

We The People
Program 134
The Power of Sound



I have a great admiration for the early inventors who created something out of nothing. They didn't just improve a device they actually dreamt it up and made it work just from the power of the mind. In other words it didn't exist before nor did the technology and the results of a few in particular changed the world. Alexander Graham Bell for the telephone, Marconi for the radio and Edison for the phonograph. In particular these men harnessed the power of sound and the spoken word and this changed the world forever.

Now when the first cylinder records were played on an old Edison phonograph through a long horn speaker phone people were mesmerised and many believed it was a machine which connected directly to the spirit world. Such was the concern that Edison saw the need to write an article in the newspaper describing his invention and how it worked to allay the fear of those spooked by the idea. Now it's 100 years later and look how far technology has come and what would those amazing inventors have made of all this. Indeed the power of sound and in particular the spoken word is fundamental to civilisation as we know it. The transmission of sound using radio waves is even more important today where new technologies like Bluetooth and cell phones crowd our lives but all use electromagnetic radio waves.

Once you would listen to the wireless for entertainment while now we call it the radio although I still like to call it the wireless having spent a working life time in broadcasting from engineering and management to presenting and this program you are listening to called, We The People. This history gives me licence to call it the wireless and to the amusement of the women in my life I call their dresses frocks and why not. Now in all those years I have seen firsthand just how powerful the wireless can be when it brings programs to us that inform and entertain. Its portable and you can enjoy it while driving a car to work or while going to sleep at night. It's a friend and a colleague and drives away loneliness and isolation. Today there are any amount of stations to choose from and all kinds of formats for all kinds of people. Radio is far more than just music; it's a clever one to one medium where the on air personality is known to you yet you may never have seen the announcer or presenters face. In my case it's often said I have a fine face for radio.

Today so much of the media is part of a complex network and this robs the listener of localism where I believe radio's greatest strength lies. Radio is best as a local medium but unfortunately many commercial stations suffer from the network syndrome and the over researched audience and music genre. With your station 4CRB, you get a whole host of special features and a wide variety of music and a respect for the creator and that's a mix that can't be beaten. Perhaps Edison overlooked the fact that his medium would indeed transmit the good news and he was an atheist, God only knows why. Your station, 4CRB, is staffed by many volunteers and a management committee including Steve Stuttle and CEO Hilton Redding, I think Hilton may have been around when Edison was a boy so he has a right to foster the wireless and has done so now for 30 years. This station is endearingly old fashioned but captures the very essence of good radio and transmits material and ideas which are decent, honest, respectful and ethical that all can listen to with confidence. If that's old fashioned I'll take it any day. Did I mention "courageous" in that we the people can have our say without fear or favour and in that the voice of the people makes a difference through this radio station.

While 4CRB is well run it still has bills to pay and so if you deem the service worth while the annual station radiothon is on next week where you can help keep the station on air creating great programs and friendship for many. Listen next week and seize the spirit of opportunity to acknowledge the work of the great inventors and to fight the good fight for a civilised society.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley