

## *Hans Knot's International Radio Report - May 2003*



Hi everybody and welcome to the April edition of the monthly report. Yet another week and it will be May and the weather is increasing. Also I will be heading, with my lovely wife Jana, to the most beautiful Isle of the Netherlands, Terschelling, very soon for a short break.

As there is so much to talk about, the monthly report is a week earlier than expected.

But now here the comments, news and gossip for this month.

Just an hour after sending away to some 2000 people the monthly report the first 10 people sent back a 'thank you message'. One of them was Mick Coren and he wrote: 'Just read your latest newsletter and found it very good as usual. I am following the developments of the Communicator with great interest. As you mention the transmitters have been loaded on to the ship and some repair work has been done. Have you any idea what the new station may be called or when it hopes to get on the air. Over here in England a lot of us anoraks would love to here live programmes from a ship again. Is it true that 1224M will only be available till around July and after that there will be big changes in allocated frequencies for radio stations in Holland?' Well Mick I have written that the ship has no transmitter anymore from the Nozema company and also wrote that it has been sold for scrap.

A late one, is the message, that on City Beat FM in Dublin on March 23rd there was a special Caroline Revival program, when former North deejay 'Ugly' Ray Terret did a special program with memories to the good old days. Another old offshore deejay, who earns his money now on RTL4 as a newsreader and journalist, is Frank van der Mast. He worked for Radio Mi Amigo in the second part of the seventies. Next to making television he also can be heard on a

regular base on Radio Rijnmond. This station has another former employee of Offshore Radio. It's Erik Post who was working for the Dutch service of RNI on the land based studios in Naarden. Well Frank - or should we mention him as Jan de Hoop which his original name is - was guest in a TV program called 'Kopspijkers' on VARA Television.

Another quick answer came in from Jan van Heeren. He has written us that he heard from family that John Michael, formerly working for the CNBC radio project in the early sixties, is recovering from an heart attack in Canada. We wish him all the best. Also Jan wrote about our monthly addition on 'nicknames'. He's interested, for instance, how Dick Verheul got his nickname. It counts for everybody so tell us why you got that nick name. On the one of Roger Day, Jan did found an article in the FRA Magazine from early 1970: 'One day I was laying on the deck in my swimming trunks. This prompted one of the jovial Dutch crewman on the Mi Amigo to remark that I was as thin as Twiggy. Tom Edwards overheard this comment, and when he was next on the air he called me 'Twiggy Day'. We thought nothing more about this until the 'Viking Saga' came out to the ship that evening, full of tourist type people. On the 'Viking Saga' was a bunch of girls yelling out: "Where's Twiggy?", and from that day to this I have been Roger Twiggy Day. I often wonder who those girls were on the 'Viking Saga'. Well let me add another nick name we didn't mention before. Was listening to an old tape of Radio Mi Amigo and found out that former Radio Atlantis deejay Rob Ronder used 'Rob Ronder, der op of er onder' with mentioning his name (upside or downside). Ross Brown on Caroline North changed his name into Freddie Beare when Caroline became Caroline International on August 15th 1967. His nick name was 'Frantic Freddie'. And what about Kenny and Cash on Wonderful Radio London. We did forget that they called each other nick names: Jim and Neddy.

Remember Leen Vingerling? One of the people behind tendering the Ross Revenge and the Communicator in the eighties? Well he was also doing work behind the scenes at Radio Delmare. He came with some

other nick names from deejays from that station: Ronald 'de bolle' Bakker (the thick one). Kees 'Kaas' Mulder (cheese), Peter 'de Spijker' van der Holst (The nail) and Rob 'Stinkie' van der Meer. When getting this name I suppose 'Stinkie' hadn't seen a shower since ages.

And this following message came in on the 1st of April: 'Plans are under way to salvage the former VOP ship from the Mediterranean Sea. A group of Israeli left wing and peace supporters are financing a project to salvage the Peace ship from the depths of the Mediterranean Sea. Plans to bring back the Voice of Peace have been underway for a while now, and today I have been given the go-ahead to publish the story. If all goes well, the ship will be brought to the surface within the next few days. The salvage was delayed because of the bad weather we have been having here in Israel these past few weeks. As the weather for the next week is going to be hot and sunny, it was decided to go ahead without delay. If all goes well, after the ship is brought to the surface, it will be taken to Ashdod port for a thorough drying, clean out and paint job. After this, it is to be fitted out with new transmitting equipment, and antenna. The date given for the station to go on the air is at the moment the 1st July.

Plans were accelerated recently after the start of the war in Iraq, and the appointment of a Palestinian Prime Minister. Many names that were part of the original VOP are to take part in the new station, but I have been asked not to reveal them at this point of time. The frequency for the station will be given close to start date. The old VOP frequencies cannot be used, as they are now taken by legal commercial radio stations now broadcasting in Israel, that were not around when the former VOP ceased to broadcast in 1993. I will update you with more news when I have it (Mike Brand).' Well of course the clever ones knew it was only, but a good, 1st of April Joke.

Another message came in on April 2nd and some of you should have

thought is would be a joke too when it was released on April 1st. Jeroen Soer, once Jeroen Woelwater on Radio Caroline (1979) will become one of the directors of the public broadcasting societies in Holland, VARA. He will start there on August 1st. Since 2001 he's director of the regional radio and television station RTV West in The Hague. During the period 1980 - 1986 he worked as radio presenter for VARA radio on the pop station Radio 3. In 1986 he was one of the founders of the Radio 10 Group. We wish him lot of success.

Then one of the readers came in with a question about Father Abraham: 'I noticed that in a lot of recordings from the seventies of Radio Veronica and Radio Northsea International they played a lot of music by Father Abraham. Did he had any connections with the station?' Well Mike the Dureco company, for which he was the main songwriter, was buying plug time (payola) and on both stations Vader Abraham had his own radio program in the weekend. Pierre Kartner, as his real name is, made million sellers all over the world and is multi millionaire. He still lives (he's 67 years) and he did programs on Radio Monique in the eighties.

I do remember very well presenting a radio program for a hospital radio station, Radio Clothilde, on April 2nd 1973. Yes, we all started this way, didn't we? It was half way the program that I was phoned from Leiden where Jacob van Kokswijk - my then partner in Pirate Radio News - informed me and the listeners what that evening happened in a heavy storm on the North Sea. Both ships from RNI and Veronica lost their anchor. The MEBO II from RNI luckily enough stayed in international waters. The Norderney from Veronica ended on the beach, near Scheveningen harbour. It stayed there up til the 18th of April that year, the day the biggest demonstration ever held in Holland took place. 150.000 people demonstrated in the Fight For Free Radio. Lucky enough Radio Veronica had a quick return to the air as Radio Caroline offered their ship and transmitter to Radio Veronica, so that they could be on the air to promote the demonstration. Always Ronan O'Rahilly is quoted to be the generous man in offering his ship. Let me tell you that someone else needs all

the credits: It was the office clerk and deejay Dennis Koning who came with the idea and who brought Ronan O'Rahilly for Caroline and Rob Out for Veronica together. Thanks again Dennis.

On Radio 192 Ad Bouman, former Veronica deejay, played a lot of golden oldies in which the word 'windy' could be heard as a remembrance to 30 years ago.

Oscar de Pater is a keen radio listener from Holland who wrote in to MusicMann to hear if the station could come on the air in the forthcoming period. Station organiser Rusling sent a response to him: 'the format which we will use I cannot discuss this with you. It is commercial secret. I can tell you that we shall be aiming at adults 25 to 55, and there is no other station broadcasting our format. We will not be a Gold station. But if we tell people now what we shall do, the other stations will steal our ideas, diluting the impact of our launch.'

Furthermore Oscar asked about interference problems, which could occur and Paul wrote him back: 'Our signal will be much stronger than Radio Minsk. In Amsterdam anyway, so we do not envisage a problem with that at all. The tests will start as soon as the transmission facility is ready, but it will be about 9 months away, I think. We do not give any dates, because always there are delays, and it just annoys everyone. As soon as we have firm start dates for tests we will inform it on our internet site.' Well I will be the one to inform you as soon as a date is settled.

Oh yes, we don't have to forget to mention that at the end of March we celebrated the fact that 39 years ago the MV Fredericia set sail from the harbour of Greenore to the East coast of Great Britain to transmit the very first broadcast of Radio Caroline. And Ronan's dad died a couple of years ago so the harbour could be sold. Recently we learnt that for a 'small' amount of 32 million Pound it has been sold. So maybe could luck for the Irish soon with a new radio ship? Good to hear that Dave Donkervoort paid attention on the fact Caroline started officially on March 28th 39 years ago, in his program on

Radio 10FM.

During the last month two fine mails came in from people who are happy that I gave them a huge plug on the sites I've access to. I first did a long preview on Robert Preedy's book on Radio 270 and he did write, that thanks to that, the book is still selling well. Okay Rob, it was lovely to do so. The other one came in from the man who did the production of the new Skuesville CD. He and Keith were thrilled to be in my report as well in my review on several internet sites. Well the both of you, I did it with great pleasure and hope to meet you up, together with our friend Rob Olthof, probably at the end of 2003 or elsewhere in 2004.

Next it was Barbara Apostilides who wrote me on the subject Keith Skues: 'Your recent monthly report was sent to me via Keith Skues. I am writing his biography and wonder if, through you I could ask if anyone 'out there' has any tales to tell about him and the offshore days. I would also be delighted to hear from any of the crew of the Mi-Amigo (Caroline) or the Galaxy (Big L) during 1964/1967. I do not need glowing reports. Any adventures or misadventures or a friendly 'Hallo' will be most welcome.'

Well anyone who has memories on Keith, and that counts for you the listener too as well for Keith his colleagues in Holland, just sent them to Barbara at: [mrs.lady@talk21.com](mailto:mrs.lady@talk21.com)

Gerard Smit, former news readers and deejay on Radio Noordzee (MEBO II) writes in again from Paramaribo in Surinam: 'A very long report I received from your side Hans but it was again very interesting. My personal update is much smaller. We removed for the fifth time in five years, since we're living in Surinam. This time we bought a house and so we've planned now to stay for a longer period. I want to share an experience, which happened to me last week. I was talking on the phone with one of the people I have to work for soon. It's a lady of about 40 years of age. When she heard my voice she recognised me from the radio program, which is presented by me

every Sunday on Radio Apintie. From the very first program, she told me, she and her daughters listen to it on a weekly base. But it became yet more funnier when she did asked me if I was the same one as the Gerard Smit, who could be heard on RNI in the seventies. She told she was an adolescent in those days and listened to the program 'Buitengaats' which I did present in those days. She and her friends found the program the symbol of youth rebellion. Of course she was amazed that I was the same person who presented the program, together with Erik Post during the last period the station was on the air. And be fair, it was rebel radio which we did in those days. Following the words of the woman the program had put a stamp upon her life and felt far much free than in the time before she listened to 'Buitengaats'. For me it was very unveiling as I never thought that the program could have such an impact.' So far the message from Gerard Smit and never forget it was almost 30 years ago we heard him on 220 metres medium wave.

On April 4th it was 15 years ago that Radio 10 (later Radio 10 Gold and Radio 10FM) could be heard for the very first time. It took 3 years before Dutch government told them that they did it on legal base and since 1988, when they were the first on air (Cable One who was originally the first on air had to close down due to governmental Dutch rules) the amount of listeners has grown and grown. Nowadays the ownership is in hands of Talpa Radio International, which also owns Radio Noordzee and is headed by John de Mol jr. Former offshore people who have worked and are working there include Klaas Vaak (sorry Tom Mulder), Ferry Maat, Peter van Dam, Peter 'Carl de Jong' Teekamp, Herbert Visser and much more.



Ed Simeone was one of the people who went with the Peace ship in 1973 from New York to Europe. It was Mike Brand who told me he was contacted by Ed who has written down some memories to share with us: This is Ed's story from 30 years ago and lucky enough for Ed

Simeone, the writer of this nice story, a few of the people (including Bill Danse and Tony Allan) get this monthly report, too.

I was wondering on April 4th if I read the press report, I got, properly. It mentioned that CNBC was a new company. My mind went back to the early days of Offshore Radio and the birth of the English language service of Radio Veronica, way back in 1960. Well this new CNBC had nothing to do with radio from a ship. The press report came from WestWood One and CNBC: 'In a joint effort between Westwood One and CNBC 'CNBC Business News Radio' debuted this week on radio stations. CNBC staffers including Maria Bartiromo, Ron Insana, Bill Griffeth, Sue Herera and Michelle Caruso-Cabrera, anchor and report on the new network. One-minute business reports are fed hourly each weekday from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Eastern American time, including 10 feature reports for weekend use. CNBC Business News Radio affiliates also have CNBC's stock market reports for use on air.'

At the end of March I learnt that Harry Harrison stopped presenting programs in New York. This ended after more than 44 years. He's one of the good guys I followed through the years and I did write some comments on the internet, which included a comment that I wrote a story in Dutch about my memories on Harry Harrison. I get a lot of request for a translation afterwards which are already on our Soundscapes site. Here is the story for you.

Last year I got a very warm welcome with the people of World Radio



Network in London. From there programs from several organisations are rebroadcast by several satellites all over the world. And at April 5th the next message came in from Tim Ayries at the WRN PR office: World Radio Network has been awarded the prestigious Investors in People (IIP) Standard that provides a national framework for improving business performance and competitiveness. Tim Ashburner, WRN's Director of Technical Operations, who organised WRN's successful bid for the IIP Standard, believes it reflects the company's long term strategy to become one of the leading international broadcasting and transmission service providers, "this award demonstrates that WRN's continued investment in its staff and their commitment to WRN has resulted in a highly client-focussed approach to our business. The staff are delighted to have met the standard in a relatively short space of time. "In achieving the Investors in People Standard, WRN successfully fulfilled a number of strict criteria based on the four key IIP principles of commitment to invest in people to achieve business goals, planning how skills, individuals and teams developed to achieve these goals, taking action to develop and use necessary skills in a well defined and continuing programme directly tied to business objectives and evaluating outcomes of training and development for individuals' progress towards goals, the value achieved and future needs. The Standard was developed during 1990 by the National Training Task Force in partnership with leading national business, personnel, professional and employee organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD). The work was supported by the Employment Department. The experiences of the UK's most successful organisations, large and small, representing all sectors of the UK economy, were very positive and the Standard received the full endorsement of the wide range of interested parties.

So whenever over in London try to make an appointment with the people at WNR in Vauxhall. They do a very good job.

Returning on the new Virgin 1215 this month was The Emperor Rosko with a weekend program. I do remember he was also on the original line up when Virgin Radio started in April 1993 under PD Tommy Vance. Also John Peel was back on Radio 1. Former Radio London Perfumed Garden guy did some programmes during lunchtime on the British National pop station as Jakki Brambles. It was not the idea of the program director on the BBC but an idea of a student from Manchester, who launched the idea to get the 60 year old Peel on Radio 1. This happened during a recent debate on the future of the BBC network in Britain. Well John Peel always plays 'tomorrow's hits today', so he was on the right place there.

On April 10th it was 30 years ago Radio Veronica transmitted for the first day from the MV Mi Amigo, using the Caroline transmitter. Veronica vessel was washed up the beach and they needed to be on the air to promote the huge demonstration. On Radio 2 this year, the program of the KRO paid attention to this historical fact. Also it was 30 year ago some people transmitted for one day on a ship called the Morgenster from Scheveningen off the Dutch coast, using the name Stereo Radio Patat. It was all to promote the future for a classical radio station in Holland. It lasted 2,5 years until at the end of 1975 a legal classical radio station started in Holland.

I want to go back to the review I mentioned in last month edition on the history of radio by Ben Fong Torres. I wrote about this terrible chapter on Offshore Radio, Ben included. Well I got some comments I want to share with you. First I received one comment from Jon from 'The Pirate Hall of Fame': Yes, Lawrence Diggs, the man who claims to have been on Radio Caroline "for six months" in 1968 and is now known as "The Vinegar Man"! I asked Robbie Dale if he could remember employing a black DJ on Caroline South after the Marine Offences Act. He said he had vague memories of a DJ from an Amsterdam club coming out to the Mi Amigo on a trial basis and, after one show, they realised he was not suitable and that was the end of his offshore career. Robbie couldn't remember the guy's name. 'I thought it might be Sebastian Jones who presented a one

hour show on Caroline South and sounded like he might have been American. But I think that was in 1967 not 68 so probably wasn't Mr. Diggs. It's a mystery. It is also a shame that the chapter in Ben Fong-Torres's book is so full of mistakes that it makes one doubt the accuracy of the rest of the book'.

Mary Payne, from the Wonderful Radio London site wrote: 'I was interested to read your comments in the newsletter about the Ben Fong-Torres book 'The Hits Just Keep On Coming' and its appalling chapter on the subject of offshore radio. I agree that the rest of the book is fascinating, but it is very badly let down by this badly-researched chapter. Ever since I read this chapter, about three years ago, I have been trying to get to the bottom of the mystery of the identity of Lawrence Diggs. How could an experienced journalist like Ben Fong-Torres ever have been taken in by Diggs? There is absolutely nothing about that interview with him that rings true! The author has used the cover of the Caroline 30th anniversary souvenir booklet (depicting the Ross Revenge) to illustrate his story, but doesn't appear to have checked inside it. The booklet contains a very comprehensive list of 'Those Who Have Served' on Radio Caroline - and Mr Diggs's name is noticeably absent. Not surprisingly, nobody who was genuinely aboard the Mi Amigo in 1968 can recall the man at all. Diggs admits he actually had no US radio experience, but was interviewed in the Amsterdam office and bragged his way onto the ship by way of being an American citizen. He reckoned he joined the staff in 1968 and worked as a DJ for the station for 6 months. Well, we all know that isn't possible, as the station did not exist for as long as six months in 1968. Had this guy been on Caroline for that long, he would have had to have joined the station in 1967. In the Fong-Torres interview, Diggs says nothing that confirms he genuinely broadcast from the Mi Amigo, or indeed was ever aboard the ship at all. Everything he says, he could have found out or fabricated without ever visiting the vessel. There's no reference to what name he broadcast under, which time-slot he filled, the names of the other people he worked with, what living conditions were like etc. There is no mention whatsoever of the station's untimely demise

when the tugs arrived and towed the ship away. All the guy seems to 'recall' is that prostitutes were ferried out to the ship from Amsterdam on a regular basis, although he assures us he didn't avail himself of their services! I thought getting food and water supplies out to the ship was a big enough problem, let alone loose women!

But Mary also spoke to Bud Bullou, who was on the Mi Amigo in those days: 'Bud Bullou's initial reaction to my enquiry about Diggs was: "Lawrence Diggs? Never heard of him. And I had to laugh about the "prostitutes from Amsterdam" being brought to the Mi Amigo on a regular basis. No way!! What a joke! The guy's a fraud." Bud also checked up on Diggs's claim to have worked at US station KFRC. He says: "Just got a reply from my friend Ron at KFRC. He says nobody currently at KFRC remembers a Lawrence Diggs. Ron also has most of the old KFRC surveys with pictures of the jocks on the cover but there's no Lawrence Diggs." When Bud Ballou, Roger Day and Johnnie Walker met for the first time since 1968, I asked Bud to bring up the subject of Diggs to see if anyone recalled him. But the only guy they could remember was the junkie previously mentioned by Roger. Mary Payne told us more about a search done by Jonathan from the Pirate Radio Hall of Fame: 'he has also been trying to solve the mystery of Diggs. He successfully tracked him down via the Internet to a site where Diggs currently imparts information on the subject of vinegar! The URL for Lawrence Diggs, 'The Vinegar Man': <http://www.vinegarman.com/Vinegarman.html>

An e-mail enquiry of Diggs as to whether he was the Fong-Torres interviewee who had 'been a Caroline DJ' received a very evasive answer. Diggs said that, yes, he was the interviewee and he had been on Radio Caroline, but he claimed it had all happened so long ago that he couldn't remember anything about his stint on the ship. If I'd thought of it in time, I would have asked Ronan about Diggs when we met at the reunion. Ronan proved to have an exceedingly sharp memory when it came to the people he'd hired. When he met Mick Luvzit for the first time in 35 years, he instantly recalled the obscure single that Mick recorded, and quoted the title, "Long Time

Between Lovers" to him! I think it's high time Ben Fong-Torres salvaged his reputation and confronted Diggs about all his false claims. Then he should write a properly-researched item on the subject of offshore radio stations!' Thanks Mary! By the way, go and have a look at Mary and Chris Payne's site:  
<http://www.radiolondon.co.uk/>

On April 18th it was 30 years ago the biggest demonstration till then took place in The Hague as a protest against the plans of Dutch government to close down the offshore radio stations. More than 150.000 people took part. Even Ronan O'Rahilly. Caroline director, was there. As a token to this day Radio 192 went back to Scheveningen to do a 7 hours live broadcast from pub 'The Pirate'. People involved in the demonstration were interviewed and artists from those days like Peter Koelewijn, George Baker, Ben Cramer and Melanie took part in the program. Make sure to have a look at [Jan van Heeren's pictures](#) of the event.

Well Caroline UK came with a newsflash on their site in the middle of this month about the Ross Revenge: 'Two and a half tons of fuel oil were put on the Ross Revenge a few days ago. We are now seeking out fresh supplies of light and heavy mooring ropes and paint. We are also considering the purchase of a floating pontoon to be moored alongside the ship enabling the hull to be repainted in stages. It is still hoped that the ship may go to Southend in the summer, hence these preparations, but even if Southend falls through this year the work is still required.'

In earlier reports we've already spoken about the popularity of Radio 10 and Arrow Classic Rock in England. Both stations, which can be heard on AM get a regular audience from England. The two Dutch stations are of course very happy with the response. Tom Mulder, in charge for Radio10 comments: 'Yes we do get also many letters and e-mails from England and are very happy for that. Thanks for sending the address of a special Internet forum. I've forwarded it directly to Erik de Zwart.' Well Erik is director of competitor

station Radio Noordzee...

Andy Cadier told us that, after 13 years, he will stop writing Anorak Pages for the Short Wave Magazine from next August. We all know Andy (that's when we are 50 plus) as Martin Kayne on Radio 355, Caroline and RNI. Of course I did thank Martin for his good work during the past 13 years and he wrote back: 'Oh yes thanks Hans, I hope to be doing a few more things before I retire: I seem to have a breakfast show on a local RSL Hythe FM from 15th - 20th August, this will be the third one that is mostly paid for by a local festival group and a few sponsors. This year the main attraction it is a waterborne carnival called the Venitian Fete, the floats are on small canal barges, they have one parade in the afternoon and another similar one during the evening with all the floats illuminated. Last year there was a festival, I was stuck in the studio while everyone else was out there with the outside broadcasting vehicle interviewing the female participants in a beauty contest. Well it was all good fun.'

Well we all know that there were already offshore radio stations in use in the late fifties of last century. One of them was the MV Courier, which was used by the American authorities for AFN transmissions of Rhodes in the Mediterranean. Svenn Martinssen has sent us an e-mail in which he tipped us some very beautiful photos of this ship on a site, which were sent in by Dave Newell, President of the USCGC Courier Ass., to the International Shortwave Magazine. Go and watch it: [http://www181.pair.com/otsw/Courier\\_Photos.html](http://www181.pair.com/otsw/Courier_Photos.html)

Ian Bigger is a big fan of Radio Northsea International and is still looking for recordings of those who have been on the ship for just a short period. Let's follow his own words: Something you can do for me via the International Report, I am looking for recordings of the following presenters on RNI, Ed Moreno, Ray Cooper, Bob Mackie and Roger Kirk. They were not on the station for long and in the case of Roger Kirk did only one programme. He worked for our local station here in Harrogate, Stray FM, indeed I used to see his name listed in the local paper. Sad to say though the station has never inspired me

to tune in! I hear it now and again in some shops. That is enough. I believe that Roger died a couple of years ago.' So if you've recordings just sent me an email and I will forward it to Ian again.

Well that was a very long report with interesting stories. I hope you did enjoy it and never forget that the international report is coming to you all with the help of several former employees of Offshore Radio Stations and other Radio Friends, so let the news, your memories, stories and gossip come in.

Till the next report, all the best wishes from Groningen,

Hans Knot