

Magic *does* happen in Parramatta

You *can* organise a great meeting, you can prepare well in advance, enlist the help of the right people, check and recheck that everyone knows what they're supposed to do, and generally get it all right. What you *cannot* organise is the presence of the element of magic—that thing that happens when the planets align, and there is a super-normal energy present, when the air crackles and people's hair stands on end—we had just such a night at Parramatta Toastmasters last Thursday night.

With around twenty-five guests, a speaking lineup of club masters, a club anniversary celebration, and a *full half-hour* presentation from World Champion Darren LaCroix it was always going to be an evening to remember—but somehow it was better than that.

Linda displayed her trademark grace and good humour as an outstanding Chairman I, Laurance welcomed almost as many guests as there were members with a beaming aplomb, before Socheat, Raj



A many of many face, and great advice—Darren LaCroix spurring us on at Parramatta Toastmasters

and Cheryl warmed us up for the evenings main-event, Mr Darren LaCroix. That this good man was willing to give his limited time to come and speak at our club was testament to both his generous nature and the power of Toastmasters. Darren acknowledged the role that Toastmasters played in his development as a successful professional speaker, and reminded us of just how a unique opportunity it is, to be able to come every fortnight and practice in such a forgiving and encouraging environment.

His words of inspiration and encouragement touched everyone in the room, as he led us on a little journey through the path of his own speaking career. A few lucky guests even took away some of Darren's educational material—<http://darrenlacroix.com/>.



World Champion Speaker Darren LaCroix with our Treasurer and resident photographer Suben Subenthiran

Night signed, sealed and delivered by lineup of masters

As if it wasn't enough that we had a half-hour with Darren LaCroix last Thursday night—we were treated to a speaking program of local masters. Five of our most experienced speakers lined up and took us on a journey that covered a rang of inspirational topics. John Taylor led us through some historically special moments for the club—we got to know some past members and see them in action. Robyn, Ian and Michael all touched on the learning experiences in Toastmasters, all delivered in their own unique styles, and all with their own stories. A real highlight was Demian's finale—his speech was a very strong call to all pushing ourselves. He spoke of the level of 'adequate' skill that many Toastmasters reach before abandoning their communication and leadership journey. Demian highlighted the ability of Toastmasters to be able to facilitate learning far beyond the stage of 'adequacy', it really was an inspiring number.



Three of the five local masters that graced the stage on Thursday night, Micheal Said, Robyn Peck and Demian Coorey

Natta Photos by *Suben Subenthiran*

A moment of Excellence

Sam Ekinci

“Quality is often unappreciated until the value of what we have - has come and gone”, fortunately for the 60 Toastmasters who attended the Meeting Procedure workshop on the 9th September, 2010, 40 years of experience and knowledge was imparted by a generous Toastmaster delivering a presentation that was interactive, enjoyable and simplified to unpuzzle the processes of Meeting procedures.

New and old TM – were given a comprehensive understanding of the history and interpretation of Meeting procedures, a step by step explanation of Motions (substantive and procedural) amendments and ways to run an Agenda and ways to dispose of the business before the chair. The fundamental requirements of a chairman allowed us to have clarity and understand of the role of Chairman and through the breakout sessions we were able to create the proper environment and to apply the applications and strategies to run efficient meeting.

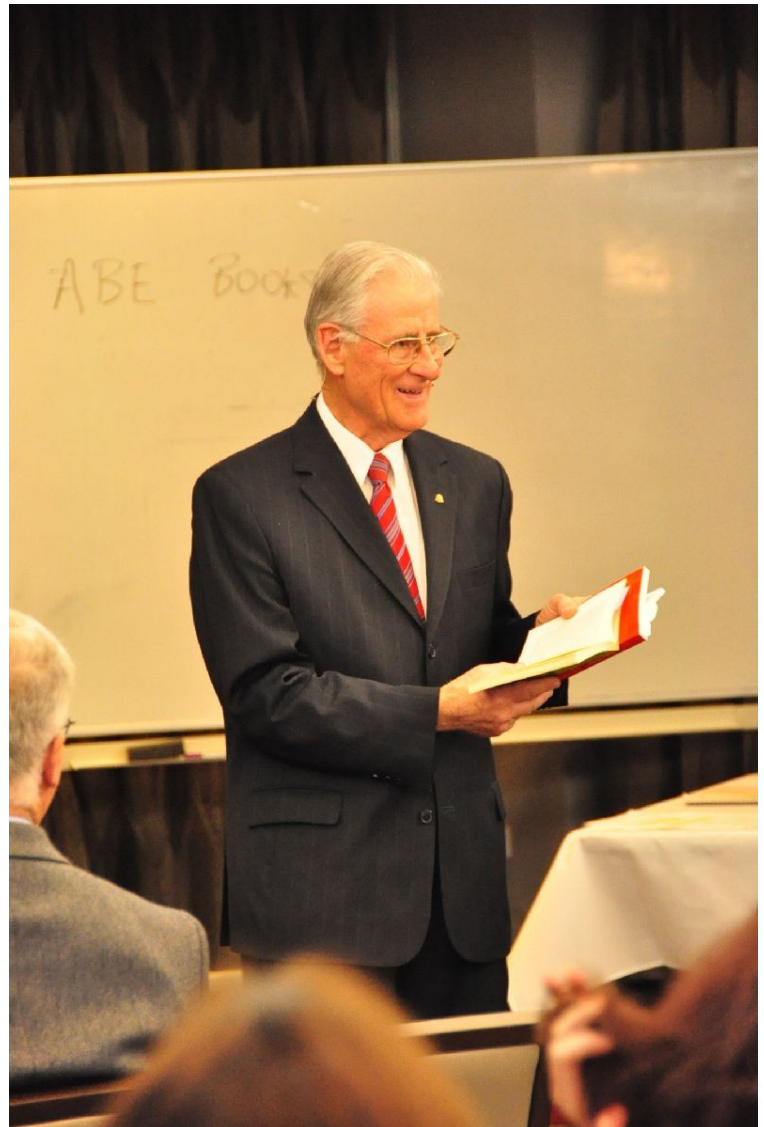
Each person who attended undoubtedly expedited their development in Meeting procedures and the value of similar training conducted back in 2002 netted at club and District many quality TM who excelled in their TM careers and still continue to use these transferable skills in their work, business and/or other extra-curricular activities.

The value of the training was a reflection of the value of the two Toastmasters who designed, developed and delivered the training. In the absence of Elizabeth Wilson, Gary Wilson delivered a brilliant presentation challenging the perceptions of those in attendance, unpuzzling the myths and providing the logic behind the applications to short cut many of the lessons that you would have taken away by reading books like Renton’s “Guide to Meetings and Organisations” Charles Bentleys “Handbook for Chairman and Secretaries” and others.

Supported by an energetic team of TM, Robyn Peck (event bookings and Logistics), Suben Subenthiran (photography), Jodi Robertson and Wendy Nielsen (Registration) Bernie Fisher (Sound) and assisting Gary Wilson was Demian Coorey, John Taylor and Michael Said, The event was always going to be a success.

For those who attended congratulations on your investment and I value your feedback and some of your comments I have listed hereunder, “Great Value” “Great Learning” and “It now makes sense” and “It wasn’t boring – great workshop”. To our team and especially to Gary Wilson – Thank you for delivering a “Brilliant” and again “Exceeding expectations”.

Sam Ekinci ALB, ACB
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A whole evening of excellence—Gary Wilson imparting his extensive meeting procedure knowledge and experience

DON'T MISS!

- **Full write-up of the Area 13 Humorous and Table Topics Competition—Next Issue!**



'real' Postcard from Speechcraft

For Toastmasters that have been around for a little while, it's no secret that Speechcraft works—but isn't it nice to be reminded! Ian received a card as a special thanks from recent graduate Vivek Philip. The card has been scanned, and the text appears below. Great work Ian, and Vivek, we thank you for your kind words.

Hi Ian and Toastmasters!

Wished to convey my personal thanks to all of you who helped make the recent Speechcraft course a memorable and useful one for all the participants.

I'd like to raise a toast to all of you
- apologies if I have unintentionally missed any names!

Wendy N, John N, Lyndal E, Sam E, Ingrid H, Kirisha T, Alicia D, David G, Peter S, Demian C, John T, Andy Y, Raj V & Ron M

Your encouragement and support (in some cases delivered in person) during the programme is appreciated.

Your constructive feedback has been taken on board too.

Thanks again & Best Wishes

Vivek



Anniversary gone but not forgotten

The evening was so full of content, that we'd be forgiven for forgetting the occasion. On top of everything else that happened last Thursday night, it was of course Parramatta Toastmasters anniversary meeting. This is not a club suffering the pangs of old age, Parramatta Toastmasters is a healthy, vigorous and vibrant club—full of buff members with perfect hair, shiny teeth and great taste in clothes.

There have been a number of new members join our ranks this year already, and we are certain there are more on the way.

We all enjoyed a little chocolate cake (well it was a big one, but we had little pieces), thanks to Dave Griffiths and Suzanne Berkeley for an outstanding cutting job!



Keeping it simple—Oblique Obfuscation and Polysyllabic Poetry

Robyn Peck

*Perambulate, perambulate, perambulate your craft
Placidly down the liquid solution
Ecstatically, ecstatically, ecstatically, ecstatically
Existence is but a delusion*

Translated into clear and simple English, our polysyllabic poem turned out to be:

*Row, row, row your boat
Gently down the stream
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily
Life is but a dream*

When we speak and write, we generally try to say something. We

call on our vocabulary to select those words and expressions that will best communicate to others what we have in mind. This process of choosing words to express ideas and emotions is called diction. We move up and down levels of diction when we decide how formal or informal, how abstract or concrete, how common or uncommon and how big or small will be the words in which we cast our message.

Writers have a fascination with big words and that's fine for writers because the reader can go back and re-read what is not understood the first time. But be-ware as a speaker you must be sure you use words your audience will understand the first time.

Let's finish with another perfect example of up and down levels of diction:

"Under no circumstances should you compute the quantity of your barnyard foul previous to their incubation" simply spoken "Don't count your chickens before they're hatched"

Parramatta Toastmasters - Club 2274

Meeting Details

Parramatta Toastmasters meet fortnightly on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, in the Linden Room of the Parramatta RSL.
6pm for a 6:30pm start
Dinner is available during the meeting
Guests and visitors are always welcome

Enquiries / Correspondence

Snail-mail: PO Box 623 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124 Australia
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Speechcraft Spot

Do you suffer from human-kind's most common fear?

Public speaking is a fear held by many people. For some it is a mild discomfort, while others break out in a cold sweat at the mere thought of standing in front of an audience!

If you have decided it's high time to break free of the powerful fear of public speaking, Toastmasters may be an excellent place to get the knowledge and practice that will allow you to speak both confidently and competently in public.

Looking to advance yourself professionally or personally?

Public speaking is both a skill and an art form. Whether you are a novice speaker or a seasoned presenter, there is always something you can do to improve your skills.

Toastmasters can show you new ways to invigorate your existing presentation style; to put that sales pitch over the top, help you nail that job interview, or make your daughter's wedding toast worthy of the tears and applause!

Do you enjoy sharing ideas and meeting new people?

Toastmasters may be the club you've always been searching for. Toastmasters are people from all walks of life, nationalities and professions who are working to better share their ideas with others.

Each meeting provides an opportunity for a wide range of perspectives on any number of topics, and give/receive positive, constructive feedback on how those ideas were expressed.

Start the ball rolling - come to a meeting or enroll in a Speechcraft course!
Enquiries at speechcraft@parramattatm.org.au