

# THE PARRANATTA

## PARRAMATTA TOASTMASTERS CLUB

*"Helping people, help themselves, develop the skills, to help other people"*



May 2023 Edition



President's message - As I approach the end of my 12 month term, I look back with immense pride at all we have achieved together. I set out as President to rebuild our club, both in numbers and spirit. I feel satisfied that, together, we achieved these objectives. We overcame many obstacles to once again achieve 10/10 Distinguished Club points, assisted Winners Circle and Parramatta Pioneers run Speechcraft courses, and to dominate Area and Division contests. We celebrated major milestones, including (who will ever forget!) our 1500th meeting in January when we had 12 past presidents, and members from every decade since we chartered in 1966, in attendance. Our spirit of friendship award, affectionately known as the Tommy Award, has helped to rebuild the camaraderie for which Parramatta is famous. At the District Conference, so many people spoke with reverence about Parramatta; it was truly humbling. We may not be perfect, but we are still the yardstick against which other clubs measure themselves. But we can't be complacent; we must strive to be better...to do more good! In closing, I'd like to thank all of you for your support these past 12 months and wish the new executive much success.

### Meeting 1504, Thursday 16th March 2023.

The Theme was **To Be or Not To Be**, with several references made to this quote during the evening. Rosina Tombs was acting Sergeant at Arms and started us off in her usual fun and engaging way. Vicki Sheehan, VP Education, described the results of the survey sent to members regarding topics we would like to hear as educational sessions. The top requests were; Pathways, Evaluations and How to Write a Humorous Speech. Vicki has planned our programs to cover all of these topics.

Vicki also won the best speech with her fascinating description of delivering the Speechcraft course inside a maximum security prison. Mandy Chiu won Best Evaluator. Michael Said was awarded the Tommy Award for sharing some tough love - telling us where we needed to improve, and how. And isn't that what Toastmasters is all about?

The "Stirrer's Spoon" is granted to the person who gives a bit of cheek to Chairman 2 during the business meeting. As is often the case, it was won by Ron Marriott at this meeting!



Vicki Sheehan wins Best Speech



Mandy Chiu wins Best Evaluator



Michael Said wins the Tommy Award

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## Meeting 1507 on Thursday 20th April - Unforgettable Mentors



Vicki Sheehan wins the Best Evaluator



Lana Shaba wins Best Speech; she kept us laughing the whole time



Wendy Lipski wins the Tommy Award for camaraderie

## District 90 Conference—Inverell 20-21st May 2023

We were recently represented by Anu Vijayan, who competed in two finals at the District 90 Conference in Inverell. The competition was stiff and Anu did not place this year. However, we are all so proud of her achievements and we look forward to cheering her on at this level again next year.

Ron Marriott was elected as Cumberland Division Director for 2023-2024. We congratulate Ron on this achievement; thanks for representing us at this level!



Rob Tibberstma, Kevin Zhang, Ron Marriott and Anu Vijayan in Inverell.

## Meeting 1508 — 4th May

The theme was "May the Force Be With You". This was perfect as the meeting coincided with international Star Wars Day. Table Topics was run by Barbara Mifsud wearing her Princess Leia hat and the questions were all about Star Wars and other sci-fi topics. Michael Said was the winner of Best Table Topic.

This meeting had many visitors. We made them all feel welcome and asked each person to speak briefly about their reason for coming to visit our club. This is a tradition that we practice, giving everyone a chance to speak—which is why we are at Toastmasters!

It was exciting to be involved in the election of the new executive. We also warmly congratulated Anu Vijayan's success at Cumberland Division Contest. Anu won First Place – Table Topics and Evaluation, and Second Place in Humorous and International speeches.

Robert Gubbins presented his Ice Breaker; "Toastmasters Changes lives" - welcome to the club, Robert. Rebecca Gattari told a moving story in her pathways level 3 speech—"Empty". Elvis Chand inspired us with "the Secret to Happiness" and Peter Steinhour was on the Star Wars theme with his cleverly researched speech—"Could it be true?".



Michael Said wins Best Table Topic



Kevin Zhang wins the Tommy



Gary awards the Stirrer's Spoon to John New.



Rebecca Gattari wins Best Speech



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## Meeting 1509 — Thursday 18th May 2023



Anu Vijayan wins Best Evaluator



Christine Huynh wins Best Speech



Michael Said wins Best Table Topic



Rob Tibbertsma awards the Tommy to Kumi Matsunobu



Rebecca Cattari will mentor new member, Meha Khatri.



New members Meha & Marvin

This meeting's theme stimulated much debate about whether **Persistence or Talent is more important** in life. There was a great turn-out, with over 30 members and guests present. Mandy Chui delivered a well-structured Table Topics session, which was won by Michael Said. Bupen KC ran the Business meeting with professionalism, even though it was his first time in this role. We then heard from VP Education, Vicki Sheehan, that there is a "pot luck" meeting coming up soon. Here, we won't be assigned our roles for the night until we get to the meeting. There will not be any time to prepare, but there will be a chance to swap the role you are given with others; I look forward to this meeting; we will all need to be on our toes! Two new members were inducted to the club - Meha Khatri and Marvin Do. We look forward to their Icebreaker speeches soon.

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### **Incoming executive for 2023-2024**

Congratulations to the following members who were elected as Club Officers:

President - John New

Vice President Education - Sabesh Sitsabesan

Vice President Membership- Eoin Gubbins

Vice President Public Relations - Natalia Bist

Secretary - Barbara Mifsud

Treasurer - Robert Gubbins

Sergeant at Arms - Kevin Zhang

### **My contribution to the Coronation—by Gary Wilson**

The SM Herald has been hosting a discussion about whether there were toilets in Westminster Abbey for the coronation. I couldn't resist sending in an extract from my famous (infamous?) Crapper speech that was full of toilet humour. This was the speech that won the first ever club humorous contest in 1972 and the Peter Poulson award in 2017.

"Gary Wilson of Castle Hill pipes up: "The toilets and plumbing in Westminster Abbey (C8) were originally installed by Thomas Crapper, the Victorian engineer who sent the world 'clean round the bend' through his invention of the S-bend. Noisy toilets though have always given their problems. Before the Queen's coronation with the advent of radio and TV, a detachment of guards was used to check the noise by simultaneously flushing all 22 toilets installed in Westminster Abbey for the occasion. On the command 'chai-ains pull!', they pulled and not a gurgle was detected outside, much to the relief of the BBC. Visitors to the Abbey today will see on the floor, among the famous plaques, the name of Thomas Crapper, Sanitary Engineer, Chelsea – even if it is only on a 022-2023 manhole cover."

### **Editorial— My appreciation for Toastmasters, Rebecca Fox, Editor of ParraNatta**

As a member of Parramatta Toastmasters, I have witnessed first hand the transformative power of public speaking. Whether it's delivering a speech, writing this newsletter or engaging in conversation, the skills I have learned in Toastmasters have had a profound impact on my personal and professional life. As an example, my Manager recently commented on how much my ability to speak up in meetings has improved since starting in Toastmasters.

But Toastmasters is more than just a training ground for public speaking. It's a community of like-minded people who share my passion for personal development. We come from all walks of life, but we are united by our desire to become better communicators. I have made friends in Toastmasters who provide support and are "on the same page" as I am in their wish to continue learning in life. I look forward to continuing learning in Toastmasters. I wish the new Executive well as they grow our club even more.