

"PUT EXCITEMENT INTO YOUR MEETINGS"
NOTES ON SESSION CONDUCTED BY ELIZABETH WILSON DTM
17 SEPTEMBER 2001

In this session participants were introduced to the idea of holding a number (maximum 4) of Integrated Theme Meetings each year. Preferably members, other than the VPE would be responsible for the planning of these meetings. The preparation for the theme meeting would include decorations, food to be placed on the tables, a menu (if the club has a meal meeting), the physical meeting agenda, prizes and games that tie into the theme and the meeting program which would be prepared in consultation with the VPE

Discussion was held as to what were the criteria for excellent meetings and the participants came up with this list

CRITERIA FOR EXCELLENT MEETINGS

Keep on time and finish on time
Full involvement of members
Conduct meetings where members can achieve their goals
Prepare a balanced and organised agenda
Have variety and flexibility
Enjoyment
Humour
Recognition of achievement
Support of both new and continuing members
Welcoming atmosphere and welcoming of guests and members
Have a variety of speeches
Non-threatening atmosphere
Have an element of surprise

THEMES CAN BE USED TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT MEETINGS

SOME SUGGESTED THEMES (NOT EXHAUSTIVE)

Choose a Season	Humour
Australia Day	Trains and Planes
St Patrick's Day	Choose a country (Italy, Japan etc)
Melbourne Cup	Wine
April Fools' Day	The Play's the Thing
St Valentine's Day	Rock and Roll
Anzac Day	Music
Kindness	Friendship
Dreams	Christmas
The Internet	Toastmasters International
Disasters	The Stock Market
History of Your Local Area	Champions
Into the 21 st Century	The Wild, Wild West
Letting Off Steam	Camera, Lights, Action
Healthy, Wealthy and Wise	Thinking Beyond the Square
Halloween	Caring and Sharing
Kangaroo Court	Current Week, e.g. Education, Volunteers
etc	

Those in attendance then prepared meeting plans relating to specific themes.
Their ideas are shown in the following pages.

1. WINE

DECORATIONS: Wine bottles, Wine advertisements, cut-out cardboard grapes, wine producing regions - advertising
On Tables – mini bottles of wine, corks with Australian flag in them

FOOD: On tables – cheese cubes, water biscuits and wine glasses

PRIZES/GAMES: Wine glasses with winner's names painted on it on the night

MEETING PROGRAM: Instead of gavel, use corkscrew and wine bottle
Introduction – Allow 10 minutes for Toast so speech can be made on wine making prior to Toast given

Table Topics – Celebration when wine is used

Assignments - Wordmaster
Poetmaster
Laughmaster

Debate - Wine v Water

Speeches - Persuasive Speech on selling wines
Storyteller
Show What You Mean

Conclusion - 5 minutes on Listeningmaster or Quizmaster

2. A SEASON - SUMMER

DECORATIONS: Big yellow sun, pots of sands with umbrellas, mirror with sand on top, beach balls

FOOD: Corn chips, cold prawns, fruit punch and Sunkist

MENU: Sunburnt chicken with block out sauce, surfing salad

MEETING AGENDA: Big sun/wave breaking in corner

PRIZES/GAMES: Lifesavers, summer fruits e.g. bananas
Pass the orange with your chin

MEETING PROGRAM:
Table Topics – What's Your Favourite Summer Activity
Speeches: How to Build a Passive Solar House
Ride a Surfboard
Summer from an Earthworm's Point of View

3. THE INTERNET

DECORATIONS: Computer printed banners, set up as an Internet café, each member takes a creative email address related to their name and personality, Mice (pretend)

FOOD: Fast Food, Serve on Mouse Pads

MENU: Megabyte pizzas, Mice meringue dessert, SAVE Savouries, DELETE Drinks

MEETING AGENDA: Decorate with computers and computer/Internet symbols; email it to members, format as a web page

PRIZES/GAMES: Most creative email address (chosen by vote)

MEETING PROGRAM: Table Topics retrieved from recycling bin
Table Topic Question – Describe your web page
Manual Speech – Power Point Presentation
Frustrations Accessing the Net

Computer Jokes

Introducing members by email address when giving assignments

4. ROCK AND ROLL

DECORATIONS: Posters, LP's, Guitars
Music Notes, Juke Box, Music
Table Decorations (Lights) – Paper cups etc

FOOD: Rock and Roll named items e.g. Elvis Pretzels etc

PRIZES/GAMES: Guess the Song, Name the Artist
Complete the lyrics
Costumes, self-made
Karaoke

Prize for Best Dressed

MEETING PROGRAM: Introduction – “Where was I when... (Consider age/gender of audience)

Hit number for the item number on agenda
Favourite song from era
Table Topics – Favourite Stanza (Sing and Speak it)
Speeches: History and Storytelling and Fact Finding
Short Business Session

Rock and Roll Name Tags (Famous Identities)
Costumes

Fashion Parade – Walk and Clothing

7. MUSIC

DECORATIONS: Music symbols, Pictures of famous composers, Old Gramophones, Records, CD's, Musical Instruments

FOOD: Cake in shape of a musical instrument
Sixties Sweets (Fantails, Chu Chu Bars, Bobby's)

MENU: Mozart Mousse, Beatles's Fingers, Rock and Roll Salad

PRIZES/GAMES: Instrument shaped lollies
Some CD's

MEETING PROGRAM: Speeches on Artists/ Trends in Music e.g. Rock-n-Roll/ Musical Instruments

Table Topics: Music Themes

8. KANGAROO COURT

DECORATIONS: Wigs, Gavel, Scales (Weights), Banners and Flags, Military Paraphernalia, Fleurs, Dock

FOOD: Bread and Water (Crusts), Lifesavers

PRIZES/GAMES: Whodunit: Accused gets booby prize, each right guess gets a prize
Best alibi

MEETING PROGRAM: Trial – Result already decided
Case "Who murdered fluffy Pekinese dog?"
Suspects: Husband, Wife, Milkman, Postman, Neighbour

If you have a dock, next presenter sits in dock
Different names of roles – Chief Inquisitor (Topic Master)
Bailiff (Sgt at Arms)
Court Reporter (Secretary)
Accused (Speaker)
Judge (Meeting Chairman)

Table Topics - Alibis
Trial By Inquisition

9. LETTING OFF STEAM

DECORATIONS: Kettles boiling water, Steam Engine Photos, Boxing Ring or Punching Bag

PRIZES/GAMES: Prize Belt, Certificates, Plastic Trains and Lollies

MEETING PROGRAM: Table Topics – What Cheeses Me Off
Mini Debate – Steam V Electricity or Petrol or Diesel
Speeches – Controversial
Trains, Steam Engines

10. ANZAC DAY

DECORATIONS: Flags (Oust & NZ), Huge Hats, Mood Music, Medals, Torch, Pictures, Red, White and Blue Balloons

FOOD: Sao Biscuits with Tomato and Cheese, Anzac Biscuits, Bully Beef, Vegemite, Lamingtons, Pavlova, Kiwi Fruit

MEETING AGENDA: Anzac soldiers on programs and Anzac Flags

PRIZES/GAMES: Chocolate Coins (Gold with ribbons)
Packet of Anzac Biscuits
Hanky with Gallipoli Sand (From any beach)

Two Up – Old Coins
Guessing Competition
Celebrity Heads

MEETING PROGRAM: Toast to Anzac
Recording of Bugle Playing Last Post
Table Topics – Anzac These
Humorous Wartime Story
Speeches – Anzac Heroes
History of Anzac
Weapons of War

11. APRIL FOOL'S DAY

DECORATIONS: Funny face masks
Famous April's Jokes (From Newspaper Archives)
Colour (Balloons, Dunce Cap)
Each corner with chair and dunce's hat

FOOD: Empty lolly boxes
Dries Peas

PRIZES/GAMES: Jokes, charades, prizes from joke shop

MEETING PROGRAM: Back to front program
People reassigned to tasks – not as scheduled
Speech – Origins of April Fools
Storytelling – A Funny April Fool's Story
Table Topics – Old Famous April Fool's Jokes

12. ST VALENTINE'S DAY

DECORATIONS: Cupids, Film tars posters. Red Flowers, Heart Shaped balloons,
Chocolates, Badges (Ideas from party shops)

FOOD: Champagne, Heart shapes strawberries, heart shaped savouries, gingerbread

MEETING AGENDA: Special stationery, Valentine Day cards, pink and blue
Search [www](#) for ideas

PRIZES/GAMES/MUSIC: Romantic Music to be played "Some Enchanted Evening", "Come Fly With Me"

Balloons
Dinner for 2 (Subject to Funds)
Booby Prizes (Stuffed toys)

MEETING PROGRAM: Table Topics – Wedding Proposal
Role Play (Reaction to situations)

Speeches - Humorous
Information (History etc)

13. A COUNTRY THEME - BALI

DECORATIONS: Tropical plants around the room
Statues/Carvings on tables
Bright coloured kites on the walls
Sarongs
Miniature Boats
Lots of colour
Indonesian Music in background

FOOD: Rice, Lobster, Curry, Hot chillies
Nasi Goreng
Bintang Beer
Blue moon cocktails
Popcorn Nibbles

MEETING AGENDA: Pictures of animals on agenda, monkeys

PRIZES/GAMES: Bright wooden ornaments
Boullee

MEETING PROGRAM: Speech Demonstrate – Cooking Nasi Goreng
Speeches – History
Tourism
Hindu religion

Table Topics Illness – Bali Belly
Geography
Politics
Experiences
Have you travelled, Favourite place

Go to Travel Agents for brochures

14. HEALTHY, WEALTHY AND WISE

DECORATIONS: Bowls of fruit, chocolate coins, sporty gear, owls, agenda in shapes

FOOD: Healthy dried fruit, nuts, vegetables and dips
Red wine for healthy heart

MEETING AGENDA: Shapes of owls, fruit and vegetables, \$ sign

PRIZES/GAMES: Bowl of fruit, chocolate coins
Aerobics Session with a gym instructor. Ring bell throughout meeting with aerobics to follow

MEETING PROGRAM: Speech topics - Healthy - Wealthy - Wise

Table Topics - Fortune Cookies
Sport Theme
Food Theme

Business Session - Put forward a motion that incorporates Healthy, Wealthy or Wise e.g. clubs funds be held offshore, maybe Majorca

15. HUMOUR

DECORATIONS: Clown Masks, Whoopee Cushions, Decorated badges with ribbons, Funny Hats, Chattering Teeth

MENU: Jelly Belly or Quivering Jelly
Lamb Shank
Tripe and Onions, A load of Tripe
Funny Faces on Biscuits
Brains, Mad Cows' Brains
Fairy Bread
Laughing Cookies

MEETING AGENDA: Clowns and Smiley faces
Jack in Box as Agenda
Agenda written with Magic Pens
Blank Agenda

PRIZES/GAMES: Magician/Magic tricks
Laughing Teeth for best speech
Night out at special place, middle of nowhere
Laughing Bag

MEETING PROGRAM: Humorous Table Topics
Humorous Speeches
Make it the Humorous Speech Contest
Make every assignment humorous
Fictitious reports
Reverse Agenda meeting
Tall Tales Speeches

16. TRAINS AND PLANES

DECORATIONS: Posters of aeroplanes etc
- Models of trains/planes if available
- Plane/Train mobile
Arrange Meeting in shape of aircraft, i.e. aisles and seats, have seat numbers, Boarding Passes and people check in
Cardboard Hats of hostesses/pilot
If available dress up in uniform

FOOD: Lollies in shape of transport such as planes, trains
Aeroplane jelly

MEETING AGENDA: Agenda could have take off, departure times, stopovers etc
Border/Symbols on agenda
Could be in shape of luggage bag

PRIZES/GAMES: Guess the destination
Raffle for Mystery Flight if funds allow

MEETING PROGRAM: Find members who have travelled train routes/flights
(eventful hopefully) to present speeches
Table Topics Travel theme i.e. possible scenarios

17. MELBOURNE CUP

DECORATIONS: Jockey hats, Riding Stock, horseshoes, Ribbons/silks, Betting Slips, Winning Post, Streamers

FOOD: Canapés, Champagne, chicken, prawns, nibbles

MEETING AGENDA: Lots of Clip Art, Horseshoes

PRIZES/GAMES: Talking Heads, Melbourne Cup Trivia, Hat Parade
Small bottles of champagne, Racing Tickets, Copy of Punters Pal,
Lucky Horseshoe

Um/Er Award - bag of horse droppings
Best man's Hat - Racing Guide
Best ladies hat - Small Bottle Champagne

MEETING PROGRAM: Laughmaster - Racing Joke
Race Starter - Welcome
Race Caller - Evaluator

Table Topics - Jockey, Horse, Fine Cotton Affair

Town Speeches - Famous Horses, Phar Lap, Gusing, Kingston
Racing Identities, Tommy Smith, Gay

Waterhouse

18. CHAMPIONS

DECORATIONS: Medals, Photos of Sports, Business, World Leaders, Extraordinary People

FOOD: Chocolate Medals, Nutrigrain, Bowls of sultanas, Vitamins

MENU: Ian Thorpe Fish and other courses named after champions
Dream Achieving Dessert

MEETING AGENDA: Dais
Theme music (Rocky eye of the Tiger)
Change names on Agenda, e.g. Coach, Starter, Sprint

PRIZES/GAMES: Trivia Quiz
Who am I?

MEETING PROGRAM: Pass the Baton
Story telling
Debate
Dress Up
Mexican Wave

19. AUSTRALIA DAY

DECORATIONS: Flags, Gum Leaves

MENU: BBQ, Lamingtons, vegemite

MEETING AGENDA: Australianise the Agenda
Yellow paper, green ink

PRIZES/GAMES: Kangaroo Pins

MEETING PROGRAM: Reading - Australian
Table Topics - Prime Ministers or Important Dates

20. THE WILD, WILD WEST

DECORATIONS: Wagon Wheel, Ropes, harness. Horse equipment,
Reward Posters, - "DEAD or ALIVE" of Toastmasters members

Entrance Door made as Saloon entrance

FOOD: Beans, Corn on the Cob, Corn Beef, Roast, Whisky

MENU: Buffalo Bills Beef Burgers
Wyatt Burp Beans
Rot Gut Rid Whisky
Guns a'blazing
Spur on

MEETING AGENDA: Bullet holes paper
Singed, burnt paper
"Wanted" paper
Topic written on playing cards

PRIZES/GAMES: Wagon Wheels (chocolate)

MEETING PROGRAM: Table Topics - Themes of The Wild, Wild West
Timing device replaced by cap gun warnings instead of green,
amber, red
Sgt at Arms called Sheriff, Chairman is Town Marshall
Outdoor Meeting, BBQ or Campfire
Background Music

21. HALLOWEEN

DECORATIONS: Cut outs of witches, pumpkins, bats, cats, spiders, Lollipop Ghosts. Maybe candles and dim the lights

FOOD: Popcorn, jelly beans, gummy snakes (in the tables)

MENU: Lurch's Lasagna, Creepy Crawly Chicken, Ferocious Fish, Bat's Wing Beef and have a jelly snake to top each meal.

AGENDA: To be decorated with Halloween style clip art or if lucky some commercial paper from Office Works (coloured)

PRIZES/GAMES: Make sure all receive one, Treat Bag of lollies etc

Throughout the meeting have "Guess the Ghost" Spots. Members are assigned a "Ghostly character and have 30 sec. to guess whom it is by just asking a partner questions which require a "Yes/No" Answer.

MEETING PROGRAM: Normal meeting program with special assignments slotted in.

Round Robin, All tell a Ghostly Riddle

Laughmaster: A Ghostly Joke

Read/Recite: A Ghostly Poem

Topics: Magic Spells

Speeches: Storytelling (2) Tell a ghost story or retell own ghost story

Speech on background to Halloween

Speech on Halloween Customs