

## MEET OUR PRESENTERS



### **Rita Satch – Wednesday 1-4pm**

Rita is a full time professional musician, singer songwriter and violinist. She performs regularly at jazz clubs and concert halls around Australia and overseas. Rita has been listening to GDR since she was very young and can remember calling the station when she was doing her VCE exams. The sounds of GDR provided her with much needed stress relief.

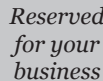


### **Melissa Hall – Saturday 5-8pm**

Melissa has an eclectic range of music and enjoys listening to both old and new alike. She is an avid fan of old movies and musicals and loves ballroom dancing. She found GDR whilst driving home from work and now listens via our app.

## SPONSORS

We sincerely thank GDR95.7fm sponsors for their continuing support throughout the year. We encourage everyone to use our sponsors where possible and always tell them where you heard about them. Should you know of a business that may benefit from a GDR sponsor partnership, please contact us on 9572 1466 or email: [sponsorship@goldendaysradio.com](mailto:sponsorship@goldendaysradio.com)



### **Golden Days Radio For Senior Citizens Inc**

1st Floor, 1236 Glen Huntly Rd  
(PO Box 287) Glen Huntly, Victoria 3163  
Phone: 03 9572 1466  
Email: [mail@goldendaysradio.com](mailto:mail@goldendaysradio.com)  
Web: [www.goldendaysradio.com](http://www.goldendaysradio.com)



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# THE GOLDEN BROADCASTER

VOLUME 14 No. 1  
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## Newsletter of Golden Days Radio for Senior Citizens Inc.

Registered in Victoria No A.0025759L ABN 29 845 875 007



**PATRON:**  
**Peter Smith OAM**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



### **Change – that word**

We live in a world of change whether we like it or not. I grew up in the 1950s where television had only just begun in black and white. There were no such things as mobile telephones, iPads, Facebook, YouTube, microwave ovens, robots that clean your house while you're out or Siri who can turn on your lights at home after your voice prompt.

We've put man on the moon and can see events all around the world via satellite technology in our living rooms. The world has changed.

Similarly, radio has changed over the years. From AM radio we've now got FM as well as digital. Podcasts have come along where you can listen to your favourite programs and music when you want to.

At GDR we've changed a bit too since we first started broadcasting in 1991. We attained a 24-hour licence in 2001 and have been on air ever since. Listeners at that time heard our slogan say, "music for the over 50s". These people would now be in their early to mid-80s.

A long-held policy of the station is that we never take away but simply add to the music that we play. This policy continues today. But we must survive so that the next generation of GDR volunteers can keep the station running. Our volunteers and the Committee of Management (CoM) are simply the current custodians of the station and we must ensure that our policies we have maintain the station's high standards.

Now we've made a few changes over recent months such as having sponsors messages and promos timed to 30 seconds (an industry standard). We've introduced "sweepers", and these are simply little 4 second reminders that you're listening to GDR.

We've also introduced 3 more news services throughout the morning and afternoon and people say why? Well, it's very simple. We're already paying for these services and in fact could have news on the hour every hour for the same price. We have opted for just the key times that news is required. By doing this particularly in the morning it means that people will stay with our broadcast rather than switch to another radio station plus our sponsors Uniting AgeWell and Astoria Honda Centre have come on board with these additional advertorials.

We've changed the presenter's times by one hour so that the breakfast session is now just 3 hours (Monday to Friday) and the night session takes up the additional hour.

Speaking of the breakfast session, to assist our sponsorship team to attract new sponsors, the music played in these sessions has been reviewed so that they can attract a younger audience i.e. the baby boomers. This is starting to pay off as we are now attracting new sponsors who wish to advertise when the music is from the 70s and upwards. In fact, most of the music on these new playlists (compiled by Tim Symons) comes from our existing library. You'll still hear some of the great standards that we're renown for and if you want to hear some from the 1920s, 30s and 40s simply tune in from 10am every day and listen to your hearts content.

It really gets down to this: If we don't change and recognise that we have a bigger audience that like music and songs from the 70s onwards the station will eventually fade away because our original audience is getting older and many of the regular listeners are no longer with us. We're still broadcasting to the seniors which is our ACMA license conditions and whilst I like music from that early era, I too am a senior and enjoy music from all genres.

Happy listening.

Larry James, President

**Golden Days Radio For Senior Citizens Inc**

**1st Floor, 1236 Glen Huntly Rd (PO Box 287) Glen Huntly, Victoria 3163 Phone: 03 9572 1466**



**SECURING OUR FUTURE – Dudley Chamberlain**

Twelve months can sometimes feel like a lifetime and sometimes it speeds past us leaving us all wondering where the days have gone.

That has been life at GDR for many of us over the past twelve, sometimes, tumultuous, months.

Much has happened since we laid down our plans that were designed to bring a sharp focus on doing all that we can to ensure that GDR continues to provide music and memories to our seniors.

For many years now our media landscape has thrown up a range of challenges.

Changes in the way people are now listening to radio;

Changes in the way radio is delivered;

The challenge of a sub-metro license that limits the power of our broadcast;

The exclusion of sub-metro licensees from the digital platform.

Combined with these crucial challenges we also faced a four year trend of diminishing revenues from sponsorships and memberships.

If your Committee had chosen to ignore these challenges and simply sat on their hands, we estimate that GDR would prove to be untenable within a very short timescale. We could not let that happen.

It is worth pointing out that the operating costs of running a community radio station are largely fixed leaving little room for savings in this area. Having said that we are constantly on the lookout for achieving cost savings where we can.

Therefore, naturally, our main focus for the short/medium term has been to improve revenue streams.

And this is where John Rowland, our General Manager comes in.

Setting aside his impressive pedigree in broadcasting, his appointment was crucial in providing us with the leadership necessary to execute our strategy and to improve our revenue streams. Although there have been some critics who continue to question the cost, the net cost to the bottom line is being compensated in part, by the improvement in sponsorship revenues - a trend that we believe will continue as well as a grant from the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF). In combination, we believe that this makes the investment in John’s services affordable.

His leadership and “know how” have led to far more impressive production standards and processes than ever before. While to some this may seem trite, it is essential that we achieve high standards of production

as well as tight disciplines around meeting our contractual obligations - because this is what we are judged on and what attracts potential sponsors to GDR.

The recent small changes that we have introduced are all part of a larger picture that seeks to attract new sponsors as well as engaging the 50 plus age group.

Research tells us that the 50 plus age group are far more likely to be listening during the breakfast program and at drive time. With this in mind we decided to pluck out from our existing playlists those tracks that we believe would be more attractive to this age group and this now forms the foundation for our breakfast programs. Feedback we have received suggests that this is proving most successful.

Having said that, we should add that program content comes under constant scrutiny and review, allowing us to refine our music where necessary.

Turning now to our existing loyal listeners whose taste in music may not line up with those from a younger demographic.

While we will be looking at ways in which we can deliver your taste in music through an alternate platform it is worth noting that we have changed nothing in regard to our music offering.

Therefore, from 10 am each day through to 7 am the following day you will be listening to the same music mix that you have enjoyed with GDR for many years.

You will have noticed that we are now providing news on the hour during breakfast and drive time programs. Once again this has helped to secure two important sponsors for the long term and on that basis alone it has been worthwhile.

So, you will see that far from sitting on our hands, your Committee and some dedicated volunteers have worked tirelessly over the past twelve months in an effort to secure the future for GDR.

Change is never easy and is often resisted. To this we would say that change is both essential and inevitable and we would ask for your patience, forbearance and above all your continued support.

It is you, the listener, that we live for and GDR wants to live for a long time to give you and generations that follow, the music and the same memories we have all enjoyed through GDR over the past 25 years.

**RADIO PLAY**

Golden Days Radio 95.7fm in conjunction with Melbourne Theatre Organ (MTO) presented great entertainment at the Dendy Theatre Brighton on Sunday 26th May. Many old radio jingles and pictorial advertisements of our youth and snippets of silent movies accompanied by David Johnston OAM on the Wurlitzer Pipe Organ came our way. We also performed an old-fashioned Radio Play ‘Adventures on the Glen Huntly Tram’ done very professionally by a number of the GDR team together with friends from local theatre companies. David featured on the organ adding his inimitable touch to the Play. You had to be there to absorb the era. Very funny stuff!

Brilliant screen visuals by Eric Reed from MTO and the emcee was Ian McLeod. Photos courtesy of Maurice Austin.



**TREASURES FOUND AND SAVED – Barry Gomm**

Ardent fan of Golden Days Radio, Dion Rowbottom, recently found a suitcase full of treasures amongst goods delivered to his workplace. Dion works at Connecting2Australia, an organization that provides work and training for handicapped people with the view of their placement in the everyday workforce, it also provides accommodation if necessary.

During a recent conversation when Dion rang into GDR he mentioned opening the suitcase to find it full of photographs, letters and autographs from many well-known TV personalities from the early days of television, especially from those who appeared on live shows.

Amongst them there were such names as Graham Kennedy, Joff (Joffer) Ellen, Don Lane, Ron Blaskett and Gerry Gee and many others. One letter of particular interest was from Dorothy Baker who is fondly remembered for her appearances on In Melbourne Tonight, The Don Lane Show, The Tarax Show and as the singer at dance venues in Melbourne around the late 1950s to early 1960s. She currently gives talks and sings to various groups about her show-business career.

Dion and his workmates have framed many of the letters and, along with photographs and other TV memorabilia, have made a most attractive display in the main office at their workplace. Dorothy Baker recently visited them and was amazed and delighted to find autographs and correspondence from many friends she knew during her career, many of whom have passed on.



*L-R: Supervisor Jodie Donnellan, Dion Rowbottom, Dorothy Baker, Melissa.*



David Tate likewise; he had fifty voices on his reel; any accent you'd want, he just went from studio to studio taking on any persona asked of him, and in fact David is the voice of private detective Dan O'Hara.

When you were running a recording studio, you never knew who was going to walk in the door; it might be Leslie Phillips, Terry Thomas, Dame Dianna Rigg or Susannah York who lobbed on your doorstep. For them, it was just a job of work and a very lucrative one I might add. They were all pretty impressive. I suppose I only met two or three people who were terribly grand and a bit above it all, one of whom was Jimmy Saville.

**ML:** John, do a little crystal ball gazing for me now. Tell me how you see GDR in say, five years from now.

**JR:** I think radio is following a very different path quite rapidly. I began in an era when everything was in mono; then we moved to stereo, to tape and to computers, so it's been a bit of a roller coaster, but I think when you look at your media player or phone and at what GDR does and there are fifty or more stations doing exactly the same thing on a world stage with streaming, I think change is always hard to accept. But if you don't change, you die and I know that from running studios in both Melbourne and London where you've got to keep ahead of the game or you become redundant.

It costs GDR about \$200K a year to keep its doors open and if we don't have that money, we close, the bailiffs come in, take the gear and sell it and the funds go back into the consolidated coffers of the CBAA.

I think what we have at GDR is a very special kind of radio station, it's a real niche station which serves a very particular type of listener. So I think we have a huge responsibility to ensure our audience is cherished.

I know there's been a lot of talk about "tearing the heart out of the station" but I'd like to think we're giving it a bit of a bypass and as a consequence, helping it to survive. We've got to know that our competition is greater; we've got to understand that costs increase; we've got to know that the younger generation needs a reason to listen to radio nowadays, and by younger, I'm talking fifty and fifty-plus.

So at GDR what we're about is trying to please most of the people most of the time. We have to make new relationships without costing us old ones. And that's the art of it and I hope the skill of it, because here we have some terribly talented people that other community stations would give their eye teeth for. The love that people have for this station is unique and is not found everywhere.

**ML:** what do we already have, and what do you believe we still need?

**JR:** I think what we have is a unity in the love of the station. The one thing we lack is a unity of those ideas and pushing together to make those things happen. I think a lot of the tugging between each other could spell the ruination of the station if we let it. To answer

your question, the way to ensure the station is still on air in five years is first and foremost to keep our finances in the black; secondly to uphold our obligations to the ACMA to make sure we are what we say we are and do what we say we'll do, and thirdly we must engage with our community and earn our keep.

What we must not lose sight of is that we're on air to entertain and what some volunteers tend to forget is that although there's a handful of people who ring in regularly, there's between two and five thousand at any one time who don't, and that's who we're talking to.

### ‘LISTEN TO THE BANNED’ RETURNS!



The segment ‘Listen to the Banned’ which featured in the Saturday Drive program hosted by Graham Pack many years ago, returns to the airwaves soon.

Songs that nowadays wouldn't raise an eyebrow were banned by the BBC between 1931 and 1957 for a variety of reasons that were accepted as ‘in keeping with the times’ back in the early days of radio. The BBC convened a committee known as ‘the Dance Music Policy Committee’ which arbitrated on the ‘playability’ of certain records.

The reasons for banning a recording included – salaciousness, loose living, religious references, the mention of commercial products, and ‘mutilation of the classics’ – among them.

Johnny Messner's recording ‘She had to go and loose it at the Astor’ conjures up all sorts of possibilities but it turns out Minnie had ‘lost’ her Sable Cape. George Formby was banned several times, first with ‘My little Stick of Blackpool Rock’, then with ‘When I'm Cleaning Windows’. Bing Crosby's song ‘Deep in the Heart of Texas’ was also banned.

The Andrews Sisters were banned for ‘Rum and Coca-Cola’ but it could be performed live as ‘Rum and Li-mon-na-da’. Even Louis Armstrong was banned for ‘Mack The Knife’ in 1956.

So tune in to Graham Pack on Monday mornings following both the Serial at 11am and the Trivia to hear this weeks ‘Listen to the Banned’ track. The reason for the ban will be revealed after the track is played.

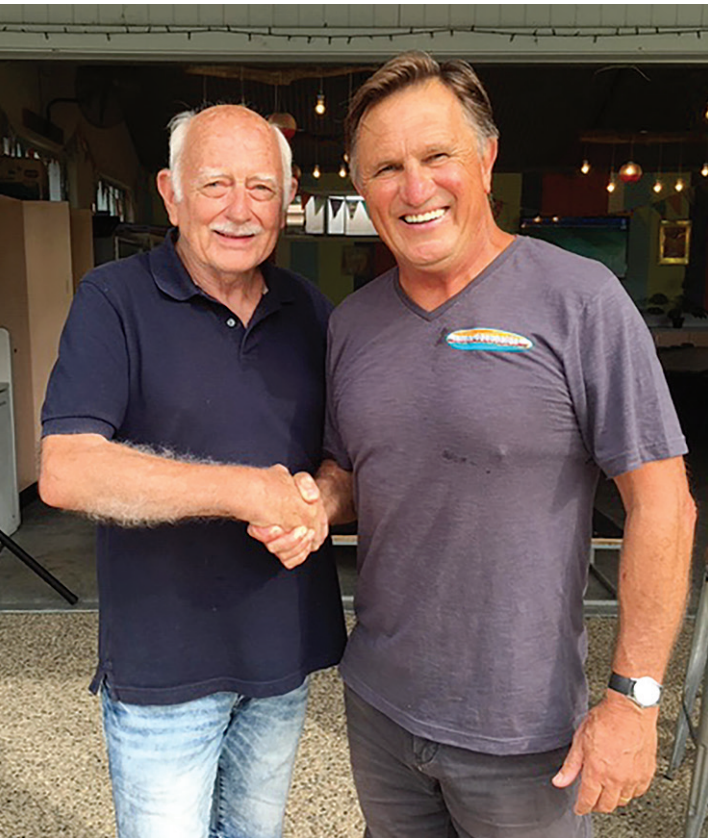
### HOLIDAY BLISS

Our Vice President, Ian McLeod and his wife Anne paid a brief visit to Tathra on the NSW Sapphire coast last month for a relaxing ‘get away’.

Just for fun, they elected to book a vintage retro van at the local family holiday park situated on the beautiful beach front. Ian noted that the holiday park was owned and operated by Frankie J Holden OAM – the Aussie rock legend from the 70's.

Frankie J entertains in the park most Sunday nights with a repertoire of his favourite songs including Ol'55. He certainly has not lost any of his musical talents and has promised to pay GDR a visit next time he is in Melbourne.

This little oasis is worth a visit next time you are travelling north.



### SPEAKERS' CORNER

Our speakers' group is always keen to provide a guest speaker to talk to your local services group or community organisation.

There is no cost involved, just ring Heather Swift or Ian McLeod at GDR to make a booking.

Apart from Heather and Ian we have Robert Anderson, Barry Gomm and Loretta Simmons available to speak at your next function.

### BREAKING NEWS

#### GOLDEN DAYS RADIO DEVELOPMENT FUND

We have been informed that the rules concerning the Fund have changed and we are now able to apply funds to the operating costs of GDR without affecting the tax concession for donations.

This is great news for us as earlier Rules excluded operational costs from the application of Development Funds.

We are in tight economic times with rising costs and diminishing revenues, and while our strategies are beginning to pay dividends, we would very much appreciate additional funds to secure the future for GDR.

With 30th June fast approaching we would be most grateful to receive donations that you will be able to set off against your income tax liability for this financial year.

If you are able to provide a donation, please make the donation payable to Golden Days Radio Development Fund to ensure that you are able to claim the tax concession.

Prudent management of the Fund will continue through the existing Trustees.

### SENIORS CONFERENCE



Loretta Simmons represented GDR95.7fm Golden Days Radio with Marion Lau OAM, Past President and Convenor Aged Care Policy Committee ECCV at the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria Multicultural Seniors Conference in May.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN ROWLAND

*Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future – John F. Kennedy*

And while being mindful of its past and conscious of some disquiet in the present, it's the future of GDR 95.7 that is uppermost in the mind of our General Manager John Rowland.

John's impressively diverse career in the media over four decades is not something about which many of our volunteers may be aware and so in a recent interview, Michael Lynch asked John about his work in the entertainment business and was surprised to learn that it all began for him when he was just eight years old.

**JR:** In my bedroom at our home in Oakleigh I had a little studio where I played 78 rpm records and I talked to a screwdriver I had mounted like a microphone. My two brothers and I then decided we'd build a television station. So we got boxes and painted them grey. We put lenses on them made of wood and we did shows for kids in the neighbourhood. In those days life was much simpler and we thought we'd like to let television which was very, new, know about us.

We rang the local newspaper which did a story on us and then we wrote letters to Hal Todd and Eric Pearce inviting them to come and have a look at us, and to our astonishment, they did.

**ML:** Ron Bond was one of those people and it was at his invitation that you found yourself at 3XY where he was hosting the breakfast program.

**JR:** Yes, when I was about thirteen Ron used to let me go into 3XY during school holidays. I was his panel operator from 5:30 till seven when it got busy. He was a great mentor and got me absolutely hooked on radio. I was glued to the old radiogram listening to the serials, Hit Parades and the dramas, such as Rod Taylor playing Tarzan and Leonard Teale starring as Superman.

**ML:** From working as a panel operator at 3XY which in those days was owned by actor Frank Thring Snr and operated out of the Princess Theatre, you later became a sound recordist and in that pre-digital era, tape editing involved a razor blade, chinagraph pencil and splicing tape – a very different process wasn't it.

**JR:** Yes it was. I was quite good at cutting tape. When we had studios, you'd record everything to tape. You'd cut out the breaths and put in room noise to disguise any silence.

**ML:** With the passage of time radio led to television and the boxes you had once painted grey as a child in your make believe TV studio were replaced by the real thing.

**JR:** When I started off in television, it was fabulous because these were the early days of the medium in Australia and so this was the apprenticeship, learning

to operate a boom mic, miking up an orchestra mixing quiz shows, Go Show and Kommotion and they were great because 'live to air' is a real drug, it's just the biggest adrenalin hit you can get knowing that you're talking to a million people or whatever. But there's nothing quite like recording an orchestra and having them play just for you.

**ML:** You discovered that post production had great appeal because you had absolute control.

**JR:** Yes, it's really an invisible art and involves a lot



of work both in picture and sound and I like building things out of sound, cobbling bits together and making them sound real, a bit like if you're doing a soundtrack for a film and you add in all the sound effects such as footsteps, crumpling the paper, rustling the clothes, all that stuff, and making it look and sound utterly believable, that's quite an art and quite fun.

**ML:** At the moment as GDR General Manager your challenge is to make this not-for-profit organisation more appealing to a broader listening audience and importantly to prospective sponsors – and your track record in radio management and production both here and in the UK stands you in extremely good stead in that regard.

**JR:** When I went to England, commercial radio was very, very new there, it had only begun the year before. Until then, all you could listen to were the pirate radio stations, such as Radio Caroline and Laser 558 which broadcast their programs from boats in North Sea and on a windy night, the records being played would jump

because the boat was being rocked by rough water – hence the title of Bill Nighy movie, 'The Boat that Rocked' You could also often hear Radio Luxembourg. About three weeks after my arrival in London I was lucky enough to fall into the job of chief Engineer at a recording studio in Soho called Studio G., My role was making commercials so that's how I got to work with a lot of very interesting people.

**ML:** But you discovered that radio in England was very different to what it was here in Australia.

**JR:** Yes, in London when I worked with Capitol Radio and LBC I found that radio had to be all things to all people and commercials were much more like a playlet rather than a thirty second hard sell because listeners didn't like being shouted at.

**ML:** One of the proudest feathers in your professional cap must be the course you devised and taught at the prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) – an August body that dates back to 1904.

**JR:** Mmm. I was the only one at that time who had ever been allowed to teach or lecture there without a degree and it came about because I had a production company in London where we were not only producing commercials but a lot of programs which we were syndicating. One program I was attempting to syndicate to Capitol Radio because I wanted it heard all over England, was Dan O'Hara now being heard here at GDR.

Long story short, I ultimately inherited nearly all of Capitol Radio's drama work and because radio was blossoming I was asked to work with Capital Radio's head of drama to devise a course called 'Acting for Radio' because the style of acting for radio is obviously very different to acting for the stage. I did this part time for a couple of years. It was a magic time and I loved being part of it.

**ML:** Another significant accolade in your career was the pioneering role you played in surround sound for the Olympic Games in Beijing – how did that assignment come about?

**JR:** That was interesting. Bob Kemp, a man I'd known from the television days and who'd moved into sport and set up BSkyB Sport, CNN in Tokyo and Singapore, was employed by the Chinese Government as the President of Production for the Beijing Games to run the host broadcaster for 82 venues and it was he who asked me to take on the role of overseeing the consistent surround sound quality at all of those venues.

Basically I sat in the master control room and if ever there was anything that was not consistent we'd talk to that broadcaster by phone and where there was a language problem I would call for a Chinese translator. So essentially I would be sitting in the sound van, coaching the broadcasters on how to mix surround and get their levels right.

**ML:** There must have been some nail-biting moments

though, given that you were essentially overseeing the audio output from 82 venues being broadcast to more than a billion people around the world.

**JR:** Yes, they were fifteen hour days so it was pretty full on.

**ML:** Did you find that your production of educational documentaries in various third world countries lead to some personal growth?

**JR:** Absolutely. My association with Albert Street Productions took me, from being a sound recordist to a hands on CEO taking a film crew all over the world as a regular event to look at the education system in Africa; the assassination of a nun in Peru and the political situation in Timor.

**ML:** Your brother Bruce Rowland is Australia's pre-eminent movie music maestro. I mean who has not heard his majestic, sweeping score for The Man from Snowy River, Phar Lap and evocative theme he composed the TV miniseries, All the Rivers Run – have you and he had the opportunity of working together on joint projects.

**JR:** Yes, lots of times. I did an album with him last year of just solo piano which received an American release and we've worked together on many jingles. A few years ago, we worked on a short film called Jasper Morello which was nominated for an Academy Award. Bruce composed the music and I did the sound design which won the producers a BAFA, BFI and Sundance prize as well as an Academy Award nomination.

**ML:** You strike me as someone who tends to hide his light under the proverbial bushel. Have you ever succumbed to any self doubt?

**JR:** Always! Yes, I think I've just been getting away with it. No, no I mean that seriously. Even here at GDR, if I'm involved in production, I'm always nervous, I never take it for granted cause you're only as good as your last job. I think a little bit of paranoia is good for the soul if you're trying to do anything that counts.

**ML:** Your career over four decades has seen you working with some of the entertainment industry's most illustrious names, amongst whom was Sir Richard Branson who had bought a recording studio from you.

**JR:** Yes, he asked me to stay on to run the studio. We were together for nine years, I saw him most days and he was a pretty good mentor

**ML:** Who are some of the other media stars with whom you've been impressed?

**JR:** Good question. There's always an aura about someone you've always admired so they only have to trip on the carpet and you're impressed. I loved working with the people who could just do it – just not acting; Miriam Margolyes for example. You would hear Miriam's voice reel and on it there would be thirty or forty voices you would never know were her – each one a different rhythm, a different style.