



May 10th - May 12th

2024

Killeshin Hotel

Portlaoise



WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE

**The Rock of Dunamase
Portlaoise**





“The Killeshin Hotel extends a warm welcome to District 71 Toastmasters International UK & Ireland. As one of six properties within the esteemed S6 Hotel Group, The Killeshin Hotel guarantees the ultimate Four Star Luxury Experience, seamlessly blending contemporary style with genuine service and hospitality.

Our dedicated team at The Killeshin Hotel takes pride in delivering a personalized approach to hospitality.

We prioritize your needs, anticipating guests' requirements to ensure a seamless and memorable stay.

Whether your visit is for business or leisure, The Killeshin Hotel in Portlaoise is the perfect destination for you. We are excited to host you and create an unforgettable experience.”

Simona Norvaisiene

Social Media and Digital Marketing Executive

District 71 Director Welcome

Dear Fellow Toastmasters,

I hope you are all well and working diligently towards achieving distinguished club status by 30th June, the end of the Toastmaster's year. One of the most highly anticipated events of the year is the annual District Conference which takes place in Portlaoise in Ireland, from 10th to 12th May. This year's event promises an extra special vibe as we celebrate Toastmasters' centenary, marking a century of empowering individuals worldwide to be better communicators and leaders.

Dr. Ralph Smedley's vision of helping to empower young men (at the time) to be better communicators and leaders, has grown from a single Toastmasters club in California in 1924 to a global organisation today with 14,200 clubs.

I am proud that we are carrying on his legacy in District 71 for future generations to enjoy.

The 'Fort' conference isn't just about workshops and speeches—it's a chance to connect and network with fellow Toastmasters from across the district, share insights over coffee or at the bar and forge lasting friendships. Past International President and conference aficionado, Ted Corcoran, DTM, sums up the experience as follows: "District conferences bring us together to learn, to decide, to move forward". As the South African saying goes: *"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."*

Prepare to be dazzled and to cheer on the best of the best contestants competing in four categories: Table Topics, Humorous Speech, Evaluation, and the International Speech Contest. The winner of the District International Speech Contest will progress to the Regional finals, and perhaps even make history as the next world champion of public speaking at the Convention in Anaheim, California.

The keynote speaker, Roger Caesar, a third place winner at the 2021 World Championship of Public Speaking, will inspire and energise delegates with his stories. Get ready to embrace his motto: *"Don't wait for the world to recognize your greatness, LIVE IT and let the world catch up to you!"*

Conference Director Peter Kieran, DTM, and his dedicated team, are working tirelessly to ensure that the conference program offers a blend of learning and fun activities including a roaring twenties fashion show, an Open Mic session, a gala dinner, a craic, Ted's famous singalong, local singers and a popular music band. There is something for everyone to enjoy.

A mandatory event at the conference is the annual District Council meeting, where district business will be conducted and new leaders for 2024-25 will be elected. Whether you're a voting member or simply curious about parliamentary procedures, this is an invaluable opportunity to witness Toastmasters governance in action.

As someone who has attended District conferences every year since I joined Toastmasters 14 years ago, you are guaranteed fun, friendship and fellowship. Let's come together in Portlaoise and create unforgettable memories. In the words of our founder, Dr. Ralph Smedley:

"We learn best in moments of enjoyment." **See you in Portlaoise.**

Voting members are: club presidents, club VPEs, area directors, district directors and members of the DLT

Elizabeth Jordan, DTM

District 71 Director

"letspulltogetherwithpurpose"



The Fort 2024 Conference Director Welcome



The warmest of greetings to Portlaoise, for the District 71 Summer Conference!

We extend our welcome to toastmasters and guests to the Fort 2024 Conference.

An exciting and inspiring weekend of the best of Toastmasters awaits you. There are many great speakers and workshops lined up.

We are honoured to have with us this weekend, award-winning World Champion International speaker Roger Caesar.

The centrepiece of the weekend is the finals of the District 71 Humorous

&

International Speech, Table Topics and Evaluation contests. I wish contestants in the finals the very best of luck. It is a huge achievement for them to have made it through to the District finals.

What I most enjoy about these conferences is the opportunity to meet other Toastmasters from all over the District. There will be many opportunities this weekend for you to do likewise, from the First Timers Event to the Closing Ceremony.

2024 is a very important Year for Toastmasters International, celebrating its 100th anniversary.

We wish you an enjoyable stay in Portlaoise and a safe journey home.

Peter Kieran,

Conference Director

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SPECIAL EVENTS



Saturday 27th of April 2024

Networking Walk with Linda Crofton

10:00am Trinity College

Thursday 9th of May

Anglo- Irish Toastmasters Night

20:00 Killeshin Hotel

Thursday 9th of May

Toastmaster4Golf Open

12:00 The Heath Golf Course

DAY 1 - FRIDAY, 10TH MAY 2024

08:00 - 14:00	Registration	
09:00 - 09:30	Introduction for First Timers	Peter Kieran
09:30 - 10:30	Workshop: Stagecraft	Vincent Delaney Room 2
09:30 - 10:30	Expert Panel Discussion: Judging in Fairness	Thérèse Kinahan Dunamase
11:00 - 11:45	Table Topics Semi Final Group A Table Topics Semi Final Group B	Dunamase Room 2
12:00 - 13:00	Humorous Speech Semi Final Group A Humorous Speech Semi Final Group B	Dunamase Room 2
13:00 - 14:10	Lunch	
14:15 - 15:15	Speech Evaluation Semi-Final Group A Speech Evaluation Semi-Final Group B	Dunamase Room 2
15:30- 16:30	International Speech Semi-Final Group A International Speech Semi-Final Group B	Dunamase Room 2
16:45 - 17:45	Workshop: Pathways, Workshop: Club Growth & Member Retention	Patricia Radley Room 2 Anthony Garvey, Dunamase
19:00- 20:00	Opening Ceremony	
20:00 - 21:00	Open Mike	
20:00- 12:00	Buffet: Roaring Twenties	
21:00- 23:00	Music performance by Johnny Graham and Johnny Kinsella	

DAY 2 - Saturday, 11TH MAY 2024

TIME	EVENT	ROOM
08:00 - 14:00	Registration	
09:00 - 09:45	Workshop: Happiness & Resilience	Lou Burchall Dunamase
09:45 - 10:00	Coffee Break	
10:00 - 12:30	District Council Meeting	Conference Suite
10:15 - 11:15	Workshop : Artificial Intelligence	Gary McDarby Dunamase
11:25 - 12:25	Workshop: Presentation Skills	Sean Dwan Dunamase
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch	Restaurant
14:15 - 15:15	Keynote Speech:	Roger Caesar Conference Suite
15:30 - 16:45	International Speech Contest Final	Conference Suite
16:45 - 17:30	Table Topic Contest Final	Conference Suite
19:00 - 19:45	Drinks Reception	Reception Area
20:00 - 22:30	Gala Banquet Music by the LOLs	Conference Suite
22:30 - 00:30	Band & Dancing	Conference Suite

THE FORT 2024 TOASTMASTERS

Day 3: Sunday 12th May 2024

TIME	EVENT	ROOM
08:00 - 10:00	Registration	
09:30 –10:15	Workshop: Roger Caesar	Conference Suite
10:30 - 11:45	Humorous Speech Final	Conference Suite
11:45 - 12:30	Speech Evaluation Final	Conference Suite
12:30 - 13:00	District Awards	Conference Suite
13:00 - 13:30	Closing Ceremony + Parade of Flags	Conference Suite



Roger Caesar has earned international recognition as a professional speaker, captivating audiences worldwide with over 5,000 speeches and numerous workshops. His expertise and impact extend from prestigious platforms like TEDx to achieving a top-three placement in the 2021 World Championship of Public

Speaking.

Roger's dynamic presentations resonate deeply, consistently leaving audiences inspired and eager for more. In the realm of business, Roger is at the helm of a thriving family-owned logistics company, a legacy initiated by his father over four decades ago.

His entrepreneurial spirit is matched by his commitment to community engagement and enrichment. Additionally, Roger co-hosts the "Great Convos" podcast every Monday alongside fellow speaking champion Alexandre Matte, available on LinkedIn and Facebook. This platform further showcases his talent for meaningful dialogue and thought leadership. With more than ten years of experience in motivating individuals in various settings, including corporate environments, Roger founded Caesar Empire Speaking and Coaching. In this venture, he excels as a coach, helping others discover and harness their unique voices; as a trainer, he imparts the nuances of effective communication; and as a speaker, he forms deep connections with his audience through impactful storytelling and profound messages.

Thérèse Kinahan is a DTM and is a member of this year's Conference Committee.

She is also a member of PowerTalk Advanced Speakers.

Thérèse has served in almost all officer positions and has been an Area Director and Division Director. Therese has many years of experience in a variety of voluntary organisations - national and international, in Europe and Africa. She is an experienced facilitator with an Honours Degree in Training and Education from NUIG.



Expert Panel Discussion: Judging in Fairness 09:30– 10:15

On the stage will be:

Lorraine Howard, Kildare Toastmasters

Martin Farrell, Toastmasters 4 Golf and Phoenix Tara Toastmasters,

Peter McAuley, Toastmasters 4 Golf and Kildare Toastmasters
and Chief Judge District 71 2023/24



Vincent Delaney

Vincent has been working as a management consultant for the past 15 years after many years in the corporate environment. “Ultimately, it is all about communication - listening and speaking”, says Vincent. He has assisted hundreds of businesses and individuals in achieving their goals.

His primary degree was in electrical engineering followed by post-graduates in accounting & finance and project management along with his studies in psychology. These, coupled with his vast

experience in various areas of management, gives him the expertise to advise almost any type of business.

Vincent achieved his DTM just before today’s Pathways replaced the previous system.

He has had various levels of involvement and success in Toastmasters during his time in as a member. His real love of Toastmasters is in watching - and sometimes helping - new members take their first few steps on the Toastmasters journey.

Workshop 3 Friday 09:30—10:30 Stagecraft Room 2

Called Stagecraft, it is all about using the area around you as a powerful resource that can add that extra dimension when you are delivering your speech.

It works, whether you want to move around or whether you're standing behind a lectern. There is nothing like it anywhere in pathways and never has been in toastmasters.

Now by, extension I'll be training you, from the audience point of view, on how to move, with purpose and with grace, rather than moving your hands around without any particular purpose.

So join me on Friday morning for my Stagecraft workshop.

Patricia Radley has been a Toastmaster since 2018 when she initially joined Cork Toastmasters. She served as President during the 2020/21 season when the club was online due to the Covid 19 pandemic. That year the Club earned Presidents’ Distinguished Status. Patricia has also served as Assistant Area Director and Area Director for Area 23, Division A.

She is currently a member of 3 clubs, Powdermills Toastmasters, Cornerstone Communicators and Sunday Speakers, a hybrid club in San Antonio Texas. Patricia has completed 5 pathways and enjoys sharing her knowledge of Pathways with members.



Workshop 3 Friday 16:45—17:30 Exploring Pathways Room 2

Patricia’s workshop will address the changes coming in Pathways, how to make Pathways work for all members and to inspire members to think about Pathways differently so that members can reach their potential with Pathways.



Louise Burchall Meet Louise Burchall, Ireland's foremost authority on laughter yoga. With a passion for spreading joy, Louise has collaborated with top companies like Zipyard, Deloitte, Bayer, and the Happy Pear, offering engaging and authentic laughter yoga workshops. Her expertise has been featured in the Sunday Business Post, and she's a regular fixture at Ireland's premier music festivals, including Electric Picnic, Altogether Now, and Body and Soul.

Louise's journey with laughter yoga began as a personal quest for mental well-being, leading her to discover its transformative benefits. Now, she's on a mission to share these skills and prevent others from experiencing similar struggles. Trained by master instructors across the globe—from the UK and the US to India and Australia—Louise's adaptable style caters to diverse groups, from children to seniors, and everyone in between.

Recognised as a Laughter Ambassador by Dr. Kataria, the founder of laughter yoga, Louise is dedicated to promoting this practice worldwide. In the stress-filled landscape of 2024, she recognizes the urgent need for joy and connection.

Louise offers a practical remedy through her laughter yoga sessions, bridging emotional divides and fostering a sense of unity. After all, as she believes, laughter is the shortest distance between two people.

Workshop 5 Saturday: 09:00—09:45: Laughter Yoga

Louise invites you to experience the pure joy of laughter yoga - join me for an hour of playful activities designed to induce genuine laughter and boost your energy levels. No special clothes or equipment needed— just bring a willingness to laugh and connect with others. This session is open to all, regardless of ability or fitness level. Through playful laughter, exercises and deep breathing techniques, you will feel light, energised, and ready to conquer the day ahead - I guarantee you will even make a few friends!

Anthony Garvey Anthony has 30 years' experience working in international public relations, ranging from technology and telecommunication blue chips to educational and local government organisations.

Anthony runs Confident Presenting, which provides management training to companies throughout the UK and Ireland.

Anthony is an award-winning presenter and public speaker and is the current District 91 International Speech Champion. Anthony has also written seven children's books, including the popular



Workshop 4 Friday 16:45—17:30 Club Growth & Member Retention Dunamase

Anthony claims to be a member of "two of the best Toastmasters clubs in the world". Tralee Toastmasters, an in-person club in County Kerry, in District 71 and Shilling Speakers, an online club, in District 91.

Whether your club meets in-person or online, is a community or a corporate club, is in rude good health or struggling to make the numbers, Anthony will share some tips and tricks during this workshop he has learned which are proven to help clubs grow, while developing club members. This is an interactive session, so come armed with any questions you have and we will find the answers for you.

Dr. Gary McDarby is a serial entrepreneur with a background in Electronic Engineering and Neuroscience. He has a 1st Class honours degree in Electronic Engineering (UCD 1988), a Master's Degree in Engineering Science (UCD 1995) and an MIT endorsed PhD in Biomedical Engineering (UNSW 2000). He spent 4 years as Principle Investigator leading the MindGames group in MIT Media Lab Europe focusing on technology and Neuroscience. This group was responsible for notable inventions including the relax to win concept – a novel gaming strategy for stress management (now commercialised), Aura-Lingua – a new way of getting sensory information into the brain (now commercialised) and the Cerebus Brain Computer Interface - the first ever wireless, configurable, portable brain computer interface. He spent 3 years in Australia (2016-2018) where he ran Enterprize Tasmania, the early stage technology incubator for the State. As CEO of Enterprize, he successfully helped early stage companies get into accelerator programs on the mainland. One company, Bitwoke technologies, successfully got into Cicada (who many consider to be the top deep tech incubator accelerator in the Asia Pacific region). This was the first time a Tasmanian startup had succeeded in getting into Cicada. He was responsible for the rollout of the first Citywide Open Innovation IoT platforms based on LoRa for Launceston and Hobart and he established the Advanced Sensor Manufacturing Facility with Definium Technologies in Launceston. He won the Percy Tasmanian Entrepreneur of the year award for 2018 – the first non-Tasmanian to do so.



Now back in Ireland, he is currently CEO of Edgeliot, a small Irish Company developing an intelligent sensing platform for Internet of Things Applications. There is a strong focus on Edge Computing and AI at the sensor layer itself. He lives in Greystones with his wife and 4 children.

Workshop 6. Saturday 10:55 Artificial Intelligence, Should we be concerned?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has really come to the fore in the last couple of years. The combination of powerful computing, huge datasets, extensive connectivity and new powerful algorithms has created what has been described as the most powerful analytical tool ever conceived by humanity. AI can perform many tasks way better than humans, never gets tired or bored or ill (unless somebody turns off the power) and so the question emerges – should we be concerned? In this talk, Dr. Gary McDarby discusses the emergence of AI, how it came to be, what it can and cannot do, where it has great potential but where most importantly where we need to be careful.



Sean Dwan Having gone to University College Dublin for 2 years, I managed to fail my exams. As a result I worked on building sites – jobs in Ireland were scarce at the time!

Using a cement mixer changed my life – it gave me the desire to do something more fulfilling with my life.

I went to London and worked with an Engineering Machinery Supplier in London for five years.

I returned to Dublin and worked in a similar engineering machinery sales company - selling machinery to multinational organisations and SMEs for twenty six years.

I am a Toastmaster since 2001 and a DTM since 2012.

With the experience and confidence of Toastmasters, I went to Oregon in the U.S.A. in 2009 to train as a professional trainer in communication, presentation and Public Speaking Skills Training to Multinational Organisations, SMEs and individuals.

Workshop 7 Presentation Skills: 12:00 How to be an Influential, Dynamic, Riveting and Confident Presenter **Dunmase**

The Workshop I will deliver is the Highly Rated “*SpeakersTrainingCamp*® (S.T.C.) workshop.

During this condensed Workshop that I will deliver at the D71 Conference in Portlaoise will include some elements of the (S.T.C.) will be:

- a) The THREE Core Principles you must have when speaking
- b) The SEVEN Steps to organising your Presentation
- c) The NO 1 Requirement when Presenting
- d) EIGHT Voice Check List
- e) Powerpoint, quick Tips
- f) TOP TEN Terrible Turn Offs
- g) KEY TAKE AWAYS

The Workshop will be interactive, energetic and fun.

“Humour is mankind’s greatest blessing”.

List of Contestants

Division	Table Topics Contest	Semi-Final Group
A	David Clinton	B
B	Patrick Hynes	A
C	Seamus Hynes	A
D	James Pendergast	A
E	Michelle Lynch	B
F	Brian Marshal	A
G	Fran Goddard	B
H	Debbie McManus	B
J	Colm McGlade	B
M	Rebecca Cramp	A
N	Liam. W. Mooney	B
S	Kyle Murtagh	A

Division	Humorous Speech	Semi-Final Group
A	David Haskett	B
B	Sonia Elston	A
C	Mick Rock	A
D	Bernard Traynor	A
E	Denise Pitter	B
F	Brian McLoughlin	A
G	Red Skelton	B
H	John Marsh	B
J	Christian Leon	B
M	Ciaran Blair	A
N	John Duckworth	B
S	James McGinty	A

List of Contestants

Division International Speech Contest Semi-Final

		Group
A	Siobhan Fitzgerald	B
B	Michael Collins	A
C	Tony McIntyre	A
D	Phillip Khan-Panni	A
E	Violeta Saladiene	B
F	Frances Leonard	A
G	Julian Hammond	B
H	Chris Baker	B
J	Dalila Burin	B
M	Aine Ni Ghlinn	A
N	Pol Donald Nkana Nkana	B
S	David McCrea	A

Evaluation Contest

Semi-Final Group

A	Paul O'Mahony	B
B	Michael Collins	A
C	Blake Boland	A
D	Ita Finnerty	A
E	Prince Acquah	B
F	Brian Marshal	A
G	Stuart Watson	B
H	Russell Anderson	B
J	Colm McGlade	B
M	Neil D'Souza	A
N	Satya Morarji	B

District Communication & Leadership Award



Opportunity Knox

Opportunity Knox Charity was founded by Ursula and Harry Knox in December 2015. They were both retired and went for a trip to Uganda with World Vision Ireland. In Eastern Uganda, in a village called Tiira they were stunned by what they saw: poor, impoverished, destitute families, living in mud huts with grass

roofs.

When they returned home they founded their own charity with the intent that they would find a way to help these poorest of the poor families.

After having food to eat, parents knew the value of education. Ursula and Harry provided mattresses and blankets and sacks of flour when needed. They ensured that girls had full equality with education.

Some numbers: It takes €120 to fund a child at primary school for a year, €200 for a student in secondary school and €600 for a student in a vocational skills school. The charity has spent around €300,000 to date on delivering these funds to the most needy, helping hundreds of the most needy.

Their charity provided further assistance in the form of solar power - so children could study and read for pleasure at night.

Ursula has been giving summer classes in reading and writing over several years to help deprived children catch up, in English, the official language in Uganda.

Donor certainty: Harry does all the administration, issuing receipts and is very active social media & website himself, thus minimising costs. This ensures that every penny collected arrives in Uganda, with complete transparency and annual auditing.

It's the reason we 'jump out of bed' in the morning they say!



Ursula and Harry have been lifelong members of Toastmasters and they became highly motivated when they both attended Toastmasters International Conferences: Phoenix, Arizona in 1981 and Philadelphia in 1982.

They were the first Irish members to earn their DTMs in 1987!

Harry was District Director in 1987-88 and Ursula was District PRO in 1989-90.

They have no doubt but that their confidence and organisational ability came from the Communication and Leadership skills learned in Toastmasters.

www.opportunityknox.ie and constantly updating the Facebook page at facebook.com/opportunityknox.ie.

The Organising Committee of the The Fort 2024 Conference

Peter Kieran **Conference Director**

Vincent Delaney

Michael McCann

Angela Afieghe

Linda Crofton

Thérèse Kinahan

Patricia Duffy

David Clinton

Declan Brophy

Olga Byrne





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