

SOUNDWAVES NEWSLETTER

50 YEARS STRONG!

Did you know Rhema's Alan Sharpham has been involved in Christian radio for 50 years? That's quite a milestone in our opinion, so here is Alan's story.

He writes: "Listening to Christian radio programs as a 20-something in the 1960s I found that most programs presumed the listener was a Christian. There was no explanation of **how to become** a Christian. I couldn't understand why Christian programs didn't 'evangelise'. It seemed like a lost opportunity.



"Back then I had no idea that years later God would lead little old me to become involved in Christian broadcasting. But in 1971 God put a clear calling on my life.

"I had a good job yet had no second thoughts when turning in my resignation to go "full time" into the Lord's work when He opened an opportunity for me.

"At the time, I was living in Wollongong and became involved with an evangelistic organisation that had a soundproof recording studio but no-one to use it. Within weeks I moved in!

"My strength is scripting so I got started designing and writing a 15 minute evangelistic radio program, voicing it (quite poorly as I recall) and inserting



songs and brief messages from the evangelist I worked with. Ten years later I had become involved in other parts of the ministry and opportunities on commercial radio started to dry up.

"It was about this time that God opened the door for Christian radio stations to be established in Australia and New Zealand.

"As soon as I discovered this I took steps to find out more and attended a Christian radio conference in Hobart where a licensed Christian station existed. What an experience! The Christian message going out to an entire city! I was so excited.



"In 1983 a public meeting was held and a small committee formed. Christian radio in Wollongong (now known as *Pulse 94.1*) was born. Little did I know that the broadcasting licence would take another 20 years to arrive!

"Short term broadcasts (starting at just 7 days long) were permitted and we had some incredible phone calls from unchurched listeners who couldn't understand why they were attracted to listen. They didn't understand why but we did!



"It was clear the bureaucrats in Canberra had no interest in licensing any more Christian stations (there were only 2 licensed in Australia at the time) but this was God's work and I knew it would be successful – **one day**.

"In the years following, more Christian radio stations became licensed so in 1991, to gain further experience, I moved to Launceston Tasmania for a year to work with a station that was on air full time. That year gave me invaluable experience.

"Apart from many lessons learned, and being humbled quite a few times (which is essential in God's service), there were some really great highlights. Like when I met the Tasmanian Premier of the day who had arrived at our Launceston studios to record an interview (if meeting a politician can be called a "highlight"). And the day I met Tommy Emmanuel who came to our studios for the same reason.

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“After returning to Wollongong, I got to meet B J Thomas, Glen Campbell, evangelist Bill Newman, Noel Paul Stookey (“Paul” of Peter, Paul & Mary), Don Francisco, David Meece, artist Pro Hart and so many other Christian musicians and leaders. Including local musicians like Steve Grace.

“Then after all this preparation, in 1998 God led me to hand over the reins of the Wollongong station to an experienced commercial radio announcer who was able to take it to the next level. And it was that year I moved to Port Macquarie. The Wollongong station was licensed 2 years later and is still going strong. Sometimes God moves us on so we can’t take the glory for His work.

“In Port Macquarie, Rhema 99.9 had been operating for several years under the direction of Ian & Mandie Worby and it wasn’t long before I became involved here. My initial involvement was minimal as I had become exhausted and close to burnout. But God’s plan was to use all the experience

He had given me to move Rhema further along, ultimately becoming Manager.

“My heart, however, was in the broadcast side of the work and



admin was not my focus. So others joined us and eventually I was able to become more involved in the production and announcing side.



“Which brings me to 2020 - my 50th year in Christian radio. And what a 50 years! I look back and it seems like yesterday that I was taking trips to Canberra to cajole the bureaucracy to licence this little Christian radio station in Wollongong. Praise God for His faithfulness.

“One thing of many that I learnt out of this long experience: Never give up when you know it’s God’s will and plan. Time is not an issue with God. You only need to be faithful. Stay the course, finish the race, as Paul put it. It was never my job to build a Christian radio station – it was God’s. And He gets the glory for the result.”

Alan’s experience in radio has been a real advantage to Rhema’s growth over the last 20 years and he is still very much involved as Content Director and Production Manager. He is also Secretary of Rhema’s Board. You can email Alan at

production@rhema999.com.au



A big THANK YOU to those who supported Rhema’s ‘Shine The Light’ fundraiser for 2020. It was an extra special occasion that enabled us to explore new ways in its presentation, including an online auction and the ‘live’ Facebook streaming of the event. Peter Irvine gave a very encouraging and insightful address, and the heart-felt music from Enter Worship was truly a blessing. The comedy antics of Green Lantern, our auctioneer, was enjoyed by all. You can still watch the event on Rhema 99.9’s Facebook page.

The good report of the fundraiser was overwhelming, and commented on by many as the best to date. Next year’s will be even better as we fine tune the event, so don’t miss out on the amazing experience!! The amount raised was \$7,433 after expenses, praise God for His faithfulness!

Werner Egger, General Manager



Rhema's AGM for 2020

Due to COVID-19, our AGM this year is happening via Zoom on November 18th at 7pm.

You're invited to join us online for an update of all the 'happenings' around your family radio station.

Please join the Rhema family online on November 18th! A zoom meeting link/invite will be sent out to all members closer to the event.

Zoom is a free download and is available for Windows, Mac, Linux, Android & iOS. <https://zoom.us/download>



I Can't Believe It's Christmas!

from Pastor Dave McDonald (Salt Community Church)

The best time to hear the Christmas message is any time other than Christmas. Take away the tinsel, the lights, the pudding, the chocolates, the wrapping, the public holidays, and the extravagant spending. Remove the pressure of the season and you discover a remarkable message!

I've been working slowly through the early chapters of Matthew's Gospel, and I've been freshly amazed at the wonder of the very first Christmas. God became one of us. He entered our world as the unexpected child of a teenage pregnancy. His family became refugees to escape a genocidal maniac. He waited patiently for three decades to make his mark. Strange beginnings. Not what was expected. Strength in weakness. Glory through suffering. Life beyond death. Take the time to explore Christmas before it gets lost in all the trappings. ■

Candace Foy moved to Australia from Canada with her husband and 2 children in 2014, calling Port Macquarie home permanently in 2015. Candace has Australian family heritage and they were grateful when God prompted them as a family to come for an adventure year in 2014. It was truly a year that was wonder-filled beyond anything they could have imagined watching God orchestrate a multitude of blessings for their family throughout the year.

She says her favourite verse became Ephesians 3:20 says : *"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."*

Candace and her family attend Lifeway Church in Port Macquarie and she is currently the SRE Coordinator at Tacking Point Primary School. She is passionate about sharing her faith with those around her and is honoured to be a new member of the Board at Rhema.



Candace Foy, our newest Board Member

Local Program Highlights

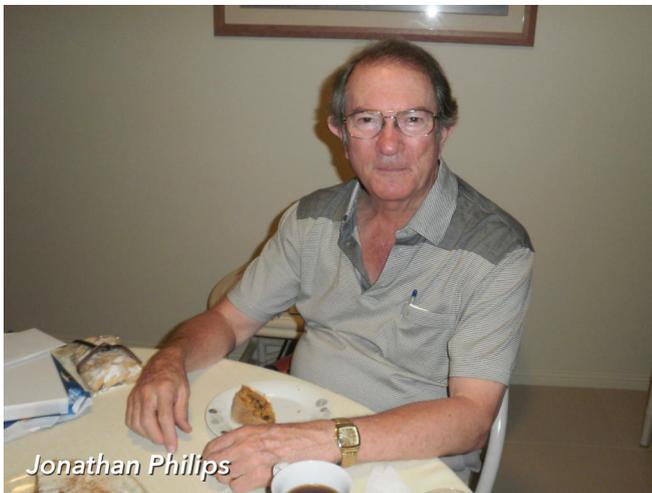


Helen Mottee

For Eternity was born out of Helen Mottee's passionate commitment to tell the stories of persecuted Christians around the world. The program has aired for more than six years and a regular feature is the broad range of thought provoking, engaging interviews which she has been privileged to conduct with people from diverse backgrounds and ministries.

The program airs every Sunday at 8pm and repeats on Monday nights at 7. Also check out the new 4Eternity Facebook page!

The Travellers Guide: "We are all travellers on a road called life and we are all going somewhere." This short five minute program, also presented by Helen Mottee, addresses any topic from the marvels of DNA to Hong Kong's new security law. Every edition is grounded in the Biblical Christian worldview and no issue is off limits. The Travellers Guide airs on Rhema at noon on Tuesdays and 7:15pm Thursdays.



Jonathan Philips

Equipped for Hope is presented by Jonathan Philips and was "birthed" around 9 years ago to present a short sharp radio program that is based 100 percent on the Bible.

Jonathan says "I believe the Lord impressed on me that the content needed to be relevant to the concerns and issues of our day and encouraging to our valued Listeners."

Listeners are invited to email or call Rhema with questions relevant to their Life Journey (admin@rhema999.com.au).



Pastor Dave McDonald

Bible Bites was a pandemic project for Pastor Dave McDonald of Salt Community Church in Lake Cathie. Due to health risks, he had to lock down pretty hard and this meant an inability to get out and about visiting people and discussing God's Word together. So Dave began recording a daily mini sermon or 'Bible Bite' to let the Scriptures speak into people's lives and circumstances. These are sharp, focused messages from the Bible with a clear focus on application.

They are compact, with bite-sized sections, and very little waffle, and are heard on Rhema 99.9 Tuesdays to Thursdays at 7.45pm. You can also listen on Dave's You Tube channel:

youtube.com/c/davemcdonaldbibletalks.