



"We Serve"

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

Guidance and Advice Based on Previous Experiences

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Committee	2
3	Budgeting	3
4	Type of Function	5
5	Official Guests	6
6	Venue	7
7	Printing	9
8	Reception	11
9	Protocol, Top Table	12
10	The Meal	13
11	Entertainment	14
12	Public Address System	16
13	Lions Charter Evening Tombola/Raffle at Closed Events Only	17
14	Conduct	19
15	Speeches	20
16	Gifts and Bouquets	24
17	Summary	25
	Appendix A - Summary of Toastmaster Duties	26

1 Introduction

This manual is to assist Clubs when planning a special function when departing guests confide to each other “the best ever” rather than “pity about the ...”

It is not intended to be an instruction book but guidance and advice on the best practice to follow based on previous experiences.

Traditional codes of behaviour and practice have given way to an increasingly informal society and there is some confusion as to the best standards to adopt.

Such help may be found in a reference library with, for example, the easy to read “*Debrett’s New Guide to Etiquette and Modern Manners*” by John Morgan, 1996.

The Charter Anniversary is an annual special occasion to commemorate the granting of a Charter to a Lions Club permitting members to fulfil the motto “We Serve” by personally upholding the individual Code of Ethics in carrying out the Aims and Objects of the International Association.

Whatever type of function is held, the original Charter should be given pride of place for Members and Guests to appreciate.

Furthermore, the framed Charter could escape the notice and attention of the Members and Guests unless mentioned and pointed out by the President or Toastmaster.

2 Committee

The President is empowered to appoint a Charter Anniversary Committee and this should consist of, say, the Toastmaster or Master of Ceremonies (MC) and two or more other members.

The President's wishes will be given first consideration and every effort should be made to comply with the President's preferences.

However, all decisions must be taken in the name of the Club, not an individual, as this is important in the event of a financial profit or loss or insurance claims if some unfortunate calamity occurs. It is not necessary to restrict enthusiasm or enterprise of an individual committee member but the whole committee must accept responsibility on behalf of the Club.

Where opinions strongly differ, the President may agree to exercise caution and compromise to ensure majority Club approval.

National historic events which are seen by millions of viewers are always much admired for the efficiency with which all aspects of the occasion is carried out. Meticulous planning is the secret of success with awareness of all contingencies, back-up support and stand-by.

Without going "over the top", these should be borne in mind by the Committee.

3 Budgeting

A Charter Anniversary is not a fund-raising event. Careful budgeting is required to ensure that the function does not result in a deficit, so erring on the side of caution is recommended. A properly budgeted event should result in a small surplus.

The main headings of expenditure that may need to be considered are:

- Venue
- Meals
- Band/Disco
- Other entertainment
- Food and drink for entertainers
- Printing menus, invitations, etc.
- Postage
- Gifts
- Bouquets
- Sound system
- Wine for top table guests
- Sherry reception
- Raffle prizes.

The main headings of income are:

- Paying attendees
- Sale of draw/raffle tickets
- Profit from “Guess the length of the President’s Speech” gamble
- Sponsorship (although not normally sought).

The Club may choose to have a Hospitality Fund into which each Club member will pay an agreed annual amount in addition to normal Club subscriptions. This Hospitality Fund may be used to pay for the meal and wine for the top table guests.

The Treasurer, in conjunction with the organising the committee, will need to estimate the probable number of attendees in order to be able to set a price per person attending. It should be remembered that the setting of too high a price per person attending might result in a poor take-up, as the function could be considered “too expensive”.

Burgess Hill District Lions Club

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

Hotels and similar establishments commonly set a minimum number of diners when quoting a meal price, so care is required before committing the Club, if this is the case. Accepting minimum numbers in excess of realistic numbers of supporters is a recipe for disaster!

Host Club members should be genuinely supportive by paying the ticket price to the Treasurer before the event.

4 Type of Function

The function will have the approval of the majority of the Club members and may be:

- formal Dinner and Dance, an evening event, or
- informal Luncheon, at a weekend, normally.

It is customary to hold a formal function and therefore every effort should be made to follow national traditions. If members are of the opinion that recognised “old-fashioned” customs should be modernised then it is recommended that the whole function is casual and informal rather than dilute the strict formalities and correctness.

Dress Code

Men: Usually bow tie, white shirt and dinner jacket and members should be encouraged to attend when only a dark jacket is available. The bow tie will ensure complete acceptance.

Women: In the last century, long evening gowns were the traditional formal wear but fashions are constantly changing and it is rare for anything to be unacceptable.

5 Official Guests

The Association encourages Charter Anniversaries of five year multiples to be attended by the highest-ranking Lion available, but this is not mandatory.

The Club may wish to invite to any anniversary a Principal Lion Guest with appropriate prestige, personality and reputation, which is compatible with current Club membership.

It is expected that this person will respond to the Toast "Lions Clubs International".

Other official guests, if any, may be:

- a top-ranking local government elected officer,
- President of a similar community service organisation such as Rotary or Round Table,
- Chairman of a company which has co-operated and assisted the Lions Club, or
- a dignitary representing the recipient of some major Lions' help during the year.

This person will probably be invited to respond to the Toast "Our Guests".

6 Venue

The options available will normally be:

- Hotel with restaurant and function room to accommodate numbers,
- Hired public hall with contracted (no choice) caterers, or
- Hired public hall with own choice of outside independent caterers.

A Club will probably seek advice and recommendations from other groups who have used similar facilities.

Compromises may be unavoidable due to finance, date and timing and general suitability.

In today's economy and standard of living, celebratory functions are becoming more popular and demand on suitable premises is resulting in early planning and booking, perhaps, one, two or three years in advance. Unfortunately, this has pitfalls with local authorities changing their mind in spite of promises, more lucrative offers prevailing over the Club's commitment.

Hotel

A Club may develop a good relationship with some hotel management and, as a result of regular annual bookings, be in a position to negotiate special favourable terms.

Well-known establishments such as Holiday Inn, Hilton and Jarvis appear attractive, but all generally accepted facilities, cloakrooms, etc., must be carefully checked out. The Club should also determine whether changes, extensions or building works are imminent.

Take nothing for granted.

Car parking is a first essential and consideration must be given to barriers, restricted spaces and adequacy at the time of the function.

A special reservation area may be negotiated when general public and other hotel guests tend to fill the spaces to capacity.

Prepared in advance, several recognisable large Lions logos and direction arrows could eliminate hassle for attending guests. This arrangement need only be temporary, in position only one or two hours before the function commences and removed shortly after late arrivals.

Where a function room is attached to the main building, these indicators should point to the appropriate parking area and entrance.

Ensure good visibility of signs in darkness or bad weather.

Disabled guests (wheelchairs) may be assisted by ramps and informed in advance.

A special VIP Guest arriving independently may appreciate the courtesy of a special parking facility and be advised accordingly.

Hired Hall

Guests may benefit from an easy-to-read street map in advance to reduce the stress of finding the venue.

Several Lions logos and direction arrows on highways or verges near the location could be erected in advance.

Give very careful consideration to all the facilities usually available as standard at international hotels and adapt accordingly.

Parking space should be adequate but in rural locations the surface may lead to problems in severe weather conditions. Mud on evening dress shoes is not a good start to a function.

Ensure that the appropriate entrance is clearly indicated from the car park.

Particularly important when considering a hired hall is the need to review and study the Multiple District Insurance Policy and ensure that every risk is properly covered.

7 Printing

Invitations

Should the practice be revived of issuing formal invitation cards? These can be a reminder of the date and timing of the event, or have the clock and mantelpiece disappeared?

With modern desktop publishing, these are no longer such an expensive item.

Table Plan

This should not be considered unimportant, as Guests have been known to be exasperated by poor Table Plan information.

Printing should be in bold 16-18pt type, black on white, and the plan exhibited in the Reception area preferably with a duplicate in another part of the room to alleviate queuing when large numbers are involved.

Guests, especially last-minute arrivals, will be looking for their surname as a priority and it is suggested that an alphabetical list be exhibited with surname first, followed by initials and title, and then the table number.

Where separate tables are set out, not sprigs from the top table, an additional list of table numbers with guests at each, will advise with whom they are sitting and perhaps assist with placing wine orders collectively.

Table Place Names

Old standard typewriter printing is neat but often too faint to be seen readily in artificial light and so not recommended.

Bold letters, black on white, is desirable. Printing by hand with an italic pen gives the personal welcome touch and is appreciated by Guests.

Menu/Programmes

A review of a variety of previous publications may assist the Club Committee to adopt a style that has the "touch of class". The Club President should make the final choice.

Modern tendency for colour wash background may be artistic but frequently detracts from the purpose of the printing – to convey a message.

In artificial light or clubroom conditions, great difficulty can be experienced in correctly reading the print.

Select only the essential wording. Mixed styles of printing may not improve the overall effect. Careful spacing and typesetting can give a top quality menu card, but too many innovative decorations detract.

Burgess Hill District Lions Club

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

Some traditions may need to be reviewed: e.g. instead of listing all Past Presidents, current membership names could be more appropriate and acceptable, with, perhaps, asterisks by Charter Members.

Always see the first draft and proof read carefully. The use of another, independent, person is recommended where desktop publishing is used.

8 Reception

The venue should have adequate reception facilities for all persons attending. Basic cloakroom facilities should be available, whether hotel or public hall, and must be checked out and not taken for granted.

It is customary to have a Wine Bar open but frequently the busy period when Guests are arriving can be frustrating due to understaffing. The caterers must be requested to provide the extra competent staff needed during the Reception period, up to one hour, to ensure prompt service.

Modern technology with computerised tills can be slow due to staff having to key in every transaction. Ways to circumvent this should be investigated with the management.

An advertised sponsored Champagne Reception or free drinks avoid delay and queuing.

The Host Club President and Partner should arrive at the venue early and arrange to receive all the Guests on their arrival. When appropriate, the Toastmaster or Deputy should announce the names to the President. A review of the Guest List in advance may help the announcer to recognise the names more easily.

The President usually brings personal Guests and will probably invite a Club member to receive and entertain them during the President's duty in the Reception Line.

The Principal Lion Guest may be invited to accompany the President in the Reception Line.

Other official Guests may also be welcomed and entertained during the President's commitment. Club members should be approached in advance to undertake this duty during the Reception period.

Host Club members could also be brought in early to review the completed Guest List and invited to befriend or host socially (but not financially!) a designated guest couple on arrival at the event.

9 Protocol, Top Table

Where round tables are set for the meal, the Top Table should normally be the traditional oblong to permit the Chairman and official guests to face outwards into the room. This also quickly identifies the Top Table.

Consideration should be given to the pros and cons of a break with tradition where the oblong straight table is replaced with a round table for the President and Principal Guests. The convivial "family friendly" round table is an excellent arrangement for that particular group, encouraging close conversation and familiarity. Is there a chance, however, that other Guests in the main body of the room will feel that some VIPs are "turning their back"? Also, an Official Speaker may have to turn around when addressing the assembly, leaving his notes behind him on the table.

The traditional oblong table appears to have more individual space and perhaps accommodates more easily certificates, items for presentation or notes of official speakers.

Study "Official Protocol" for Lions Clubs, as detailed in the Multiple District Directory, and adapt for the local custom. It should be noted that "Family of Lions" includes Lioness and Leo Clubs.

It is expected that recognition of the VIPs will be given once by the Toastmaster/MC and the Principal Lion Speaker who will be representing the Association. Other Speakers should use an abbreviated version and should be advised accordingly.

10 The Meal

It is not easy to please all the people all the time but an experienced Club Member should be on the Planning Committee to negotiate with the Caterers, preferably with the Head Chef and the Banqueting Manager.

A set meal will have to be a compromise for the popular taste of the majority, but exceptions can be made if negotiated, in detail, in advance to cater for vegetarians, allergies and medical sensitivities.

Great disappointment has been known when catering staff, the waiters, fail to properly identify the exceptions and draw embarrassment publicly to the individuals. Table numbers, place names and identification by the Head Waiter immediately Guests are seated, should eliminate this problem.

Discuss with catering management the idea of identifying persons requesting "specials" with perhaps a discreet flag system, numbered, coloured or shaped in the table place setting. Full co-operation and understanding of the caterer's waiting service is essential.

11 Entertainment

Music During the Meal

Discreet background music may be considered but should be strictly controlled by the Club. The Toastmaster may include this in his duties.

There have been commendable occasions when live music has been played by a soloist or trio. An example is a local harpist.

The Host Club may wish to explore this idea through local music societies or keyboard specialists.

There should certainly be no background music during the Speeches. Check with the establishment on shutting off any public address system which could interfere.

Music for Dancing

A live band is preferable and numbers and quality will probably depend entirely on budget limitations.

Current fashionable trends will influence choice.

Where possible, the President and Partner should take the floor first as a signal for the others to dance. See paragraph notes on Finale.

When contracting the Band, there should be an understanding that the Club (as employers) may insist on change of tempo, style and VOLUME. The Toastmaster/MC could be the liaison. An empty dance-floor and crowded bar is often an indication of music being too loud.

Finale

For decades, the general pattern at the close of the function used to be "The Last Waltz", followed by all dancers making a circle round the Club President and Partner and singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" and three cheers. Also "Auld Lang Syne" was often sung but this was sometimes scrappy due to the assembly not being too sure of the words.

These have tended to die out and the Club should plan how they wish to end the evening.

The Dance Band should be forewarned of the Finale arrangements: they must not decide by themselves.

Drink and driving laws have contributed in recent years to a less convivial evening. Furthermore, the average age of Club members is much higher. This has resulted in early withdrawal before the end of the function. Perhaps extra loud modern music has also had an effect.

Burgess Hill District Lions Club

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

Occasions have been known for the evening to close with only half a dozen people present.

All these factors should be carefully considered in advance, so that the published time for closure can be correctly estimated, e.g. 12 midnight, 12.30am, 1.00am with the majority of people still present.

12 Public Address System

Most establishments have in-house amplifier and microphone systems and at Charter Anniversaries the Speakers will invariably require this assistance to be properly heard.

A club representative should test the system in advance, preferably with a “full house”. An empty dining room or hall may give a misleading acoustic impression.

Hired equipment from a specialist may prove more reliable, but testing and rehearsal is essential.

The Toastmaster could discreetly advise the principal speakers during the reception period of the best position to have the microphone to ensure clarity and well balanced volume.

Ensure that the establishment’s public address system can be controlled and not interfere with the Lions function, especially during the Speeches.

13 Lions Charter Evening Tombola/Raffle at Closed Events Only

Even these can be mismanaged and leave Guest disgruntled so careful planning and execution is necessary.

These must not be dragged-out time-wasters. A few quality prizes rather than numerous "bits and pieces" are advisable, especially if the proceedings are to be held up whilst prizes are given out.

The basic principle is to ensure as little effort as possible is required during the evening of the charter event and the approximate budget and profit is known in advance. To achieve this, the following actions are recommended.

Note that they can only apply to a closed event, as the prizes are not truly random. It is recommended also that a notice be put up saying that all proceeds go to the Club's Administration Account.

1. To attract sales of tickets on the night you need a STAR PRIZE. Obtain authority from your club to purchase a prize of the value of between £60 - £100 depending on the numbers of people attending the event.
2. Ask club members and the owner of the venue where the Charter event is being held for the remaining prizes. An approximate quantity of between 30 to 50 prizes is recommended for a 150 people event.
3. Purchase your envelopes and raffle tickets. Quantities for 150 people attending the event would be 150 envelopes and 5 x 1000 ticket raffle books of different colours.
4. Sort out raffle tickets into losing and winning envelopes in the ranges of £2, £5, and £10 worth of tickets. The easiest way is to make winning tickets end in a number of your choice, such as zero.
5. On the day of the charter event you need at least 2 hours to set up both your prizes and placement of raffle tickets on the tables. Ensure the STAR PRIZE is in the most prominent position amongst the total prizes.
6. Use beer glasses to put combination of value raffle ticket envelopes on each table depending on the quantity of people sitting at the table. Ensure there are winning tickets on each table by having pre-sorted as in 4 above. The Toastmaster/MC must tell you the number of tables set.
7. Agree with the Toastmaster/MC the time of the raffle, usually after the end of the meal and speeches. Ensure he announces at the start of the event the procedure for purchasing the raffle tickets and later on how to collect the prizes.

Burgess Hill District Lions Club

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

8. At the end of the meal and before the speeches check that all the tickets are sold. If not, move the remaining envelopes to other tables.
9. Collect up all the beer glasses and check the correct money is in each before the raffle prizes are taken.
10. Stand by raffle prizes and check people's winning numbers before letting them take a prize. It has been known for winners to swap the tickets to prizes they prefer!

Have a good Tombola!

Other fundraising events can include guessing the length of the President's Speech (the 'Filibuster'), and this is normally carried out before the Tombola draw. To make this easy for guests to partake, forms should be provided on each table for guests to complete together with pens/pencils.

14 Conduct

The occasion is formal.

The Toastmaster/MC announces a break or interval of a number of minutes usually after the meal and before the Speeches.

Respect for the dignity of the Top Table should inhibit non-essential movement among the Guests and the Host Club members are expected to set the example.

Habitual smokers may find some difficulty in refraining from smoking during the meal and it is not unknown for Guests to slip outside between courses. Hopefully, self-discipline and restraint could be exercised until after the "Loyal Toast".

At the close of the speeches, the Toastmaster will indicate the end of the formal part of the function. The Toastmaster or President may indicate that jackets may be removed. Indiscriminate walking among the tables is acceptable and should encourage a good mix among Club members and Guests.

15 Speeches

It is important to recognise that the formal speeches will have an impact on the assembled Guests, and whilst certain statements and phrases are accepted as being a traditional part of the proceedings, it is essential to create a balance.

The listeners must not be bored, but, hopefully, inspired, interested and appreciative.

Remember the core purpose of the whole function: celebrating the Presentation of the original Charter to the Club.

Behind the scenes, discreet discussion and co-operation with Speakers will ensure the approval of the Guests.

A budget is recognised as being an essential control of finances and a timetable is just as important for speeches. Estimate in advance and courteously give Speakers guidance.

If the Meal time and the Speeches time exceed the Club's estimate, the Band may not be able to give good value for money due to commencing, perhaps, one hour late. Hence good timing is important throughout the function.

Grace

There is no official Lions Grace before a meal. In the USA, there is sometimes a benediction after an official banquet, but no set wording.

The purpose of a Grace is to express, on behalf of the assembly, gratitude for the privilege of having an essential in life, i.e. food, placed before us.

This tradition should not be overlooked. The Lions Code of Ethics invites us "To aid others by giving ... my substance to the needy" and for a few moments a reflection on the plight of others may emphasise the good fortune of those about to sit down and enjoy themselves.

Where the Host Club has a member or Guest holding an office in an established Church, it is customary to invite that person to say an appropriate grace.

In a multi-cultural society with many religions, the words of the Grace can be generalised without emphasis on any one, e.g. Christianity, Jewish, Muslim.

During the Lions year, a Club President will, perhaps, invite a rotation of members to say Grace at regular Dinner meetings and on the special official occasions the chosen Lion will have had some experience.

The Loyal Toast

This is best printed in the Menu as “The Loyal Toast”, as is done at Palace functions.

When King George VI was ill, many events had to reprint the menu because “The King” suddenly became “The Queen”.

The Toastmaster will call on the assembly to charge their glasses in preparation for the Loyal Toast. This should not be hurried and the Toastmaster will invite everyone to stand.

Again, allow time for chairs to be pulled back and the aged to straighten up.

This tradition is sometimes “scrappy” due to hasty, impetuous movements. The Chairman must sense the quietness and composure of the assembly before proposing “The Queen” with appropriate dignity. The whole ceremony can be meaningful and appreciated.

No other words should be added, not “Her Majesty”, “Duke of Lancaster”, etc., just “The Queen”.

If a band is present at that time, it should be warned not to play the National Anthem unless it is the wish of the Club. In which case, the proper timing should be discussed beforehand. It is recommended that this should be omitted as Guests are often taken unawares with a glass in their hands.

Toast “Lions Clubs International”

This should be the wording of the Toast, with no additions such as “District 105 XY, coupled with the name of”. Note that it is **not** “Lions International”.

It is proposed by the Chairman, usually the Host Club President. Ideally, the speech should be brief to allow the Responder unlimited choice.

A Club Charter Anniversary is an occasion when the President may wish to impress all those present with his/her talent for after-dinner speaking. This is understandable, but perhaps a compromise may be needed if the Principal Lion Guest is not to be “over-shadowed” when responding to the Toast.

The Charter Anniversary may be at the beginning or the end of the Host Club President’s year of office and, no doubt, words can be expressed to thank members for the opportunity to serve as President or, alternatively, for the support received during the past year.

The President may wish to express the privilege of being part of an International Association and recognise the important service given by District and International Officers such as the District Governor, International Director, etc., who is honouring this function. This draws attention to, and is an introduction of, the responder to the Toast “Lions Clubs International”.

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

On special occasions, such as multiple of Five year Anniversaries, more emphasis should be given to the purpose of the function held, by direct reference to the actual Club Charter on display.

Where Charter members are still current Club members, this could be significant.

Response to the Toast “Lions Clubs International”

This is the key part of the whole occasion.

The Host Club must approach the Speaker, the Principal Lion Guest, well in advance and offer informative material to assist. No-one is likely to “steal his/her thunder” by reference to Lions matters and duplication is avoided where the simple Toast “Lions Club International” is proposed with no flourishes.

Whilst events internationally are well known to the Speaker, such as world-wide activities, Saving Sight, Water Wells, etc., the local Club’s activities should be brought to attention and given recognition.

Where the anniversary is not a multiple of five years, the past year’s good work by the Club can be highlighted. 10, 25, 30, 40 or even 50 years may call for special attention to the accumulated service given by the Club since its inception, the original Charter Date.

The Club Secretary should compile a résumé of the principal activities and the Speaker may wish to consolidate or generalise on most of them but give special note to unusual or prominent activities for which the Club is particularly proud. A priority order can be indicated and offered to the Speaker well in advance.

If requested by the Club President, the Speaker may, in conclusion, emphasise that the Club’s “good works” owe everything to the loyalty of individual members and then lead on to the presentation of long service chevrons and special awards. (The Club President has the privilege of making appropriate presentations which may be performed at the conclusion of formal speeches.)

Negotiation between the Speaker and the Club is essential to ensure a smooth performance.

Toast “Our Guests”

Since ladies are now admitted to Lions Clubs, this Toast has been revised from the traditional “Ladies and Guests”. It is proposed by a member of the Club, sometimes by the President-Elect to give him/her practice!

Visiting Lions Clubs should be identified with gratitude for attending. If only a few Clubs are present, this could include the name of the President or members, perhaps standing to be recognised.

Burgess Hill District Lions Club

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

Where a large number of Clubs is present such details may have to be restricted due to time and only the Visiting Club named mentioned. Overseas Club representation should be given priority.

Other Guests should be recognised in reverse order of rank or importance leading up to the Principal Guest scheduled to respond to the Toast.

If the responder is a local government elected official, such as The Mayor, the Proposer could thank this person, representing the public at large, for the generous contribution and support to the Lions Club appeals and activities.

The Host Club Proposer must not forget to call on the Host Club members to be upstanding, and pause, to enable all to be in position, before proposing the Toast "Our Guests".

Response to the Toast "Our Guests"

The responder should be approached well in advance, probably by the Host Club President, to thank this person for accepting the invitation to honour the Club by agreeing to respond on behalf of all the Guests.

A discreet approach could ensure that essential factual information is offered to the speaker to assist in preparing an appropriate response.

It is expected that the Principal Lion Guest will cover, or will have covered, all the Lionistic matters such as Internationalism and Host Club activities.

The Responder to this Toast "Our Guests" may wish to acknowledge local public gratitude for the Club's community service activities.

A Rotarian or Tabler or similar club member may wish to refer to co-operation within the community.

A recipient of some specific help during the year may sometimes be an appropriate person to respond to the Toast.

Note that the Toast "Our Guests" and its Response is sometimes done first, to recognise the support of the community and then leading up to the Lionistic matters and any presentations that are to be made to focus attention upon them and the Charter which is the point of the celebration.

16 Gifts and Bouquets

Gifts

It is not uncommon for modest gifts to be placed at each table setting as a souvenir of a special occasion.

Expendable items such as commercial samples are not necessarily ideal gifts.

Bouquets

If a Reception Line is involved with, say, Host Club President and partner and VIP Lions and partner, then an unwrapped appropriately sized bouquet of flowers could be presented immediately before the Reception line undertakes the duty of receiving Guests. No other bouquets would be necessary.

The presentation of unwrapped bouquets to all Top Table Ladies by Host Club members should be carefully streamlined to avoid general disturbance and an untidy impression. Dignity and graciousness can be added with a disciplined rehearsal to ensure that all the presenters know exactly what they are required to do.

17 Summary

The Charter Anniversary could be looked upon as a theatre stage production lasting perhaps four to five hours from Reception to Final Curtain.

To be completely successful, the event must be stage-managed throughout with the Host Club in charge.

The emphasis will be on Lions Clubs International, and Guests not familiar with the Association should be exposed to the Lions logo in the "Welcome" drape, Club bannerettes, etc..

Occasionally, e.g. the Banqueting Room at the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, the existing elaborate décor prohibited the display of such publicity material, but in this case the framed Charter was hung near the Top Table.

Host Club members have every reason to celebrate and have a good time. They are, however, supported by paying Guests from other Clubs and in gratitude for their attendance all the Host Club members should do everything possible to be perfect hosts.

This may require certain sacrifices at the function, perhaps acting as host on a table where visiting clubs are seated.

Careful discussion among all Host Club members is essential to ensure harmony when the interest of visitors is given priority.

A review of the final Guest List a few days before the event could ensure that all Visitors have a Host Club "chaperone".

Appendix A - Summary of Toastmaster Duties

The role of the Toastmaster is onerous, but anyone who is not afraid of an audience can learn to successfully undertake the role.

Two words sum up the formula to success: CAREFUL PLANNING.

The Toastmaster is virtually the chairman of the dinner. He will need to work closely with the organising committee to ensure that he is fully conversant with the menu, timings, presentations etc.

People who attend Charter Anniversary celebrations want to have a good time: the Toastmaster must ensure they enjoy that part of the function under his/her control – the dinner.

The organising committee should have set a strict timetable for each phase the function, including the Tombola Draw. The Toastmaster must ensure that the timetable for the dinner and speeches is adhered to.

It is advisable for the Toastmaster to meet with the headwaiter prior to commencement of proceedings to explain the Club's requirements for the dinner. He should also check that the Head Waiter has informed all waiters and waitresses of diners who have advised of special dietary requirements in order that no delay or embarrassment is caused during the serving of the meals.

Hopefully the organising committee would have advised all speakers on matters such as subject matter and timings. The Toastmaster should make himself/herself known to all speakers as soon as convenient and preferable well in advance of the function.

The Toastmaster will need to arrive at the function well ahead of the guests to make sure that everything is in place. He should make sure that the gavel and block is to hand and that microphones, etc. are in place. He must not forget to bring his notes.

If the decision has been made to use microphones, all speakers should be advised in advance and the Toastmaster will need to check the system before guests arrive – remembering to compensate for an empty room. Microphones should be positioned sensibly and on stands so that speakers (and Toastmaster) can have both hands free to hold notes.

On special occasions the organising committee may ask the Toastmaster to announce the names of all guests as they enter the venue and prior to being greeted by the President and his/her guests. The Toastmaster will need to carefully study the guest list to ensure that full and correct names are announced together with correct titles. If in any doubt about a correct pronunciation then he must not hesitate to ask the guest.

Burgess Hill District Lions Club

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

The Toastmaster should keep an eye on the clock during the Reception. Starting on time is imperative. If the start of the dinner has been set for 7.30pm then everybody should be seated at that time. He should double check with the Head Waiter that his staff are ready then five minutes before the set time announce "Ladies and Gentlemen – please make your way to the dining room where dinner is ready to be served" (or words to that effect).

The Toastmaster will need to keep back the occupants of the top table until all guests are at their tables.

Those on the top table should be lined up in the agreed order in pairs – e.g. President followed by Principal Lion Guest then Local Dignitary and finally President elect each with their partners. Each lady walks on her partner's left-hand side. The Toastmaster will ask the diners to welcome the top table occupants and announce the names of each in order.

Hopefully, the diners will slow clap the top table occupants as they enter the dining room until they reach their places. The Toastmaster should lead the procession to ensure that the correct route is taken through the assembled diners.

When all are settled, the Toastmaster will ask for silence for Grace. After Grace, he should ask all diners to be seated.

The Toastmaster will remain standing to welcome everybody to the celebrations. Messages from absent friends will be read out and other important announcements made, including the timing of any Tombola and other fundraising events.

Consideration should be given to announcing the names of those on the top table and other important guests. Alternatively such announcements can be left until introduction prior to the speeches.

The President may have requested the Toastmaster to announce that he/she wishes to "Take Wine" with various individuals or groups. These should be restricted to two between each course with a maximum of four.

The next task for the Toastmaster will be to announce that the President will propose the Loyal Toast – this will be after everybody has finished their sweet course and before or after coffee has been served.

Normally a short break is taken after the Loyal Toast and the Toastmaster will ask everybody to be back in their seats in (say) 10 minutes ready for the speeches.

Now is the time for the introduction of the speakers. The Toastmaster's first words should be e.g. "Lion President, District Governor, District Officers past and present, Distinguished guests, Ladies, Gentlemen and Fellow Lions – the speeches are soon to begin".

Organising a Lions Club Charter Anniversary

For all introductions, remember that the Toastmaster should: -

- keep introductions short (approx. 1 minute)
- not tell funny stories that may offend
- not tell jokes
- be precise
- speak to the audience
- not give the speaker false starts
- not try to take the spotlight or steal the thunder from the speaker he is presenting
- be aware of how close he needs to be to the microphone, as some systems will not pick up speech if he strays away more than 200mm
- at the end of the introduction, announce the speakers full name and correct title and the purpose of his/her speech
- remain standing until the speaker has risen.

During each speech, the Toastmaster should give the speaker his attention, smile at the funny stories and join in the applause. When a speaker has finished, the Toastmaster should blend the speeches from one to another, bridging any gap, if necessary. He should not normally thank the speaker, as the following speaker will do that.

The Toastmaster should save his best introduction for the main speaker, normally the Principal Lion Guest.

At the end of all speeches, the Toastmaster should thank all speakers and after any presentations ask the diners to stand while the top table occupants leave the room (hopefully to a slow clap).

The Toastmaster can then relax and look forward to the next year.