

Review

Stay Tuned ... I could say something brilliant at any time!

Author: Ray Clark

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337 pages with illustrations

Burnham-on-Crouch

With a foreword by Emperor Rosko

Born in 1954, Ray Clark has once again committed to paper memories of his rich radio career. In the first chapter, he takes us through his early boyhood years, bringing back fond memories of experiencing a first song that has stuck (*Volare*) but also warming up the bakelite radio to then turn the knobs to listen to programmes like Family Favourites. During those years, Radio Luxembourg was discovered alongside the BBC until 1964 and the following years when the range of radio stations was drastically reduced by the arrival of the first generation of offshore radio stations.

It is touching how Ray described the years when the first transistor radio and tape recorder came into the family and in his bedroom, as it were, the first steps were made on the beautiful radio path, which he would subsequently take. In the bedroom, making a real imitation of what he heard on the radio stations. But also the weekdays on the bus to and from high school, where sometimes as many as four radio stations from various transistor radios could be listened to, right from offshore radio ships.

After the introduction of the MOA and months later the removal of Caroline from the airwaves, it became a difficult time. Earlier, he had observed that BBC's Radio One was really not a good successor to the British offshore stations. Touching is the chapter in which he told his own experience as a land pirate, although with minimal

listeners. Radio Viking was the adventure. In high school, the hunt was on, partly via second-hand singles, for a nice collection of records. And delightful to read that at school a special version of Juke Box Jury was performed with the absolute hit 'Je t'aime moi non plus'. The words may not really have been understood but the young adolescent quite understood what it was about. French teacher totally disagreed with the students' choice, understandable to her but.....

It was 1970 when Ray left Grammer School and RNI by now became his favourite station. Work he wanted as soon as possible and one of the applications, although at a second attempt, yielded a job within the BBC's administrative machinery. He describes in the relevant chapter how he met well-known people like DLT and Rosko but also, very recognisably, the specialist record and electronics shops in London. Real radio-making he went into in Maldon, at the home of a painter. K I N G, although badly for some weeks because the girls suddenly got more attention. Many years later, Ray got a recording on CD in which he could be heard in one of his programmes on K I N G, not to be confused with the offshore radio station of the same name.

From the BBC he decided to say goodbye at the age of 18, preferring a role as a bus conductor, and then Ray drags us through the radio and music experience in the first half of the 1970s in a wonderful and in-depth way including the rise of the ILR and the fact that he became resident deejay at The Ship Inn. Could that have been a harbinger that he would one day spend part of his radio career working for Radio Caroline from the Ross Revenge?

I highly recommend ordering the book as soon as possible. I don't yet have read a third of "Stay Tuned ... I could say something brilliant at any time!", but I'm sure that as I continue reading this wonderful book, many more excellent anecdotes will come along. Advice: quickly order that wonderful book.

Hans Knot, May 2023.

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