestures adds to a speech, but if gestures are deliberately practised, quite often they are used at the same time as the spoken word, or a fraction of a second later – enough time for the brain to register that the sequence is wrong, even though the audience may not be consciously aware of why they seem false and the speaker somehow inauthentic.

A change in the way the speech is practised may help to resolve this dilemma. Rehearsing the speech with these four aims in mind – to be open, to connect, to be passionate, and to listen – helps to create a powerful bond with the audience.

Being open to your audience

Practise your speech by envisioning what it would be like to give your presentation to someone you're completely comfortable with. The person could be your spouse, a close friend, or your child. Notice especially what this feels like: this is the emotional state to be in when you deliver the speech. This state leads to more natural body language, such as smiles and relaxed shoulders, and these behaviours in turn lead to more candid expressions of your thoughts and feelings.

Connecting with your audience

As you practise your speech, think about wanting to engage with your listeners. Imagine that a young child you know well isn't heeding you. You want to capture and keep his attention however you can. In such situations, you don't strategize; you simply do what feels natural and appropriate. For example, you increase the intensity or volume of your voice or move closer to your listener. During your speech, these behaviours will happen naturally and with the right timing.

Being passionate about your topic

While rehearsing, ask yourself what in your topic you feel deeply about. Focus not on what you want to say but on why you're giving the speech and how you feel about it. Let the underlying emotion come out in every word you deliver

during rehearsal. You'll infuse the speech with some of that passion and come across as more human and engaging.

'Listening' to your audience

Think about what your audience will likely be thinking when you step up to begin your speech. The audience may not share your passion so you have to try to engage them. As you practise, imagine watching them closely, looking for signs for their response to you. During your presentation, you'll be more prepared to identify the emotions your listeners are sending to you via non-verbal means, and you'll be able to respond to them appropriately; for example, by picking up the pace, varying your language, or even eliminating or changing parts of your speech.

Adapted from 'How to become an authentic speaker', by Nick Morgan in *On Communication*, 2013

How to protect your voice

If you are speaking on a regular basis (as we all do in Rostrum), taking care of your voice is a high priority. Here are a few tips to help protect your voice.

What to do:

- Drink plenty of water – this will rehydrate your vocal chords
- Warm up your voice before speaking – this can be done by humming or singing
- Pause regularly during your speech
- Breathe from the diaphragm
- Maintain your posture
- If speaking to a large group, use a microphone
- Don't clear your throat, instead take a sip of water or swallow
- Rest your voice as much as possible

These tips will help you to protect your voice; remember you don't want an aching, scratchy throat when you have to make a presentation.

What to avoid:

- Smoking – we all know that smoking is bad for us but smoke can irritate your vocal chords
- Alcohol and caffeine – these two drinks can dehydrate your throat and your body
- Dairy products – dairy products may increase mucus production in the throat
- Fried foods – fried foods can leave a coating on your vocal chords which could affect the sound you produce
- Over use – avoid shouting; if you have a large audience use a microphone

From 'Using your voice' presented by Mat Lane at Club 15 on 8 July 2008

2017 ROSTRUM WA ANNUAL DINNER
and
ARTHUR GARVEY SPEAKER of the YEAR
COMPETITION FINAL

Saturday 18 November 2017
Lake Karrinyup Country Club
6.30 pm for 7.00 pm start

THE FINALISTS
Amanda Meloni (5)
Jean-Marc Papineau (5)
Jacinth Watson (15)
Rob Huth (19)
Frank Marshall (34)
Rachel Ashton (63)

THE TOPICS
I've had enough
Over the hill
Sheer stupidity
My secret love
A terrible mistake
Strange but true

Join us in supporting our six finalists in the Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year competition for what will be an unforgettable night in the company of fellow Rostrum members and friends. Enjoy a delicious dinner and dessert with tea, coffee and chocolates, and beverages available for purchase.

The event is almost here! The finalists are polishing their speeches, the programme is being prepared. Most clubs have already booked – have you? The **very last day for booking is Friday 10 November**, so please get your booking in today to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are \$75 and must be booked through your Club Treasurer

All enquiries to the AGSOY Coordinators by email
15rostrum@gmail.com

Coming up in ...

NOVEMBER

- 10 **VERY LAST DAY** for bookings for **AGSOY Final and Annual Dinner**
Details opposite
- 16 **Dais Exec Meeting**
6.30pm
Wembley Community Centre
40 Alexander St, Wembley
- 18 **AGSOY Final and Annual Dinner**
6.30 for 7pm start
Lake Karrinyup Country Club
North Beach Road, Karrinyup
- 20 **Closing date for Critics' Training Course registration**
Details on page 2
- 24 **Dais Reps Meeting and Elections**
7pm
Wembley Community Centre
40 Alexander St, Wembley
- 25 **Critics' Training Course, Day 1**
9am to 4pm
Wembley Community Centre
40 Alexander St, Wembley

DECEMBER

- 7 **Club returns for Term 1 2018 due**
- 9 **Critics' Training Course, Day 2**
Details as for Day 1 above

Information and course registration:

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Rose Fogliani (Editor)

