

## Hans Knot International Radio Report October 2017.

Incredible quick this month has gone again and so now time for the October edition of the International Radio Report. Thanks for all the response which came in as well as some interesting topics have been received. So let's go on with first some e mails.

'Hi Hans, I thought you might like these two photos of Greenore taken on August 15th, which seemed rather apt! There's a new car and passenger ferry linking the port with the village on the opposite side of Carlingford Lough which I'd thoroughly recommend. Sadly, there's no visible sign of the Caroline connection that I spotted. Something to remedy I think! Many thanks for the recent reports, which have been as fascinating as always, Best wishes, Stuart Clark.'



Well Stuart maybe you choose a wrong day to go to Greenore as no signs from Caroline days are left. Anyway, it's well appreciated that you have shared this with our readers.

Next a reader from Switzerland, Alfred Bunzi, who wrote: 'Thank you Hans for your unbelievably hard work and time you spend each month putting the International Radio Report together. There are so many facts, names and useful links. I'm surprised there are so very few inaccuracies. It's an excellent read every month. Alfred Bunzi.'

Well good to know that I can bring you some hours of reading pleasure each month with hopeful fare more to come. From Switzerland back to England with Glen:

'Hi Hans, thanks yet again for another wonderful radio report. I was shocked to hear about the passing of dear old Blake Williams, what a lovely guy he was. I received an email from Johnny Lewis who confirmed what a good guy, good broadcaster and good engineer he was. Johnny says he could tell me some tales of their time together getting the Communicator ready and the tests on 729kHz, but hadn't the time at the moment as he was doing some maintenance. Hopefully another time! Needless to say, I shall treasure even more now my recordings of those tests. RIP dear Blake, a true gentleman till the end. Glen Arnold, UK.'

It's indeed very sad Glen that Blake passed away far too early. Hopefully good old Johnny 'the herdman' Lewis will have some time in autumn to bring those memories back from 33 years ago. That would be wonderful.



Having a pub evening in early 1990's

Hans Knot, Johnny Lewis and Bob LeRoi

Photo: Rob Olthof

We stay in England for an e mail received from Peter Clayton: 'Hi Hans here's just a short note how things go round in circles. It crossed my mind at Clacton recently that at the time of the close downs in 1967 I was listening at night switching from the north to the south Caroline ship, this whilst rebuilding a Vauxhall engine for

my fathers car. What was I doing 2017 12/13 August? Yes rebuilding a Vauxhall Victor 101 engine. Unfortunately this time it was not for my father but for a spare one for my 2 Victors. I went to Clacton on Sea with Graham Hall and met many old friends, along with the usual greeting from Mr. Barrington re northern Scumbag. It was good to meet so many people as I go to the ship when very few people are about. As well as seeing yourself in Holland and Theo. Best to all Peter Clayton.'

Well thanks Peter now we know why the Hollies had a hit song with 'on a carousel'

Mike Barraclough brought the next message: ITV Meridian report today: "They provided a vital line of defence in the Second World War but iconic forts in the Thames Estuary have fallen into disrepair. There are fears the Redsand Forts, which sit in the water between Kent and Essex, could disappear altogether if funding isn't found to repair them. More than £3 million is needed to restore them. Tom Savvides joined a boat trip to the site, to see the historic structures. He talks to David Phillips from Project Redsand and boat trip organiser Alan Harmer."

<http://www.itv.com/news/meridian/update/2017-08-30/historic-sea-forts-in-the-thames-estuary-could-disappear/>



## Red Sands with Pirate flag: Photo collection Roger Scott

Next it's question to and an honest answer is expected from many readers. 'Great update...50 years...and we did not forget! Here's a request: I'm going to buy a new shortwave receiver so I can listen in to Radio Mi Amigo International, but I've long lost touch with the market. What do your readers think is the best choice of (a) a portable radio, and (b) a communications receiver? Best Wishes, Robert "Robbie" Owen'

I will mention it in next issue Robbie . I wonder if someone would help. As you're on Facebook too I advise

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=shortwave%20receiver>

Several of my readers are there active too. But please readers come on and help Robbie to make a good decision by writing to

[HKnot@home.nl](mailto:HKnot@home.nl)

Next it's reader Tim Chase: 'Hi Hans! Thank you for yet another fascinating radio report. It sounds like you enjoyed your latest visit to England, and I loved the photo of you with my old friend Tony O'Neill (we were at Walton school together) on the LV18! A shame we couldn't meet up when you visited my home town, but I guess your schedule was busy enough, as is mine at this time of year. Looking forward to the next report! Best regards to yourself and Jana. Tim Chase.'

Yes Tim a pity but even on the party in London were too much people who I couldn't speak as time was restricted. But who knows in the future. And look who's here and soon travelling from the USA to England again?

**The Official Offshore 50 Website is now online.**

This is what Mary Payne wrote on August 31<sup>st</sup> 2017:

'Our Photo feature tells the story of how the reunion to commemorate the 50th Anniversary came about, who organised it and who assisted with the smooth running of the event. There are also pages listing 'Attendees and Absent Friends' and scans of the signatures from our Guest Book. Future updates will include the messages that were read from absentees at 3.00pm, a new gallery of photos and the thank you notes we have received from grateful guests.

<http://www.offshore50.co.uk>

**Chris and Mary Payne, Jon Myer, Alan Hardy Organisers**

Updates to the Radio London Website for 31/08/17 include:

Teeshirt Success. A rediscovered Everett teeshirt commercial.  
Manx TV feature. Lowestoft's 50th Anniversary commemoration. New Veronica jingles. Pirates Back in Radio Times. Here it Comes Again - The truly International Talk Like a Pirate Day.

[www.radiolondon.co.uk](http://www.radiolondon.co.uk)



**Caroline people re-united. Photo collection Mary and Chris Payne**

Just before going into the first longer topic some other e-mails for instant this month's message from LA and the Emperor Rosko: 'Hi Hans, you have been busy! As always bring us all up to date with the world's largest collection of radio veterans! Two portions gave me pause for thought. Johnny Walker adding the ashes from Dave Cash to the sea, suddenly I was thinking where has the time gone? DC would have been smiling from upstairs. I am sorry I missed that.

The mention of A.M. Sound also had me thinking, dam right it did have a mystic to it, todays clean clear cold perfection is missing some soul! So well said! Radio Mi Amigo International (I contribute to them weekly) is still doing it! As I type I am preparing for the UK and some serious fun and work. Stay well and warm. EMP.'



This was taken during European Winter Tour nine years ago. Photo: Collection Emperor Rosko

Thanks Michael for the latest update, have a good time in England and surely I will learn more soon about the trip.

Next OEM's Chris Edwards who wrote: 'Thanks for the extensive report as usual. Your mention of Manningtree and ghosts, perhaps there are some there. Around the mid-1600's, it was the home of Witchfinder General Matthew Hopkins, and a number of 'witches' were executed there.

There's also quite a good bar on Manningtree station with some reasonable beers, at least there was last time I was there a few years ago. Best wishes Chris.'

Thanks Chris and although I was warned I didn't see any ghost. And also we found out that the pub is still there but looking inside we saw that there was no cleaning for several months and so no selection of any good beer. Next time maybe better.

This one comes from over the Atlantic Ocean: 'Hello Hans and thank you for another great report. I wish I could have met up with everyone in the UK this year, but health matters have intervened. Hopefully, things will change for next year! Keep 'em coming! David Vincent.'

Thanks a lot David and indeed I hope the circumstances for you will be better next year. Take care greetings Hans

Next one comes from Spain: 'Greetings Hans. What a great report of the various events of the weekend 12/14th August. I made my way up to Clacton and Harwich from Spain and it was my second event of the year as I was in Harlingen too, for the RadioDay, on the 20th of May so been a good year for nostalgia! Best wished. Tony Burns.'

Great to read Tony and indeed a splendid year for bringing back memories! Take care. And now, as promised, time for the first longer topic and therefore we go to Australia.

'G'day Hans, Nicholas Harvey (Nannell) writing here from Australia. I just thought I would drop you a line about the new book you mentioned in your Newsletter from Stuart Vincent. ('Live from the North Sea')

It took a while to get it delivered so you need to be patient when you've placed your order. (It took 6 weeks). Overall it was an interesting book with some good photos.

However, for the sake of 'accuracy' and explanation there are a few points that need clarifying in the Nannell/MiAmigo story.

Our Mothers name is 'Ellen' which as was common in the 1920's was changed backwards like a nickname: 'Nell(i)e'. It was the grandchildren that used to call her 'Nanny Nell' hence 'Nannell.'

The summer Palace of the King of Spain is on the promontory as you enter the Port of Santander (Magdalena Peninsula) not San Sebastian. It is called the 'Palacio de Magdalena', which in the grounds at various times has had a small zoo and has replicas of the Christopher Columbus boats that were used to re-enact his epic journey across the Atlantic and on to Australia. (Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria along with the Kontiki raft that was used on another journey - Muelle de las Carabelas is well worth a visit) There was (is) a great bar/restaurant under the Palace where many 'happy hour' was spent watching the tourists and enjoying a 'Pincho de Tortilla and a very nice brandy called Bobadillo 103.

The antenna came from Scotland and I drove all the way to Portsmouth where only the trailer was put on board to be picked up on arrival in Santander. The crossing was very rough which should have been a warning of things to come. I was the last off the ferry and was questioned heavily by customs and immigration before my brother Michael was able to get our local agent 'Alvarez' to intervene. When we were doing the final full installation of the antenna it was taken off and welded together on the quayside and then with 3 massive cranes was lifted into place and welded.



Photo: Collection Nicholas Harvey



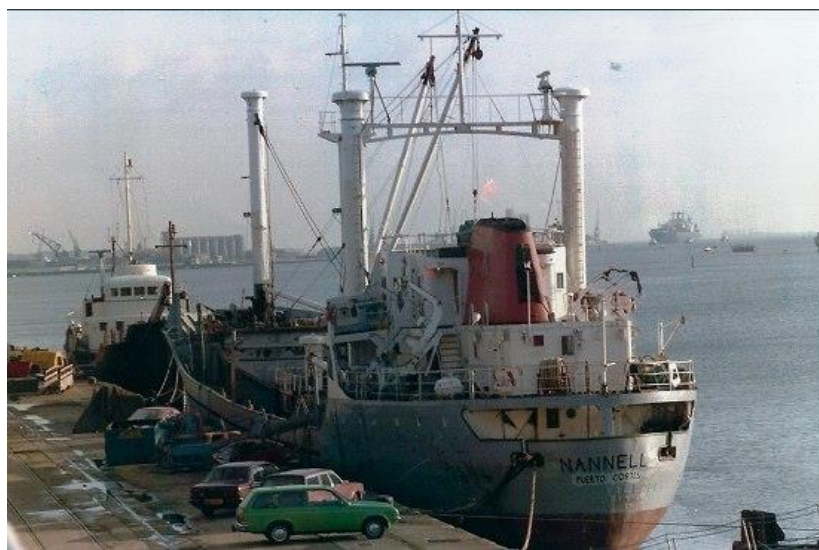
At times it was quite 'hairy' being suspended on a harness attached to the crane over two hundred feet above the deck trying to weld plates on. The trailer was off loaded and later sold locally. It was at this time that two English 'tourists' kept turning up, every day, taking photos and trying to get information. One was actually from the Embassy in Madrid and the other was from the Home Office in London. (They departed after the local Policia kept questioning them - The local cops were always nearby and they and their families were always welcomed on board) All this took place at the quayside in the heart of Santander right next to the Oceanographic Institute and Maritime Museum. We also had Nick Murrays 'Norecrest' tug alongside and as you will recall from a previous email it broke away in a severe storm and washed up on the beach on the other side of the bay. (Playa Somo)



Photo: Collection Nicholas Harvey

Until we were able to get a security guard and eventually remove the stranded tug I was on board day and night, armed as 'scavengers' were trying to board and steal artefacts. The Norecrest was to go on to be a 'lifesaver' for the Nannell/Mi Amigo.

Before this, we moved due to costs from Atlantico to a place called 'Puerto Deportivo' in the Poligono de Raos. Puerto Deportivo literally means 'leisure/pleasure port'. It is now a very popular Marina with shops and the like but at the time it was a barren, desolate place where ships and small boats that had either been impounded for smuggling or other crimes were kept. (We were alongside 2 other ships for a while and were able to scavenge parts from them such as bulkhead doors and frames - one of the ships was partially sunk and is still there today, they say that people go scuba diving onto it but I doubt that given the state of the water. However, it was at that time an industrial area which was useful for getting parts for the Nannell. Most of the area was just marshland and the locals would setup nets to catch birds that flew into them presumably to have for dinner! But better still it had two great bars and one 'hell-hole' that only the desperate would go into.



In this 'hell-hole' that was literally just a small shed Tapas consisted of grey mullet that had been caught near the sewer outlets and literally had their stomachs peeled out, they were then soaked in vinegar to mask the smell of the diesel and other 'odours'! Both of the other bars have now been replaced with fancy shops and restaurants but we frequented both of them as it was cheaper having the 'menu del dia' than cooking on board. Prycka supermarket was a long walk away and always caused us to stop at the Bar Gelin next to the Nueva Montana steelworks which is where the 'percebes'

which resembled chickens toenails were considered a delicacy. I still keep in touch the owners son.

The 'red light district' is a very famous landmark in Santander. It is actually the 'Calle Alto' and is in the same street as the local church. You'll find that in most of Spain the red light districts are always behind or near a Cathedral/Church. Madrid and Palma are classic examples. You may be surprised to find that during the day and early evening a lot of people actually visit Calle Alto with their families for drinks and tapas. As the 'bars' were open all night, it became a favoured 'watering hole' after a long day on the Nannell. A few of the places were seedy, given that all 'tastes' were catered for. Eventually we favoured just two of the many bars as apart from the obvious the food and drink was okay. Such was our regularity there that at times we (Nick Murray, Billy, Stan, Andy and myself) were left to run the bars as the 'Madam' that owned them always found us useful in translating for German, English/American and French sailors that were becoming 'bothersome'.

On many occasion the local Police would come and fetch one of us to go to another bar and translate in arguments usually over price. Being 'chauffeured' around like this by the Police added to our salubrious reputation and we were even nicknamed 'Los Pirates' over the Nannell both in TV and newspaper articles. Finally, on the Calle Alto was a cigarette factory that we often convinced English tourists in Santander was the original setting for the opera 'Carmen'. It was probably cruel to do this but it was justifiable as a lot of the English tourists behaved very badly in Santander whilst waiting for the ferry home, which annoyed us as well as locals. "Uno beero, uno whiskio" were usually indications of yet another 'numpty' English tourist who believed that putting an 'O' on the end of every word made them fluent in Spanish!)



Nannell near Maritime Museum Santander

Photo: Nicolas Harvey

Just for the record: The three brothers Stuart met are *George*, *Michael* and *I Nicholas*. We confirmed with *Mother* that we did not have another brother '*Colin*' hidden in the attic at home!

Most of the valves for the transmitters I fetched from *GEC* in *Chelmsford* and whilst I was stopped and searched and the car stripped at *Dover* and questioned extensively about my intent as I had legitimate invoices from *GEC* they (who I suspect included '*Home Office*' people) could do nothing other than delay me and make me miss that ferry. As at that time in the 1980's there were plenty of ferries it was not a problem. Every time the '*Home Office*' guys moved towards the car I 'took' their photo as I was worried they would plant drugs or something. They became very annoyed at this and a local Policeman told me to stop as they, *Police/Customs*, did not want to be photographed.

I assured him I was only photographing the '*Home Office*' guys. As *Customs* and the *Police* were becoming annoyed at the task they were forced to do they let me carry on. When it was confirmed that everything was legitimate the '*Home Office*' guys said they wanted the camera checked. I gave it to one of them knowing what they would do. Sure enough he immediately opened the camera that would

have destroyed the photos. Unfortunately for him there was no film in the camera which caused great amusement amongst the Customs and Police present. Needless to say the 'Home Office' guys left unhappy and we put the car back together.

In Santander we were advised that the U.K. was stepping up pressure on Spain to stop our work and kick us out. The Spanish went through the motions but as at the time (a few years after the Falklands War) they, the Spanish, did not put much effort into it. Under a 'quaint' Spanish maritime law, Spain would never evict a ship/vessel if it was unable to leave 'under its' own steam'. With plenty of advance notice of an inspection we were able to demonstrate that the main engine was not working and we were still awaiting parts. This usually was confirmed by 'Alvarez' our agent and Stan taking a rocker cover off of one of the piston chambers which satisfied the Harbour Master.



Photo: Nicolas Harvey

Similarly the construction and installation of the antenna was deemed okay as the local council official was 'satisfied' that it was just a 240' (80 metres) flag pole that the 'crazy English' were building. All of this was usually confirmed over a long lunch at the Olympic Bar on the quayside and became a regular weekly thing! We had by now moved from Poligono de Raos and were alongside in

Santander port outside the Maritime Museum and Oceanographic Institute which we visited regularly and at times by way of thanks for any inconvenience our presence caused we let the Museum/Institute bring staff/families on board to have a look around and explain what we were doing amazingly always culminating in tapas and drinks in the Olympic Bar! The Olympic Bar was also the local shooting range and was frequented by Police and Military people which helped. The Olympic Bar was so pleased with the increase in custom caused by 'Los Pirates' being nearby that when we were very busy working they would bring over tapas and drinks free of charge! The sandy and very popular beach, just in front of our bow, was always a good place for a swim and relaxation at the end of the day.

Just for the record we never went to Algeria. All the fitting out was done alongside in Santander port. The main generators were moved and a large fuel tank was installed that was fed via the centrifuge from the Nannells' main tanks. More on that further on. By and large we mainly used the three cylinder air-cooled Deutz generator that was in the forward paint locker as the amount of fuel one of the main generators used was not justifiable. We were forced to use one though when the Deutz seized after the fan belt snapped.



Photo collection Ben Bode

It took me a whole day to replace the shells on the main shaft and clean it up and getting it up and going again much to the disbelief of Stan the resident engineer who had written the generator off. He of little faith - I had known Stanley since I was about ten years old and had learnt a lot about engineering from him at our scrapyards in England - even though Stan left after a serious argument between all the 'engineers' on board I still kept in touch with him over the years.

Incidentally, I also built a cut-out system on the Deutz that if the fan belt ever broke it would immediately cut off the fuel and stall the engine saving it from catastrophe. It worked that well that I told Deutz about it and never got any acknowledgement for it even though they (Deutz) went on to incorporate it in their designs. Just goes to show the benefits of patenting an idea. The only acknowledgement ironically came from England. Stan and I would often go off in the Zodiac 'exploring'. Stan used to plot different parts of the bay around Somo and Raos and I took photos as a record. Stan then sent these revisions to the British Admiralty to update their Nautical Charts. If you look at the notes on the chart for Santander you will see the name 'Stanley Nichols' credited! If only they had known it was the 'Los Pirates' they probably would have hanged us at Chatham Dockyard instead!

Despite both my brother Michael and I saying that the antenna should go all the way down to the 'tween decks' to make it more secure we were 'overruled' by the so called expert engineers who convinced George and Andy (Investor) it was not necessary. So the 240' (80 metres) antenna was secured to the deck by just 4 welded plates and then stayed with one inch (25mm) cables. When everything was done including the arrival of a registered Captain and Navigator we set sail on a Thursday night in good weather. (It was mid-June) The Norecrest was to follow the next day. By midday on the Friday the weather had turned and the waves were getting very rough even for the Bay of Biscay at that time of year. As predicted the pads were not enough to hold the antenna and as they broke the stays caused the antenna to start 'corkscrewing'. A high wave was

enough to finish the job and the mast toppled over the port side but was prevented from sinking as it was still held by a single stay. The ship was now at an acute angle and there was a great danger that with the waves we may rollover. Billy and I got the oxy-acetylene cutting gear and cut the slack cables leaving only the one preventing the antenna from sinking.



Photo Collection Nicolas Harvey

Gravity is an amazing thing! Keeping as low as possible to prevent the whiplash from the stay hitting us I cut through it. This is where gravity took over, once the stay was cut the antenna fell off the port side allowing the ship to then roll instead of upright to the starboard side very quickly to a very sharp angle. It was quickly enough to throw Billy and I against the starboard rails. The cutting gear 'took off' over the starboard side but not before the torch burnt both my legs quite severely. The ship after much rolling from port to starboard came back onto an even keel. The antenna was gone to the depths of the Bay of Biscay. I still have the rough co-ordinates of its location: 44 46.8N, 001 49.7W. I was able to place a call to my brothers informing them of the disaster and it was decided we would continue sailing to our original station off the coast of Zeebrugge.



For some reason the violent rocking of the ship (it was now the Mi Amigo) had damaged the centrifuge that was used to clean the fuel before transfer to the main tanks. Subsequently the performance of the main engine deteriorated and our speed dropped barely enough to keep us moving against tidal shift. Billy and I tried for hours everything from stripping the centrifuge, bleeding the feed lines to even putting the fuel through cloth to clean it, all to no avail. Whilst doing this I was called to the bridge and the Captain told me the French were calling us on the radio. When I looked out of the starboard wing there was a French Corvette about a mile (1.6km) away. I asked them via the radio what they wanted and they replied they wished to board us. I advised them that as we were not in French waters they could not.



Renamed into Miamiigo. collection Nicolas Harvey Photo

Their reply was that we were and I asked the Captain and Navigator if this was true. They confirmed it was. I asked why but was met with a shrug. I told the French that they were more than welcome to come aboard. At the same time, although this was a hopeless gesture, I told the Captain to start moving gently back to port so that we were in International waters. To not avail because quickly

two Zodiacs with heavily armed French Commandos were alongside and we lowered the Jacobs' Ladder for them to board. Whilst at first they were very serious they soon realised we were no threat and they relaxed as the French had always done since 1815! In no time at all we were drinking the last of our Spanish Rioja told them exactly what had happened and at that point they offered us their help. I asked if they had some bandages as my legs were quite bad from burns. They sent a Zodiac back and it returned with a doctor who after the usual French 'shrugs' cleaned me up gave me more dressings and syringes and tablets. They also supplied us with some very fine Ricard Pastis and some beautiful Roquefort cheeses. They were with us for over four hours and despite my request for them to take the Captain and Navigator with them, who I had sacked, they left with a hearty "Bon Chance".



**Norecrest after refuelling Photo: Collection Nicholas Harvey**

We managed to raise the Norecrest by radio and we were met by them as dusk fell. It was decided that we would go under tow to our destination. It took a while to get the lines in place and then we were on the move. It took nine days to get on station during which the Norecrest had to unhitch and go and get re-fuelled during which time we were shadowed by both an American and a Russian ship. I

think it was more curiosity than anything and at one stage the Americans asked if we needed help. Declining, telling them that we were awaiting the return of the Norecrest they moved on. Billy chastised me for not asking for some steaks and whiskey!



The French. Photo: Collection Nicolas Harvey

The Norecrest returned and I will always be grateful to Nick Murray for his help. (I wish I could remember the name of both his 'Skipper' and Nicks' daughter as whilst we were in Santander Nicks' daughter had been a good friend to my children as well as the children from the Bar Gelin. Despite everything in the 1980's Spain was a safe place for children. Both Nick and I were more than happy to let our children go off with our agent and suppliers and even the port tug families for weekends. Sadly the world has changed and whilst my daughter lives and works in Madrid she has said it is no longer safe to let children wander on their own. What a sad indictment of our 'modern, liberated society'.

After nine days we arrived on station and dropped anchor. We had a discussion and Billy agreed to stay on board. We were all taken by the Norecrest to Sheerness where we dis-embarked and made our separate ways without any Customs or Immigration presence.

There is a video of Billy on the Nannell/Mi Amigo in rough weather whilst on station. Sadly Billy was to later take his own life in Italy. Stanley died at home, Alvarez died of old age, my wife who I met and married in Santander was killed by a drunk driver in her homeland of Argentina, our Mother died; I lost contact with Nick Murray and the others, the Nannell/Mi Amigo was eventually scrapped. Santander has changed so much over the years it is a different place. Even the Bar Gelin is now an upmarket restaurant and not the family run place it used to be.

So there you go, what started out as a potential money-maker ended as a loss. The original concept as put to us seemed sound enough to take it on. To my dying day I like my brother still maintain that had the antenna been insulated and fastened all the way down to the 'tween decks' it would not have been lost.

There were plenty of conspiracy theories afterwards: We did it for the insurance, there was none it was a financial loss for us. The so called 'experts' were paid by a rival station to ensure the project failed, they are all still breathing so that de-bunks that myth. There were other 'plots' too stupid to give words to.

Hans, I'm sorry the story goes on so long but after reading Stuarts' book it bought back a lot of memories and I wanted to ensure the story of the Nannell/Mi Amigo was correct.

I recommend the book it is an interesting read and I hope Stuart does well from it. Although the naming of Roz was I consider 'un-gentlemanly'. Roz was a kind and gentle soul and didn't need identifying. Anonymity may have added a bit of intrigue!

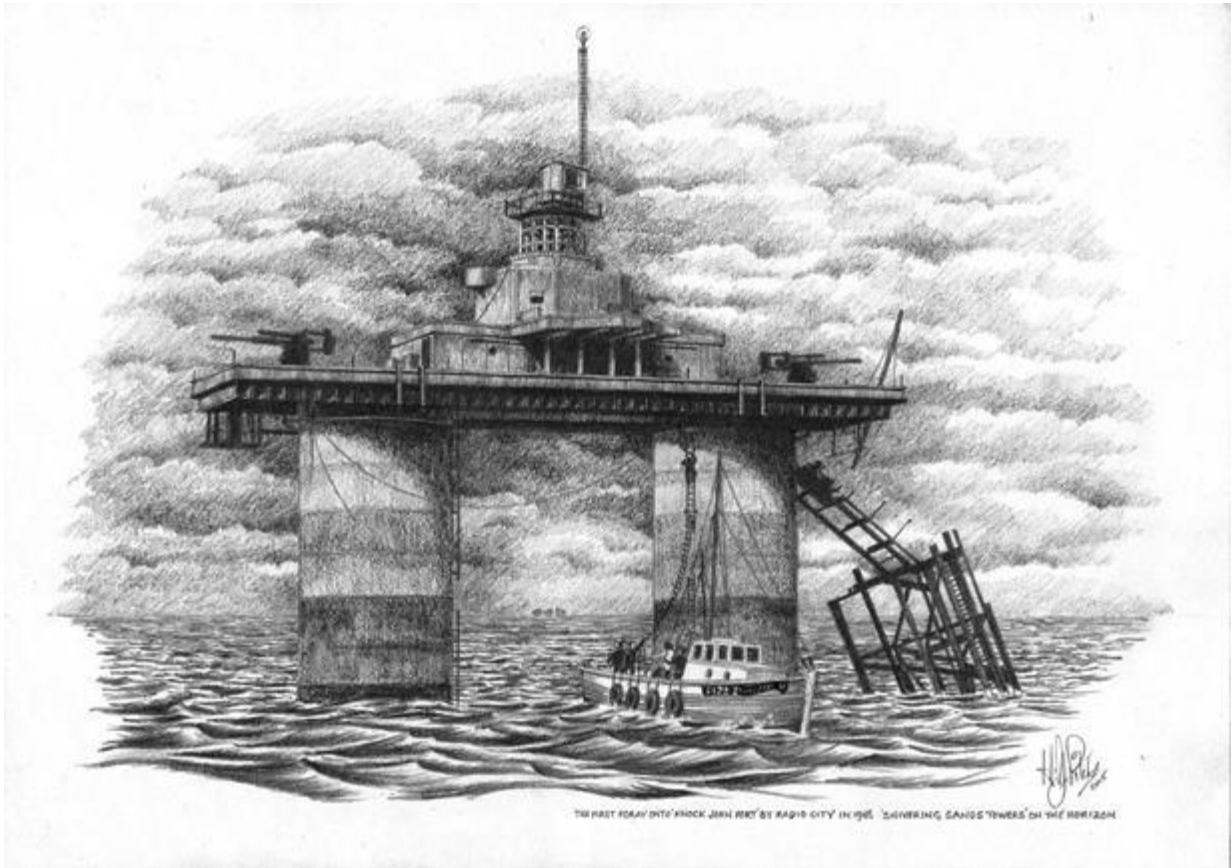
I have no desire or need to write a book so Hans as 'Keeper of the Archives' I assign this tome to you to do with as you see fit.

All the best, Nicholas. (23/08/2017)'

Thanks a lot Nicholas for sharing these enormous precise facts and stories with our readership. It's so much appreciated and above that for many of the readers a lot is known now about what was for them

in the past just rumours and even many didn't believe there was ever a Nannell project. Once again a big thanks to you and do enjoy the rest of your life.

I found the next one on Facebook from Jerry Pitcher and it's so wonderful that I decided to lent it and show it our readers too: 'My drawing of the first boarding of H.M.S. Knock John by Radio City in 1965..... That's a not-very-brave me on the ladder!



Copyright Jerry Pitcher 2015.

Two interesting historical site to visit are:

<http://danskradio.dk/radiomercur.html>

<http://danskradio.dk/historien.html>

In the meantime I can tell you that there are plans in Danmark to have the special Mercur Exhibition in Ringsted longer open, even into 2018.

Enjoy an exclusive interview with DJ Diddy David Hamilton talking about a life in TV, radio and on stage. His new book 'The golden age of Radio One' is out now.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSZbNBXwmXw>

'Remember A Charity' begun its 2017 Awareness Week campaign (11-17th September) with the launch of **Last Pirate FM**, a new pirate radio station that was travelling the nation, hosted by legendary pirate **DJ Emperor Rosko**. The press report went on with:

'Created by Atomic London and produced by Wisebuddah, the campaign is designed to raise awareness for 'Remember A Charity In Your Will Week', targeting the baby boomer generation who lived through the golden era of the sixties. Gifts left in Wills are often the most important source of funding for charities, and the challenge for Remember A Charity is to innovate and increase awareness year-on-year by talking about legacies in a different way, to end their status as a taboo subject.

Coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the Marine Offences Act this year, Last Pirate FM will help this generation relive that revolutionary decade by emulating the glory days of pirate radio stations and inspiring them to 'have their say on the world they would like to pass on' once again. This empowered audience is no stranger to influencing the future; they stopped the war, campaigned for human rights, demanded equality, reinvented fashion, invented pop culture, changed the face of music and the world, and of course listened to pirate radio in their millions.'

Read more: <https://www.adforum.com/agency/6671815/press-releases/69749/last-pirate-fm-sets-sail-across-the-uk-to-mark-remember-a-charity-in-your-will-week-thanks-to-atomic-london-and-wisebuddah>

And here a small promotion video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUwvsIL1BCo>

.....

Interesting radio news came in from Tony Prince, former Caroline and Luxembourg, who wrote me on September 12th:

'Hi Hans, I promised you would be one of the first to have confirmation of our new radio channel but here and now we have no stream for the web site and no final confirmation on the name. But I can confirm an online channel dedicated to the rebuilding of Personality Radio with sweeps of music across 6 decades and lots of colourful specials including PERSONALITY DJ OF THE YEAR where we feature the best one hour shows launching new careers.

I can confirm Mike Read, Graham Dene, Mark Wesley, Mike Hollis, Neil Fox, Peter Antony, Roger Day, Rosko, Shaun Tilly and Timmy Mallett +++ Target launch early November. Kenny Tosh has been invited to create a PIRATE RADIO SHOW where he will pull out the jingles of old and archive material. Eddie Grant will host a Reggae special each week from the Caribbean and the editor of Record Collector book will his a collectors show etc. etc. Exciting days for everyone and I know you will be behind us. Best for now Tony'.

In the meantime some sources sent me the link:

<http://d-luxradio.co.uk> as well as I'm informed the start will be New Year's Day at midnight.

So keep in touch for more exciting news soon.



Photo Tony Prince at Radio Luxembourg collection Tony Prince

**Saturday 9th September 2017 - Felixstowe, Suffolk, England.**  
A report from reader Stephen Raindle.

'Radio Caroline was on the lips and in the memories of many people in Felixstowe with an exhibition of 'offshore radio' staged in the town's Trinity Methodist Church Hall and in the afternoon a commemorative plaque to Radio Caroline was unveiled in the nearby cliff-top viewing area in Wolsey Gardens overlooking the area of the North Sea where Caroline first began broadcasting from the mv Fredericia anchored a few miles off the coast in Easter 1964.



**Exhibition. Photo Stephen Raindle**

We arrived at the exhibition midmorning and found a fair sized crowd already there, taking in the total nostalgia event which also had a record, CD and memorabilia sale doing brisk business in an ante-room of the hall. The pirate radio exhibition was largely of news, publicity, film and memorabilia items about the era of pirate offshore radio in the United Kingdom, from its start until its eventual fall after government legislation in August 1967.

Reproductions of many newspaper items of memorable events relating to the 'pirates' were the main thrust of the exhibition which also had some vintage radios and television sets on display. An early visitor to the exhibition was Roger 'Twiggy' Day formerly of Swinging



Radio England and Radio Caroline in the sixties. By the time we had seen and enjoyed all the exhibits the hall was thronging with visitors and plenty more still streaming through the doors.



Roger Day and admirer Photo Stephen Raindle

Next item of the agenda on this warm and sunny day was the unveiling of the commemorative plaque which was due to be at 2.30pm subject to the arrival of guest of honour Emperor Rosko transported from London in a cavalcade of skull & crossbones beflagged mini-mokes, which had been held up along the way but arrived in time much to the excitement of the gathering of Caroline fans who, by then, must have numbered around 200. After brief speeches by representatives of Felixstowe & Offshore Radio - the event organisers, Caroline's former DJs Tony 'Royal Ruler' Prince, Roger 'Twiggy' Day, Ray Clark, 'Neddy' Alan Turner, Alan Clark, Rosko himself and current Caroline presenter Peter Antony, the polished stone plaque set in the ground was duly unveiled to general applause by the crowd of what can only be described as eternal teenagers.



Photo: Stephen Raindle

After much general chat about the good old days of offshore radio, many photographs of the plaque and the guests of honour, the mini-mokes were fired up and Rosko and his entourage left for a visit to the exhibition before returning to London. Back at the Trinity church hall the place was packed with fans of all ages and only after the departure of the various celebrity DJs did the numbers thin out.



Left to right: Sherri Lynn, Vanessa Martin, Glenda Williams and Rosko Photo: Stephen Raindle

All told a very nostalgic, enjoyable and successful event so congratulations to Felixstowe & Offshore Radio group. The event was reported in fully the Ipswich Star which also had several excellent photos: <http://www.ipswichstar.co.uk/news/radio-caroline-legends-return-to-felixstowe-seafront-for-commemorative-weekend-1-5188255>

With thanks to Stephen Raindle of course. Surely my readers have enjoyed reading your report on the event.

I did receive also a report from Sherri Lynn about that special day from a different angle:

For the past few weeks I had been helping to co-ordinate with Mark Peacock of the Moke Club UK and Brian Nichols and Charles Wright of Felixstowe and offshore radio for Rosko, a promo lady from All Oldies Radio and All Retro Radio (owned by Russ Dee), Lora Ricketts and me to being given a ride from the hotel where Rosko was staying in London to Felixstowe for a special event there to be held on September 9th to commemorate Radio Caroline. Our grateful thanks to Brian, Charles and Mark for helping to make this day such a resounding success!

On that day, we met at the hotel before 10:00 AM and at last, when the four mokes scheduled to meet us were all there, we set off for our destination, with Rosko, Lora and me in the vehicle owned by Andy Woolhouse. In his gleaming red Mini Moke with the word 'Californian' emblazoned on the left and right side of the bonnet in gold. The other three mini mokes, with their drivers and passengers, were behind us. (See pics below including the group assembled around the red Mini Moke before setting off for Felixstowe).



We were advised to wear 'moke hats' (which Andy had brought for us) and to wrap up warmly, which we did. Needless to say, we attracted some attention as we drove through London toward Felixstowe. The plan was for us to meet up with the other 5 Mini Mokes with all drivers being members of the Moke Club UK; to whom many thanks for their wonderful support! After traveling from London, unfortunately, by the time we met up and arrived in Felixstowe, which was exciting as we were met by crowds on both sides of the street with cameras at the ready and cheering us on. We got there too late for lunch.

However, we fortunately were in time for the main event which was for the unveiling of the stone in Wolsey Garden on a clifftop overlooking the sea. From Wolsey Garden we proceeded to the Exhibition of Offshore Radio memorabilia, which was open on September 9th and 10<sup>th</sup> with 'Flashback 67' Exhibition, Felixstowe

related offshore radio history, display of vintage radios and technology, Radio Caroline merchandise and special guests. In addition a Record and CD Fair was there on Saturday only. Radio Caroline was first broadcast from a ship near the Cork Anchorage off Felixstowe on Easter Sunday, 1964 and must have been heard by a few million happy listeners, who still remember it vividly to this day.

There were many people wanting to meet Rosko, have their photo taken with him and to get his autograph! He very graciously made time to greet one and all despite the fact that we needed to get back to London as close to 6:00 pm as possible. We finally left for London in a white Mini Moke driven by Colin Blowers after a super afternoon in Felixstowe.

On Monday and subsequent days until Friday (September 15<sup>th</sup>), Rosko has had a gig in various cities for a campaign staged by creative agency Atomic London and produced by Wisebuddah. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness for 'Remember A Charity In Your Will Week', which specifically targets the baby boomer generation, who may remember listening to the original broadcasts of pirate radio. After all, who of us can ever forget Radio Caroline and other offshore radio stations!

Read more at <http://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/watch-atomic-london-brings-back-radio-caroline-encourage-people-remember-charity/1444110#2FFIiZ5gKSzWDGTg.99>

<http://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/watch-atomic-london-brings-back-radio-caroline-encourage-people-remember-charity/1444110#As72ms5QDYUu6xkP.01>

Conversations including with Rosko are very interesting

<https://t.co/asBzVqOwQS?amp=1>

<https://radiotoday.co.uk/2017/09/emperor-rosko-tours-uk-with-last-pirate-fm/> Sherri Lynn'.

Also to you Sherri, thanks a lot for your input and your report which is most appreciated. Be in contact again soon!

.....  
As promised in last issue we also will have another chapter from Harald Hummel's memories to the sixties and seventies in last century. In the August issue Harald told us that they left Germany during summer to try to visit their pen ladies as well as Radio Veronica and RNI. And so we go on with the story: Harald: 'But still, what RNI did in those days was far much more exciting. Walter and I had already tried several times in the two ports of Scheveningen to catch something from Radio Nordsee, maybe there was a tender.

RNI broadcasted live, 24 hours English service with a lot of former Caroline Deejays as the German service was dropped. That was, in my opinion pretty much the best time in this station's life. Well not necessarily in financial terms, but in terms of program quality. Who would have thought that the station would only be audible for 2 weeks at the beginning of September 1970?

And that's why what Walter and I thought to get an experience of unbelievable uniqueness. I personally had no peace of mind and was restless. I knew that the two bosses of Radio Nordsee: Erwin Meister and Edwin Bollier, mostly stayed at the Grand Hotel in Scheveningen, when they were in Holland. He had heard this often on the radio in Germany when there was a report on RNI.'

However, Harald could not have guessed that they would also be there on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September.

Again and again he complained to Walter that one of them had to go to the Grand Hotel. But Harald was shy and barely made it. Eventually Walter drove him straight to the door of the hotel and Harald pulled himself up and went to the reception. "Could I speak to Mr. Meister or Mr. Bollier, please?" "Yes, OK, go into that box over there, please." Harald couldn't believe his ears - and just a few seconds later he had Erwin Meister on the phone.



Harald's memories poster

"Excuse me, Mr. Meister, we're two fans of RNI from Germany and we'd like to go out to MEBO 2." "We're not leaving today, sorry." "Oh, we've been here for several more days, maybe we can do it later?" "Yes, on Monday at port 2 about 3:00 in the afternoon." "Oh, that would be wonderful. Thank you very much, Mr. Meister."

That's all - but you can imagine how someone feels when they've been carrying around a pirate radio station for many years and suddenly they've had this chance. Walter couldn't believe what Harald told him. He really couldn't believe it: A few days ago he was on Radio Veronica and in a few days he would be on the famous MEBO 2 from Radio Nordsee International outside in the North Sea? It was simply not possible to describe what was going on in the two of them.

Of course, the two had to share their phenomenal news with the girls. Maybe they wanted to be there? Harald called Margriet, but Margriet wasn't thrilled at all. Radio Nordsee didn't interest her at all. Whether Maria had found out about it in

time, Harald did not know yet. Maybe she would have decided otherwise. All they agreed was that they could meet again after the two got back from the radio ship.

Everything that weekend was exciting, but the next Monday became particularly bad. Harald had assumed that the RNI supply ship was still the MEBO I, as he read months earlier. So the MEBO I was searched for in the harbour of Scheveningen. He also couldn't remember exactly if it was still there. One thing was certain: on that Monday there was no MEBO I to be found. Walter drove through the two harbours in wild horror: nothing. It was getting later and later and finally they began to think their dream was over.



Tender Dolfijn. Photo: Collection Harald Hummel

But then, completely unexpectedly, they saw some people loading packages, etc. on another ship, the Dolfijn. And, on closer inspection, they actually recognised Meister and Bollier. Walter never found a parking lot that fast before. Edwin Bollier had his guests sitting on a bench next to a small inconspicuous male. He seemed a little shyer than his sidekicks. Or he pretended he was new. Anyway, Walter and Harald couldn't have guessed that Mike Ross was sitting next to them.



Mike Ross also didn't suspect that his services would be finished after 2 weeks. And he also did not suspect that in the later 2nd life of RNI (from 1971) he was the longest employed person on the ship. Yeah, they were sitting on the tender. Something could hardly go wrong. Walter took pictures in black and white and they became real anoraks. Although this term only became fashionable a bit later. The trip from the Scheveningen harbour had hardly begun, and the two could already see the MEBO II from a distance.



Remembering RNI Photo: Harald Hummel

A gigantic broadcasting ship (especially because of the middle mast) and certainly the most feudally equipped of all radio ships. Painted in bright colours, it rose quite high out of the North Sea. What would be happening on board the MEBO II. Read more about Walter and Harald's memories soon in the Hans Knot International Radio Report.

During the past weeks a lot of scans of photos have been made here in Groningen and Martin van der Ven did the second part of the job by putting them in our massive Flickr archive, which is now bigger than 20.000 photos free to use as long as you mention the source as well as the photographer's name. Here the new ones:

Felixstowe, 9th September 2017

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72157686917244394>

Theo Dencker: The Mebo II leaving Slikkerveen

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72157686917082804>

Piet Treffers: My Laser Photo Album

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72157689385309245>

Piet Treffers: Mijn Radio Paradijs collectie

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72157686916695074>

Early August another group of licensed radio amateurs were working from the MV Ross Revenge. See for more information as well photos here:

<http://www.martellotowergroup.com/gb5rc.html>

Peter Messingfeld is already more than 4 decades active from Germany making photos from several projects. Recently he has updated his photo pages:

Caroline Party in Clacton-on-Sea

[http://travelsieries.de/trav2017r/trav2017\\_01.php](http://travelsieries.de/trav2017r/trav2017_01.php)

Pirate BBC Essex

[http://travelsieries.de/trav2017r/trav2017\\_02.php](http://travelsieries.de/trav2017r/trav2017_02.php)

[http://travelsieries.de/trav1973r/trav1973\\_01.php](http://travelsieries.de/trav1973r/trav1973_01.php) (Norderney 1973)

[http://travelsieries.de/trav1973r/trav1973\\_02.php](http://travelsieries.de/trav1973r/trav1973_02.php) (Radio NorthSea 1973)

[http://travelservices.de/trav1973r/trav1973\\_03.php](http://travelservices.de/trav1973r/trav1973_03.php) (Radio Caroline 1973)

[http://travelservices.de/trav1973r/trav1973\\_04.php](http://travelservices.de/trav1973r/trav1973_04.php) (Radio Veronica 1973)

[http://travelservices.de/trav2015r/trav2015\\_01.php](http://travelservices.de/trav2015r/trav2015_01.php) (Erkrath 2015)

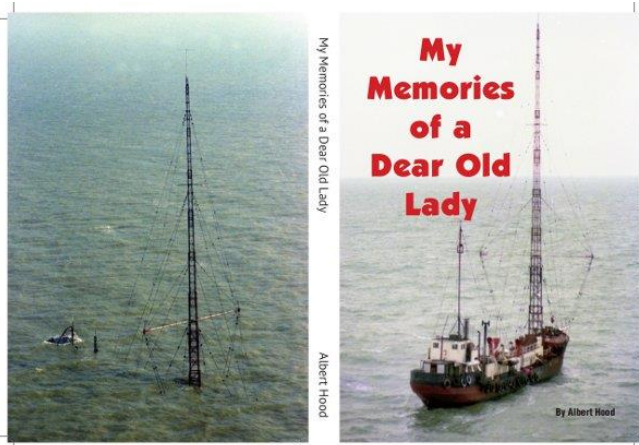
[http://travelservices.de/trav2016r/trav2016\\_01.php](http://travelservices.de/trav2016r/trav2016_01.php) (Caroline Party 2016)

[http://travelservices.de/trav2016r/trav2016\\_02.php](http://travelservices.de/trav2016r/trav2016_02.php) (Erkrath 2016)

Alex from the Netherlands wrote: There's a new video uploaded which I edited: RNI the start. Beautiful shots from The Galaxy (Big L) as RNI in the harbour in Hamburg and an interview with Edwin Bollier. Also footage of the land based pirates in Switzerland Swiss television august 2003.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OokvZxsvfoA&feature=youtu.be>

The official *Offshore 50* site is <http://www.offshore50.co.uk/>. It tells the story of how the event came about – and many more photos will be added there soon.



Officially now a chapter of the above wonderful book could be read. We had a few contacts with the author and he was busy early this month with the Felixstowe and other happenings, so the promised chapter didn't arrive in time. But we promise that in the coming two months chapters will be published. Paul de Haan has already read the book and is very enthusiastic: 'I have read the book for the first time. Purple things stand out. It reads tiringly, resembles a film that

pulls the figurine by. A lot' I said he said' is his way of writing. I have a great deal of respect for Albert Hood and his wife, unconditional dedication to the Lady. I read here again between the lines that Ronan O'Rahilly had little respect for his people, one way traffic to Irishman. It is nice to read this time not from the radio observation but rather the living conditions and generator problems. Also there is now further proof that the Mi Amigo was an unheated burrow during the winter 1979/1980. Really a beautiful book it is. You can order your own copy: <http://rcsocietysales.co.uk/read.html>



In last issue I told you that I was invited for the 50 anniversary dinner from the Principality of Sealand. A pity I could not go to England a second time within a month. Below is the speech Prince Michael Bates, who also wrote: 'An interesting old guy came to our dinner who had served on both the Knock John and Roughs fort after the war. Bill was in his 90's. I told him the Essex boys always claimed the fort was haunted and they named the ghost Joshua. He said funnily enough a man did die of a heart attack and the tender bringing out the coffin missed his evacuation and they larked about laying in it on the galley table. I put him together with the old DJs to exchange haunting stories.'

Here's the speech: 'What an amazing turnout! My mum and dad would have been so very proud. There are people in this room literally from around the world. From as far away as Argentina, the USA, Germany and China. Friends, family, supporters and business associates. There are lawyers film producers, internet tycoons, radio celebrities, pilots and skippers to name but few. All of whom have been part of Sealand's rich and varied history.

We are here today to celebrate 50 years of the creation of Sealand. I guess to do that I need to start from the beginning of this adventure over 50 years ago. From the days of Pirate Radio there is the Radio Essex lads, DJs engineers and tender skippers and crew from the early 60's. All very young men at the time; the youngest of which I believe was 16. Now dare I say mostly old boys. These guys along with of course my dad, who's station it was, and the other offshore radio stations changed the face of radio broadcasting in the UK. Prior to the offshore 'Pirate Radio ' phenomena there was no commercial radio in the UK. There was no pop music for the kids to listen to.

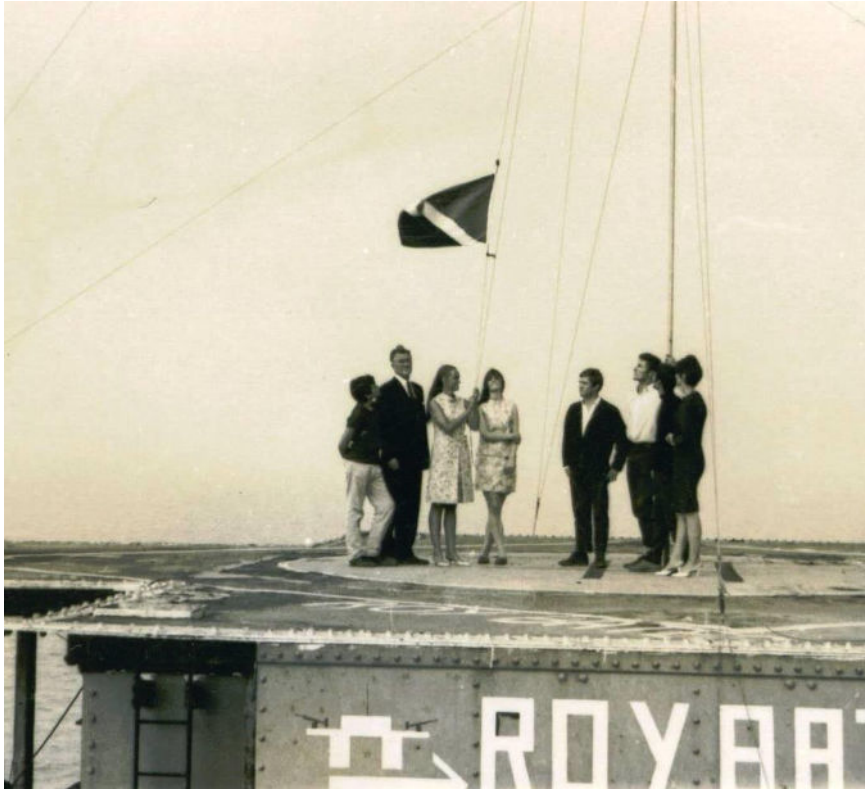
I don't think anyone made any money from those times I know my father certainly didn't. And the staff members even less I'm sure. But it was a massive adventure for all involved and I know those that took part are hugely proud of those times as am I. I wanted the radio guys to feel at home so made sure they had some Glenrick Pilchards on their table. During our pirate radio days my dad would disappear down to the food wholesaler and return with cases of them loaded in his car ready to dispatch on the supply tender. They were full of protein he would enthuse to anyone who questioned the volume of tins. They were also very cheap and times were hard. I don't think any of them actually got eaten after the first couple of tins.

Having been prosecuted under the marine offences act my father had to close the station on the Knock John fort and was looking for

some better jurisdiction to broadcast from. I remember he looked at sites as far away as the Channel Islands and Liverpool bay, pouring over sea charts into the wee small hours. Eventually he was settling on the idea of Roughs Towers another abandoned Navel fortress further out to sea off the Essex / Suffolk coast.

Christmas Eve 1966 we turned up in the dead of night on dad's death trap of an old fishing boat 'Mizzy Gel'. Me, then 14 years and the Radio Essex crew. It was a pitch dark night as we proceeded to climb up the rope ladder onto the fortress. Radio Caroline, one of the other offshore stations, it seems had two caretakers on the fort. They had been preparing for a nice quite Christmas. They were promptly told to pack their gear as they were going ashore. No one really argued with the old man, who had a fearsome reputation. So down to the boat and ashore they went. During the following months there were various shenanigans with attacks and counter attacks by different radio factions until it all started to settle down.

My father meanwhile had lost interest in radio and had decided on bigger plans. Never the 'Shrinking violet', he decided he was going to break away from the UK and create his own country. If it was good enough for Ian Smiths Rhodesia it was good enough for him he enthused. So on my mother's birthday, September 2nd 1967, along with family and supporters standing on the forts helipad, we raised our newly designed flag and announced to the world and attending press the birth of The independent state of Sealand. As well as Dad making my mother his Princess. That would have made him very happy. He adored my mother.



September 2, 1967. Photo: Family Bates Archive

In later years he asked me to help him choose one of 'Those new-fangled digital cameras'. I said dad why do you need a camera thinking he wanted to take pictures of his grandchildren. I want to take pictures of your mother he announced. He did have a bit of a one tracked mind.

Over the years we designed and had minted silver coins, made passports and stamps. We have been involved in plans for a commercial television station to broadcast into London and commercial radio once again. We built a server farm on Sealand along with 'Havenco' and hosted a myriad of different offshore industry's including online gaming.

We have had wars (Literally) and helicopter raids. We have sold the film rights (twice) to our life story and my book. There has been confrontation with governments, court cases and visits from foreign diplomats and gunboats. It has not been a dull life. These days my

sons James and Liam are very much involved and I'm sure in years to come my lovely grandsons Freddy and Harry will take up the baton.

On behalf of my dad, whose birthday it would have been a couple of days ago, and my mother whose birthday it would have been today and of course the rest of my family I thank you all for coming tonight and showing your support. I would like to propose a toast to the next fifty years. Please enjoy your evening.'

Thanks a lot Michael sharing this speech with my readership and good luck for the future of The Principality of Sealand. I felt proud in the eighties that I got the possibility to come over to West Cliff on Sea for talking for a long time with your parents, from which I could use parts for my book about Sealand.



The Essex crew on the party

Well this round up this edition of the Hans Knot International Radio Report and two more to come this year. You can send your memories, photos or questions to be included too. [HKnot@home.nl](mailto:HKnot@home.nl) is my email-address. Till next time all the best, Hans Knot.