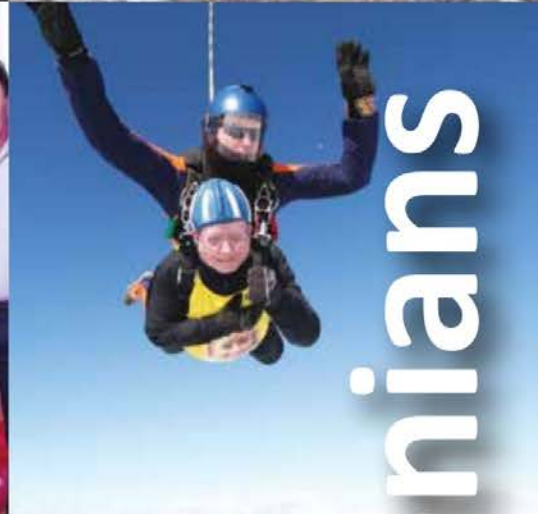


# CATENNA

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#Catenians

Youth and Faith  
pages 04 - 06



The Four Just Men  
page 41



Catenian Radio  
page 12-13



# CATENIAN RADIO

*Mike Thomas had an ambition to do something different during his year in office*



*Mike preparing to broadcast to the world!*

**“Our first idea was to launch a Brooklands Circle podcast, an ongoing series of weekly audio programmes that can be listened to on a smartphone, tablet or computer,” says Mike Thomas, president of Brooklands Circle.**

“My fiancée Elaine Giles and I are no strangers to the world of podcasting: we have been presenting and producing our own podcast, MacBites, since 2007. It’s a personal and irreverent look at all things Apple. You can find it in iTunes and at [macbites.co.uk](http://macbites.co.uk).

“So we settled on the podcast idea, or so I thought, until Elaine decided that we should ‘go big or go home’ and launch a Circle radio station. There ensued three weeks of technical configuration and content creation before we launched Brooklands196 to rapturous applause from a surprised crowd at the Circle’s handover lunch in April.”

Mike says that Brooklands196 was the obvious choice for the station name as it’s a union of the Circle name and number and he adds: “Like any radio station name should do, it just rolls off the tongue.”

Both Mike and Elaine work in IT and are passionate about it so, when it came to content for Brooklands196, they decided to broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That’s 168 hours in total every week and involves a mixture of talk and music.

“Due to the sheer amount required and the fact that we both have full-time jobs, we supplemented our own content with a range of syndicated content from services around the globe. Moving forward, however, we are commissioning and producing an increasing amount of the content ourselves.”

Mike hopes that the homegrown content will generate the most interest, feedback and discussion among listeners. He explains what those tuning in can expect to hear: “*The Weekly News Round-Up* allows Brothers and their families who may have missed an event, or who for whatever reason, aren’t fully involved, to keep up-to-date with Catenian-related events. The special interest programmes such as *Faith in Action – Becoming Catholic* and *The 196 Show* are on-point for the target audience.





*Breakfast club broadcasting*

"Taking the Terror Out of Tech" was virtually demanded by those who, while they use a mobile phone, may have no idea how Facebook differs from a blog or wouldn't be able to differentiate Bluetooth from a blue moon. This has already been extended to a live event in September where Brothers and their wives will be able to get personal answers to all their tech related questions."

Regular slots include *The Walker's Warblings*, recorded live from the field, quite literally, by roving reporters from The Brooklands Walking Group, and *The 196 Show* which features guests from every walk of life who are happy to share their passions, Catenian-related or not, with the listeners.

By far the biggest cost involved in running a station is the equipment and software required for recording and editing but, as Mike says, he and Elaine have been presenting and producing their own podcast since 2007 so they already have that in place.

"The monthly running costs include server bandwidth and storage and the licences for playing music. All these costs are currently being funded from our own pocket. It's our gift to the Circle."

So, what has been the reaction to this new initiative?

"To say that people were surprised when we announced the launch of the station is an understatement. However, the feedback we have received both verbally and via email has been 100 per cent positive.

In addition to the radio station, Mike and Elaine have set up a Twitter account (brooklands196) and a Facebook group to aid and improve communication within the Circle.

Mike says: "A great example of where this has worked brilliantly is with the formation of the Brooklands Bank Holiday Breakfast Club. It grew out of a simple throwaway comment that Elaine posted to the Facebook group, that she and I were 'undertaking research', for which read 'sampling the all-day breakfast at a local hostelry', which led to a plethora of replies in the vein of 'we'd be more than willing to suffer this research with you!'



"Elaine said: 'I've got an idea. Let's invite everyone to join us for breakfast on Bank Holiday Monday.' The logic of choosing a Bank Holiday was that more people would be able to join us. And so the Brooklands Bank Holiday Breakfast Club was born."

To listen to Brooklands196 you need a phone, tablet or computer that can access the internet. Simply open your internet app, go to the brooklands196.com website and press play on the 'Listen live' Player which you'll find halfway down the page. You can also hear the Brooklands196 podcast via the podcast page on the brooklands196.com website.

Meanwhile, Mike hopes that other Circles will follow Brooklands' example.

"In order to attract younger members into the organisation, it is imperative that Circles formulate a communications plan that includes all forms of digital media."



*Mike with his lucky mascot*