

SO YOU WANT TO START

A RED HAT GROUP



Where did it start and when?

It started in 1997, when Sue Ellen Cooper, presented her friend with a red hat and a poem (call "Warning" by Jenny Joseph) for her birthday. But instead of hanging the poem and the red hat on a wall, the friend copied the idea and gave it to her friend who turn did the same for another friend. One day, in April 1998, four of these friends decided to put on their Red Hats, dress in purple and go out for afternoon tea. And the rest is history (as they say).

It is now world wide and came to Western Australia in 2003 when Beverly Fussell formed the first WA Group called "Dinky Di Divas" That group grew to over a hundred members and Bev encouraged members to form their own groups by holding an info-day in September 2004 at Kings Park, Perth.

Today there are over 80 Groups in Western Australia and close to 350 throughout Australia, and growing all the time.



So, What is this all about?

As we get 'older' we tend to get overlooked – yet we have spent our lives looking after husbands, children and even grand children. Today we want to stand out in the crowd and be seen and recognised and above all have FUN and FIVOLITY and FRIENDSHIP (and FOOD) with other women - all who want to grow old outrageously !!

Membership

There are no rules, maybe guidelines and suggestions, but each Group operates as they wish. It is their prerogative to meet or go out as often or as little as they wish. Some Groups only do day activities some only nights, some groups have outings (or in-ings) every week. Whatever suits your ladies.

Core of a new Group

Your first privilege as a Queen is to choose a vice-queen (or two) or co-queen, or whatever title has been selected. What criteria should you use? You need to really like her and enjoy hanging out with her AND she also need to be someone who enjoys having fun. You can also appoint other ladies to help out with the duties (eg Countess of Coin).



Clothing

Each member should wear the proper clothing denoting her membership to Australian Red Hatting. This means **Red Hat** and **Purple Clothes** if she is 50 or over.

Pink Hat and **Lavender Clothes** if she is under 50.

We suggest the clothes are predominately purple – we need to be clearly identifiable. Be encouraged to display creativity and play dress-up to your heart's content.

Bling is not mandatory but does add sparkle to your attire

One must be a female to belong to any Red Hat Group and some Queens insist it is a hat that has to be worn, while other Queens are more lenient and allow fascinators or flowers.



Gathering Members

There are many ways to gain new members. You might start with calling some friends and acquaintances, or just put out to the general public that you are looking for new members – through flyers, word of mouth or in the local papers or shopping centre notice boards.

Some groups start with several women who were getting together regularly in a group already – book clubs, sport or activity groups. Soon the group will gain momentum and will grow. It has proven a good idea not to let new ladies pay their membership dues before they have attended their third outing. We also suggest that you compile a handout of suggested guidelines to be given to new members. Please also remember that all ladies are different - their ideas / ideals; family / personal situations; etc.

Values that are most valued as a Red Hat Lady - Fun, Friendship, Frivolity and of course Food

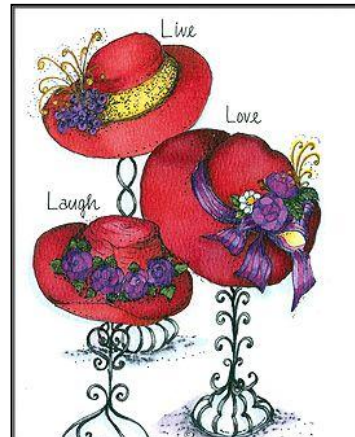
It is strongly recommended that as a group, every lady



- Respect Individuality and Diversity
- Encourages and Motivates
- Be friendly / unify / harmonise
- Participate in Activities
- Problem Solves
- Be Inclusive / Approachable
- Tolerate / Be Impartial

You may be the Queen (in name), but it is your role to encourage all ladies to participate – not to dictate.

- Consider Members Welfare
- Health / Finance / Support
- Overall Responsibility Chapter Finances
- Know and Believe in Red Hat Ethos
- Set Dress Standard
- Support Members Ideas / Talents



Group Size

How many members can a group have?

That is up to the group – do they wish to stay small or grow and enjoy the company of more ladies. Ladies can join more than one group.- or if the group get too big, start a spin-off group.



Choosing a Name

We cannot really prevent duplication of Group Names, but we suggest you search the Australian Red Hat website www.aussiehatting.com for ideas.

Attendance

There is generally not a roll call at gatherings. Some groups ask their members to attend as many events as possible. Other groups take the view that ladies turn up as often or as rarely as they choose. The important thing is that the group is in agreement about this issue and should be in your guidelines.



Record Keeping

Maintain a list of members, which can be distributed to all members of the group. Have a handout / newsletter about the group activities. Also a registration form detailing name, email, contact phone and birthday. Also note if there is a cost to join.

Keep a simple receipt / account book to record membership and fees. Later a bank account should be opened rather than cash. Easier option when transferring monies for combined group events.

A complete list of financial members is essential if you are a Public Liability Insurance member (need proof if there is a claim.), also need an attendance records.

Group Outings (and In-ings)

The task of planning events should not fall on the Queen alone. Different groups have different ways of going out this - some delegate a lady / ladies to a specific month and they do all the planning; some groups have a planning committee to organise outings suggested by members; some groups have the birthday girls organise. Whatever works for your group and it can always be change if it is not working to everyone's satisfaction.

Strongly suggest that all ladies RSVP whether they are or are not attending. So much easier if everyone replies.

Get to know what kind of functions (and how often) your members prefer.

Have regular "Hatter Natters" to discuss outings. Make this a regular event, usually followed by a meal / afternoon tea etc.

Although most groups prefer being in public, it is also fun to do 'in house' events (PJ breakfast, swim party, etc) in someone's house.



If a member decides to plan an event, she will be responsible for making reservations and the arrangements etc.

Red Hatters have been known to stomp grapes at a winery, visit a bakery, host hat making parties. Gatherings can last from 1 hours to entire very long weekend.

Again – check out Aussiehatting and the Western Australian websites for ideas for outings, weekends away and the gathering of many groups within this state, other states and overseas.

When you are invited by other Groups to join in their activities, it is always polite to reciprocate the invite.

Etiquette – Public and Private

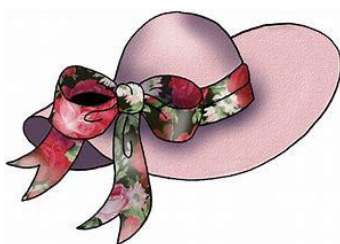
Since we are now royalty, very little needs to be said regarding public manners. However, even though we are a disorganisation without rules, please remember we are highly noticeable when we are **out in public** in our colours.



The public reaction is very favourable because of our good spirits and our bright colours. We do ask you that keep in mind that you are representing Red Hatters to the public. We strive to be quite the ladies, don't you know! Light-hearted fun is good. Raucous, rude behaviour is SO not Red Hat.

Respect for your fellow sisters in Red Hats is equally important. Speak and treat your sisters as you yourself would like to be treated. We work on the premise that if it's not edifying then don't say it. Should an issue arise, deal directly with the person involved, or if that fails, seek assistance from your Queen or her Vice.

Pink Hatters



These ladies are a wonderful part of Red Hatting. Not yet 50, they are welcomed into many groups. Some even have their own groups - and then when they turn 50, its time for a **REDUATION** and to continue with fun, frivolity and friendship as they continue as a Red Hatter.

Birthday Suits

No, not that kind. For our own birthday (or the Group's birthday) we can wear our colours in reverse – Purple Hat and Red Clothes - just another way to have fun.

Titles

In the Royal spirit of play, members are encouraged to dream up a title for herself.

Royal titles are encouraged - Princess, Duchess, Lady, etc. The name with the title can be as fun or frivolous as they choose, usually denoting the ladies interest - Princess Happy Snapper (photography); Lady Lunch-a-Lot (frequent diner).

A playful title can be the first step toward personal liberation and self-permission to play.

Charities

If an individual group wishes to participate in any charitable event, we encourage them to do so in their group name. Red Hatting is not a fun raising or service group, we are into fun-raising not fund-raising.

We are our own 'cause' – ARHGA does not promote any charity.



ARHGA Membership

The Association of Red Hatted Groups of Australia Inc has been formed solely to provide the opportunity to all Australian groups to take out Public Liability Insurance.

Your Group can choose to take out Public Liability Insurance. It is organised by the *Beehive* committee in Western Australia for all Australian Groups.

It is NOT the headquarters of Red Hatting in Western Australia (or Australia) - there is no controlling group. BUT it is the *Communication Hub*, distributing a newsletter to all Queens and Groups (in Western Australia only) on a regular basis informing them of upcoming events and other items of interest.

So, when you are organised, let the secretary know and she will add to you the list for this newsletter and then you can pass the information onto your ladies. There are often events that invite all WA Red Hatters and they are always fun. Email - arhgasecretary@gmail.com

If you have any queries about Red Hatting , talk to other Red Hatters – they are always ready to offer assistance and information, or email the Secretary.



There are also WA Red Hat website and Facebook

www.red-hatters-wa.net
info@red-hatters-wa.net

for your perusal and to gain ideas and information.

Red Hat Society

This is totally up to you and your ladies. You decide if you wish to register with the Red Hat Society in America. Some groups do, some don't. Check out the website, talk to others and decide what to do.

If you decide not to join, please refrain from using their registered logo and name.

www.redhatsociety.com

Warning

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick flowers in other people's gardens
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practice a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

