

WE ROCK ON RADIO

A VOLUNTARY radio station aimed at the over 50s is hoping the ECHO'S Wish campaign will wavelenght.

Vintage Radio in Wirral started as a pilot scheme in 2008 with the help of a grant from Age UK - aimed at catering for the tastes of more mature listeners and showing how older people still contribute to society

Between short licences (RSLs) the radio station now broadcasts from Birkenhead YMCA on the internet every day between 9am and midnight.

It now has more than 40 volunteers, who present music for all tastes as well as interviews, discussion, advice, stories, poetry and drama.

by LORNA HUGHES

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All costs are met by the group's own fundraising and they say money from Wish will enable them to update old equipment and help train YMCA residents in broadcasting.

Producer and fundraiser Will Redfearn, 63, said: "Our objective is to get a permanent community licence and to involve more people as listeners and give them a chance to broadcast.



"We hold open days, run outside broadcasts from community events and encourage people to come along and have a go.

"It is giving retired people new interests. Nearly all of our members were new to radio and now really enjoy it."

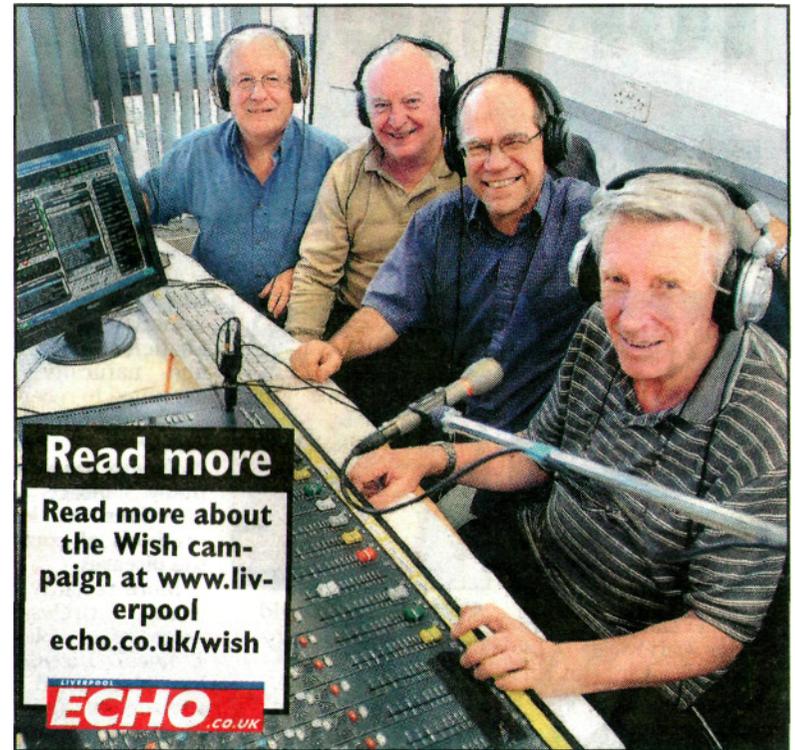
Volunteers also research local history and nostalgia programmes which are used as a form of reminiscence therapy for people with dementia.

In a recent project in conjunction with the Media Trust they recorded discussions with elderly residents from Abbeyfield care home, Birkenhead, which were then broadcast by the station.

In June 2011 Vintage Radio scooped the "Community Voices" category award at the Technology4Good awards in London.

Will said: "Any money we receive from Wish will be used towards running costs and the cost of short-term licences, which can be £5,000 for a month. We also have to pay PRS (Performing Right Society) and PPL music licence costs.

"We get the odd bit of second hand equipment but ideally we would like to bring the studio up to date."



BROADCAST: From left, Gordon Nichols, Ken Harper, Mike Pill and Norman Polden

He added: "There are a lot of radio stations around but only for certain age groups. We are more Radio Four meets Radio 2.

"Vintage Radio is proving that

once you get to 50 you are not on the scrapheap - after all Mick Jagger can still rock at 70!"

• Go to www.vintageradio.org.uk or call 0151 601 7636.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT...

WE WILL publish the names of all groups that have successfully registered for Wish 2013 on Tuesday, October 1.

Wish tokens will be printed inside the ECHO from October 1 to November 30, 2013.

We will then allocate a proportion of the £25,000 prize pot out to each group on the Wish list, based on the number of tokens they collect.

The bigger the share of tokens each group has at the end of the campaign, the bigger the share of the prize pot they will receive.

In addition to their share of the cash pot, the group that collects the most tokens will also receive a fantastic £10,000 building makeover from local building firm Fletchrose - remember, every token counts!