



89.7 TENTERFIELD & COUNTRY AREAS

98.7 STANTHORPE & SURROUNDS

Your local community FM radio



TENTERFIELD & DISTRICT COMMUNITY FM RADIO ASSOC INC
STANTHORPE & GRANITE BELT COMMUNITY RADIO ASSOC INC

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A Short History of Ten FM

"A story about one of the area's first FM radio stations"

Compiled by Peter van Schaik

Tenterfield & District Community FM Radio Association (Ten FM) functions as an Association incorporated in the state of NSW. It provides community radio facilities for Tenterfield and Stanthorpe and surrounding areas, bounded roughly by Woodenbong, Tabulam, Deepwater & Texas. Its activities are governed by a Committee which is elected annually by the membership of Ten FM. Aside from the announcers and a band of volunteers, a three member team of permanent part-timers takes care of the day-to-day operation of the station.

In 1983 trial transmissions began from Mount Mackenzie from a caravan parked near one of the television transmitter towers. When test transmissions proved successful, the fledgling Ten FM built a studio first in a room in the Tenterfield Lodge alongside the railway station, and then at the rear of the building which now houses the Community Centre. A year later, with the assistance of the Tenterfield Shire Council, Ten FM moved into its present location at 142 Manners Street.

Only some of the people who were instrumental in getting Ten FM on the air in those early days still have a close association with the radio station. They include Marion Saxby, Trent McCrystal and Paul Thompson. Setting up Ten FM was however a team effort and the station would not have succeeded without the dedicated efforts by people such as Brian Stokes, Phil Ainsworth, Peter Flexman, John (the big O) Osborne, Bob Mulholland, Chris Gallen, Glenn Taylor, Trevor Cooper, Peter Robinson, Robin Elks, Jan Fisher, Mike Harris & Kevin Condrick. (If you believe your name should be in this list, please email me with a précis of your contribution to peter@tenfm.org.au)

During the early 1990s, there were many more announcers than we have now. Newcomers to radio were assessed and had to apply for a spot on the timetable after training. Most of the daytime slots were filled with live programs, presented by announcers behind the microphone. Eventually developing technology has allowed us to remain on air for 24/7.



While the studio now has 2 CD players and an on-air computer, in the early days of Ten FM, the studio was fitted out with 2 turntables, reel-to-reel tape recorders, and slow speed video recorders which played pre-recorded programs during the early hours of the morning. Despite the risk of these programs being repeated, it was felt it was better to be transmitting program, rather than go off the air. For a while we also tapped into the program material available from the Community Radio Network satellite feed.

The range of material played on a day-to-day basis has changed as much as the equipment. The breakfast show has changed least of all but during the 1990s it was not unusual to feature sports interviews. Rather than CDs and music files from the on-air computer, announcers then had most of their material on 45s and LPs. You had to be mindful to change the speed of the turntable to suit the record and to ensure you didn't play the following track. Announcers used colour coded record sleeves to assist their choice of music. Program content has gone through changes as well. Ten FM often covered football matches and the Tenterfield Show with live programs, and patients in hospital & mature aged listeners were catered for with The Hospital Show. Serial radio shows such as The Castlereagh Line were also popular. Probably the biggest change that Ten FM introduced during the 1990s was to reduce country music from the daily mix, leaving only one afternoon of pure country music each week. Recently some relaxation of that policy has taken place.

Ten FM recognises the need to be flexible both in terms of emerging technology, such as Internet Audio Streaming and of the public's changing expectations in terms of music and programming. We will continue to adapt so that we remain relevant to our sponsors and listeners. (This page is a work-in-progress. If you would like to make any contribution to this history page please email me at peter@tenfm.org.au)

- **If you have any photos of Ten FM, please email them to peter@tenfm.org.au**

