



June 9th 2011

NATIONAL AWARD FOR PIONEERING WIRRAL RADIO PROJECT FOR OVER-50s

A community radio project based in Wirral and aimed at giving over-50s a voice has won a prestigious national award.

Vintage Radio, which broadcasts online from the Birkenhead YMCA and is staffed by older people from all walks of life, scooped the 'Community Voices' category award at the Technology4Good (T4G) awards.

Vintage Radio volunteers received their award from TV and radio presenter Mariella Frostup during the ceremony at the BT Centre, St Paul's, London.

Gordon Nicholas, Chairman of *Vintage Radio*, said: "We were overjoyed just to be nominated as a finalist in the 'Community Voices' category so to be judged the winner from the shortlist of such excellent and worthwhile projects nationally is a real achievement for everyone involved.

"The award will help *Vintage Radio* further fulfill our aim of catering for a mature audience with a wide range of content selected to appeal to our target audience. We will continue to produce, for example, interview-style programmes, allowing people in residential homes and day care centres to share their life experiences, bringing enjoyment to themselves and listeners."

The 'Community Voices' category, sponsored by the Media Trust and Barclaycard, was one of eight categories contested by 250 nominated projects across the UK. The T4G awards, organised by the charity AbilityNet and BT, celebrate the hard work of charities, businesses and individuals who use digital technologies to help change our communities for the better.

It is the second major award for *Vintage Radio*. In 2009, after just nine days of broadcasting, the project was recognised in the National Counsel and Care Awards for its portrayal of older people in the media.

Vintage Radio was founded in late 2008 with help from Help the Aged, now Age UK, and broadcasts via FM radio for limited periods and also free through the internet at www.vintageradio.org.uk from 9am seven days a week. Audience figures are growing and the website has up to 80,000 hits a month.

Newsdesk: Background story and photo captions attached. *Vintage Radio* chairman Gordon Nicholas is available for interviews - ring him on 0151 336 7143 or 0151 601 7636. For more information about this story please ring Peter Harvey on 07825 886809 (m) or email peterharveymedia@virginmedia.com

PHOTO CAPTIONS - TECHNOLOGY4GOOD AWARDS, LONDON, JUNE 2011



(Please note: these are 'lo res' thumbnails for illustration only - large jpg files attached)

Vintage Radio Award1.jpg

Ken Harper (left) and Gordon Nicholas (right) of *Vintage Radio* with the Technology4Good award

Vintage Radio Award2.jpg

Volunteers from *Vintage Radio* with TV and radio presenter Mariella Frostup, sponsors and organisers at the Technology4Good awards ceremony in London

Vintage Radio Award3.jpg

TV and radio presenter Mariella Frostup who presented the award to *Vintage Radio*

PHOTOS BY RAY GIBSON

Please consider credit in publication - thank you



The Vintage Radio Story

(updated June 2011)

Vintage Radio is a community radio station aimed mainly at the over 50s and run entirely by volunteers. The project was conceived in 2008 and set up as a pilot scheme with the help of a grant from Help the Aged, now Age UK, to show how older people still contribute to society and in doing so can help others of like mind.

The concept they chose was that of a radio station broadcast to older people listening in their homes and cars.

The emphasis was to be on how the more mature sections of our community could learn the mechanisms of programme preparation and production with some of them actually broadcasting 'live' on air. The procedure was initiated by an advertisement in a local paper and resulted in a substantial response from people of widely different backgrounds.

Suitable training was provided and the result was a short spell on the air in February 2009 with a nine-day restricted service licence (RSL), broadcasting to parts of Wirral and central Liverpool. Content included interviews, discussion, information, advice, history, stories, poetry and drama much of which was original and music for all tastes with some very knowledgeable presenters.

Clearly this was a winning formula because soon afterwards *Vintage Radio* was runner up in the National Counsel and Care Awards in 2009 for portrayal of older people in the media. The winner was the BBC but then they are a bit better resourced than us!

Vintage Radio is now mentored by the BBC as part of one of their community initiatives.

With grants from Wirral Borough Council, Riverside Housing and the Media Trust and the continuing support of Birkenhead YMCA, it was possible to run a second successful RSL in November 2009, this time for 22 days.

Between RSLs, which are expensive, we have maintained a presence on the internet broadcasting every day since April 2010, initially with recorded material but recently live on Fridays. The station is now broadcasting on the internet between 9am and 11pm each day and new programme content is being created on a regular basis. Happily we have now obtained enough money to run a third RSL in autumn 2011.

Some of our *Vintage Radio* volunteers, as part of a project in conjunction with the Media Trust, recorded on-site discussion material with elderly residents from Abbeyfield home, Birkenhead, which formed the basis of online broadcasts. Roberts Radio donated six internet radios to allow residents who did not have internet access to listen to themselves and other *Vintage Radio* broadcasts online.

In June 2011 *Vintage Radio* scooped the 'Community Voices' category award - one of eight categories contested by 250 nominated projects across the UK - at the Technology4Good (T4G) awards in London. Volunteers from *Vintage Radio* were presented with their award by TV and radio star Mariella Frostup.

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. We offer practical advice to those who want to join us and contribute.

Nearly all of our members were new to radio in 2009 and now really enjoy it so if you fancy listening to our broadcasts and maybe joining us, please visit our website or ring 0151 601 7636. The station is always pleased to receive offers of help, financial and content as well as being open to new members.

Click on the 'listen live' button on the station website at www.vintageradio.org.uk

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