

Rph)))

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turning print into sound

## CLIPPINGS

## From the manager's desk

Well, we're very rapidly heading towards the end of the year, and it's time to start preparing for our Christmas programming! If all volunteers could record a story, or poem, or some sort of Christmas item, it would be much appreciated!

We're now well into our new program schedule, and generally things seem to be going well. We've put in a few new local programs, and extended some others to increase our RPH content. Thanks to Daphne and Cate for re-introducing our 'Readers Digest' program. As well, a warm welcome to Lynne Greene, a new volunteer who is presenting 'Food Glorious Food', which you can hear at 5.15 p.m. on Wednesdays and repeated at 3.15 p.m. on Mondays. Phil Tyson has done his usual sterling job in pulling together our new 'Inbox' program, heard at 8.00 a.m. on Friday mornings, and I think that will become a very useful addition, not only to our station but to the community. If you have any more programming ideas, please don't hesitate to let me know. I'd be particularly interested in a program about books. Not just book readings, but reviews, information about authors, book and best-seller lists etc.

We have had a few new additions to our fold in the past couple of months, the aforementioned Lynne Greene, Alan Raby, Elizabeth Macdonald and Jenny Marwood. A very warm welcome to all of you, and as they say in the classics, 'Thanks for joining us!!!!' To those to whom we have unfortunately had to say goodbye I'm sure you will join with me in wishing them all the best in the future!

One of the things I have had to do in the past couple of months is to go through our programs and report to the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) on our RPH content. This is in response to our RPH service and content support grant. Incidentally, we were successful in securing this grant for 2012-13, which is great.

We have made a few procedural changes in the past few months, chiefly in regard to how we present our articles. In line with the RPH Protocols drawn up by RPH Australia, we are not allowed to edit or abridge articles in any form, and it is good practice to credit the author at the beginning and end of each article. I have managed to discuss this with some of you, but others I have not, so if you could please remember to do



this, it would be much appreciated.

It is also worth remembering our listeners, especially when we're talking to members of the community! We provide information to people with print disabilities. I recently discovered that it is thought that nearly 50 per cent of the adult population of Tasmania has a moderate to severe literacy difficulty and cannot readily access printed material. These people, by definition, fall into the category of 'RPH service users' as defined by the RPH Protocol. I'm sure you all know this, but it never ceases to surprise me how many people are unaware of it!

Finally, I should like to thank all volunteers for making me welcome and making my transition into this job as easy as possible. My door is always open, and I welcome suggestions and ideas. Don't hesitate to come into the office or drop me a line.

*Vaughn Bennison*  
Station Manager

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# Presidential Ponderings



The last couple of months have seen some very special happenings for 7RPH.

Our brand spanking new Devonport transmitter came on air for the very first time mid-August. After a short testing phase, it was declared fit for purpose and has been sending out our programs 24 hours a day ever since.

To mark the occasion, we mounted 'D-Day', that is Devonport Day, with our big outside broadcast from the Devonport LINC centre. I'd like to acknowledge the work put in by the many people who contributed to its outstanding success. Firstly, Devonport LINC centre Community Learning Coordinator, Kathleen Priestly, kindly made an excellent broadcasting space available to us in the library and made sure we had everything we needed to set up the on-location 'studio' and get it to air. Volunteer Technical Manager Jim Parish rounded up the equipment needed to set up the broadcast and it all performed flawlessly on the day, thanks to Jim's diligence

and expertise. Jim borrowed some of the components required and special thanks go to those people and organisations who kindly loaned us what was needed. My personal gratitude goes to the band of volunteers who made the trip north, along with Station Manager Vaughn and Assistant Manager Mel, all of whom did a wonderful job of reading, presenting, coordinating and interviewing. The whole production sounded excellent on air from start to finish. Special congratulations have to go to Producer Extraordinaire Phil Tyson, who scripted, timed and laid out the day's schedule with to-the-second precision beforehand, then rode 'shotgun' on proceedings as they went to air. In a cruel twist of fate, Phil lost his voice the day before the broadcast and was unable to do his own bits on air. Special mention of the work of Peter Johnston, who compiled all the recorded music breaks, promotions and announcements on his laptop, playing them in as laid out in the master schedule. Peter also compiled a slideshow depicting life at 7RPH, which ran on the big screen behind our broadcasting position.

Our next big 'thing' as I write is the station's involvement in the Hobart Christmas Pageant on 17 November. Katie Holness has been the leading light for the exercise, as in past years and has put together a new look for this year's progress through the streets of Hobart. Phil Tyson has also stepped forward, providing his immaculately kept snow-white vehicle as operation central to Jim Parish's live broadcast setup. Katie has been successful in obtaining the presence of ABC-TV's chief newsreader Peter Gee, who will walk with me ahead of the vehicle as we describe the scene, greet onlookers and generally chat, all going live to air on 7RPH.

I'd like to extend a big welcome to new members of the association and volunteers who have joined us over the last months. I hope your time with us will be long and fulfilling. Finally, to all volunteers and members I wish a joyful festive season and the very best for the new year 2013. Hope to catch up with you at the station Christmas Party on 2 December if you can make it.

*Ron Andersen*



# Rostering and volunteer news **TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

AS YOU PROBABLY know, we've changed our presentation of the news from the *Australian*, and it was a wise move to get that bedded down before the *Advocate* entered the arena. We now read national and business news articles, followed by editorials and letters to the editor. The new format means that preparation of the *Australian* now takes less time.

From 10 a.m. till 11 a.m. in Studio 3, we now read the *Examiner*, followed by the *Advocate*. We are still working out some fine details, one of them being the definitive pronunciation of the *Advocate*. When we did our broadcast from the Devonport LINC, we became aware that the locals pronounce the name of their newspaper as if it were a verb.

So, during this period of change, a special thank you to all the morning news teams, who have assisted with feedback and coped with something new with good humour and helpfulness.

We are using email and SMS more and more as a means of communicating quickly, and this seems to be working very successfully. Remember — if you have a query about upcoming shifts, please consult Mel, Vaughn, or me to be sure you're given correct information.

Thea Stephens, a very long-serving volunteer, is retiring from RPH work at the end of the year. She is a very accomplished presenter and reader, and has done shifts regularly on Fridays and weekends for some time. She has mentored up and coming presenters, including me, and I



found this most valuable. She has been willing to fill in for weeks at a time when other presenters have gone on holiday, always very cheerfully. She has held office, including President, for the Committee of Management. We will miss her greatly. (She has asked me not to make a fuss about her going, so please shut your eyes as you read this.)

We have a few new faces — we're pleased to welcome Elizabeth Macdonald, who now reads on alternate Fridays, and Jenny Marwood, who recently had her initiation on air. Alan Raby is a foundation member of the Inbox team. Listen for this new program on Friday mornings at 8 a.m. Another new face, Lynne Greene, records 'Food, Glorious Food' which goes to air on Wednesdays at 5.15 p.m.

We are very fortunate to have so many people who commit to weekly shifts — thank you to these regular volunteers. And finally, a plea to everyone — please do remember to give me as much notice as possible of impending absences. This makes my job so much easier.

*Margaret Gibbs*  
Volunteers Co-ordinator

ONCE AGAIN it's time for another look at training that has, and will, occur at RPH Print Radio Tasmania.

Firstly, a few words of thanks to volunteers who have completed training and are working to help put programs on air for our listeners. Our newest addition, Mike Spickler, is now learning the finer points of programming and production. Of course Vincent Henderson and Keith Bailey are both now regulars in production and programming at the station.

Thanks also to Daphne Toombs and Cate Harding who produce our version of the 'Readers Digest' and whose voices also appear at other times on air.

Recently, Bronwyn Fuller has begun training as presenter/producer and we are looking for more volunteers to join in as well. It doesn't matter if you say you want to and it doesn't work out. Just be happy to have a go, and we can take it from where you are at!

Please take a moment to think of your own work here and ask, 'Is there anything else that I can do — whether it's 'on air' or 'behind the scenes'. If you can spare more time or skills, we would like to hear from you. And if you know of others who may be interested in helping us 'turn print into sound', please do encourage them and let them know that we're only a phone call away.

*Melvin Lee*  
Assistant Manager and Trainer

# Mondays on RPH

It's 7.30 on Monday morning, and the 7RPH studio is unlocked for the beginning of another week's broadcasting.

Of course, listeners tuned to their radios at home or in the car are unaware of this, as early risers have been listening (perhaps all night) to the BBC World Service broadcast on the 7RPH frequency. At the moment, they'll be catching up with the world news from the BBC studios in London.

Back in Davey Street, the first arrival is Margaret Gibbs. She unlocks the door and collects the morning newspapers from their box on the wall before beginning preparation.

A few minutes later Peter Johnston, the morning presenter, arrives to prepare Studio 1 for the morning programme. He fires up the computer, tests its operation and at 8.00 he puts the first RPH programme to air – on Mondays it's *Accent on Asia*, supplied by one of the RPH stations on the mainland. At 8.30, he's joined by Rasa Dunlop and readings from the *Australian* begin.

Soon, Vaughn and Mel arrive and the phones start to ring.

At 10 a.m. the local news goes to air. In Studio 2, presenter Paul Morris is joined by George Richard and Joan Bowden reading the *Mercury*. In Studio 3, the presenter is Maggie McKerracher, with Alex Leaver and Susan Hogan reading the *Examiner* and the *Advocate*.

Meanwhile, Margaret gets busy and sorts out the weekend magazine supplements and other snippets left in 'The Box' by diligent Saturday and Sunday people, distributing this invaluable source material for programs to be recorded during the week. She stays until about 3.30pm, doing administration and some recording.

Maggie McKerracher, too, stays on as the afternoon presenter. Elsewhere you might bump into Belinda Kendall-White, Annie Quarmby, Sylvia Watkins, Kath Chasemore or Debbie Le Grande who drop in to record 'Mercury Features'.

Katie Holness takes over the presenter's headphones from 5 to 7 p.m., after which the computers put pre-recorded evening programmes to air till the BBC World Service takes over again at 11 p.m.



Peter Johnston — Mondays 8 – 10 a.m.



Katie Holness — Mondays 5 – 7 p.m.

## FOR THE DIARY

Date	Time	Event
Sunday 2 December	2:00 – 5:00	Christmas Party

## FOCUS ON MONDAY PRESENTER MAGGIE MCKERRACHER

WHEN I LOOK at the whiteboard in the office, I realise I am one of the longest serving volunteers at 7RPH. Monday is my regular day with a shift as presenter from 9.30 a.m. – 4.50 p.m.

Monday provides a pleasant variety of tasks. After presenting the *Examiner* and the *Advocate* with two readers in Studio 3, I record 30 minutes of a short story, or an episode of the current serial to be played later in 'Afternoon Extra'.

At 12.30 I move to Studio 2 as the afternoon presenter. 'Afternoon Extra' allows the presenter to select the material for an hour, so each day of the week there's a different approach. Finding fresh articles can be challenging, but compiling an hour of entertaining listening is enjoyable.

Apart from presenting on Mondays, I share 'About Movies' and 'Environment Watch'. I'm an avid moviegoer and am interested in bird-watching, land-care and the outdoors, so I love recording these programs (except for attempting

to pronounce all the pesky foreign names and film titles!)

Since retiring from teaching I've been lucky enough to do some marvellous travelling — most recently a trip by train along the Silk Road in China. For exercise and pleasure I cycle and do Pilates, potter in the garden or curl up in the sun with a book.



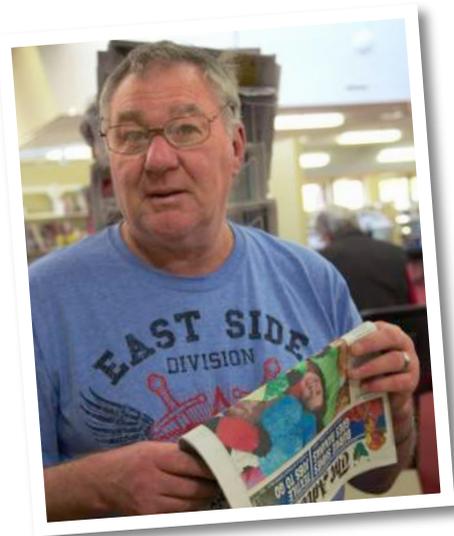
## FOCUS MONDAY PRESENTER ON PAUL MORRIS

I WAS BORN in Devonport, but my adopting family moved to Victoria when I was five. When I left school I started work as a doorman at the Regent Theatre in Melbourne, graduating to Manager of the Mid-City Cinema in 1980. My wife was the box-office supervisor there, and we married in 1986.

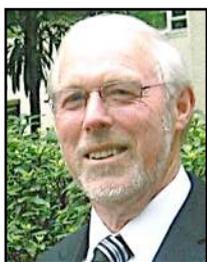
As about the same time, I took up the position of General Manager at the Palais Theatre in St Kilda, and my wife became Manager of the Comedy Theatre. In the mid-1980s, these two theatres were rarely dark, so we lead very busy and entertaining lives. [See more on page 7 – Ed] By the end of the decade, though, I'd moved on from theatre into a new career in hotel management.

In 1987, we had identical twin boys. Then the fun really began! The twins, now aged 25, both caught the show-business bug and are now based in London, where they run a dance studio and are contracted to all the Kylie Minogue touring shows. They'll embark on yet another massive Kylie tour early in 2013.

My wife sadly passed away in 1991 and I moved to Hobart to be near my natural birth mum. I recently retired from hotel accounting and management and now work mostly from home for Ticketmaster. I've been volunteering for 7RPH for the last four years.



# Many hands make light work



*Inbox* is a weekly compilation of Tasmanian state, regional and local community news items broadcast on Friday mornings at 8.00 a.m. The program's name captures its nature – words from a variety of sources covering a diversity of topics received at one point.

Lyn Muir, Marilyn Chenault, Debbie Le Grande, Richard Walters, Alan Raby, Peter Johnston, Ron Andersen and Phil Tyson make up the *Inbox* team. All have regular on-air reading or presenting commitments at RPH or other stations, so in the early days of *Inbox* it was agreed that the program should not add too much to people's existing workloads. On average each contributor has about three minutes' on-air exposure in the program, plus the time taken searching for and preparing stories.

With such a large team any member can stand aside for a week or two without undue impact on the program. Several members of the team file more than one story each week so there

is always a repository of unused, but still current, stories to draw on.

The contributors gather stories from community newspapers, the big Tasmanian dailies, the State Government media office, websites such as *Tasmanian Times* and the Tasmania Fire Service, and from their daily life experiences.

Stories are recorded by Thursday, put into a file-sharing device called 'DropBox' and then the selected items are assembled, along with a list of community events, into a 29-minute program. We often incorporate audio pieces from press conferences and telephone interviews and would like to have on-the-spot reports in the future.

Some of the team record at home, then transfer their stories via their computers to 'DropBox'. Others record at the studio.

Vaughn or Mel would be pleased to talk to readers or presenters about joining the *Inbox* team or becoming occasional contributors to the program.

*Phil Tyson and the Inbox team*

## On the cards

In July, I had a week in Darwin in order to take part in the National Bridge Championship as a member of the Tasmanian Women's team.

I thought a lingering winter illness would soon clear up once I reached warmer climes, but it got worse, and was horrified upon seeking medical help to find that I was close to bronchial pneumonia. My team-mates had to play a little more bridge than they had bargained for as I recovered!

We have a team of three pairs, and for each match of two and a half hours one pair has a rest while the others battle it out. Our Women's team ended up with the best results of the Tasmanian contingent, coming fifth out of the eight states and territories.

This was my third trip to the Top End, and I made sure I witnessed a sunset again – wow, so dramatic! On previous trips I had extended my stay and went on tours exploring the attractions. This time I came straight home, which was probably a good idea, as after I had finished the penicillin dose I came out in spots!

*Margaret Gibbs*



# There's no business like show business

In 1974, I started work for Hoyts Cinemas in Melbourne. Back then, Hoyts operated 12 city cinemas, four suburban hard-top cinemas and 18 drive-in cinemas. The jewel in the crown was the magnificent Regent Theatre in Collins Street, and it was there that I began work as a doorman.

The Regent only ran two shows a day. Each consisted of a one-hour vaudeville-style live performance, followed by an intermission, the B-movie, another intermission and the main feature film. The theatre held 3200 people and all sessions were pre-booked and seated by usherettes. It was a busy enterprise, with stage hands, performers, projectionists, electricians, usherettes, booking-office staff, caterers and cleaners — altogether amounting to 62 full-timers, plus another 80 part-time staff.

In 1978, while at the Regent Theatre, I was instructed to go to the airport and pick up some luggage for Gregory Peck, who had flown into Melbourne for the premier of the film *The Boys from Brazil*, in which he played the Auschwitz doctor, Joseph Mengele. I arrived at the airport in my beaten up old Volkswagen to discover Mr Peck's 'luggage' was in fact his wife! She was a charming lady, but I often wonder what she made of her trip to the Hilton Hotel perched amongst all the back-seat clutter of my un-valeted VW.

In 1978, Hoyts developed the Cinema Centre in Bourke Street. The initial plan was to have eight 900-seat cinemas featuring the new, curved

'Cinerama' screens. The technology was very clunky and involved three projectors and operators, so the Cinema Centre was finally downsized to three 1000-seat cinemas. Also in Bourke Street, Hoyt's developed MidCity Cinemas, an ultra-modern complex catering for 8000 patrons in four auditoriums.

While Hoyts went on to become Australia's second largest cinema chain, by 2002 all the cinemas in Bourke Street had disappeared except for the MidCity, which now operates as Chinatown Cinemas.

Long before then, though, I took up the position of General Manager at the Palais Theatre in St Kilda, which seated 3500 people and was used for major productions and overseas performers. Meanwhile, my wife became Manager of the Comedy Theatre, seating 900 and an ideal venue for plays and smaller musicals.

Some of the shows I had the pleasure of working with during my time at the Palais Theatre were *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Rocky Horror Show* and *La Cage aux Folles*. Some of the well-known bands and performers who appeared there were Skyhooks, ACDC, Gene Pitney, Bette Midler, Cher, Joe Cocker, Harry Chapin, Debbie Reynolds, Barry Humphries, John Farnham, and... oh yes ... Kylie, of course.

One year we were presenting a Christmas pantomime. It was *Cinderella*, starring the character actor Frank Thring as an Ugly

Sister and Tina Arena, then a teenager climbing the ladder after her success in *Young Talent Time*. Frank was renowned for his acid wit and sometimes potty mouth, whilst Tina was extremely inexperienced at live theatre. On one matinee performance she fluffed her lines and disrupted Mr Thring's grand entrance onto the stage. Frank was somewhat huffy. After the performance, he blustered past Tina's dressing room in full hooped frock and massive Pompadou wig. Tina was sitting with her hands on her knees with her head cupped in them, staring at the floor. Frank stopped in his tracks and bellowed, 'It's no good looking down there, honey. Nothing much happens down there either!' Tina has never forgotten a scripted line since.

Unfortunately, by the end of that the 1980s, the Palais Theatre had lost all government-subsidised shows, such as the Australian Opera and Ballet performances, to the new publicly-owned Victorian Arts Centre and Rod Laver Arena. After years struggling to make ends meet, it has at last been returned to its 1910 glory and is once again a popular venue.

*Paul Morris*



*Photograph by Graham Lees. Used with permission.*

## Vaughn's story

I was born in New Zealand and we lived in Hawke's bay, on the east coast of North Island. My father was an orchard manager, and my mother was one of those people who did lots of different things!

I always knew I might have to leave home when I was old enough to go to school, and when the principal at my local primary school refused to take me it became a certainty. So when I was five, I was enrolled at a boarding school for blind children in Auckland. I remember being excited about going on the plane and I thought it'd be fun meeting new people, but at the same time I was sad about leaving my mother and father and my little brother, who was two and a half.

The school gave me a very different view of family to that which most people hold. I lived in a hostel with seven other children. We were all much of an age, although significantly different in intellectual ability. Classes were very small – there were about five children in each class – and the teaching was specialised. Although some of the staff were popular it was always pretty clear that they were paid to 'look after us', and generally they weren't well liked.

I saw my family about four times a year for the first couple of years, flying home on the last day of term and back again the day before school started. Later, my father got a job managing a farm nearer to Auckland and after that I saw them on weekends.

I consider myself to have been very lucky as neither of my parents really saw blindness as a big issue, and certainly I was discouraged from using it as an excuse for not doing things! From age five, I had to make my own bed, feed the chooks, clean the bathroom and do the dishes. I much enjoyed helping out with the vacuuming from time to time! I drove the tractor, rode the motorbike, helped pick fruit and maintain the irrigation system, too, so I had quite a good grounding in farming and orchard management. I learned to cook, wash and iron — skills many children never learn to do, especially blind children.

My mother had quite a significant career in ceramics during the late 1970's and early 80's, and my brother and I used to have a lot of fun painting and glazing. That is basically the extent of my



artistic experience, but I always loved pulling things apart, especially clocks, radios and electronics. My grandfather ran a radio and TV repair shop, in which my mother worked, so I had no shortage of things to study. He was also a radio amateur (ZL2AQR) and I spent a lot of time as a very young child closeted away with him in his shack, talking to people all over the world. I understood Morse code before I really even knew what it was used for. (Mind you, I've forgotten most of it now!) Through my grandfather, I developed a lifelong love of audio and radio. My father loved cars, and always let me help him work on the family cars and farm machinery, so I spent a lot of time learning all sorts of practical skills there, too.

We came to Australia when I was ten, and I hated it! I think the change was more significant for me than for anyone else in the family, as I went from living in a hostel with seven other children while seeing my family on weekends, to living with my family all the time and going to a mainstream Melbourne high school with thirty kids in the class.

**(Vaughn continues his story in the next issue of Clippings.)**

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### Coffee Machine

Thanks to Vaughn and Emma Bennison for their donation of their machine. It uses Nespresso Capsules

which are freely available at supermarkets. If you are interested in using it, see Mel or Vaughn for a demonstration and details of cleaning, payments, etc.