

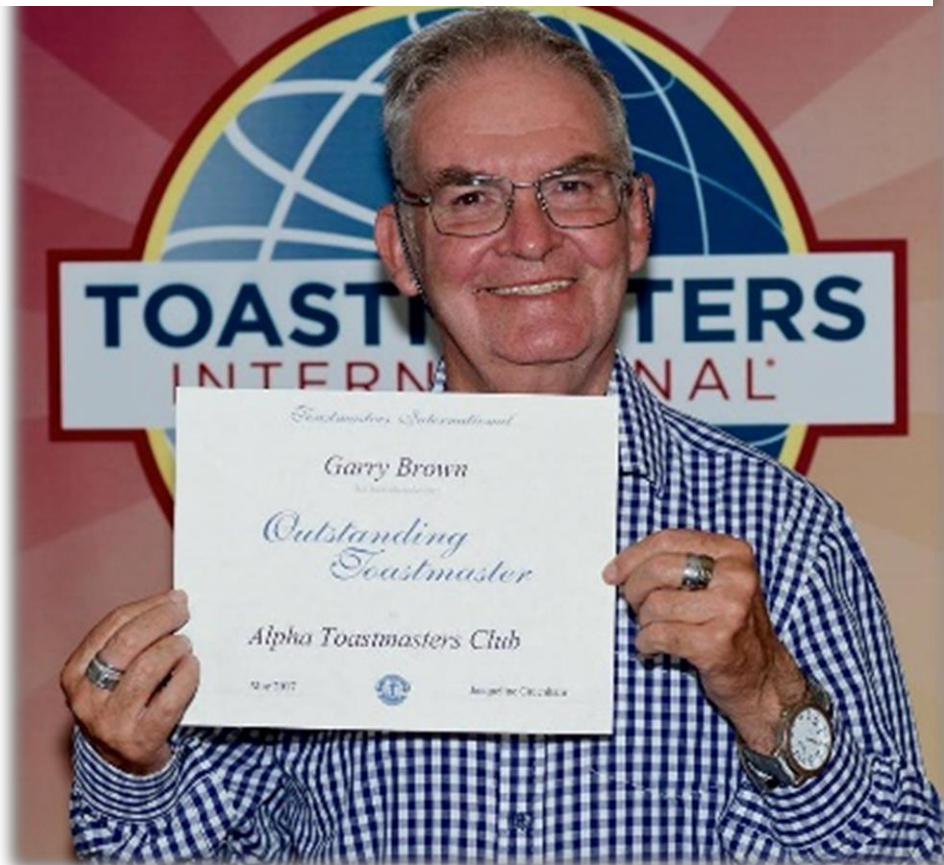
February 2018



# The Alpha Mail

All the news from Newcastle's dominant Toastmasters Club

## Vale Garry Brown



In January 2018 our long-term member and friend Garry Brown unexpectedly passed away. Garry was a very enthusiastic Toastmaster being a member of a number of local Toastmasters clubs. Garry always added colour to our meetings and will be sadly missed.

### Mission Statement

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

### Upcoming Events

#### February 3

Club Leadership Training  
Glendale Church Hall  
344 Lake Road, Glendale  
10.00 am – 1.00 pm

#### February 8

Speechcraft  
Glendale Church Hall  
344 Lake Road Glendale  
6.30 pm – 9.00 pm

#### February 10

Joseph Boutros workshop  
Glendale Church Hall  
344 Lake Road, Glendale  
Time 10.00 am – 3.00 pm

#### February 19

Evaluation and International  
Speech contest  
Alder Park Sports Club  
6.00 pm for a 6.15 pm start

## A word from the President

Barry Finlay AC-B

We are now back into the swing of things at Alpha Toastmasters as we start the second half of 2017/18. This is, of course, also the beginning of the new year. It is the time for us to make decisions about various aspects of our life over the next few months. Is it time to climb the next rung of the ladder of success in our career? Do we need to prepare for a job interview or a major event such as a wedding? How can we improve our speaking skills? Is it time to finally do something about our communication? All of these can be achieved through Toastmasters.



This year the new Toastmasters Pathways program will be introduced at Alpha Toastmasters Club. This new educational program is designed to allow you to tailor a program to suit your needs in developing communication and leadership skills. The new program provides online access to educational resources and your history and introduces you to new technologies such as creating a podcast.

In February the club will again hold its International Speech and Evaluation contests. I encourage all members to enter these competitions as they help in the development of superior speaking and listening skills and allow you to assess how you are going against Toastmasters from other clubs, enjoy the contest environment and meet new people.

In March the club will hold a mock wedding reception. This will provide all of those attending the event a better understanding of wedding reception protocol and practice and/or hints on how to better perform in the various reception roles.

All of these programs and events are aimed at helping you improve your communication and leadership skills so get involved. It is only through taking that first step and then practicing that you will achieve your goals.

I hope you have an excellent 2018 and achieve those goals you set yourself.

## In this issue...

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Talk up Toastmasters  
Meet a member – Rob Martin  
Vale Garry Brown

## Welcome to our newest members

Janelle Crawley  
Rita Gutesa  
Kristy Bandy

## Talk up Toastmasters

February 1 – March 31

It's simple—clubs who add five new, dual or reinstated members within the contest dates above win this award.

**Let's get talking Alpha!**

# Garry Brown

A reflection by Susan Robinson

Garry Brown was a man who wore many hats: Judge for the International Speech and Evaluation Contests at Charlestown Toastmaster Club. President of Hunter Gourmet Toastmasters Club. Member of Fast Track. Panel member for interviewing candidates for the youth leadership program at Warners Bay High School. Volunteer at Wesley Mission's charity store, Hamilton. Chief First Aid Officer at Samaritans Christmas lunch in the park. Keen traveller. Garry had been to Bali several times, as well as New Zealand and the South Pacific. He had frequent trips to Melbourne, where he grew up. His next plan was to cruise the coast of WA and see the Kimberley.

Garry's diary was indeed full. Yet for all his activities, he had time for friends. He would happily drop around for drinks and nibbles, or a cuppa. He would polish off a plate of scones with jam and cream at afternoon tea. When I had a pre-Christmas party in 2015, he attended. He also attended New Years' Eve parties at Annette and Tom's place. He was happy to get involved in whatever was happening. When a member of Alpha asked for witnesses to attend his wedding at the Local Registry. Garry was the first to volunteer.

One day Garry reminded me of a well-known bible verse: The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'. (Matthew 25:40) It strikes me that this was a principle he lived by. Garry liked to help people whenever he could. When I was about to graduate, he thought I should treat myself to a new handbag. I found a suitable one and Garry arranged a 20 % discount at Strandbags. He gave Annette a walking stick to help her when she fell and injured her hip. He was much loved by his neighbours and the church community.

Garry walked a lot. He got up at 5:00 most mornings and walked several kilometres through Valentine and beyond. While visiting Armidale, Garry got up early every morning and traipsed around the campus. He even found his way to the kangaroo enclosure to view the animals. Garry probably could talk underwater if necessary. He was delighted to meet the Legal Eagles of UNE at graduation and have a drink or two with them. On hearing that he was ill, a UNE Law school staffer wrote "Give Garry my best".

In December 2017, Garry brought a ham to my house ready for our Christmas party with Canadian friends on Christmas Night. We discussed baked ham. "You mentioned Dijon mustard" said Garry. "I don't think I would like that." "Okay" I said. After some informed research, I decided to use orange and maple syrup instead. Sadly, Garry never got to enjoy the ham. On Christmas morning 2017 I went to his place, because he had not returned my calls. His neighbour, Kathy, said that he was back in hospital and not very well. We missed his lively conversation on Christmas Day. We drank a toast to him and to family members who were elsewhere. The ham was delicious. Annette and Tom had plans to do Christmas again once Garry was out of hospital. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be.

Reflecting on Garry and our friendship, this song came to mind.

You'll be with me

Like a handprint on my heart

And now whatever way our stories end

I know you have rewritten mine

By being my friend (Stephen Schwartz, "For Good", *Wicked*)

In closing, I am sure that Garry was comforted by the fact that he was surrounded by friends at his passing. He would also have been encouraged by the many prayers said for him by those who knew him. As one friend put it, "he was clearly a good man, and God does not forget good men and women".

Garry has left a legacy of tolerance, punctuality and service to others. He is sorely missed.

# In the words of Darren LaCroix

According to Tom...

*Don't sell the process or product; sell the benefits*

Focus on the audience: it's not about you, it's about the audience

What do you want the audience to know, feel or do?

If you can't describe your speech topic in one sentence, you are trying to cover too many topics.

*No one wants you to start with a weather report. Start with action! What do you*

*Connect: if the audience doesn't trust the messenger, they won't trust the message*

A message is not only heard, it is experienced

**When you squeeze too much information in, you squeeze the audience out.**

*We need to internalise, not memorise our speeches*

For speech ideas, think of people and events that have taught you a lesson in life.

It's not how it goes today; it's how it's remembered tomorrow.

Instead of "telling them what you are going to tell them", tell the audience the benefits, not the features; how the information will empower

It's totally natural to be nervous so it's not about being perfect; it's about being personable.

# Meet a Member

## Rob Martin



### What do you do for work (or study)?

I have a few jobs. Working as a labourer in a friend's small business installing playground and recreational surfaces. I also help with a variety of gardening and handyperson roles with a property developer. I lastly have my own removalist business called "Robs Small Moves".

### How do you spend your spare time?

I have many social and sporting interests. I have played tennis socially mostly over past 10years on a regular Basis. I have also enjoyed social Latin dancing for a similar timeframe. I ride a bicycle often and walk often. I especially of late find I benefit from yoga exercises.

### What is your greatest strength?

I think it's the ability to keep a childlike attitude to life. I think it helps me keep moving forward and not dwell on negative emotions for too long.

### What is the best thing about being a Toastmaster?

Having a place where you can explore/ experiment socially without feeling judged in a negative way by others. You feel supported by others rather than the feeling you a judged or boxed in by yourself or others

### What is your favorite Toastmaster role?

Speech evaluations. It feels great when I think i have something of value in the form of feedback that others might benefit from.

### What is your least favorite Toastmaster role?

Master evaluator. I don't like having to concentrate over the whole period of a meeting. But all roles are not too bad once you get used to them.

### Where do you see yourself in 5 years

For me my focus for the future is getting my health both mentally and physically as good as i can. Core to that is working on creating balance in my life. Like Toastmasters i don't think I will ever get near where I think it is possible but at least I can get closer than if i never tried. I think if I manage this to some degree of success good thing in life will come. I don't think it's in my power to know exactly what this will bring in the next 5 years. Life would be boring if you knew exactly what your future has install lol.