

Hans Knot International Radio Report Spring 2023

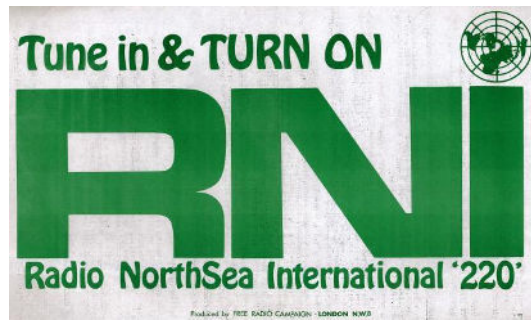
Welcome everybody to another edition of the report. Already two months have gone since last edition and a lot of information has come my way including e mails, memories, questions, photos and more. So let's start. Here from Australia a late response on the Christmas edition of the International Radio Report. Maybe it brings back some memories for the other readers too as Bryan brings back items in telexform.

'Thanks Sir Hans: I enjoyed the story of the mast-rigging on the MV Mi Amigo in last issue. Back in the day, I also used to listen to RNI's hit list. And I remember the mix of DJ languages. My high school taught me English, Latin and French. While Arts students could do Greek and German. But nobody there thought we might use Dutch!

I am reading the sleuthing of an old orchestral recording. Which reminds me of the multi-story building where my ham radio club met. To get to the stairwell, we had to traverse behind a deafening brass-band! Typing Dutch text into a Web-translator, helps.

I notice in the old photos, dated customs: smoking indoors, and car occupants without seat-belts! Wow, and the photos of old radios bring back memories! The mentioned retro museum ([link](#)), is interesting also. In those days, electronic-appliances looked like furniture! And I had a reel-to-reel recorder then. Wow, polished-wood!

Not forgetting the information about the Welsh Internet radio outfit, which was interesting news to read. I am enjoying the stories accompanying historical photos, in linked pages. Old swimwear looks doggy! People have their radios with them. I used to listen almost exclusively to RNI. So its old photos bring back memories.



A film movie-camera, is a relic! Thank you once again. Bryan in Canberra, Australia.'

Well Bryan good to read you still enjoy several subjects in the radio report and thanks for responding.

Mike Lane responded on last issue and a non radio related subject:

'Great content as always. I have watched the TV station 'That's 60s' as mentioned in the newsletter but it is spoilt by mainly relying on live performances. Unlike 192TV from Holland, which I can get here in the UK, which has much better content.'

45 photos are now in the Offshore Radio Archive related to Caroline in the Seventies made by Maestro Photographer Theo Dencker.

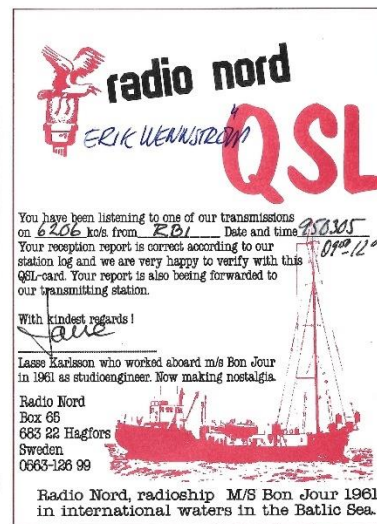
https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72157713566262982?fbclid=IwAR38Imyli2Is1CAW-hYPPntje9RSytwvYPI_ZMJsB3sJyW5Qz6U35FKJqKQ

E-mail time from Sweden with Eric Wennström: 'Hello, I took a photo of the attached Radio Nord souvenir playlist at a private radio collection which we visited with the local HAM-club. If you run the song titles through Google Translate then you will notice a theme among the song titles. The list was the last one transmitted at the station as far as I can understand.'



Click to enlarge

Also please find attached a QSL-card for the shortwave pirate Radio Nord active in the mid-90's of last century. The programs were produced by a former technician onboard MV Bonjour.



Sad to hear about the passing of Connie Enhörning, I spent a week in December 2009 at the former Radio Syd QTH operating CW as C56SMT.

73
Eric
SM1TDE'

Thanks a lot Eric for sharing this wonderful memories to Radio Nord, the station was far ahead from other offshore projects in Europe.

Klaus Quirini, who was born on 19 April 1941 died at the age of 81 on 17th of March 2023 in Aachen, Germany. In 1959, under the stage name DJ Heinrich, Quirini was one of the first moderating disc jockeys at the Aachen Scotch Club, probably the first disco in Germany. As a reminder, I'd like to take you back to Klaus Quirini, whose name can certainly be associated with RNI's tune 'Man Of Action' by Les Reed and his Orchestra.

It was Ad Roland, who was involved in the preparations of RNI in 1969, who told me years ago that Meister and Bollier, the Swiss owners of the radio station, had been given a copy of 'The Man of Action' from the Les Reed Orchestra by Quirini with the message to give it a listen as it would be a great tune for a radio station.

Admittedly, the man could not have made a better choice. But who was this Quirini? Well, he was born in Germany in 1941 and, after finishing school, served an internship at a magazine publishing house. He also profiled himself as a deejay and even claimed to be the first freely improvising deejay in Germany to perform in a club/dance bar, making him, even before the name discotheque became widespread, the first 'Discotheque-Disk-Jockey'. This was in 1959 - the man was nineteen years old at the time - at the Scotch Club in Aachen, which was then known not as a discotheque but as a 'Jockey-Tanz-Bar'.

As a schoolboy, he was already editor-in-chief of the school magazine 'Welt der Jugend' in 1955 and later became editor of the boulevard magazine 'Die Schnauze', among others. In 1963, Quirini, who later meant a lot to the music industry, was at the cradle of the DDO, the organisation of German deejays (Deutsche Disk-Jockey Organisation). From that position, he in turn published magazines such as 'DDO Nachrichten' and 'Discotheken Rundschau'. In 1967, an LP was released on the Vogue label, on which he talked the songs together. According to Quirini himself, this was again the first time this had happened in the history of the record industry.

In 1968, he came into contact with Lüthi and Gschwendt because he was working as a deejay for about three months at that time in the - again - first disco on Swiss soil, the 'Playground' which was based in Zurich. Quirini's pursuits made it into the local newspaper, which attracted the attention of Lüthi and Gschwendt. The two gentlemen approached Quirini and managed to involve him in their planned offshore radio station project. They tried to bring the *MV Galaxy* back into international waters with a radio station aimed at German youth, about which more in another nostalgic retrospective soon.



Consequently, Quirini's personal record states: '1968: programme leader on board the Radio Nordsee International transmission ship.' Well, that may have been true on paper, but in reality it really wasn't as the station never came on the air from the *Galaxy*. Indeed, when the project was abandoned by Lüthi and Gschwendt, that also marked the end of Quirini's involvement. He was, however, involved in attempts to get the *Galaxy*, Radio London's former transmitting ship, back out to sea but that ship remained safely in Hamburg harbour at the time.

Review

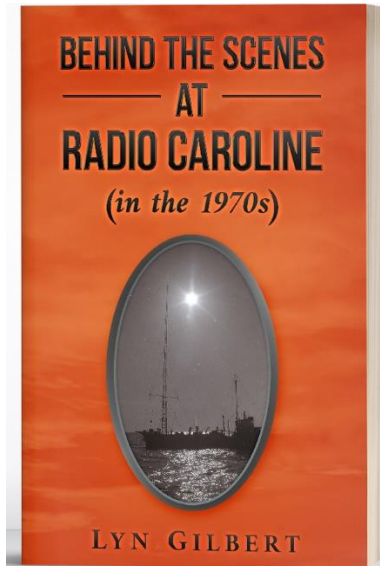
Behind the Scenes at Radio Caroline (in the 1970's)

Author: Lyn Gilbert

ISBN 978-1-9999334-8-7

Published by Woolloomooloo 2023 (Copyright 2022)

267 pages, illustrated



The first proper book on the history of the legendary Radio Caroline was published in 1967 under the slogan: 'It's all in the magic book'. Australian-born Lyn Gilbert wrote in the introduction to her book that countless books have since been written on the subject, noting that the total story will never be written. Nevertheless, she has decided to do her own bit by sharing with readers her experiences with Ronan O'Rahilly and Radio Caroline. And this will be a revelation to many followers of the legendary station.

She met Ronan in 1973 at a party at the home of Ronan's right-hand in the 1960s, Oonagh, from whom she rented a flat. During that party, Ronan appeared to be impressed by Lyn Gilbert and made several attempts to win her over. He wanted her to work for him but she saw more in a career as a 'a teacher of dance and history'. And so it became a college application to make the dream come true.

But Ronan kept calling her and, when moving house, managed to find her again and again. And eventually Ronan was successful and, as was

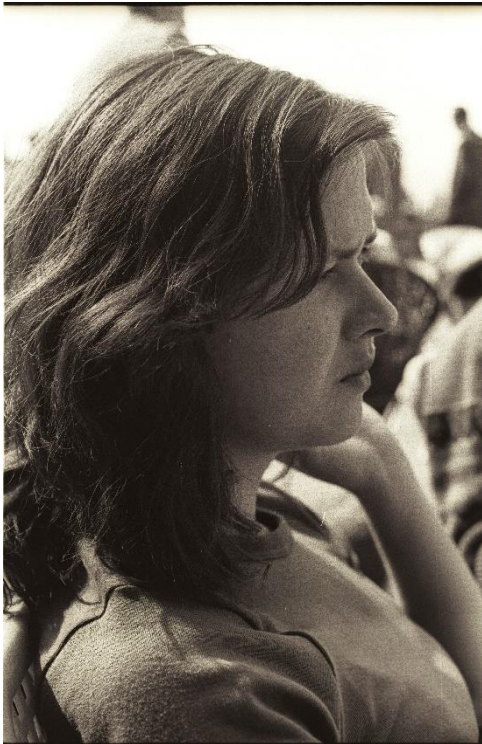
often done by others, she went to work for him in late 1974 for a meagre wage. Initially, she was hired as the final financial officer for the film company 'Research Educational Systems Ltd', which had been set up. Lyn also visited record companies to pick up new releases for Radio Caroline before and was given the responsible task of smuggling money by plane to and from places like Liechtenstein and Amsterdam. Money that arrived in London was mainly for payment to deejays and technicians, with it becoming clear that a small number were given access to Ronan and others were not.

Entertaining and also sad is the story of how Lyn was sent to Sheffield with young James Ross by Ronan with the aim of fulfilling a promise to a close friend. Mission to buy or order copies of the latest Elton John LP from all the record shops established there. Goal to influence sales figures. The same would be done by other teams in various cities. The overnight stay in Sheffield had more unpleasant consequences.

She was also involved in the project of the band that did not yet have a name but later became known as Loving Awareness, and in which Ronan had a thick hand. He even went so far as to attempt to dissolve a budding relationship between band member Charlie Charles and Lyn at one point because it was not good for the group's developments. Lyn narrates extensively about this project about which not too much has been revealed in the past.

Very entertaining is the chapter about Ronan using, or abusing, phone lines, changed numbers, seldom paid bills and used other people's phone lines to call for hours. Also, the story about a mysterious 'Bob' who claimed to be from the Home Office and reported as a mole that investigations into Ronan and his were going to happen is totally new to me.

Lyn, who briefly had a more than friendly relationship with James Ross, also recounts from his letters to her showing that there was plenty of discontent aboard the *Mi Amigo* and a lack of everything. Living conditions on board during part of 1977 were so bad that Samantha and cook Anne decided to go ashore via a fishing boat. It became a three-week trip before they were finally brought ashore in a port.



Samantha Dubois collection Rob Olthof

But there are more stories in the book about failed attempts to reach the broadcast ship. For example, Lyn recounts that a second consecutive attempt with a tender failed and large quantities of meat had to be buried in her garden. This led to a visit by the police, who had been informed of the burial.

Besides the Caroline event, she also delves into other O'Rahilly projects in which she was involved. Among others, the film project around John F. Kennedy, the connection with George Harrison as well as the 'Caroline Homes' project are discussed in detail. The stories reveal that Ronan could be quite manipulative financially and often

failed to honour agreements made. Many claimed that Ronan was only to be glorified. Some years ago, it was even suggested that he should be nominated for a high British award but if the average listener has read this book, the other side of Ronan O'Rahilly will already become clear. And to think that in the period up to 1991, the British government spent a huge amount of time and money tracking all movements within the Caroline organisation. Millions of pounds was poured into it of which Lyn Gilbert rightly reports that if this amount had been freed up for Radio Caroline there would have been a well-organised station where it could have run well on a commercial basis and the staff could also have enjoyed a good salary.

The above information alone makes it clear to us that we are dealing with filling a gap in Radio Caroline's history. This book certainly belongs on the bookshelf where all those other books about the legendary radio station are.

Here is more information for readers in England:

https://www.rossrevenge.com/promotions/?fbclid=IwAR0_KXzcCK-rHRxDU7EulMiIsHj4ndBbtjkVNuzfYOclplx8uKt3odQP30

And here for people in the Benelux:

https://shop.rockart.nl/product/behind-the-scenes-at-radio-caroline-lyn-gilbert-engelstalig-boek/?fbclid=IwAR1C2u5IyOlw8daQ_N5EfC_kMfK9Kfc-AJKO1GFMshd_Aedu7uVZFL8Tovs

Hans Knot

Next it's time for Jon Myer: 'Hi, I have updated The Pirate Radio Hall of Fame.

Over the 23 years that this website has been operating one of the most regularly asked questions has been "what happened to Bill Hearne after the end of 'Caroline Cash Casino'?" This month correspondent Trevor Enefer provides the answer; plus we review a

new book by Lyn Gilbert which looks "Behind the Scenes" at Radio Caroline in the seventies. I hope you find it interesting.

www.offshoreradio.co.uk

Radio Pluggers Presents Emperor Rosko With A Lifetime Achievement Award For Services To Radio And Media.

'The World's First Superstar DJ'

Congratulation Emperor Rosko and thank you for the many years of incredible radio!

California, USA, March 20th: His voice reaches millions of listeners every week and he has been doing this for a long time, Radio pluggers have taken a poll and the result is final, the hardest-working long-time radio personality award goes to the Emperor Rosko, who broadcasted off Vietnam on the USS coral sea in the '60s to Radio Caroline, Luxembourg, and Radio One and who now syndicates around the world. We asked the ladies at The Kilt in California if they would do the honors. Read more:

<https://www.einpresswire.com/article/623219246/radio-pluggers-presents-emperor-rosko-with-a-lifetime-achievement-award-for-services-to-radio-and-media?fbclid=IwAR3Ja147urpdcjOkek34WCmdWboMkdRX-ujmxYqelVg577EjesNDbHqlhmw>



March 21st: Today I received the message from Carrie Brennan from Suffolk in England asking if I would like to announce to our beloved offshore radio world that she has sadly parted ways with her husband Shaun Brennan as he passed away last Monday. Shaun was a decades-long follower of the offshore radio stations we love and a prolific collector of books, recordings and much more. I myself had been in regular contact with him since the late 1980s. May he rest in peace.

Review: 'Thank you for the music'.



It is wonderful to be gifted with a strong memory. People sometimes remember where one was when a certain event took place. I myself have this with various topics, but especially those focused on the field of radio history. Such is the case with the official launch of Laser 558, an American-tinged radio station, which took place on 24th of May 1984.

Similar to the relaunch of Radio Caroline in August 1983, I also remember exactly where I heard the first official sounds of Laser 558. It's actually not that hard to bring up because on that particular Thursday I couldn't get time off. The day before, I already took one of my recorders and a good transistor radio to my work at the University of Groningen. I looked for the best possible

spot in the building so that a somewhat good signal could be received and recorded for the archive.

And what a surprise it was that a tight format, 'never more than a minute away from music' was played with short announcements, wonderfully good-sounding jingles and a wonderfully assembled deejay team. It was clear to me within a few days that from then on Laser 558 would be on much more often than on its direct competitor at sea, Radio Caroline. How much we enjoyed the ensuing period, during which the station was able to win over millions of listeners in Western Europe and a number of commercial radio stations in England got tremendously bad listening figures as a result of the popularity of Laser 558 and later Laser Hot Hits.

A very long period without commercials, promises from the New York organisation for big advertisers on 558, but most of all opposition from the authorities. Eventually it was the Dioptric Surveyor, a boat deployed by the government, that had to ensure that any kind of supply to the used radio ship MV Communicator, was made impossible.

After a long time with broken transmitter masts, towing in into national waters, government seizure and more, the radio ship finally came into the hands of an organisation, involving Ray Anderson - who we knew from Jumbo Records and East Anglian Productions. The result was a relaunch under the banner Laser Hot Hits.

And let the same Ray Anderson regale us with a more than surprising collection of jingles, promos, songs, clips and more from both Laser stations from his vast jingle collection. It even includes jingles that never made it to the airwaves. A double CD that certainly belongs in any collection of fans of the offshore radio stations. Below is a link

to an overview of the material presented and how the CD box, including a 32-page booklet, can be ordered.

http://www.radiofab.com/itemdetails.php?search_format=AUDIO&recordid=198

For the Benelux it's easier to get your own copy:

<https://shop.rockart.nl/product/laser-558-laser-hot-hits-jingles-production-hit-kit-2-cds/>

Hans Knot, April 2023.

March 21st Johnny Lewis reported: '43 years ago this week our beloved Radio Ship Mi Amigo sank in a storm off the Kent Coast after many years broadcasting. Her loving spirit looking after everyone on board kept us all safe. That March day in 1980, everyone involved with Radio Caroline knew we would be back, it took till 1983, but back Radio Caroline came.



I was just thinking if someone had have said to me then: "do you know lad, in the year 2023 you will still be on Caroline, still broadcasting from a ship, as well as land base studio's, not only that, you'll have a UK broadcasting licence, and it will be on an ex BBC frequency, (648khz) and in Stereo around the world". Think like most I would have said "don't be stupid, your having a laugh, more chance of ET getting home, and England winning the World Cup again! Like many who worked on this wonderful ship, it's 43 years since she left us, but I

still shed a tear for her this time every year, Radio Caroline is known as The First Lady Of Radio, and this boat was one very special Lady!

Thanks for reminiscing true words Johnny!

Let me take you back to October 1963 when, in the Netherlands too, the government consisted of men in mostly black suits who seemed very conservative and only wished to comment politically if it benefited themselves. So it could happen that one of the broadcasting organisations, the KRO, wished to get a comment from ministers Scholtens and Van Aartsen via the television programme Brandpunt. They wanted to know why no action was still being taken against the 'illegal' radio broadcasts carried out by Radio Veronica.

Of course, we lived in a totally different time. It was not a matter of just walking into the Binnenhof in The Hague, where the government is housed, with a mobile camera and meeting the minister and then shoving a microphone under his/her nose and asking the question.

No in advance of a scheduled interview, the questions always had to be submitted to one of the senior officials within the relevant ministry, after which there would be a positive response or not. Of course, regular press conferences were provided from the government offices but even at those meetings it could be a stiff and rigid affair.



In any case, then, it turned out on the 20th October 1963 that both the aforementioned ministers refused to appear before the camera

of the programme Brandpunt. The editors of the programme had invited both ministers to the Hilversum studio to appear in the television programme of this current affairs section. They simply announced that, at the time, they saw no point at all in commenting on Radio Veronica's broadcasts.

The people at the KRO, the Catholic broadcasting, apparently thought differently. They showed in Brandpunt a filmed reportage with the Veronica radio ship floating around on the North Sea. Curiously, it was revealed that the footage had been shot by VPRO director Almar Tjepkema.

Also appearing on screen was a Danish minister, who had been interviewed in Geneva and was asked for his opinion. This one replied, "It violates the Convention on Human Rights and the Geneva Convention." It is assumed that this one meant that the broadcasts should not be tolerated.

The editors added in Brandpunt that they found it unreasonable that a simple laborer from Twente, who used an illegal low-power transmitter, was convicted by the judge while at the same time Veronica was left alone and could continue its broadcasts. The immediate reason for the report was that from then on, it was apparently also possible to broadcast commercial television from an artificial platform off the coast.



This referred to reports in the press at the time that such a project, which went down in history as RTV Noordzee in 1964, would be realised, an undertaking in which the aforementioned Tjepkema was also involved. Brandpunt's editors interviewed a specialist who made it clear that the aforementioned plans were unlikely to take off, as starting up and implementing them would involve far too high costs.

At the time, the report ended with the editorial comment that setting up such a project was possible: "It is possible one could even build a chain of amusement arcades and prohibited establishments outside territorial waters without legal intervention."

The then VVD deputy in the Lower House, Mrs. Van Someren-Downer, was willing to give her opinion on all this. It turned out that while she may not have welcomed the whole situation, she tolerated it nonetheless, and that was because at that time no majority had been found in the Netherlands to allow commercial broadcasting. And so, for at least another decade, it appeared that the VVD reacted in a different way on this issue from the other parties in the Lower House at the time.

Let's have a night out from the past:

Often, when listening back to old archive recordings, the Radio London and Radio Caroline broadcasts pass by and it becomes clear that at some point the management of both stations felt it was important to also reach out to listeners by organising 'a night out' or a 'fan ball' and more. When it comes to Radio Veronica, it was first the Oranjebal and dance parties as well as the disco shows with the mobile disco that followed one another. But still, this station was already active at a much earlier stage to engage its listeners.

For instance, the station organised talent competitions in which the Rotterdam-based formation The Rocking Thunders was declared as all the first winners in May 1964. An article, which appeared in Televizier

at the time, did state that the victory was mainly due to The Rocking Thunders' fan club. In fact, the members had expressed a preference en masse and sent it by postcard to Veronica in Hilversum.

The final evening of the talent show was held in Zwijndrecht and at the end of the meeting the winners were presented with the Veronika cup by the then mayor of Zwijndrecht, Mr Slobbe. It was also announced that, given the success of the talent show, Veronica's management planned to organise several of these evenings in the future.



A feather in the cap was given by the Televizier journalist to the people who were active behind the scenes: Arnold Vis and André de Vries, who had partly transformed the building being used, 'the Vonkenberg', into a studio. Also mentioned were Cees van Zijtveld as recording manager and Chiel Montagne as director.

A couple of Wednesdays after the closing nights, Radio Veronica's Wednesday afternoon programme covered the talent show and recordings were performed. And The Rocking Thunders temporarily changed their name to Anno 66 and, in various formations, still

performed occasionally in Rotterdam and the surrounding area after fifty years.



Photo: Archive Dutch Sixties Beatgroups

Next thing is a promo for another book about radio and will be published this summer. Another Ray Clark first!

ADVANCE INFORMATION POPUBLISHING

STAY TUNED - *I could say something brilliant at any moment!*

Ray Clark

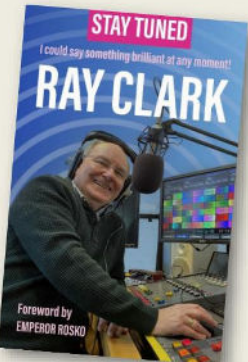
What a 'fab' time to grow up. The 1960's and 1970's were decades overflowing with the most exciting music and more and more radio to hear it on.

Hooked on "the wireless" before he was even a teenager, Ray Clark's carefree childhood ambition was to one day just play records on the radio.

Packed full of vivid memories and entertaining stories, Ray's biography, *Stay Tuned*, sees him navigate a long and happy journey to make his broadcasting dream come true.

After climbing aboard the legendary Radio Caroline, a successful, award-winning career in commercial and BBC radio followed, presenting prestigious breakfast shows on pirate, BBC, commercial, community and American radio. With tens of thousands of hours of radio shows over four decades behind the microphone, and award-winning documentaries to his name, Ray has interviewed hundreds of household names - another terrific source of anecdotes for this book.


Ray Clark can still be heard every week worldwide on Radio Caroline, BBC Radio Kent, Suffolk, Norfolk and BBC Essex in the UK, and regularly on KDKA Pittsburgh and other American radio stations. Away from the studio, he has written two books: *Radio Caroline - The True Story of the Boat That Rocked* and *The Great British Woodstock - The Incredible story of the Weeley Festival 1971*. He lives in Burnham on Crouch with his wife Shelley and has lost not one jot of enthusiasm for his childhood dream of 'playing records on the radio'.



"...a wonderful memory of my afternoon with the Bee Gees. "Do you take sugar in your tea Ray?" asked Barry Gibb, as he filled the delicate china cup in the small serving area of their plush suite."

"I don't know if Sir George Martin was aware of what I'd done - he didn't say, and I wasn't about to tell one of the world's best music producers that I'd forgotten to turn the tape recorder on!"

To pre-order a copy of Ray's book, signed and dedicated by the author, please email poppublishing@gmail.com for further info

Publication date 1st June 2023
Price £11.99
Format 198 x 129 mm
Binding Paperback
Extent 350 pages
Illustrated throughout 

Early March I put an upload on good quality from the Caroline Revival Hour as transmitted 54 years ago in presentation of the late Don Allen on Radio Andorra. Some days later it was Paul Bailey who brought some background information: 'The Caroline Revival Hour was sponsored by some continental listeners to Radio Caroline. A booklet, aimed at raising money to pay for regular programmes, was produced - the late Roy Patrick of Derby, who was a regular DX news contributor to Practical Wireless magazine and the Radio New York Worldwide DX programme, sent me a copy of the leaflet. I may still have it somewhere. The project failed because the reception in the target area - England - turned out to be very poor due to the crowded nature of the medium wave band at night at the time.'



Artists visits to the offshore radio stations is updated. Now 921 names are included. If you know more names mention it please to HKnot@home.nl

The idea for this list came from Martin van der Ven after listening to one of the last shows from Keith Skues in September 2020 when Keith mentioned some of the names of artists who visited the Mi Amigo from Caroline South in the sixties. With this new list we mention not only those who visited a radio ship, but also the studios on land or even presented a program. Mentioning for being on a roadshow or other venue, organized by an Offshore station, are also in this list. If so the item will be mentioned 'outside'. Up to the

readers to make this list as complete as possible. Please name the artist, the station's name as well as it was on land or at sea.

Download the list here:

<https://hansknot.com/features/Pop%20Stars%20aboard.pdf>

Gavin McCoy wrote an interesting article filled with memories when International RadioDay took place earlier this year on February 13th.

'My love affair began with this marvelous medium began when I was just a kid. I was banished to the dining room at my auntie's house, whilst the adults talked endlessly about the war. I fired up the old valve radio and tuned up and down the dial. In those far off days the tuning scale featured exotic places such as Hilversum, Reykjavik and Athlone.

It was a kind of geography and language lesson. I soon found the Voice of America, AFN (the American Forces Network) and Luxy 208, and later my real radio awakening came with the arrival of the 1960's 'pirates'.

The inspiration of the broadcasts from boats anchored off the coast really cemented my ambition and kindled my imagination.

"Mum and dad I want to be a DJ!"

My very first appearance on air was at BBC Radio Oxford, helping an American DJ called 'Peanuts' circa 1970. Since then, I've been lucky enough to work for Israel's Voice of Peace in the middle of the Mediterranean, and Radio Kuwait. Also many BBC and commercial stations in the north and south. As a manager, I've programmed some great London, national and international stations. I have had some wonderful mentors and guides.



I'm truly blessed that my voice has 'imaged and identified' countless radio stations here and abroad. Too many to mention, but it includes Norway, Netherlands, Thailand, Caymen Islands, USA and Australia, and of course from Radio Tay to the Isles of Scilly here in the UK.

My crazy character voices on BBC R1 are still remembered today. Some of my teenage radio heroes became treasured employees and friends, and I'm still dabbling with audio and making stuff for radio stations virtually every day. I've made some great radio friends and worked in some wonderful places.

I'm lucky enough to be able to nowadays give a little 'radio talk', and in the next few weeks I'm delivering it in Banbury and Southend on Sea. So let's raise a glass and say cheers today, to the people who made radio and to those who listened to it. It's a perfect partnership.



A new series of photographs has been added to our offshore radio archive on Flickr. This time from the collection donated by Rina Haver and featuring RNI's Dick de Graaf as well as photos he took during his time on the MEBO II

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720306177458>

On our SMC FB Spot recently we published some photos from 1980 and one of these was captain Harris sitting in the Caroline studio. After publishing the photo one of the people reflecting was Chris Garrod: 'He was allegedly on the MV Hosanna (Radio Caroline tender), which disappeared on February 16th. 1980 in the English Channel off Dover (presumed sunk, but no wreckage ever found). There were reports of her being seen off the coast of Flushing. Holland, and various other locations after she had disappeared.

I was asked by a relative of the skipper Germain Ackx, to look into her disappearance. What I discovered was a connection with a certain Irishman in Cornwall that was involved in some very dubious dealings. Which allegedly involved gun running for the IRA, and drug running. What I discovered would make a book, the involvement of Devon and Cornwall Police, the Police in Flushing, Holland, the Daily Express Chief Reporter at the time. I have another picture of Captain Harris on the deck of the Mi Amigo, which was sent to the Police in Cornwall. The information we came across was that Captain Harris was wanted in Belgium for the murder of an ex Radio Mi Amigo DJ, that was found dead on Ostende Beach. Unfortunately I am not a liberty to reveal all I know. The Irishman in Cornwall was connected to the fishing vessel Pescado which sank some years later.



Hosanna stranded by Scheveningen. Photo: Hans Joachim Backhus

This Irishman therefore ended up going to prison over. He seemed to like having his vessels sink. The Virginia Rose, was another and he was allegedly involved with another fishing vessel that sank off the North Kent coast.'

When reflecting with the question who was the dead Mi Amigo deejay, as I didn't recall anything at all about this incident, Chris came back with: 'I can't remember off hand only that it was claimed it was a Radio Mi Amigo DJ. I will have a look in my Hosanna file to see if I made a note of it. It would have been in 1979 when the person's body was found on Ostende Beach. I'm sure it would have been in the local Ostende newspapers at the time. If I find the name I will let you know.'

So reading the answer there came more memories and so I wrote: the only victim from those days was Bart Verlaar (Bart van der Laar) who did some programs for the station. He was also a record producer. But it was not earlier than 1981 that he was killed.

And again Chris came back with more info: no that wasn't the name. Maybe it wasn't a Radio Mi Amigo DJ. All I know is it was said to be a crime of passion and that Captain Harris (obviously not his real name) was wanted in connection with the dead body of a man found on Ostende Beach, which was ruled by the Belgian Police as murder, and that there was a connection with Radio Mi Amigo, and victim was a DJ. But it was never proven 100% it was a DJ.

I think the information originally came from Cornwall Police. I was in contact with D.C. Dave Sutton and another officer. They even traveled to Ipswich to look for Captain Harris, when reports surfaced that he was working on a fishing trawler there. His photo was shown to other trawler crews, who claimed they had seen him. But as I do not have access to any of the Police reports/files. The Devon and Cornwall Police Fraud Department only became interested in the Hosanna when it left the Port of Plymouth leaving large sums of money owed in unpaid repair bills.

The vessel was supposedly owned by the Irishman Joe O'Connor of Minerva Fisheries. The original Belgian crew remained on board who were Germain Ackx, his son Piet, Hector Snaewert, and two others. One supposedly being Captain Harris. The year before the Hosanna had struck a sandbank near Scheveningen harbor, and was deemed unseaworthy due to damage done whilst hitting the Sandbank. Westcoasting in Holland a ship broker contacted another Company in Ramsgate in England called Norse Shore Marine looking for someone to buy the vessel.

The owner of Norse Shore Marine knew Joe O'Connor and contacted him about financing/buying the Hosanna but only if he kept the original Belgian crew. I believe the owner of Westcoasting in Holland was a guy called Herbert Westervall, and I gave somewhere the details of the Hosanna information sheet his company produced. I believe originally the Hosanna was owned by Germain Ackx wife, and that Germain had no permission to sell the vessel. That's what I was

told, and it was her who made the claim against the English Insurance Company for the loss of the vessel.

I was informed of this by an employee of the Insurance Company, but was never able to establish if a payout was made. Who had insured the vessel with the English Insurance Company, but it seems odd that Germain Ackx wife made the claim, because if it had been sold illegally to Joe O'Connors Minerva Fisheries, surely the insurance would have been invalid. I asked the Insurance company if they had a photograph on file of the Hosanna, and they said they had one, which they sent me. I couldn't believe that the photo only showed the vessels wheelhouse and I questioned them about it, and they then said they no longer wanted to talk with me further about the issue, which I thought was odd. '

I finished it up with: thanks for the long in depth information. The insurance company of course normally only talk with those involved and that could be a reason they did not talk any longer with you. And so you as a reader you can give your opinions too versus:

Hknot@home.nl

A message from Ben Atkins is very interesting for jingles lovers:



A comprehensive selection of jingle packages and imaging used by Capital Radio/FM 'London' from 1973 through to 2022, happy listening! <https://radiojinglesonline.com/legends/capital-radio-fm-london/>

Message from Kenny Tosh late March: Hello Hans
Hope you're keeping well. Last week, my friend John Rosborough was in Brisbane and called to see Graham Webb. He's in great form and says hello to everyone. Kind regards Kenny.



Recently I posted a photo from a ship in Slough on our SMC Facebook Spot concerning the ill fated GBOK project. Jim Gordon never heard of this project and wanted to hear more. In 1999 I wrote an article about the planned station in our on line journal for media and music culture from the university Groningen. However it was written in my native language. I promised Jim to come with an English translation in the international radio report.

As in the Netherlands, plans for commercial offshore radio stations were made early on in the UK. Not all such initiatives were equally

successful. In the early 1960s, John Thompson developed the station The Voice of Slough, and in its wake came Canadian Arnold Swanson with his plans for the Great Britain OK (GBOK) station. Both ventures were serious in intent, but suffered shipwreck at an advanced stage. Hans Knot recounts his research into the failed attempts to get the transmitter ships out of port.

The Voice of Slough. On 10th of October 1961, a brief report surfaced in The Times about the arrival of a British offshore radio station. The newspaper reported that 42-year-old journalist, John Thompson from Slough, was planning to set up his own radio station. Thompson told the journalist in question, that for this purpose he had available a 70-tonne, 65-foot motorboat, previously used as a fishing boat. The future anchorage would be near the lightship The Nore, about three miles off the coast off Southend. As a detail, he informed that the transmissions with a power of 1 kW would be made over 980 kHz.



Thompson had sought collaboration for this project with Robert Colier, whom he appointed as co-director. The company was registered as The Voice of Slough Ltd. The company's address was

35 Beechwood Gardens, Slough, Buckinghamshire. A caravan had been set up as studio accommodation, which could also be used as a mobile studio. A second studio had also been set up in a house in Aylesbury. The plan was to go on air on December 1st that year.

Among other things, Thompson said, "Our ship is still in Scotland at the moment. That is also where the transmitter will be fitted, as otherwise we would have to do this right under the nose of the Postmaster General. As You can see, 'caution' plays a very important role with us."

For technical guidance and possible funding, Thompson had involved 56-year-old Arnold Swanson in the project. Swanson was from Canada and had made his fortune developing and marketing seatbelts. There was also a fourth person involved, one Leon Taylor, about whom nothing more became known during my research than that he had been appointed co-director of the project. Over the next few weeks, the station's name played an important role in the various newspapers. Besides Voice of Slough, the name GBLN was used, which stood for Great Britain London. The names Radio LN (Ellen) and Radio Elb also circulated.

On the broadcasting front itself, however, nothing happened yet. The start of the project was postponed and a new date of the first of January 1962 was mentioned. From one of the newspaper articles, it can be seen that the intention was to start that day at 6.30 in the morning with the sound of seagulls and the waves of the sea followed by the first announcement: 'With studios in Slough, Buckinghamshire, and transmitters at sea'.

Had the station actually gone on air then, it would have gone down in history as the first British offshore radio station. The same newspaper also reported that during peak hours, the advertising rate would come in at over 3 pounds for 25 words, around 30 guilders at the time. Programmes would consist of music and news, adding that all this would just make washing up more sociable.

It was written about Thompson that he had gone to Canada immediately after the war to earn his living as a saxophone player and that he spoke with a Canadian accent. The journalist quoted him: "I returned in April and feel that the station will be a success, not only as a profitable object but also as an object of communication between us and the listener. For example, we will make a special programme for the residents of Southend and the surrounding area and demonstrate

what community radio can be. We have now met with the mayor, who agrees with our plans. The Postmaster General is aware of our plans. The situation now is that we can own a transmitter without question but, after installation, the whole thing has to be checked by the authorities (GPO). Once we are at sea there will be three-man crew on the ship. all young married guys. Their job will be to guard the ship and will also be responsible for the progress of the programmes, which will be delivered on tape. The presenters themselves will do the technology for the programmes and will try as much as possible to come across as if the programme is being broadcast live from the ship. They are currently being trained by me as they are all inexperienced radio makers. Sometimes they are still too fluent and say banal things in the pilot programmes, but I will help them get rid of that."

That was apparently true, because on the wall of the studio, the newspaper reported, there were reminder cards pinned with the slogans: "Beware of clichés" and "Was that farmer really necessary?"



24009

voice of slough Ltd.

35 BEECHWOOD Gdns.
SLOUGH Bucks.

Sept 27, 1962.

Lars Nyden
Kallhall
Sweden.

33

Dear Lars:

I am sorry to be so long in replying to your kind letter about GBLN.


Our ship is held up by British Customs authorities on a technicality, and so we have not yet been able to begin regular program broadcasting.

We are trying now to free her from "red tape", and hope to be on the air on 306 Metres (960 kcs.) by mid-October.

The authorities are doing all possible to stop us.

I would be very glad to know what happened to Radio Nord, where Bon Jour is, and what laws were passed to stop her and Radio Mercur. Are both Mercur ships stopped?

Kind regards,


John Thompson.

JOHN J. THOMPSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR
ROBERT C. COLLIER, DIRECTOR
LEON TAYLOR, DIRECTOR
E. THOMPSON, SECRETARY

What was to be expected did happen: a reaction from the authorities, which in this case came from a spokesman for the GPO. He stated that they did not know what to make of this problem, which was unknown to them until then: "The broadcasting of radio stations is regulated through the allocation of frequencies at international level and any transmissions from ships violate these international rules. According to us, we can notify the country, where the ship is registered, that a violation is committed and then request the withdrawal of the ship's registration."

However, already the day after this statement had appeared in the newspapers, Thompson revealed that his lawyer had checked out the scheme and had told him that since his boat was a fishing boat, he did not have to register it at all. He also claimed that there were still countries, such as Monaco, that had nothing at all to do with the international arrangements given they had not signed the agreement. So it would always be possible to register the boat with such a state. As a reason for still broadcasting illegally, rather than through the approval of the GPO and other authorities, Thompson gave that the supply of frequencies was much, much larger than the allocations issued by the ITU - the International Telecommunication Union. This, he said, already indicated that the international arrangements were an outright farce. Moreover, he claimed, applying for an official frequency would not be such a problem but would take months before a reply - probably negative - would be received.

Yet again, a GPO spokesman was quoted as saying, "As long as the station is not on air, we cannot do anything at all. Just how much trouble such a situation can cause is evident from the fact that Sweden and Denmark have recently announced measures against the offshore radio vessels operating there. However, until Finland wants to introduce such measures, nothing can be done against the stations."

A hopeful statement. Reports continued to appear in the British press over the following weeks, mainly of the same nature. Occasionally

there were some new things to read, including a hopeful statement from Thompson: "No one else has ventured such a project off the British coast before. There are also similar ships off the coast of the Netherlands and Sweden and they are extremely successful. So I hope we too will soon be able to say we are among the winners. Several industrialists, whom we have approached, have agreed to act as sponsors of the project. The programmes of The Voice of Slough will feature 6 minutes of commercials per hour. During the rest of the time, normal programmes will be provided and that 24/7. Besides the previously promised music, we also hope to come up with extensive news and current affairs programmes, which will eventually be available via radio to some 9 million countrymen."

A test broadcast? In April 1962, there was a report in the British press that a test broadcast had been heard in the Thames Estuary area regarding a station calling itself Radio LN, which had briefly been on air via the 306m. It is not clear whether this had anything to do with Thompson's project. Overall, why the Voice of Slough ultimately did not take off remains a mystery. Some clarification perhaps provides a letter written to Lars Ryden. In the 1960s, Ryden worked for the World Radio and TV Handbook. In addition to all legal stations, he also wrote to the organisations behind the offshore radio stations to get more data about them.

In early 1962, Ryden had addressed a letter to the Voice of Slough for that purpose. It was only on 27th of September that year that he received back, with apologies, a letter reporting that the organisation's radio ship had been detained by the British authorities due to technical defects, but that it was nevertheless hoped, after the civil service mill would have run its course, to get on air via the 306m. It was also reported that this could well be the case in October. But, even then, as far as the Voice of Slough was concerned, things remained grimly quiet on the 306m.

The only thing I could find myself about the possible problems was a note in a magazine, published by a group of DX'ers, reporting that a vessel, the MV Ellen, had been seized by the British authorities on 30th of August 1962, citing the Sweden Calling DX'ers programme as the source of information. From all this it may be clear that there were nevertheless very serious plans to start this station and that there were studios may be evident from the story of Keith Martin, who was to work for Radio Atlanta and later Radio Caroline in 1964. Martin, he told us, had been in contact with Thompson in 1961.

In an interview many years ago, he stated, "The first time I met Thompson, he reacted rather reluctantly. He thought I was an inspectorate official. Fortunately, he gained more and more confidence in me and eventually I was allowed to see his studios which were housed in a shelter right next to the local cemetery."

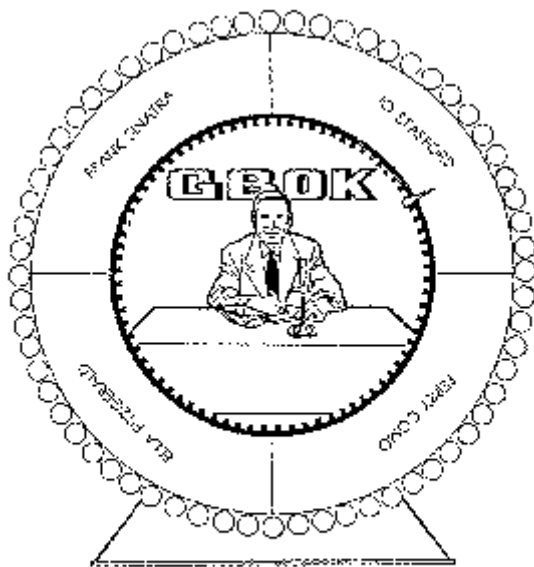


GBOK. The studios really existed and so the plans were quite serious. The little mouse even got a tailspin. When the Voice of Slough project threatened to go down the drain, its main backer, Canadian Arnold Swanson, decided to pull out and commit to a similar project, which he

would call GBOK. To do so, he purchased his own boat, a former 91-foot-long and 570-ton lightship. The first thing he did after that was to compile a colourful brochure, following the American and Canadian example, in which all information about the future station could be found. Besides all radio information, it also mentioned that the future ship, the Lady Dixon, would have a double function. Apart from being a broadcasting ship, it would also function as a lightship. By the way, the abbreviation GBOK stood for Great Britain OK.

Amalgamated Broadcasting Company. Swanson, who lived in Sir Olivier's former house, in Thame (Buckingshire), had already had studios set up in his house, which address was also registered as the home of the Amalgamated Broadcasting Company - as being the official owner of GBOK. Although owner, this company was deemed to have no influence on the programme brought to the public, but was totally responsible for the advertising airtime to be sold. Apart from his own home, Swanson used premises at 151 Fleet Street, London's newspaper street at the time.

Swanson's plans to establish the first offshore radio station off the British coast may also be taken seriously. Indeed, Ed Mereno, a very reliable deejay who would later join several stations, said that he had recorded programmes for GBOK for quite some time, for which he was paid no less than Fl. 50 a week, which in 1962 converted to some sloppy Fl. 500, so quite a lot for those days.



"I was approached by Swanson during a ballroom performance at Wembley Town Hall, where he asked me to start recording programmes for the project. I eventually agreed to his proposal and I was also given the task of building up contacts with record companies and possibly inviting artists to appear, as guests, in the programmes to be recorded. Swanson stated that in the initial period only taped programmes would be broadcast and only later

would they be presented live from the ship. The studios were located in the former stables of the huge house where he lived and state-of-the-art electronic equipment was everywhere in the house. Four days

a week I went to Buckinghamshire that way." An American accent. "Swanson persuaded me to adopt a slightly American accent when presenting as this could be more successful than the typical British style of presentation for the time. I then spent weeks recording programmes on a salary that was very good for the time but unfortunately the project never got off the ground. One of the stories I was told concerned the fact that one of the technicians had switched on the transmitter on board while the ship was still at Pitsea, in Essex. As a result, the authorities would have intervened after which the entire boat would have been confiscated."

GBOK's NEWS



6³⁰ AM to 9⁰⁰ AM

the 'wake-up' show



Yet ... Thompson and Swanson's attempts to get their stations Voice of Slough and GBOK on air ultimately failed. GBOK's ship now serves as a houseboat (see picture opposite). Still, we should take Thompson's and Swanson's initiatives seriously. In both cases, ships and studios were available. Their names are now forgotten. Still, suppose they had been luckier ... Would we now think back to Radio Slough or GBOK as enthusiastically as we do to Radio Caroline or Radio London?



The former GOBK ship in 1992. Photo John Platt.

Above article was earlier published in Dutch in the online Journal for Media and Music Culture University Groningen. Copyright Hans Knot.

March 27th Victor Pelli: Many Radio Northsea RNI fans frequently asked me what happened to Eva Pfister. (Eva Beckwith). I have sad news - I was told by her sister that she passed away some time ago after a long illness. After her time at the MEBO and RNI Office, she was a successful businesswoman and owner of the famous Cashmere House in Zurich and St. Moritz. At RNI she was a great and very efficient assistant. Even in stormy moments, she knew what was best to do. R.I.P. dear Eva. Your team at RNI HQ Zurich/Switzerland - Edwin, Erwin, Victor.



Well we're in page 36 of this edition of the report and still more than 50 pages already there for future editions. Before ending I want to ask you to visit the marvelous update Mary Payne's site about Wonderful Radio London and more. Take as visit:

<http://www.radiolondon.co.uk/kneesflashes/happenings/2012julyon/july2012.html>

If you have a question, memories, photos, and more don't hesitate to contact me at HKnot@home.nl and the next edition of the Hans Knot International Radio Report will be somewhere in the first weeks of the summer of 2023. Best Wishes, Hans Knot.