



Chatswood Early Risers Newsletter

March 2008

Club 7123 District 70 Area 34



Twenty years of Early Risers

Chatswood Early Risers will be 20 years old later this year. A special celebration is being organised and invitations extended to members past and present, friends, family and the wider Toastmaster community.

Jan Whitten is a charter member of the club and has written a memoir about the early days of our club.

Charles Cave
Newsletter Editor and VP Publicity

I am the remaining link from 20 years ago. It may be interesting for the current members to know that the Club was formed as a corporate club for the big accounting firm, Deloitte. We met on the 21st floor of Tower B of the Zenith Centre in a very salubrious boardroom with views to the city, the coast and the airport. I worked for Monier Ltd who were located in the same tower block on Level 18. In a recruiting drive for outside members to boost the company numbers, a flyer was delivered to our Reception Desk, inviting interested visitors to attend on a Tuesday morning before work and it took my eye. Look where it has taken me!

The Charter Dinner to celebrate the founding of the club saw Jan Whitten on the program, very nervously giving a vote of thanks. I was hooked.

Toastmasters, Jennifer Gilchrist (mother) and Joanne Gilchrist (daughter) were the drivers for the establishment of a highly unusual club – meeting weekly and early in the morning. In Sydney, it was almost revolutionary in 1988.

Jill Lamond is the next longest serving member. Jill joined in 1991.

Throughout the next few months, members of the Club Executive will be contacting as many former members as we can find to celebrate this major birthday. A date and venue will be announced, and ...I might score the vote of thanks slot again.

Our award-winning President



Syann Williams receives speech contest award from Area34 Governor, Ros Deller.

It only seems like yesterday

by Janet Whitten, Charter Member

In September this year, our Toastmasters Club will celebrate its 20th anniversary. It is a significant milestone and one that will be marked with due ceremony and celebration nearer the date.

Evaluation and International Speech Contests

Our club held its International speech contest in December 2007. The first and second place-getters, Melody Braithwaite and Charles Cave competed in the Area 34 contest on Wednesday, 20th February at Lindfield. Read more about this contest in the previous newsletter.

Our Evaluation contest was held just one week before the Area 34 contest. Our target speaker was Sonia Rousseau from Chandos Challengers who delighted us with an entertaining speech on champagne. The first and second place-getters were Stephanie Boyd and Pauline Gulleford. Other contestants were Julie Macken, Clare Gallagher, and Paul Dower. It was pleasing to see new members having a go at the contest and I am sure the experience was valuable and educational.

The Area 34 contest was well attended by club members to cheer our contestants. The target speaker for the Evaluation contest was Keith Sherringham from Chandos Challengers. His speech was constructed mostly from cliches and presented quite a challenge to the evaluators.



Supporters and contests at the Area 34 contest: Brian Johnson, Melody Braithwaite, Stephanie Boyd, Jenny Chen, Paul Dower, Charles Cave, Janet Whitten, Louis Klein, Young Eun Cho and Pauline Gulleford.

Semi-Annual Dues

A reminder that semi-annual dues of \$50 are due by the 31st March. You can pay by cash, cheque or bank transfer. This money is remitted to Toastmasters International and pays for the monthly Toastmaster Magazine and other costs.

Chandos Challengers Debate

The next annual debate with Chandos Challengers will be held at our club venue on the **15th April**. Breakfast will be available (fruit, juice, coffee and pastries) so come along and join the fun.



An educational session will be run on April 1st (April Fools Day!) where you can learn the basics of debating. Two teams will then be formed to have a practice debate. The suggested topic is "That April Fool's Day be made a National Holiday". Please note that participation in the practice debate does not force you to be on the team against Chandos Challengers.

The topic of the real debate is still to be determined so feel free to send your suggestions for a fun, non-controversial topic to Stephanie Boyd.

Taking paper to the lectern

In a recent evaluation, Jan Whitten gave some tips on how to prepare notes to use at a lectern. She recounted a story of a speaker whose notes were blown on the floor as a result of a powerful ceiling fan.

There will be occasions when you need a printed script of your speech. Here is what you should do.

1. Use a larger typeface (Times 14 point) with double spacing and wide margins for ease of reading.
2. Single-sided printing only! This will allow you to slide the pages across the lectern.
3. Number each page clearly so there is no confusion about the sequence, especially if the pages fall off the lectern.
4. Don't fold the pages. Creased paper does not sit well on a lectern.
5. As you finish with each page, slide it to the left to minimise distractions for the audience.
6. Never staple the pages. Keep each page separate.

Early Rising bush-walkers

Louis Klein is a very keen bush-walker and has motivated several members to join him in the early hours of Sunday mornings to walk.

Melody Braithwaite describes her experiences:



I am keen to lose weight and encouraged by Louis, I took up the opportunity to do a Sunday morning bush-walk as a great way to vary my exercise routine and socialise beyond the club's weekly post club meeting café catch-up. We solve the problems of the world, and challenge each other to debates on individual philosophies, but more often just share an appreciation of the beautiful bush so amazingly close to Sydney's metropolitan North Shore.

I have bush-walked for decades and never knew these beautiful and mostly pristine tracks existed. On the very first walk I managed to fall flat on my face because I was worrying about the hill climb ahead rather than the next step – an apt metaphor of my life to this point in time. Now I have learnt to just concentrate on the step in front of me, and feel quite proud that the hills don't challenge me as much as they use to.

Louis is a great motivator! Last week I was saved by Simon (thanks dear!) from overbalancing on a small rock outcrop, because I got distracted by laughing at one of Paul's dry jokes. Most of the weeks we are walking by 7am, and it means we are back home by 1pm, with the rest of Sunday to do as we please.



Louis writes: These photos are from the walk on 2nd March from St Ives to Apple-Tree Bay. The walk was nearly 20km with moderate difficulty.



Jenny, Syann and Louis caught the first bus at 6.30am and met Simon at the start of the walk just before 7 am. Jenny sent an email to the others from each corner of the track to give precise indications on the topography of the land (that's being an engineer!).



Paul missed the coach as he had to catch up with his beauty sleep. He started half an hour later and ran to Bobbin Head before catching up with the main party. We learned later he was skidding his way down at full speed defying gravity.

Melody and Julie took the soft option and started at 9 am and walked till we met with them on our way back. We found they talked so much they didn't know how hard some climbs were.

Paul suggested that the walkers practice table topics along the hiking trail, or possibly delivering prepared speeches. He compared the walkers to the pilgrims in "Canterbury Tales" telling their stories to pass the time of the journey.

Would you like to become a Sunday morning bush-walker? Watch out for Louis's announcements on the club email list each week.

SMART Toastmaster Goals

You most likely joined Toastmasters to achieve a particular goal, probably along the lines of “improving my public speaking”. How are you progressing with this goal?

A popular method of creating and achieving goals is to define what are called SMART goals: SMART is an acronym for the five characteristics of well-defined goals:

Specific. Goals must be clear and unambiguous. It should be easy to test if you have reached your goal. For example, “Complete the Competent Communicator manual by 1st December 2008” is a specific goal, whereas “Become a better speaker” is unclear. How do you know when you have become a better speaker?

Measurable. If your goals and the steps to achieve them can't be measured, then how do you know how you are progressing? It is much easier to set a deadline for each manual assignment (e.g. One assignment per month) than saying “I will deliver a speech when I have some spare time”.

Attainable. Goals must be realistic and achievable for you. The best goals require you to challenge yourself, overcome fears and limitations and to achieve growth in some form. Writing and delivering a speech every three months is not difficult, but how about one speech every three weeks? Challenging? Yes! Achievable for you? Of course!

Relevant. The goal must be relevant to your life and your vision of what you want to become. Spending time and energy on relevant goals is far more valuable than achieving goals of no importance. Choose goals that are going to give you the biggest payback on your time. Maybe your goal is to develop skills in facilitating meetings and impromptu speaking, so you ask the Education VP to schedule frequent assignments for Chairman and Toastmaster.

Time-Bound. Goals must have starting points, ending points and a fixed duration. Commitment to deadlines and review of progress creates a sense of satisfaction as well as creating a sense of urgency and excitement in your growth. Larger goals such as “Become a Better Communicator” can be made up of several SMART goals: “Achieve Competent Communicator by December 2008” and “Serve as President of Chatswood Early Risers in 2008-2009”.

Member Progress Chart

Now that you defined your SMART Toastmasters goals, the next step is to commit to some dates. The recently created “Early Risers Wiki” is a password-enabled web page maintained by the Education VP. Go to <http://earlyrisers.pbwiki.org/> and click on the Weekly Program Speakers link to find available speaking slots. Advise the Education VPs (Stephanie and Celeste) and they will update the page.

You can also review your progress on the Member Progress Chart page. Tracking progress is important as the club earns points for the Distinguished Club Program based on members completing Competent and Advanced Communicator programs.

Gaining Leadership Experience

Have you thought about nominating yourself for a role on the committee for 2008 – 2009? Serving on the committee is a rewarding experience in leadership, personal growth and giving back to the club. Anyone can nominate for any role, as you will receive training in your role as well as be supported by experienced members of Chatswood Early Risers.

The roles up for nomination are President, VP Education (two people needed to share this role), VP Membership, VP Publicity, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Sergeant-at-Arms.

If you have any questions about a role, please ask the person in that role, or any current committee member.

The Toastmasters Mission: Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality. Members learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualisation, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

www.earlyrisers.org.au

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