



# DJ peeps up the airwaves

**B**AY radio's DJ Pep, 32, puts his big career break down to one thing. "Fate!" he says.

He explains that he was working in a shop and DJing at night when he was "discovered" by Bay radio's John Gilmore — best known to most listeners as "Gilly".

Ten years ago, Pep was working in a shop at Pontins by day and as a club DJ by night.

"One day in the shop I was listening to Preston based Rock FM and they were doing a charity appeal for Children of the North West.

"I called in and said I would donate £450 to the charity if they would let me do a one hour show on the radio."

The challenge was accepted and Morecambe-based Pep phoned up the local Bay radio station to ask if he could get a bit of experience in their studios before his big day.

"I spoke to Gilly and told him the score and he told me to come down for a few days," he says.

Some time later, after doing the Rock FM show, Pep got a call from Gilly asking him to send a demo tape to the Bay offices. "That man is a top guy and a legend.

"Within a week I was on air," Pep says happily, adding, "These things are just meant to happen."

Pep started off on Bay doing a Saturday night dance show but these days hosts the morning show at the weekends from 6am to 10am — while still DJing at nightclubs in the evenings.

It makes for an exhausting lifestyle. "I'll often DJ somewhere like Manchester on a Friday night, drive home in the early hours, get a shower and go into the station around 5am.

"The first thing I do is have about 10 cups of strong coffee," he laughs.

He plans his weekend shows about a week ahead, choosing the tracks to play and also flicking through the national papers daily to pick up bits of news and gossip to discuss on air.

"I am the first to admit I am not gifted academically. I may not have any O levels but I do have a personality."

And it is his whacky, off beat personality that has made him increasingly popular with his breakfast show listeners.

"Bay radio have been good enough to realise that I like to get on and do my own thing to an extent — with

## I love my job

**DJ PEP** wakes us up with a smile on his weekend morning show on Bay radio

Interview by CLAIRE HIGH

some barriers in place of course!

"I like to keep the show young and boppy."

Over the years Pep has had a stream of celebrities guesting on the show, from jazz singer Stacy Kent to magician Paul Daniels, *Crackerjacks*, Stu Francis and singer Curtis Stigers.

"Some people ask why I get so many Z list celebrities on?"

"But they are not Z list to me, they are the people I grew up with."

But his callers are just as important to Pep as the stars he has on the show.

"In this job you must leave your ego at the door and talk to people in the same way you would to your friend."

"I love the energy that comes from talking to ordinary people."

"It gives me a real thrill to think that every morning I am laying next to a lady in her bed somewhere... on the radio of course!"

"I am there in people's homes and cars."

In his years at the Bay Pep has been constantly grabbing headlines.

First with his proposal to girlfriend Natalie in front of thousands of people at Robbie Williams's Knebworth concert, then with an appearance on Anne Robinson's *Weakest Link*.

"I got voted off first and that's the only way to do it," he laughs.

Most recently he's been doing a special called "Pep for Hire" at the Bay — to raise cash for Tsunami victims.

For a month local people have rented out Pep's services to do a range of tasks — from calling bingo to cleaning a bull's den and even taking a dip in the freezing waters of Coniston.

His efforts look set to raise around £5,000.

"Getting out and meeting people like that — it's what it's all about."

"I am like this 24/7 — what you see is what you get."

"I was born with something, I can make people smile and I have been lucky to be able to share it with other people on the show and make people forget their problems for four hours