



Signals

For people who love to listen

May/June 2023



Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

Here's to the history of our bright future

Alt+A To celebrate our 40th anniversary as a fully operational radio reading service, our Vice Regal Patrons, Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley, Governor of NSW and Mr Dennis Wilson, her husband, invited 120 of our volunteers, staff and

The surroundings were stunning, the hospitality was unparalleled, and the mood was bright. The speeches and tributes were alternately serious and amusing, and everyone felt proud for their part in our continuing success.

Her Excellency raised her glass and said:

"What I really think is magnificent about 2RPH is that it has a mission, but it doesn't have an agenda. It allows people to hear the news, the entire news articles, to think about the articles themselves, to be informed and to make up their own minds, to form their own opinions, which is what we should be as a community, an informed, educated, entertained community, either for matters of current affairs or things for pure enjoyment."

2RPH Chair, John Martin OAM, responded:

"What it was, and what it is still all about, are the core values of access and equity, and participation. Regardless of our individual abilities, we all have the right to access published content."

John spoke of our current and evolving role of advocacy for people with disability, so their voices are heard, and their perspectives taken into account. Our core values have resonated for more than forty years since the strident activism of our founding board members Barbara Blackman (co-founder of the National Federation of Blind Citizens) and our first Chair, Professor Neil Runcie.

We were moved by the words of Robert Fitzgerald AM, the NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, who gave thanks for the voice and presence Radio 2RPH gives to those so easily excluded in our community. The Commissioner concluded:

"With good grace, some government funding and a lot of community support, 2RPH will continue to flourish and thrive and, as a consequence, make an enormous difference in the lives of so many."



2RPH Chair, John Martin, OAM



Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald AM



John Leung and Janine Penfold



Nicola Snell and Barry Melville



2RPH volunteers and guests



2RPH volunteers and guests



From left: Katie Brookes, Megan Grew, Chris Schofield, Colin Payne, Geraldine Menere and Michele Watts.



2RPH volunteers, staff and guests in the Government House garden



From left: Danielle Amos, Vivian Schenker, Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald AM, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Robert Estcourt AM, Deputy Lord Mayor - Councillor Sylvie Ellsmore, Barry Melville and Geraldine Menere



Libby Hargreaves, Robina Hargreaves and Chris McGregor



Ken Cappie-Wood and Robert Estcourt AM



2RPH volunteers and guests



John Ratcliff, Andrew Chin and Kim Woo



Pam Nemeny and Peter Theodore



Chris Schofield, Roz Crosier, Mary Jane Hogan and Peter Ryan



Mikaela Ford



Emma Rossi

New voices at the desk

We're delighted to welcome two new producers - Mikaela Ford and Emma Rossi who are taking the helm of our Koori Mail and Inclusive Agenda programs.

Mikaela, a proud Gamilaraay woman, is the Pathways and Partnerships Manager at the Community Media Training Organisation (CMTO) and will produce the Koori Mail program fortnightly, taking over from April Pressler. Former newsreader and reporter Emma Rossi will produce Inclusive Agenda monthly (previously presented by Vivian Schenker). Both April and Vivian did a fabulous job with these programs for several years and will provide valuable mentorship to our recruits.

Seven ways to listen to 2RPH

What are the different ways you can tune in to 2RPH? Over the years we've expanded our listening options considerably. If you don't have an FM or AM radio at home or in your car, here are some other ways you can hear us:

Throughout Sydney on any digital radio receiver (DAB+). We have two digital stations, 2RPH and 2RPH Plus. Our "Plus" station is a new initiative,

- broadcasting alternative pre-recorded content to our listeners. In the near future, we will expand DAB+ to Newcastle and Wollongong.
- [Community Radio Plus App](#), developed by our partners at the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia. This is *the* app for Australian community radio, providing over 300 live streams from community stations all around the country.
- [Live streaming on our website](#) – just click on “Listen Live” below the logo on our homepage.
- [On demand](#) – All our live readings are available for 24 hours on our website, look for “Newspapers On Demand”.
- [Podcasts](#) – A variety of programs are available on major podcast apps like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, and more. You can also listen to these shows on our website if you click on “Podcasts and On Demand”.
- Online streaming aggregators such as [TuneIn](#), [Beetroot](#), [OnlineRadioBox](#), [radio-australia.org](#)
- Via any smart speaker – just ask Siri, Alexa, or Google to “play Radio 2RPH”.

Simply put, 2RPH is available anywhere in the world on your computer and smart devices. So if you have a relative or friend who is an ex-pat, let them know that they can still catch up on all the major news from home by streaming 2RPH online. Happy listening!



Denise Alexander



Shawn Burns

Radio 2RPH's most recent Board appointments Denise Alexander and Shawn Burns

Denise Alexander joined the 2RPH Board last November, bringing a wealth of experience in multimedia and digital health. John Martin asked Denise what it was that particularly attracted her to Radio 2RPH.

“I had heard of 2RPH over the years, primarily when I was working at the ABC in Sydney where a number of people had volunteered at 2RPH. I was aware of the community connection, and I always thought the service added some nice value to

Denise came from England to Australia almost 30 years ago and landed what she describes as her “first proper job” as a production assistant with ABC Television. Denise’s early career, spanning more than a decade with the ABC, moved into management where she worked in International Development, New Media & Digital Services, and became the Head of Business and Communications for ABC Innovation.

After a further decade working in virtual healthcare and telehealth, Denise now divides her time between her part-time commitments as a Classifier with the Classification Board and consulting work for non-profit organisations including Lifeline.

So what does Denise see as the major challenges and opportunities for the station going forward?

“There's huge opportunity, obviously with digital platforms and having the ability to broadcast or to publish onto different platforms. There's certainly no shortage of content ideas in this organisation, and there are so many things that can be done, so it's a case of really connecting those dots and making it happen.”

From Denise’s perspective, the key challenge is funding, and our priority is to continue to reach out into the community to attract and retain what she describes as our “fantastic volunteers”.

What Denise loves about Radio 2RPH is its commitment to the spoken word and to quality journalism. “It doesn't just fill the gaps with lots of music or noise. It's very much committed to providing access to quality journalism for its listenership. I like 2RPH’s focus on audience; that very strong connection to community, and the value it adds to people with low vision, blindness, or other needs,” she said.

Looking to the future, Denise thinks there will always be a desire for people to have with them a companion voice, “Technology of course will change in the future and AI and all sorts of fabulous things will come along. But there'll always be the human desire for the kind of content that 2RPH delivers. I think that's guaranteed.”

Dr Shawn Burns from the University of Wollongong joined the Radio 2RPH Board in November last year. Barry Melville asked Shawn what was it that attracted him to the opportunity.

“I like 2RPH’s ability to reach an audience that is largely, or in many instances excluded from news and news coverage. I think the way 2RPH goes about reaching out to its audience is to be encouraged and I’m enthusiastic about supporting any potential we have to improve, expand or embrace new technologies,” he said.

Shawn is a former newspaper journalist/editor, State News Director for WIN Television, and political media adviser. He has been working for more than 15 years

Shawn has a son, now a young adult, with severe physical disabilities. In his doctoral studies, Shawn's focus was on how people with disability feel about how they are represented in the media, particularly in news coverage of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. People's lived experience of disability is at the centre of his research and informs his journalism teaching.

Shawn is concerned about how the mainstream media frame its reporting about people with disability. "You're either a burden and something to be pitied, or you're a hero for overcoming your disabilities and these are often-propagated models - I can only hope, not by our students."

In his teaching, Shawn is determined that students gain a deeper appreciation of the perspectives of people living with disability and how disability should be represented. "We shouldn't do stories that are focused on people with disability without including them at the heart of the storytelling", he said.

And on the question of our future use of technology? Shawn's hope is that Radio 2RPH continues to deepen its engagement with its audience in the broadcasting space but also engages with new formats and builds audiences by offering new diverse multiplatform content and streaming. Is Artificial Intelligence a help or a hindrance? Shawn recognises its capacity to do good or evil but believes we would do ourselves a disservice if we didn't embrace AI and work towards using it for the benefit of all.



Ron Postle - station pioneer

Vale Ron Postle - 1940 - 2022

Radio 2RPH mourns the passing of Emeritus Professor Ron Postle, who died on 22 November last year in Mulhouse, France, at the age of 82.

A key figure in the early history of Radio 2RPH, after assuming the 2RPH Chair in late 1982, it was he who fully realised the vision of our first Chair, Professor Neil Runcie.

Ron, who was blind, developed strong community support, recruited a dedicated bunch of talented volunteers and hired the first Station Manager, Geoff Brown. Together they secured premises and transmission facilities. Under Ron's leadership, 2RPH overcame the myriad challenges of funding, permanent licensing, volunteer resources and audience building to develop a fully-fledged radio reading service.

Throughout his academic career, Ron was internationally renowned as a pre-eminent specialist in the physics and mechanics of textile structures. He was regarded as a brilliant, caring, and passionate man by all who knew him.

On behalf of the 2RPH community, past and present, we express our condolences to his friends and loved ones while paying tribute to his legacy over the last forty years.



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