

## learning curve

"When I was with The Doug Anthony Allstars and we were living and working in London, we were regular guests on this program called *Viva Cabaret*. We had a wrap party after the first season and were all drinking in this old English pub, which was part of the set. Tom Jones, who was the host of the show, was down one end of the bar with his son, who is also his manager, and another guy, and they were singing old rhythm and blues songs and having a whale of a time. I was at the other end of the pub talking with some girls from the production team who suggested I get out my guitar and play along with Tom. They started chanting for me to do it, going: 'Richard! Richard! Richard!' I was hugely embarrassed and thought better of it at first, but another part of me thought it would be cool to jam with Tom. So I pulled out my guitar – the girls went, 'hooray!' – and started trying to pick up chords. Tom was singing *You Never Miss Your Water (Till The Well Runs Dry)* and as I started trying to play along with him, he just gave me the filthiest look. Then he just started saying, 'no that's the wrong chord,' 'that's wrong too,' and 'no, that's not right either,' and I realised that I'd better leave him to it. The lesson I learnt on that occasion was that just because people want you to do something, doesn't mean you should do it. I really should have gone with my gut feeling."



**Kings of comedy ...** from left, Richard Fidler reflects on his career choices; forming the 'unholy trinity' with Tim Ferguson and Paul McDermott; and as host of the *Race Around the World* series



them, and they parted ways to follow separate television careers.

Richard became host of the ABC's popular *Race Around The World* program, among other things, eventually working behind the scenes developing comedy for ABC TV.

He was comedy unit manager before coming to Brisbane, where he started his evening gig on 612 a month ago.

"I think three years in management was probably enough for me," he says, with an ambiguous look.

"Besides, I had wanted to work in radio and had filled in a bit for Tony Delroy on the *Nightlife* program over the hols and loved it.

"Sitting there, talking about all sorts of interesting things each night seemed like the best job in the world to me.

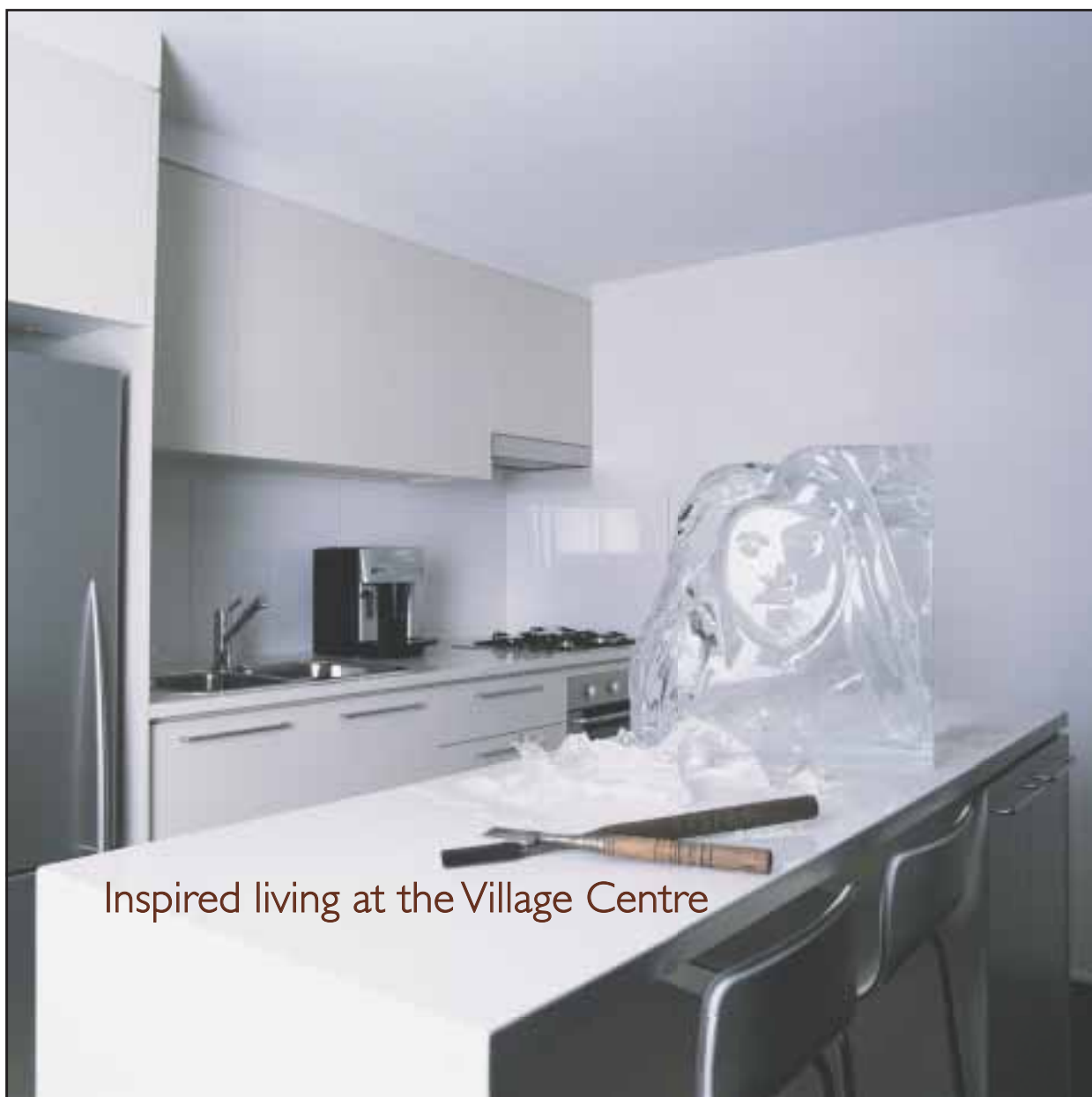
"So when I was offered the job at 612, I jumped at it. Plus my wife Khym's parents live here and we've got two kids – Joe, 5, and Emma, 2 – so the prospect of free babysitting was just way too appealing."

Chatting with Richard, you can see why he was

sometimes dubbed the nice guy of the DAAS trio, but the satirical edge does rear its head on occasions, like when I enquire about the bruise on his forehead, which he explains he received getting hammered by a wave while swimming at the Gold Coast.

"Yes, got slightly dumped," he says blandly, adding with a bit of DAAS-like vehemence: "Almost broke my f---ing neck."

Richard Fidler can be heard on 612 ABC Brisbane each week night from 7-9pm.



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