

# 2019 Queen's Council Meeting Minutes

This is a summary of the points of discussion at the 2019 Queen's Council

- **Talking stick** - Each attendee was issued with a numbered stick – and would raise the stick when they wished to make a statement. This helped to prevent too much talking over each other.
- A request for all Queens to check previous Queen's Council minutes – to avoid discussing the same topics every year, as many of the points brought up each year have been discussed the previous years.
- **Write Neatly!** - A reminder to everyone that when hand writing booking/registration forms – write neatly and make sure all details are correct. It is often very difficult for event organisers to read people's handwriting and this makes a lot of extra work as well as sometimes members can't be contacted when email addresses are not clear or incorrect.
- **Registration forms** – It was brought up that some devices can't download word files, so a .pdf file may be better to use. Also attaching forms to an email doesn't always work as some email providers remove attached files (for safety).
  - Note that forms can be sent to Obsidian to put onto the [www.redhatsvictoria.com](http://www.redhatsvictoria.com) website for people to download.
- **Gifts** – The topic of many events asking attendees to bring along a small gift to swap was brought up. Some people felt that this was an unnecessary expense and some felt they simply didn't need more “stuff”. Some people brought up the point that for some women they don't get gifts often, so this gift giving at Hatter events can be one of the few times they receive gifts. General consensus was to know what works for your chapter and each Queen or event organiser can decide what to do at their own events.
  - The suggestion to donate to charity was brought up as an alternative to swapping gifts, however this was not an idea many liked, as it was reiterated that the Red Hat Society is not about raising money for charity – although individual chapters are welcome to fundraise if they wish.
  - Reminder to people to be respectful with gifts, as you don't know who has contributed to the gift. Commenting negatively on the gift you receive could be disrespectful if the person who bought it overhears you.
  - The topic of Raffles was also discussed – this was seen to be a better option as it allows those who wish to participate to be involved, and those who don't want to can choose not to purchase tickets.
  - Some ideas/notes for raffle type situations that were discussed are as follows:
    - Raffles where there are lots of small prizes and almost everyone therefore wins a prize are seen as being more fun than having fewer larger value prizes.
    - Chapter or the event host purchases gifts and the gifts are raffled off, with proceeds going to reimburse the purchase and remainder to chapter.
    - Each attendee who brings a gift gets a raffle ticket, so that only those who brought a gift are able to take a gift.
- **Regional Picnic** – There needs to be a new host for the regional picnic. The discussions were that perhaps it should be held in Bendigo (possibly lake Weeroona). The question of whether it should be a weekday or weekend was discussed, with a vote taken – the majority voted for weekday. The general consensus was that the event organiser will choose whether it is weekend or weekday.
- **2020 Queen's Council** - It was decided that Geelong will host the next Queen's Council, Being midweek, early May 2020. Hosted by the Bayside Belles and Serendipity Sisters.

- **Insurance** – Topic of the public liability insurance offered by ARHGA was brought up. Points to consider is that there is very little information about this insurance provided, with a few Queens saying they have tried contacting ARHGA for more information and not had successful results. Many Queens take out the insurance on good faith, assuming they will therefore be covered, but have very little understanding of what they are actually getting. General consensus is that insurance is confusing.
  - Taking out the insurance offered by ARHGA means you are joining their association. One Queen pointed out that a copy of the minutes from the AGM should therefore be made available to all members, yet it is not.
  - Many Queens have said they don't know what they are actually insured for.
  - The issue of what would happen if both the venue the event was held at, and the chapter had public Liability – as it is possible each insurer would try to make the other pay out.
- **Clothing** – Question was asked whether clothing needed to be solid colours, or if prints and florals are fine. A discussion regarding this went on for quite some time (as it has the previous years), with different points of view. Some Queens feel very strongly that the colours need to be very specific and don't like florals. Some feel that the spirit of the idea is more important than a rigid dresscode.
  - Some people felt that each chapter is able to make their own decisions as to what clothing standards they would adhere to.
  - Some people felt that wearing black trousers or jeans would be inappropriate and argued that purple pants are easy to find or that you can easily find white pants and dye them.

It is worth noting that the official Red Hat Society guide book says the following on the topic of wearing the colours (Directly quoting the entire portion of the 2019 guidebook, page 22):

*“Regalia – Wearing Your Colors*

*Hatters age 50 and over wear any shade or print of purple clothing with red hats. Those under 50 (fondly referred to as Pink Hatters) wear any shade of lavender clothing with pink hats. This is all that is absolutely needed to be dressed in “regalia.” Be creative and wear your colors the way you feel most comfortable. Your entire outfit from head to toe does not have to be purple or lavender, but the more color the better—and that can (but does not have to) include shoes! Each Member is encouraged to wear colors, display creativity and play dress-up to her heart’s content. How will your adoring public know who you are if you don’t dress the part?*

*Note: Full regalia may not be appropriate every day of the week, and Hatters often choose to wear purple or lavender only on the top or the bottom. As long as you are wearing our colors, you’re good to go! Remember, the spirit of the Society is in your heart and mind! We have found that wearing your RHS Supporting Membership pin is a great way to let women you may come in contact with know where your heart lies. Consider wearing your pin every day, no matter what else you may be wearing. You will be surprised what amazing conversations can be sparked through wearing it.*

*Some have asked exactly what constitutes a hat: will a bow suffice? Or, what shade of purple is the proper shade? Can I wear red shoes with my purple outfit? Can I wear a purple print dress? Can I wear a magenta hat? Remember, this is regalia, not a uniform. Each Member chooses how she will express herself visually. It is more important to enjoy each other’s company than to worry about small details regarding what each one is wearing.*

*It’s all part of the same informal spirit that we use to avoid “meetings”—there is no place for “Robert’s Rules of Order” at our gatherings! Let’s keep the fun in the Society. Just stick to the basics: red (or pink!) on the head, and something purple (or lavender) below. Simple! That is what makes being a Red Hatter so appealing...less rules and more fun.“*

- The topic of a particular member (a Queen, who was not present at the event – although had previously indicated she was going to attend) was on the agenda that someone had anonymously brought up for discussion at the Queen's Council.
  - One Queen brought up the issue of the Privacy act, and said that this member should not have been specifically named, as that those unaware of the situation did not need to know her name. The counter argument was that this issue is one which affects several open events and one that many Queens had asked to be discussed – so using her name was necessary for clarification and proper discussion.  
*(I have not named this person in these minutes, as I also do not name individuals who have made other statements during the Queens Council events – Obsidian)*
  - Several Queens spoke up to reiterate that the transgender nature of this woman is not an issue at all, only her behaviour. It was brought up that there were 3 transgender women at the recent Melbourne convention, which caused no problem.
  - One Queen told us that some of her chapter members were frightened of this member.
  - One Queen said that the behaviour of this member was “*not acceptable to the ethics we work to in the Red Hat Society*”.
  - Some Queens made reference to this member being a “bully” and “aggressive” to other members.
  - Several other Queens agreed that they found this members behaviour to be of concern.
  - Some Queens said that members of their chapter do not feel comfortable attending events where this member is going to be present, to the point where they will decline to attend events, or cancel their attendance if this member may attend.
  - The issue of protecting members, especially in home-based events was brought up.
  - One Queen stated that she had specifically cancelled an event due to this member wanting to attend.
  - Some Queens said that they do not wish for this member to attend events they run, but that they are unsure of how to exclude her without creating problems.
  - Some Queens stated that they would be issuing private invitations to events, so that they can restrict attendance to only those they wish to have at the event.
  - The idea of creating a “Code of Ethics” was brought up, thereby creating a set of rules and guidelines for acceptable behaviour at events, giving everyone a clear picture of what is and isn't acceptable.
  - Some Queens asked if it would be possible to make an official declaration that this person would not be welcome at events – however it was also argued that we are not any form of official body, so we are unable to make any such declaration – Instead each Queen and/or event organiser is within their rights to restrict attendance to their events as they see fit.