

HANS KNOT INTERNATIONAL REPORT AUGUST 2010

Welcome Radio friends all over the world. Thanks again for the many e mails and reflections. In this issue some response to the contents of the last report as well as new items. First let us go to Canada: 'Hi Hans, Chris Lindgren from 'old' Radio Mercur/Radio Syd. I'm now living in Vancouver Canada and I use my amateur license to keep in touch with old friends all over the world. My call sign is VE7 SWE and my QTH is Mission City in the province of British Columbia in western Canada. I'm still working with Mick Luvzit - the Micker- from Radio Caroline North and South to put together a video with interviews for DJs from the Pirates, according to the Micker, there are quite a few of them here on the west coast. I'll keep you up to date how it goes. Last night I was listening to some old tapes from RNI and Radio Veronica. What a nice feeling it is to go back in time and remember Radio Syd is no longer, as I think you know. I think they gave up a couple of years ago when they got competition from more modern radio stations in Gambia. Please keep in touch and I'll continue reading your news letter. Cheers Chris VE7 SWE.'

Thanks a lot Chris for sending the information about your license. For those who don't know, a couple of months ago Andre Schokker in the Netherlands thought it was a good idea to make a list from people who worked in pirate radio in the past and also have an official license as a Radio Amateur. So if you're such a person please send your information to HKnot@home.nl

Good to know Chris that you're still in contact with Mick and when more info is available please let us know. By the way Mick himself is also one of the many readers over there in Canada who read the report monthly. Finally your comments on the closedown of Radio Syd: Indeed the family Wadner decided in 2001 to closedown the station, which was run from Banjul in Gambia. Not only the fact they had high competition from more modern radio stations, although a huge storm broke down their areal system and a lack of money could not bring the station back. It mainly transmitted to many of the Swedish immigrants in Gambia.



RADIO SYD GAMBIA PHOTO HENDRIK KOTOWSKI

Next England and someone who I met once at one of the many radio visits I did there during the last four decades: Hi Hans, please add me to the mailing list of your report. I think you remember me as one of the friends of Chris Cortez Minter, Dave Caine and Freddy Archer. I was once the founder of the landbased station ABC England. I too have call signs vk3frs and vk3fz and I'm an active ham. Thanks again and I look forward to your most interesting news letter every month. I have not spoken with Chris Cortez for a few years, but I did speak with Bob Meade, who was Freddy Archer from Radio Caroline SW and he is well, but like us all getting older. Yours, Roger Stafford (Roger St. John).'

Thanks a lot Roger for your email. I must confess that at least I visited Chris Cortez 15 times in the Cambridge area. I tried to think where we met and it must have been in the pub near the playground of FC Cambridge, where heavy fights took place the same afternoon on the field between supporters from Cambridge and Oxford. It must have been in the mid-nineties of last century. For those who don't know Chris Cortez: He was in to radio a lot. Had a lot of handwritten reports send out to his friends. Did comment a lot of times to radiomagazines like Offshore Echoes, Monitor and Pirate Radio News and kept us bombarding in a positive way with his ideas. Nowadays radio surely isn't a Chris Cortez thing and so he disappeared out of our radio world, except the occasional Christmas wish. He also was connected to some ill fated radio projects, including Phoenix Radio.



CHRIS CORTEZ AND ME IN CAMBRIDGE AROUND 1985
PHOTO: ROB OLTJOF

Next from Kees in the Netherlands the question if I could inform my readers that there's a new worldwide radio station, called Radio Batavia. Although, the station can only be heard on air in Europe and Northern America. All information can be found at www.radiobatavia.tk Well to you Kees and the other guys good luck with your new station.

Next mail from England and reader Bruce Newton: 'Dear Hans, thank you for the reports and I am looking forward to Radio Day at November 13th. There is a presenter on BBC Radio Newcastle, called Frank Wappat. He mostly plays big bands music, but he often mentions when he worked for Radio 390. I wondered if you know about him, and if he could give you some information about his days with the station. If you know about Frank, please accept my apologize. Yours in free radio. Bruce Newton.'

Well Bruce well I didn't know his name at all from 390 days. Maybe he did coproduce a program and he definitely he mentions on his BBC pages that his Al Bowbley show is still for sale. I've some of these programs in my archive and they're presented by Edward Cole. The Radio Day organiser Martin van der Ven tried in contact with Frank Wappat recently to invite him for the Radio Day and the 390 Reunion but sadly his wife reflected with: 'I'm afraid Frank will not be able to join you at your reunion as he has suffered a further stroke and is currently in hospital. Whilst he is making steady progress, it is unlikely that he will be able to fully function for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, I know he will join with me in wishing the event every success. Regards, Susan Wappat.'

So thanks to Bruce as well as Susan for reflecting about Frank Wappat and we hope Frank will recover totally from his illness.



FRANK AND ASSISTANCE IN THE DAYS THAT RADIO WAS RADIO
Collection:Frank Wappat

Next update time Pirate Hall of Fame:

New in July:

- There is another page added to 'The Seventies Supplement', this one covering DJs from that decade with names beginning with Q and R;
- we have another batch of City Sixty charts, this time from April/May 1966;
- we hear from Nigel Elgin who broadcast on Radio Caroline during the summer of 1975;
- there is news of a book coming later this year about Radio City and the shooting of its owner, Reg Calvert;
- and we are sad to report the death of Dominic Le Foe who was the presenter of Radio 390's Voice Of Business programme in 1966.

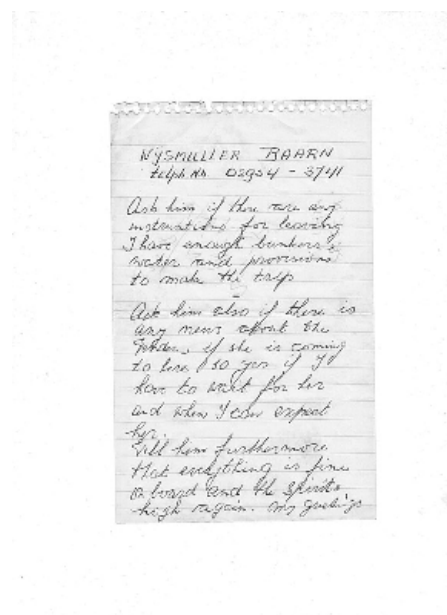
New in the August update:

- The RNI Story, part four, remembers 29th August 1970 when an attempted hi-jack of Radio Northsea's ship resulted in one of the most dramatic afternoons of offshore radio ever;
- and we have another batch of City Sixty charts, this time from May/June 1966.

The Pirate Radio Hall of Fame www.offshoreradio.co.uk

George Hare worked as Caroline North's on-shore agent. Perhaps as far as the DJs were concerned, his most important function was to make sure that they got paid, but the payroll was just a small part of his job and he often arranged functions and promotions for the station. He reflected on my article with interviews with former crew members onboard the Radio Caroline vessel MV Fredericia:

'Hi Hans, I just read through your July report and I am always pleased to read about the Caroline ships. I attach copies of some old documents for you. There is a letter that Captain Hengeveld sent in to Dovercourt to be relayed to Baarn. There was no quick way of communication then, I see that the position that he was to head for was 54degrees22' N 4degrees 16'2 W. (I do not know how to do the small 'o' for degrees), this was written in my hand on the reverse side of the letter, I must have got that from the Wijsemullers. It's a shame that the letter is not dated or signed.



The other letter, as you can see, was a proposed contract to position the Offshore '3' tender in Ramsey harbour. This was too expensive, which led us to use the Essex Girl as our tender after converting her to carry water and bunkers. She was owned by a Mr. Cowley, who also owned a brewery on the island. We used beer kegs to ship water before a water tank was fitted to the Essex Girl as these were readily available from the brewery.

If I remember correctly the Offshore '1' did make a trip to the Isle of Man to deliver bunkers, duty free cigarettes and beer. Also she went there to change some of the Dutch crew and this was all before the MOA in August 1967. The other Captains, that I remember, were of course Marten Gips and Captain Bakker, who also captained the Offshore '3'. Where are they now? Give all that remember me my very best wishes. And of course my Best Wishes to you and your now extended family George.'

AGREEMENT

for the charter of m.v. "OFFSHORE 3"
Stationed Ramsey, Isle of Man
Serving m.v. "CAROLINE".

It is today mutually agreed between:

Mr. Ronan O'Rahilly for Planet Productions Ltd.,
6 Chesterfield Gardens,
London W1

hereafter called: "Planet"

and:

Offshore, Tender on Suppletie Mij. N.V., P.O. Box 85, Bearn

hereafter called: "Offshore"

that:

1. m.v. "OFFSHORE 3" to proceed to Isle of Man coast.
2. m.v. "OFFSHORE 3" to take station in Ramsey Harbour and be available for one trip a day to m.v. "CAROLINE", Saturdays and Sundays excluded.
3. The remuneration for these services is £ 1.000.- (one thousand pounds) for the first month and £ 800.- (eight hundred pounds) for any consecutive month as from February the 15th. If more than one trip a day is required and if these trips or part thereof are outside the normal working hours (00.00-18.00) an extra charge of £ 5.- per hour is agreed upon. If trips on Saturdays or Sundays are required these trips have to be executed but also here an extra charge of £ 5.- per hour will apply. In any of the above cases and also if the vessel cannot make port because of the tide or because the vessel is diverted to any other port to the Isle of Man this extra charge of £ 5.- per hour never to exceed £ 10.- per day.
4. If by reason outside the control of Offshore m.v. "OFFSHORE 3" should not be available Offshore shall try to arrange for replacing facilities but in no way responsible for any costs or inconveniences occasioned thereby. During the period m.v. "OFFSHORE 3" is not available no hire shall have to be paid by Planet.
5. In case either party wishes to terminate the agreement a written notice of two months should be given.
6. Harbour charges, light dues and normal dues of this kind pertaining to the "OFFSHORE 3" only, and only in Ramsey to be for Offshore account. Any other charges with regard to Customs Clearances, Authorities or otherwise, to be for charterers account.
7. "OFFSHORE 3" is a motorvessel of 40,70 tons gross and 14,18 tons nett, equipped with a Deutz diesel engine of 150 PK, speed 7 1/2 knots and has a capacity to carry 2 tons of gasoline in fixed tanks and, in good weather only, an additional 4 1/2 tons in a rubber container now on board. Her water capacity is abt. 3 tons in a rubber container now on board. m.v. "OFFSHORE 3" can pump these commodities herself.
8. Payment for the above services to be effected one month after receipt of invoice.

Signed in duplicate this sixth day in February 1967.

In London:
PLANET PRODUCTIONS LTD.

In Bearn:
OFFSHORE, TENDER EN SUPPLETIE MIJ. N.V.

Well I must say to you George that I was really thrilled to hear from you and get all the info and documents. Most appreciated. In a personal mail I've already answered his questions and anyone knowing any of former Fredericia crewmembers, please get in contact with me at HKnot@home.nl

Four days after the last issue of the Hans Knot International Radio Report was sent out there still was no trace of the Emperor Rosko. Did he had problems with his tomatoes or is there less sunshine to get the solar system running? Get the old reports and you see he's always there. Or is it maybe that he is disappointed that his personal manager Cherry was at the top last time in the report? Let's wait some three more weeks before we start 'operation save the ego of Rosko'. In the meantime I digged in the archive to find a Rosko memory from April 1967 when he appeared on a cover of a French Magazine.



Stuart Aiken wrote me in that he would meet Johnnie Walker: 'I am meeting Johnnie Walker tomorrow at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. He is doing a Pirate radio show, and I arranged some jingles for him from S2Blue - Steve England's company for use during the show. Best Wishes Stuart.

Well thanks a lot Stuart and hope you both have fun at the Festival. Maybe a small report and photo next time?

For the latest update for the site from Mary and Chris Payne about Radio London and related items go to:

<http://www.radiolondon.co.uk/kneesflashes/happenings/julyaugsept10/julyaugsept01.html#news>

Next is sad news from America coming in from Ron O'Quinn. Hello friends.

Mitch Miller, American musician and band leader died Saturday at the age of 99. The Yellow Rose of Texas, sung by the Mitch Miller singers, was the first song played on Swinging Radio England at the request of Don Pierson, station founder. Ironically, The Yellow Rose of Texas was one of the very few things ever played on Swinging Radio England that was not stolen by Rosko for use on Radio Caroline. Of course I'm a bit joking about that. Regards to all, Ron O'Quinn.'

A Scottish group is coming this month with a brand new song about Radio Caroline:

<http://www.anotherformofrelief.com/2010/06/11/bubblegum-lemonade-carolines-radio/>

Next is Alex van der Hoek from the Netherlands who told me that he visited an old radio friend who I know also from decades ago. In his house he found an interesting radio to show the readers of the Hans Knot International Radio Report. It's an ERRES portable Type RS 1283/ and if you look on the scale you will see that stations like Radio Veronica, Radio Caroline en Luxembourg are also mentioned.



More info on the transistor radio can be found at:

<http://www.radiocollectie.nl/radio%27s/RS1263.htm>

Some changes have been altered at Radio Caroline lately. Steve Conway re-joined the station on Monday 12th July. Steve was famously aboard our radio-ship Ross Revenge when she grounded on the Goodwin Sands in 1991 at the end of the station's offshore era. In 1999, Steve re-joined the team to help relaunch Caroline on satellite, later returning to his native Dublin, where he has enjoyed a 10 year stint as a presenter on the alternative rock station Phantom 105.2

Mondays 2pm -4pm

Radio Caroline also welcomed specialist broadcaster and author Derek Taylor to Radio Caroline. Derek is now hosting the Archive Roots Americana Show to showcase his passion for country music. In the past he has worked for BBC World Service, BBC Radio Suffolk and Thanet Radio. Since 1992 Derek has been archivist at the British Archive of Country Music.
Mondays 4pm - 6pm.

<http://www.radiocaroline.co.uk/home.html>

Talking about Radio Caroline, who does remember Judy Murphy, who worked for the station in the eighties? Well she's working on another career already for many years. Learn more on the internet:

<http://web.ukonline.co.uk/a.sebastianscott/>

<http://www.amazon.com/September/dp/B001HAIHCO/?tag=vglmk-c9-20>

With thanks to Martin van der Ven who also told that the next internet site is of interest as many of the Dutch radiostations are linked there. So have some fun:

<http://www.allradio.nl/>

Also in this issue sad news as I got the next e mail sent by Alan Bailey: 'It is with deep regret that I have to tell you all that my good friend Dave Christian passed away this morning. This is from Dave's Daughter Karen (the family name was Crockford) 'My dad passed away at 0945 this morning. He had internal bleeding, that caused his organs to shut down. It was fast, but peaceful and his heart faded away at 0945. He was born in 1949 and christened as David Crockford. '

Dave Christian had joined Radio Luxembourg in September 1968 and worked from London for the first few months before coming to the Grand Duchy permanently. He gained fame as one of the DJs of the 'Station of the stars' during the 1970s and worked for the German and Dutch services of Radio Luxembourg.



DAVE CHRISTIAN 2004
PHOTO: HANS KNOT

Next an announcement of a forthcoming publication: 'Death of a Pirate: British Radio and the Making of the Information Age by Adrian John.

'When the pirate operator Oliver Smedley shoots and kills his rival Reg Calvert in Smedley's country cottage on June 21, 1966, it is a turning point in the careening career of the outlaw radio stations dotting the coastal waters of Britain. Situated on ships and offshore forts like Shivering Sands, these stations blasted away at the high-minded BBC's broadcast monopoly with the new beats of the Stones and The Who and DJs like Screaming Lord Sutch. For free-market ideologues like Smedley, the pirate stations were entrepreneurial efforts to undermine the growing British welfare state as embodied by the BBC. The worlds of high table and underground collide in a riveting story full of memorable characters like the Bondian Kitty Black, an intellectual femme fatale who becomes Smedley's co-conspirator, and the notorious Kray twins. This is rousing entertainment with an intellectual edge. Adrian Johns is a professor of history at the University of Chicago. Educated at Cambridge University, Johns is a specialist on intellectual property and piracy.

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0393068609/thepiratradio-21>

Rob Veld is another reader in the Netherlands who focused a lot on all sorts of radio including the landbased pirates and the American hobbyists who want to make radio. He wrote me that reading the next internet site is a

must for every reader: <http://www.radiobrandy.com/radiocampus/>

Next e mail comes from Alan Racheter: 'Dear Hans, Thanks for including me in the distribution of your monthly radio report which I read with great interest. I can remember well the stations in the 1960's, but always of fascination to me was RNI. The ship wasn't like all the others with just mw transmitters-- it had MW, FM and SW and those lavish EMT turntables in the studios. I can well remember when in 1970 the Mebo II anchored off the Essex coast in the run up to the General Election and then the jamming started. I have always been wondering why the Government took the unprecedented step in jamming RNI. I have looked recently at the UK National Archives website www.nationalarchives.gov.uk and now available to the public are UK Government documents from the 1970's on Radio North Sea and Radio Caroline. This material is not on line, but I do plan to visit the National Archives at some stage and these papers should make interesting reading. Also in there is a file from the Metropolitan Police about possible prosecutions under the UK Representation of the Peoples Act 1949 so I would guess the authorities looked at RNI as influencing the 1970 Election. Regards, Alan Racheter.'

Well Alan OEM from England already published a lot of the material from the British Archive. I've send your e mail to their Editor Chris Edwards so no double work has to be done in the archive. And I know he's already reflecting on your questions. Well last month I told you about the guy who's doing nowadays radio in Bahrein and tried one time to get a job on a pirate station . I found him after searching on internet after his name. Remember I found his letter to the station in the cellar of Graham Gill? Well I asked Geg Hopkins to write some of his memories.

GEG HOPKINS AS WAS AND STILL IS - 12th July 2010

The days of the Pirates were coming to an end and I was beginning to think that all the people in this business were so cliquey and driven by agenda; I sort of went to ground a bit. By now, the only one left was Radio North Sea International with its signal getting weaker as it moved further and further off shore. I was listening to Graham Gill a lot and warmed to his rather

homely, more real approach. It was all novel, whichever way you looked at it and Graham singing his own jingles was even more enthralling. He was also a stalwart operator remaining at the helm long after the others were gone. I was frustrated that I could not find an avenue to do what I really wanted and for some reason I wanted to share my thoughts with him. I decided to put pen to paper and drop him a line. I have no idea what I wrote, it was probably a rant and a half and blamed everything on everybody, I just don't remember. My God, my handwriting has always been atrocious too. No doubt I had forgotten about it a few hours after I posted it, hoping and praying that the letter never got to its destination thus could not embarrass me then or in the future. Low and behold, some 40 years later, this letter turns up. Shoot me now!

Geg Hopkins is probably the most un-famous (nearly infamous) somewhat famous radio personality in the business. Many know me, but like a jobbing actor, apparently recognized for many associated things but not up front enough to be part of the glitz. Today, 90% of my time is taken up with radio related issues, whether production or just slagging off the rubbish out there in articles or on my blog.

I fell in love with radio and became a fanatic the minute I first heard the pirates and from that moment on, I wanted to be one of two things in life: either a DJ or a Pilot. Until recently, I often proclaimed that there was still time to be one of them. Today, radio as a viable medium has been hijacked by deluded experts who have turned it into a bloated, formatted forest of garbage for most. Only the States has managed to maintain a decent footing with radio in the media stakes and when all is said and done, the Pirate stations should have been allowed to flourish and grow and we might now have the best radio in the world if so.

In 1966, with a dream to become a Fleet Air Arm Buccaneer pilot, I joined the Royal Navy at 15 and found myself slammed up in HMS Ganges at Shotley village, near Harwich and Ipswich. Prior to this, like everyone else, I was an avid nighttime listener to Radio Luxembourg because in my part of the country it was all we could get thanks to the famous Luxembourg AM bounce. However, from day one at Ganges, Radio Caroline was blasting out loud and clear across the camp from 'veille' to 'lights out'. Each mess had its own big brown valve radio and depending on who got there first, or which

DJ was on, the set would be tuned to at least one of the Pirates as we could get all of them clearly without fading or interference. Not surprising, because if we climbed the famous mast at Ganges, you could see the ships off the coast towards Essex.

On election, Harold Wilson cancelled the Fleet Air Arm as part of his dumping down of society agenda, so I had no future and there was no way I was going to become a Stoker which the Navy ordered me to do as an alternative. Radio Caroline had enormous influence on me and to be closer to the theme of things, I moved into the field of Radio as an option. To be honest, because of this, I began to hate the Navy and soon discovered that I was not cut out to be banged up with 40 strapping blokes for months on end, being ordered around like fodder for my Queen and Country. I didn't think I minded being banged up with a couple of DJs on a fishing boat though. There was something better for me out the big world and I was homesick anyway. To us young lads, all the now very famous names were like buddies in the free world as we listened while scrubbing floors with toothbrushes and each record played had such a deep and meaningful affect. For example: The Beach Boys came out with 'Sloop John B'; can you imagine the pining that created? "Go call the captain and tell him we wanna go home". Each passionate female encounter while on leave meant serious business and an undying love affair, so when we heard Amen Corner doing "If Paradise is Half as Nice", which played every 15 minutes, we all just wanted to run away, but we couldn't leave our Caroline as it really was a life line - but still half the country had no idea about them. Earlier this year I actually told the same story to Andy Fairweather Low as he signed the original copy.



GEG IN YOUNGER YEARS

Leaving Ganges with top scores in communications, I was trying so hard to get out of the navy and get on the Pirate stations, but there was one small problem; I had signed up for 12 years and in those days, you were in Her Majesty's hands come hell or high water with no way out. I did my stint at HMS Mercury near Portsmouth and still we used privileged equipment in the classrooms like high antenna and tuning equipment to try and improve the Pirate reception, so my mind was constantly on it.

My first ship was HMS Fife, which believe it or not had its own mini studio, which 'piped' music and announcements around the ship on the 'Tannoy'. I asked my Divisional Officer if I could be a DJ as I had by now accumulated a decent singles library of hits that I carried with me. He was a fellow Welshman and liked my real name 'Gerewyn' and ordered that I call myself 'The Laird Gerewyn', which I did. Armed with only one turntable, a microphone, no mixer and a switch to patch either, I began my career as a DJ, trying to talk and switch back to the record as fast as I could which now played without a slip mat. We even set up a small broadcast to the other ships in the posse. One fine Sunday, while floating somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, the 'BBC Family Favourites' programme, with Judith Chalmers, linked to us on shortwave and I did home requests. To this day, I never met anyone who heard me on it.

I travelled the world on HMS Fife and visited various radio stations wherever I could, I even travelled up from New York to Toronto to try my hand at CKLG, but I had to return a few weeks later as my ship was sailing. Eventually, I managed to remove myself from the Royal Navy grasp using the theory that I was mental. This didn't work as the lovely psychiatrist, who put me under observation, was more nuts than me and just signed me out as 'Unsuitable for Naval service'. I was extremely lucky; one day locked up, the next as free as a bird to pursue my goal.

Immediately, I attended DJ auditions in London and although I didn't know what a slip mat was, I got hired by a company called Phonographic which was part of the 'Associated Leisure Group'. The same day I met a lot of DJ's there and worked with them at some stage. Peter Young of Capital radio is one of them and I frequently farmed some of my gigs off to him. My first gig was at Jack Straw's Castle on Hampstead and a private party. I did not know at the time that I was supposed to just play records and say nothing, instead I ran it like I would a radio programme, based on my pirate radio indoctrination. Anyway, the word was out as guests complimented me for having a good laugh and enjoyable night, exclaiming that I was 'unexpected' and a lot different to others. I got six pounds for that.

The gigs kept coming; I kept campaigning to legalize Pirate radio. I travelled around London on the bus with Simon Dee and others. I spoke with Ronan O'Rahilly on more than one occasion as he envisioned a plane flying above London while beaming FM radio and even TV to one and all. All this time, I tried hard to get a sponsor to take me through my pilot training, writing to everyone from British Airways to Bristow's helicopters, but no luck. The best I could do was go back to college and further studies in radio and electronics, which I did, while Deejaying at night with the same company.

I met Mike Lindsay who also worked for this company and we seemed to get along just fine, although we both seemed to be miles apart as far as breeding was concerned. Mike and I took on some of the most violent gigs known to man. I had the Cross Keys at Edmonton just north of Tottenham in London, while Mike was assigned to an equally dodgy part of town out in Hackney. Each of us were given a 'Go Go dancer' as well, (well I was), which seemed to be the in thing at the time. Naturally, I fell in love with each one but the venues made us nervous to say the least, with these lovely bodies

gyrating in front of us. Sometimes, on our rare off times, Mike, the gang and I would meet up and disappear out to the suburbs to Mike's pad. To me, Mike appeared as the only intelligent, peaceful life form out there.



MIKE LINDSAY AT RADIODAY 2005
PHOTO: MARTIN VAN DER VEN

I can't remember quite how I gave up working for this outfit and went out on my own, but it must have been around the time a young innocent reveler was so viciously murdered in the car park at the Cross Keys, stabbed to death after first being beaten to a pulp on my dance floor by thugs smashing barrel pint pots on his head. The violence erupted out of nowhere; I saw these guys (one apparently named 'Tommy the Turk) sliding next to me as this fan was just swaying to the rock music and minding his own business. He wore circular blue tinted glasses, which must have attracted the thuggery. Suddenly with such barbaric action, he was set upon and in seconds laid on the floor a bleeding deformed wreck, but still he managed to crawl to the car park where they set about him again. Of course, all action stopped and the police came. Despite many in the audience knowing exactly who these guys were, nobody would give information up. (To this day I think they got away with it).

We had gunfights and fights with bags of cement thrown around as disputes continued night after night. The last straw was when one very gentle looking and reasonable sounding fellow came over to me and asked me to play

'Norman Greenbaum - Spirit in the Sky' again. I had just received a pre-release white label from Reprieve Records and obviously some powerful thug liked this. I took little notice and I did not play it again as I had just played it. A minute or two later our chap approaches me again and says that if I don't play the record again, 'Edmonton Jack' (I have forgotten his name though I swore I never would) would come over and shoot me. He very casually said; 'Just do it mate, I am not joking'.

He walked away and just a few seconds later, this giant of a man dived at me, gun in hand and said; "Play the f....g record or I will play with this through your 'ed'. I took the record and gave it to him and wished him the best. Like a child he was so grateful as if nobody in life had ever presented anything to him ever. He offered me a job in his West End nightclub, told me to stay in touch and my life would change. He walked back to the bar and got into another fight that ended in gunfire and the bar doors being smashed by a body going through it. I went home and never went back.

On or about the same time, I called Mike and he was often in trauma mode too having had his dance floor decoration re-arranged with blood and his life threatened. In fact if I remember well, Mike had blood on him after his equipment got smashed in a brawl. I tried to find better venues, but wherever you go in this game, fights and thugs abound. I had, what I thought, would be a great venue at Crystal Palace, but more violence. The Fountain Inn at Mile End Road, severe unabated violence almost nightly and I had a nightly gig there. For safety we had to build a cage for me with little portholes and a locked access door for protection. Was I that bad a DJ I ask myself? Joking apart, it had nothing to do with me; it is just a failing society.

Nightclubs with DJ's were not really invented at this time and Ayia Napa or Tenerife was not even a dream. Going independent, I secured gigs up and down the Home Counties, I acquired a long term gig at the Feathers next to Scotland yard which was a lot more gentle and dedicated to rock or as it was called; 'Progressive Rock' in those days. There I met a few DJs from the newly established BBC Radio One and quite often I would go and sit in with Alan Freeman on his 'Top of the Pops' show up at Broadcasting House. A young, strapping, sweet looking boy that I was, Alan was a good friend as such but his motive was perhaps not conducive to me getting on radio. After

a long successful run and a regularly packed house, the Landlord wanted a change in music policy, asking for pop. Until that night, we really didn't have teenagers in and there had never been any trouble in the Feathers whatsoever, but with a completely different audience, all hell broke loose on the first night and a young boy lost his life, stabbed to death in the tube station entrance opposite having had the fight start in the Feathers. It was time to hang up my turntables in public. (Until I got to Bahrain).



NORMAN SMITH ALSO KNOWN AS THE SINGER HURRICANE SMITH

Archive: Freewave Media Magazine

By now I knew most of the guys in the record companies, I even knew the now late Norman Smith at EMI quite well and what a tremendously lovely, talented chap he was, always ready to introduce me to anyone of benefit. Not being a particularly pushy sort of guy I was not into networking through networks. I did hang out for a while with a great guy and an outrageous Queen by the name of Ian (Henry) at President records who constantly introduced me to many well known celebrities at various parties. Kenny Everett was often present. Many weekends I would trot off to Brighton with Ian, on to Eastbourne where I had a gig, then go back and stay at Paul Hollingdale's pad in Brighton. (Many years later, I was doing in-flight programmes for Airlines and I met Paul again but he completely blanked me and I believe rather unceremoniously contributed to my unpopularity and demise at said studios).

By now the 70s were getting into full swing and the heat on the Pirate stations reaching fever point. I had not seen Mike for a while and didn't really know where he was until he turned up at Purple Records. Mike knew

well that I desired to go out to the boats and it was all I really wanted. I don't quite know how my vocal accent came across but it was a mix of hard London with soft country from Somerset and Devon. Mike of course was very well spoken and we must have seemed like chalk and cheese with his very obvious good education and mine from the streets. (I later took a degree in Electronics and communications and got a lot posher). Nonetheless, I had contacted many companies with a view to getting myself sponsored out on Caroline and one of these was 'The London Rubber Company'. I forget the name of the Marketing Manager I spoke with at some length and he agreed to sponsor me with 'Durex', if I got on.

One day in Mike's office, Mike made a call to someone who I thought was Ronan, but I can't remember. I only heard Mike's side of the conversation and it went something like; 'Oh yeah, he knows what he is doing and oh yeah, he's ok.. he can DJ ok.. etc.' Next I got the job and only awaited the moment I could get out on the boat. As luck in my life has it, the law caught up at the same time and the Pirates were shut down before I got my chance.

I applied to Aidan Day at Radio One, sending him a tape. Not expected any response, my phone went one morning and this very chirpy, extremely well spoken, public school voice came on the line; "Hello, is that Geg - Aidan Day at Radio One here. Listen mate, I love your tape, I like what you can do, but your accent is so God awful, you sound like a night club bouncer in Clapham. If you can mellow your accent a little bit within the next few months, get in touch with me again'. Before any chance of that, Aidan moved on and I lost touch. (Aidan died November 2009). I should have followed up when he went to Capital Radio, but I was involved with other things by then and that has been the story of my life as far as taking the opportunity when opportunity knocks is concerned. I met Doreen Davis a few time and sometimes I spoke with her on the phone and she sort of expressed an interest, but I never actually asked for a job as I was too shy to do it. In my naivety I always thought that someone would 'discover' me and ask me to join but that is just plain daft. I have helped so many people get on radio over the years and indeed hired various talents, but the reality is that nobody will help you, you have to be hard nosed and determined and mostly outrageous.

Although I lived in central London, many a day either alone or with my mate, I would drive to the coast to Frinton or Clacton and sit there listening to the

RNI. If I had a girl friend at the time, I would take her along. Sometimes we would flash our headlights each time the DJ asked us to. 3 PM everyday we would hear the 'Three Degrees - When Will I See You Again' coming from the Dutch continuation; 'Radio Twee Twee Nul'. Then the last day! I drove to the coast and just sat there in the van as the last record was played and we cried and cried as the Three Degrees faded out. Yes, there has been resurgence and various attempts to keep the Pirates going, but that was really the end of it for me and millions of others.

With commercial radio slowly making itself known in the UK and an abundance of DJs from the ships coming home, there was no way a novice like me was going to get in, so I decided to go back to college for a 'proper job'. Taking my mother's long-long begging lectures to forget about showbiz and get some qualifications first, then go back to pursue it later, this is what I did during the later half of the 70s. I became an Officer in the Merchant Navy.

I could not leave radio alone though. In 1979/80, news of an English language FM station starting up in Bahrain reached me via my pilot brother who was working for Gulf Air. He gave me the run down saying that it was just like the old Pirate days off Essex, with anything goes. It took me a while to get a job in Bahrain as you cannot just come here and stay, you have to be sponsored with a work permit and if lucky, your sponsor didn't mind you doing some radio on the side. Why not - it was all so new then? I came as a Senior Engineer for Caltex at the refinery in December 1980 and immediately sent a tape to the radio station and I got the call. No sooner I start work at the refinery I left and went to work for the radio station. My ex boss takes pride in his claim that he was the stepping stone for this 'great opportunity' Little did he know that I had it all planned.

The Radio Bahrain DJ compliment was actually very good at that time with Essex boys, all enthusiastic bedroom jockeys doing their shows. All were very reasonable and chirpy and presented a rather bland but professional programme. Everyone except the boss ostracized me immediately, mainly because my style was different yet I could very obviously DJ and was highly technical with it. I even adjusted the compressors and enhancers while I was on air, which made my programme stand out. It upset some of the other DJs so much that they would report me for every little thing and the most

popular breakfast show DJ actually resigned because the boss would not remove me. Many of these guys have gone on to be DJs on various stations throughout the UK now.

It was boom time in the region and there was about a million British like listeners within the footprint. Although a staunch Muslim country with little freedom of media or expression, Radio Bahrain didn't seem to be interfered with and we could do what we wanted to some extent. Unlike Britain where it was so controlled, it was a lot of fun and it kept you there. Naturally, there was no direct sexy talk or chat shows venting anger towards the authorities, but jokes, music, fun, interviews, and no problem and in fact Radio Bahrain in the early days was a hell of a lot better than most radio stations these days. During the first Gulf War of 1990, Radio Bahrain was the be all and end all as far as information was concerned and with literally over one million American and British troops here, the station really went all out. Really a lot of fun, openness and some award winning professional content happening. That all died off soon afterwards though, as the local Arab power base ripped in to gain control again taking the station into the abyss. This remains today and I am no longer part of it.

The controversy has followed me right up to present. Because of my earlier experience my style stood out a bit and I did not conform to the more usual constant station ID, time checks, more music - more often format - and instead generated a rock oriented theme with a lot of commercial content to get me a decent wage. I produced documentaries and advertorials and always ready for interviews. My nationwide physical treasure hunts became the in-thing. My off the cuff remarks made many nervous and got me the name; "The DJ you love to hate". With the constant media attention this was generating, I decided to call my production company; 'I Hate Geg Hopkins Productions' producing thousands of car bumper stickers 'I hate Geg Hopkins'. They became a treasured item. You can imagine the scenes as I attended things like conferences and so on, taking my official badge and the counter clerk pausing before passing my badge, saying; 'Um! Sorry Sir, there seems to be a mistake, I think someone has been typing jokes in the system". The then Minister of Information Mr. Tariq Almoeyyed, who most thought hated my guts but was in fact my protector and a great friend and intellect, liked to introduce me to dignitaries such as visiting British Ministers; "Meet Geg Hopkins, he works for me, but I hate him.. Everyone hates him'. One

British Minister (Douglas Hogg) approached me afterwards and asked after my welfare, obviously concerned for my safety and actually apologized in disbelief that a Minister could publicly say something like that.

Time rolled on I became what some call the 'Programme Controller' for a number of years at Radio Bahrain, but in the Middle East, no foreigner really ever has that much control. I built my own state-of-the-art recording studio, geared mainly for radio with video an accessory. Radio commercials and documentaries by the thousand have been produced here. I've met and interviewed so many well-known celebrities and officials.

Throughout the 80s and 90s and even now, life shot by as I worked around the clock and still do. I was doing a sort of 4 weeks on, 3 weeks off routine between London and Bahrain. My long time buddy was the late Tommy Vance and we pretty much hung out constantly together in London. Around the time he left BBC in a move to Virgin, we both tried to get in together, with Tommy using his massive influence for just the once in his life. Apparently Richard Skinner praised my production standard but rejected me on the grounds that the station could not have two people sounding like "Tommy Vance'. I am somewhat growly but really nothing like Tommy in sound. Me thinks intimidation, but that again is the story of my life.

I once applied to one or two favoured stations up and down the country and received the proverbial but positive; 'We are keeping your details on file as there is no appropriated opening at this moment". In the Mid 90s I sent a tape to Francis Currie at Bull Ring Radio Birmingham and like Aidan Day all those years ago, I really did not expect a call, but there he was next day and offered me a job. As it was, he was leaving for the then Melody Radio in London so asked me to considered that. I did and no thanks. Years later I became seriously ill for a couple of years due to an allergic reaction to cortisone and my immune system went haywire. During this time, Francis became Programme Controller at Heart FM in London, but I did not know. Another chance had gone.

I used to write articles for various magazines and still do at times, but nowadays I am happy with my own blog and minding my own business in my studio which is still smack up to date and busy with system stuff for major telecom companies. I have achieved a very good reputation within the

industry across the world really, for my production standards and direction along with the world's best system prompts; a job I hate with a passion, but the pay is good.

At present, I get close sometimes to de-regulation and the opening of Independent stations but right now I am negotiating the purchase of radio stations along the Mediterranean coast.



Finally here a photo memory from me. This was a live shot which my brother took - he happened to be in the studio. I think this was around 1984. I had been at the station a couple of years by then. My brother was a Captain with Gulf Air on TriStars at the time, which is how I got to know about Radio Bahrain.

If anyone ever asked for a signed picture, I used to send this out. (not many did). I was "The man they loved to hate". I just made a lot of jokes, said off the record things. Had many guests and so on.. A lot of sort of jealousy I guess. This got more publicity and so it went on and on. I could not be arched with it all. I didn't hate anyone. But all the other DJs were more the "More music more often. The hits keep on coming and so on. They never had any content. I used to make content. In fact, it was written many times that "More people who hated me, listened that those that 'loved' me" There was no in between as they said. I have to say though; I did have the biggest audience by far, since I was not format. I used to say what I wanted, or whatever came into my head. This frightened a lot of people as

the area is so restricted. No freedom, but I didn't care. Funny enough though, it made me popular with the Royal Family, whereas the creeps and weaks out there although thought it would be the opposite. It must have done, or I would have been deported long, long time ago.

I called the programme: "The Most Sociably Social Show on Radio". Back in those days, it was pioneering a million people/guests in the studio at any one time. I even used to add background hubbub of party people running on jingles carts. Made it sound like a party going on.

Listening back now to those old tapes - embarrasses the shit out of me. But they were in-tune with the days and all acceptable then I guess. I wouldn't do it now though. All the best, Geg.'

Well Geg thanks a lot for putting down a long part of you radio life story it's most appreciated. And although not on an offshore radio station you've found your earnings in radio. Anyone who want to reflect on this story or write his or her own story into the radio world, please reflect at HKnot@home.nl

Now some information on a very interesting internet site:

<http://jonathanmarks.libsyn.com/>

Jonathan Marks about the idea behind it: 'This site is an experiment - an experiment which is so far working well. It is simply a place to listen to old editions of the Media Network programme as broadcast on short-wave by Radio Netherlands in the period 1981-2000. It was one of the first international communications magazines of its time. I hosted and produced the programme, but a lot of the content was made by a network of volunteer monitors, reporters and researchers dotted all over the globe. I kept copies of most of the programmes, especially those that dealt with specific issues or were connected to current events in that period. Since leaving Radio Netherlands in 2003, I have been slowly digitizing the tapes. Personally, I find it amazing to relive this era, especially as most of it was pre-Web, pre-Skype, pre-email, when most people thought twice about picking up the phone to call a radio station in another country.'

I am interested in your reactions, especially from people who may be discovering this stuff for the first time. It will encourage me to post more. At the moment, I am looking at the best way to release the material. This site has a monthly storage limit. Feedback has indicated that people like a regular feed of shows, rather than a monthly flood. Looking at the site stats, it would seem that around 19% of the 6589 "subscribers" are downloading via iTunes. The rest do so directly from the site. Please tell your friends about this site. I'd like to get the subscribers up to 10,000 by the end of the year. This podcast publishing system archives editions on a monthly basis, showing only the latest editions on the home page. If you want to see what has been put up since February 2010, click on the Media Network Archives orange button on the left and all the editions will be listed. You can also subscribe in iTunes by searching for "Media Network Vintage". As each "new" edition is published, it will download automatically to your MP3-player.

The statistics show that most people download the shows through this site directly or through Facebook. As of the start of July 2010, the most popular programmes have been those on wartime deception and the RNI Libya programme. Note that some programmes are now archived under the months in which they were published. I know some of the material here is niche stuff - but I also know that people interested in international communications and broadcasting are very passionate people. Because of the politics, it provided a constant wave of stories. I also believe that we developed one of the first collaborative formats on international radio, where individuals could do some detective work, report their results, and share experiences with those with a similar passion. Please keep the comments coming.

<http://jonathanmarks.libsyn.com/>

Since April 21, "192 TV" has been broadcasting a daily 30 minutes programme on the Dutch TV channel NostalgieNet. 192 TV is a new initiative by the Foundation Norderney and BR Music. The new TV channel broadcasts music videos interspersed with Radio Veronica jingles 24 hours a day, focusing on the period of the offshore stations Radio Veronica, RNI and Caroline. From July 15, 192 TV is also being broadcast on channel 43 of the Dutch CAIW cable network. The first experiment with 192TV took place on the 50th celebration of the birth from Radio Veronica, on April 17th in Hotel

Laapershoek in Hilversum. <http://www.192tv.nl/index.html> for the website of 192TV. <http://www.nostalgienet.nl/programmas/192tv> for the website of NostalgieNet.

The next news came from ABC Australia early July and was written by Bruce Hill. It was sent to me by Mike Brand in Israel.

Pacific pop pirate plans to bombard Fiji



A symbol of the olden day pirate - now an opponent of the Fiji regime wants pirate radio to pound the country with pop and alternative politics. An opponent of Fiji's interim government wants to set up a floating radio station to broadcast uncensored news into the country. Usaia Waqatairewa, president of the Fiji Democracy and Freedom Movement, based in Sydney, Australia, says the idea is to put an antenna on a ship anchored in international waters, outside Fiji's legal jurisdiction.

The same concept was used by the so-called pirate radio stations which broadcast pop music to Britain, and New Zealand's Radio Hauraki, in the 1960s. Mr Waqatairewa told Radio Australia people in Fiji need the news that the Bainimarama government is not letting them hear. He said: "We've got blogs and we've got internet and we also have a regular discussion program every Tuesday night which streams live on the internet, so it can be heard in any parts of the world. But the problem though is that internet access in Fiji is very limited at the moment, it always has been very limited. It's probably limited to about five per cent of the population in the urban areas. What we're planning to do is to if we could in some way set up a freedom radio that does not have the control of the regime in Fiji and be

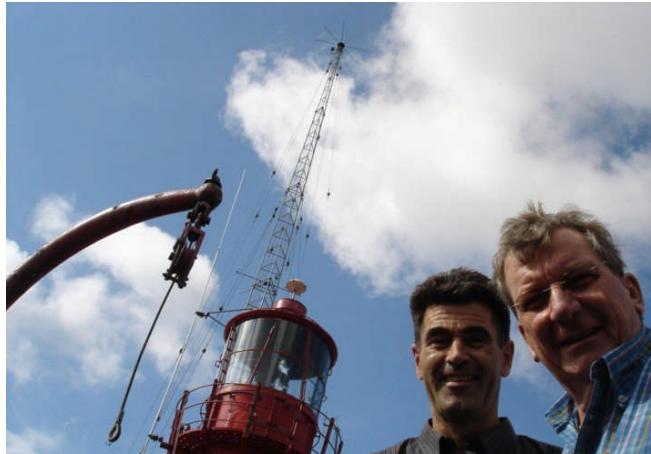
able to broadcast out the real news, instead of their propaganda and what they have censored themselves."

Mr Waqatairewa says the chartered boat would have powerful antennas able to broadcast to the Fiji audience on the AM and FM frequencies. Just like the 1960s pirate stations? "Precisely that, we will also broadcast the pop music they banned in Fiji. For example, they recently banned the Te Amo song from Rihanna, which is a favourite among the young people of Fiji." As for money, he says "we are trying to talk to supporters all over the world. There are a lot of supporters for freedom fighters out there."

Mr Waqatairewa said that on Fiji radio at present "there's about three or four sessions there of just government officials coming in and bombarding the people with government propaganda". As for any threat by Fijian forces, against such a craft: "It's going to be piracy, or it's going to be an act of war."

In another press report it was mentioned that the people behind the project were in contact with a Dutch organisation which has a complete radio ship available. A quick thinking brought me to the thought that there's only one in that sort in the Netherlands, Radio Waddenzee. And so I asked the big man behind the project, Sietse Brouwer, if he was in contact with Waqatairewa or other people behind the project Freedom Movement: 'The answer is a clear 'no'. They're looking for a radio ship, we've one. I've spoken with no one from the Freedom Movement. Probably they've been searching the internet and will be on the phone one day, although I think it's better for them to have a call with Peter Moore from the Caroline organisation. The Ross Revenge is much bigger. But if they're realistic they don't phone either one of us. A towing with a radio ship to the Fiji Isles will cost far much more than get another ship and equip it totally into a floating radio station.'

With thanks to Sietse Brouwer for the quick answer. Radio Waddenzee had a surprise visit this month from Robbie Dale. He was very enthusiastic: 'Hi Hans, the composition of this picture tells it all. Sietse is a man with a mission; I am truly impressed with his dedication to the Waddenzee project. Greetings, Robbie Dale.'



SIETSE BROUWER AND ROBBIE DALE

A very nice report on Radio Waddenzee was earlier this month on the regional station RTV Fryslan

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKlxcSQj1r8&NR=1&feature=fvwp>

Chris Edwards from OEM also wrote in: 'I did try and find some details about Mr. Usaia W. Reports are very mixed, some suggesting he has a lot of support, and others that he has little support and is a bit of a dreamer, so nothing really to go with there. Of course it all depends on whether Mr. W can raise enough money. We shall have to wait and see if or what will happen. Best wishes, Chris E. '

Someone we know from two offshore stations in the eighties changed job again within the radio industry. It were Radio Caroline as well as the Voice of Peace were Dave Asher served. Nowadays he's program director at ILR station Peak FM in Chesterfield.



DAVE ASHER ON THE ROSS REVENGE
PHOTO: LEEN VINGERLING

Yes, we have another nicknames as on Radio Atlantis Gaby 'with the gab' Hernandez. Also, when listening to an old Hitback Show on RNI I heard Mike Ross talking about 'Chief' Dave Rodgers.

From Ireland an e mail next from Ger Sweeney, who's looking for work: 'Hi Hans, I enjoy your report very much. It brings back great memories of stories I have enjoyed through the years. I'm Irish and worked in pirate radio from March 1981 (when I was 14) to 1989 (when we were all told to go away). Since then I've been working on commercial local radio on and off. In my pirate days I worked with some Caroline lads like Stuart Clark, Dave Shearer and Tony Allen and a few others who may have been on board like Mark Warner and Keith York. Anyway, that's by way of 'credentials'. I'm making a move to the UK (timing is open) and I want to work in radio. I've been researching the UK industry in recent weeks, have demo to hand but was wondering if someone in 'the Know' could point me in the right direction and offer some "Do's and Dont's". Any contact or information would be very welcome on gersweeney67@gmail.com

Many thanks Hans....keep up the good work. Kind Regards

Ger Sweeney

Some people in Ireland think it will be a 'good idea' to use an old name for a new radio station:

www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/finance/2010/0722/1224275195411.html

On July 25th Tony Blackburn was 46 years on the air. He told in his today show that he started on Caroline South way back in 1964 at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and told his first record ever played on the radio was 'Rag Doll' from the Four Seasons.

Radio Ham Kurt Baer 'Don't forget to switch off your radio, you're wasting your batteries' is the next one in the gallery of those working in Offshore Radio and also being an experienced Radio Amateur.

Former RNI DJ Leo van der Goot was involved in a plane crash in the USA on the last Saturday evening of July. Leo was piloting the plane which was carrying two other Dutch passengers, His plane encountered problems shortly after take-off, hitting a fence and bouncing off the ground before coming to a halt in a field. All three persons in the plane were unharmed. They were on holiday in America. Van der Goot was in possession of a temporary license to fly in the United States. A police investigation into the crash has been instigated. After that they went on with their holiday by car. Leo worked for many organisations in the Dutch radio and television industry and will be one of the quests this year on the Radio Day. On VOO TV he did a very good series of documentaries on aviation.

This year's Radio Day in Amsterdam on Saturday 13th November will have many treats for offshore radio enthusiasts. Think of the Radio 390 reunion, the Tom Edwards interview and the Radio Mi Amigo round table. One of our highlights will be an "RNI is 40" reunion. We can now reveal that we are expecting the following guests: Jan Hartevelde, Hans ten Hooge (Hogendoorn), Robb Eden, Peter Ford, Graham Gill, Arnold Layne (Roger Scott), Peter Chicago, Peter Jager, Nico Steenbergen, Leo van der Goot and Bob Noakes. And with Andy Archer, Robin Banks, A.J. Beirens, Edwin Bollier, Victor Pelli and several others we have more interesting names on our ("hope

to be there") guest list... So watch out for more exiting news during the next few months and visit our Radio Day website on a regular basis:

<http://www.radioday.nl>



Well let's go to another e mail from Alan Bailey: 'Hi Hans, I hope you had a good holiday. I'm not sure if I sent you this but I've added new audio, comments and links to my website. Cheers, Alan.'

www.208itwasgreatradioluxembourg.co.uk

In this issue not the promised next chapter from the Graham Gill archive, I will try to bring more next month. Also more next month on the subject radio t shirts and artists visiting offshore radio stations. I hope you all had fun reading this issue. All memories, questions, photographs and more can be send to HKnot@home.nl

Greetings Hans