

Mercury's Messenger



Bi-monthly bulletin of
Mercury's Motivators
Toastmasters Club

Club: 711243
Central Division
District 69

Vision:

Mercury's is a professional club which provides fun, fellowship and innovation combined with epicurean delights

Meets 4th weekend of every month at various locations around Queensland's Sunshine Coast



Executive committee:

- President:
Sue Kruger
- Vice President Education:
Ian Pinker
- Vice President Membership:
Coral McVean
- Vice President Public Relations:
Brian Duckworth
- Treasurer:
Hugh McVean
- Secretary:
Lorraine Keely
- Sergeant at Arms:
Judith McConnell



Leprechauns dance among shamrocks

Mercury's club was well represented at the Area 3 Contest Day last month. In keeping with the Country Green theme, members chose "The luck of the Irish" as their particular theme. All the little leprechauns were excited and busily raced around all day as officials or stepped in to help where needed. "Our pot of gold was available to whoever needed it and I think we gave away too much as our rivals took home all the major prizes," said President Sue Kruger. "However, our leprechauns Kevin Wright, Fran Kay and Patti Kuss did us proud in the speech contests - they brought home their own gold of pride and achievement." Shamrocks, Irish Whiskey and gold surrounded the members who cheerfully bounced through the day.

Area Governor challenges members: If your club was a car, what kind would it be and how would it be different? Read Barbara's response on page 6.



Inside this issue:

Enthusiasm thrives	2
Q&A with Patti	3
Cruising celebration	4
Ian's dizzy heights	5

Meetings thrive with enthusiasm

Our club continues to thrive due to the enthusiasm and *New Ways* that just keep getting bigger and better!

The March meeting at Palmwoods Tavern was an exciting one with lots of innovations, despite the small number of members and outside noise.

Our April meeting was well attended and conducted - we hosted our club officer elections as well as exciting *New Ways* and twists.

The elections produced a full executive for next year, thanks to **Kevin Wright's** encouragement and members' willingness to step up and challenge their already busy lives.

Congratulations to **Patti Kuss** as the President-elect. Patti is keen and motivated to keep our club as successful and strong as it is today, and with her executive committee I have no doubts that her wish will be fulfilled.

Ian Pinker's programming allows us to stretch ourselves, yet maintains the elements necessary for us to fulfill

speeches and the assignments required to meet recommendations by Toastmasters International.

We therefore have been able to achieve six points already, which makes us a Distinguished Club. As President of Mercury's, my main objectives were to maintain interest and variety in programming which would foster membership and camaraderie. This has certainly been achieved. Congratulations to all members for your efforts towards this, through speeches, assignments, attendance at training or submission of details to World Headquarters.

Hari Kotrotsios must be congratulated for her newsletters, three of which have been submitted for District 69's Newsletter Contest. Only a few days to go to find out if the newsletter is a winner - not just in our eyes but the District as well.

As usual, we will have a strong presence at the District 69 Convention in Inverell; won't it be lovely for us all to sit back



this year and have someone else do the organising! I look forward to seeing everyone at Convention or at our next *New Ways* meeting.

- Sue Kruger, President

Diary dates

Sunday, 29 May

Afternoon tea - venue TBC

Club officer training:

Sunday, 5 June 12.30-4.30pm

Caboolture Bridge Club

Saturday, 18 June 1-5pm

Nambour Christian College

Thursday, 23 June 5.30-9.30pm

Maroochy Baptist Centre

Friday, 24 June

Rydges Caloundra

Mercury's changeover dinner

Further details & RSVP to:

j_a_mccconnell@hotmail.com



Q&A with Patti

Member profile



1. When & why did you join Toastmasters?

Initially in the early 1980s to gain presentation skills to assist with my career. I was a TAFE teacher and Gary and I also developed computer systems for small businesses. Having gained skills I needed at the time I left the organization. When we came to Bribie in 2006 we saw the ad for Islander Communicators and it sounded like just what we wanted. We were looking to associate with people interested in growth and wanted to improve our presentation skills. We initially joined Bribie Toastmasters but switched to Islander due to clash with our dancing lessons.

2. What have you gained from being a Toastmaster?

Besides fun and friendship and a few pounds in weight (I notice that Toastmasters eat well and I enjoy food), I have gained confidence in speaking before a group. I also have better appreciation of the structure of a good speech. Recently I have gained appreciation of the leadership opportunities that Toastmaster brings and wish to pursue this more.

3. What club/district roles have you held?

Islander VPPR for about 18 months. I was involved in a major project last year at work so I had to stand aside.

4. How do you use your Toastmasters skills outside of the club?

I use leadership skills at work. I also represented Toastmasters locally as a judge at a Lions youth speaking contest and have spoken to community groups.

5. What are your hobbies?

Dancing, solving puzzles which can be killer Sudoku puzzles with Gary, or an IT problem for work, walking, moderate bike riding, family and friends, being grateful (fits into life skills). I have spent a lot of time studying this area, including a Masters of NLP in Las Vegas in 2007. In future, I would love to be able to really communicate some of these skills and do professional presentations.

6. What do you do for work?

I'm an Oracle database specialist. I administer large databases (upgrade, backup, recovery, tuning, design) and also develop back-end programs eg calculating broker commissions. I work remotely for a Melbourne-based consulting/outsourcing company. We also have a holiday house which we self manage.

7. How long have you lived on the Coast?

We built our holiday house on Bribie Island in 2001 and moved to the Island full time 5½ years ago. Gary grew up in Nambour and we have been visiting Bribie for more than 20 years. I think it was fate, as I fell in love with Nambour when passing through in the 60s (I was 14) and

named one of my horses Nambour. I also had a childhood fancy about a town called Banana - in the 80s I was thrilled to visit friends of Gary's on a cattle property in Banana!

8. Which is your current home club?

It was Islander, but for work reasons I cannot currently make Monday morning meetings with any regularity. So Mercury Motivators will be my home club next year.

9. What are your next goals?

To reach Competent Leader. Support Gary if he becomes District Governor and even if he doesn't! I have nominated as Area 3 Governor next year. (Yes, it was a surprise to me, too). If accepted, my goal is to lever Gary's experience for the role and continue the great work he has done this year. I am very proud of Gary – I think I'm still in love!

10. Why did you join Mercury's?

I enjoy the interesting meetings and associating with a great bunch of people. Mercury has weekend meetings that I can make. I like doing things differently. I enjoy the challenge of meeting and speaking in different venues.

2011-2012 incoming committee members:

President - Patti Kuss	Treasurer - Penne Bowles
VPE - Ian Pinker	Secretary - Barbara Richardson
VPM - Coral McVean	SAA - Kevin Wright
VPPR - Judith McConnell	Newsletter editor/webmaster - Hari Kotrotsios

High seas birthday festivities

Lorraine Keelty's recent birthday celebrations coincided with the captain's cocktail party on board the Dawn Princess on its round Australia cruise.

"It turned out to be on one of the formal nights, so everyone dressed up for it," she said.

On the morning of her birthday Lorraine received a card from the captain with three balloons outside her cabin. Later that night her dinner table was covered in balloons and featured a lovely vase of red roses and white orchids

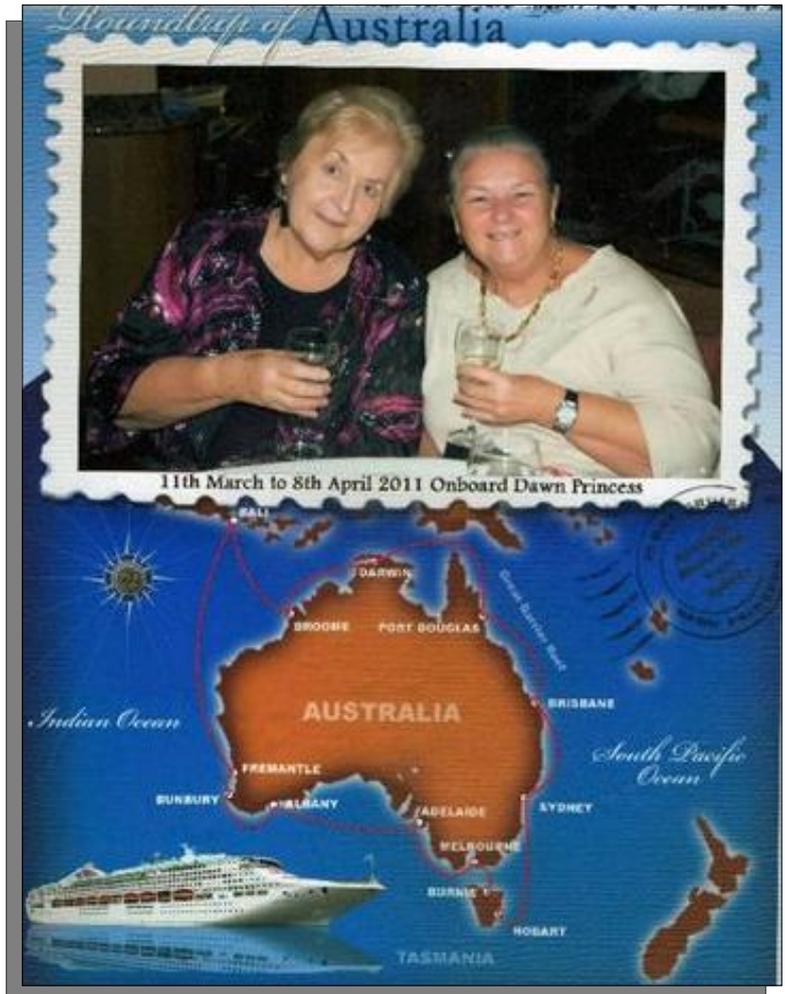
"The waiters sang Happy Birthday and brought me a small chocolate cake, so that was very special."

Lorraine said the whole cruise was a highlight. It was her and fellow Mercurian Judith McConnell's first cruise around Australia, though the travelling pair went on a cruise up the inside passage of Canada and Alaska three years ago.

"Both of us were able to catch up with family on this cruise - me with my cousins and my uncle (in a nursing home) in Melbourne and Judith with her stepsister in Adelaide and her daughter in Freemantle," said Lorraine.

"The whole cruise was a highlight."

"Broome was very different - neither of us had been there before. Judith hadn't been to Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia or the Northern Territory; and I hadn't been to Western Australia or the Northern Territory." Lorraine and Judith boarded the ship in Sydney, where they spent a couple of days sightseeing first. The cruise then sailed to Hobart, Bernie, Melbourne, Adelaide, Bunbury, Dalby, Freemantle, Bali, Broome and Darwin. "The weather was great until we got to Darwin where it rained, though we had a great tour in the morning. A cyclone was in the offing, so we had a spot of roughish



weather from there," said Lorraine. "But no, we did not get sea sick."

She said the rain followed them almost all the way down the Queensland coast and through the Whitsundays.

"It was so rough we couldn't land in Port Douglas - but there was tons to do on board the ship," she said. "In comparison, when we sailed through the Great Australian Bight - which everyone told us would be rough - the sea was as smooth as glass."

Lorraine said the food was amazing, and they felt as if they were eating in a 4-star restaurant every night.

"We had a super table of eight people and we got on extremely well. We played trivia and met some more lovely people - we even won trivia twice!"

As for the duo's next big adventure? "We're thinking of doing a cruise to Asia."

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." - Mark Twain

Ian reaches dizzy heights of 60

Ian turned 60 in February. His mate and old school friend from Victoria, Malcolm, turned 60 a few weeks before him.

Malcolm's family gave him a gift voucher for two to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge, so I thought it would be a great idea for them to do it together. I bought Ian a gift voucher for his birthday and booked us in for the same day as Malcolm and Joy, on 12 March.

There was much excitement as we waited in the pre-climb area and watched instructional movies; then in a group of 11, we were given suits, breath-tested and advised what to do and not to do!

Nothing could be carried onto the bridge - only glasses, hat and headphones were allowed and had to be attached to the suit.

We were given a hanky on a wristband and had to wrap it around and tuck it into the band.

A quick lesson on how to attach the belt and manoeuvre it around the bends, try a few flights of steps to make sure we could manage them, test out our headphones, a slap of sunscreen and we were off!

We had to make sure we were beside the person we wanted to be photographed with at the top, as we were in single file; once the belt was attached it couldn't come off until we reached the end of the climb.

Water coolers were available just before we started, but no-one was game to drink much as it was three hours before we would be able to access amenities!

It was a glorious day in Sydney and we were enchanted by the views as we



Ian and Sue enjoy the breathtaking views overlooking Sydney Harbour. INSET: Sue also made Ian's 60th birthday cake: as a Brisbane Lions fanatic, it could not be anything else.

worked our way to the top. It wasn't a hard climb, only a few sets of very steep, narrow steps at the beginning and end and the rest was a gradual incline.

It wasn't scary at all as we were attached securely and had two railings to hang onto at all times and a much wider platform to walk on than I had envisaged.

We were encouraged to take our time and enjoy the views as our guide talked a little about Sydney, answered questions and took any photos we requested.

We got to the bottom and our complimentary group photos were ready and waiting for us with the option to buy

more then or online later.

The whole experience was exciting, professionally run and enjoyable.

We spent the remaining weekend at Darling Harbour with Malcolm and Joy and another couple from Victoria, Thelma and John.

We had some lovely meals, ferry rides, lunch at Manly, dinner at Doyles, walks, and best of all, lots of fun and laughter.

The girls got in a bit of shopping while the boys visited the Maritime Museum. Sydney even put on fireworks for us at Darling Harbour one night!

It was an enjoyable weekend with fabulous company.

- Sue Kruger



Mercurians Coral McVean and John Kay attended the Northern Division Conference in Cairns in March to help present District 69's Communicator and Leader Award for 2009-2010. This trophy is presented each year to a non Toastmaster who has shown themselves to be a good communicator and leader. Pictured: (from left) International Director Region 12 Mike Storkey, Immediate Past District Governor Coral McVean, award recipient Noel Pearson, District Governor Bruce George and Lt Governor Education and Training John Kay. [Click here to read more.](#)

Club provides a comfortable ride

An advanced Toastmasters club is like a comfortable car, according to Barbara Richardson.

"I must be able to drive comfortably in it, knowing I'll have fun and I can see all my friends."

Barbara's analogy was in response to a question by Area 3 Governor Gary Kuss at the club's March meeting: *If your club was a car, what kind would it be and how would it be different?*

Barbara's requirements for a car were:

- It must fit me.
- I can reach the pedals.
- I don't want to be sitting right up to the steering wheel.
- The seat is high enough so I can see over the steering wheel.

"Most cars on the road today accommodate everyone, but we all have special needs," she said.

"An advanced Toastmasters club must be just as comfortable for me."

Barbara's impromptu presentation followed Gary's official Area Governor address to Mercury's members.

"What spectacular leap are you going to make?" he asked.

"Who can remember giving their first icebreaker speech? Didn't that feel like you were standing on the edge of a vertical cliff, where the only way forward was down?"

Asking about the benefits of an advanced club, members responded:

- We can give longer speeches
- The opportunity to step-up
- Have fun
- Try out new ideas
- The opportunity to mentor clubs
- No pressure. There is always someone to cover for you
- Learning opportunity
- Great peer group
- Program variety
- It's fun



"Is your spectacular leap going to add to the strengths of the advanced club?" Gary asked.

"To maintain the club and have the benefits of belonging to an advanced club, there must be leadership at the executive level.

"Maybe this is the spectacular leap that you're planning," he said.

Mercury's Motivators is an advanced club that meets along the Sunshine Coast from Caboolture to Noosa in fabulous venues such as restaurants, wineries, parks and country pubs.

The club meets once a month, generally on the last weekend of the month, with meeting times varying between lunchtime and evenings.

If you have leadership aspirations then come along and learn from the members who hold District positions. The program is stimulating, the company is riveting, the locations are superb and the food is to die for.

All you need to join is to have achieved your Competent Communicator award.

Even if you have not yet achieved this award, you are still welcome to come along as a guest and check out what happens at an advanced club.

Contact the membership officer, Coral McVean on 5441 7820 or email coralmcv@bigpond.net.au



We're on the web:
<http://mercurys.freetoasthost.info>

District 69 website:
www.toastmastersd69.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/ToastmastersD69

Mercury's Messenger is published by Sue Kruger suziek55@bigpond.com
Newsletter editor: Hari Kotrotsios hari.kotrotsios@hotmail.com

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