

Hans Knot's International Radio Report - June 2003 (1)



Hello friends and already it's June within a day and time for another international report. Again your response was great. Most of you take it simple by writing 'thank you' and some are responding on the contents of the report. And also this time a few of them are included.

The first one is an e-mail coming in from the USA. It's former inhabitant of Harwich, Shaun, who likes to respond on my story on AFN and on the remarks Roger Day brought in on the difference between the radio in Great Britain and the USA: 'Once again, a great read - really enjoyed your memories of listening to AFN as a kid. Listening-under-the-bedclothes seems to be the starting point for most of us of an anoraky persuasion. For me it was John Peel and the inimitable Samantha Dubois...great memories.'

Got to take issue with Roger Day's claim that American radio is superior to the European model. You'd be hard pressed to find a music station out here (aside from college radio) that isn't automated, takes syndicated programming or, most heinous of all, takes programming from a 'central' network location, then inserts the occasional pre-recorded link to make the show sound local. And the computerised play lists seem to get smaller every year. Our local oldies station, the legendary KFRC, seems to have a core of about 500 tracks now. Bad. bad, bad and, did I mention, bad? Well, had to be said. Much as I respect Twiggy on most radio issues, I think he's 100% wrong here.



Having said that, people who take brief trips out here always seem to enjoy the radio: I guess you don't notice the repetition, robot-programming etc till you've listened for a few weeks, perhaps.'

Concerning the radio in the USA there was also a comment coming in from René Burcksen. He lives in America since a few decades and originates from Holland. He wrote: 'There are no personalities anymore on the radio who are working just for 'your' station and who let you come back to that certain station over and over again. Maybe the shock deejays, if you like that kind of radio. At the other hand the shock deejays are all the same. The play list of a radio station is focused on a certain listening group and sometimes it sounds if they've not more than 15 songs in the list. Above that they're programmed by computers. And the same computers doesn't have a feeling for the things happening in town, region or in the world. Some strange songs can appear in that way in a program. Has anyone a suggestion for some good radio stations where I can listen to on the internet?'

But talking about Roger Day we heard that he only does the regular show on SAGA Radio and that he hopes the long wave radio station on the Isle of Man will start soon. When it does he will be on the air again.

During the years people are contacting me from all around the world for information about offshore radio as well as questions if I could provide photos or other materials from the past. So two years ago I got such a question from Denmark and out of the blue came the following message in on May 16th: 'At last I can tell you that the book of The Danish Offshore radiostations, Radio Mercur and DCR, is being published. In June this year the book titled "Pirater i æteren - Radio Mercur og Danmarks Commercielle Radio. Dansk reklameradio fra Øresund 1958-62" is in the bookstores in Denmark - published by The Press Museum of Denmark and the University Press of Southern Denmark. The Press Museum - situated in Odense on Funen - is presenting an exhibition on the offshore stations with

pictures, television-recordings and sound from the Danish pirates.-
The exhibition runs from June 14th until August 31st 2003.
Again I would like to thank you for your help!' was signed Hendrik
Noegaard.

<http://www.radio-mercur.dk>

So now you know what to do if you're planning your summer holiday in
Denmark.

Then it was Bob Noakes who asked last time who knew something
about two technicians, who worked onboard the MV Mi Amigo. Well
Paul Rusling, who was on the ship in 1973, has some memories to
share: 'Once again, a big thank you for the excellent international
news round up. All interesting stuff once again. Interesting that Bob
Noakes should remember Jaap en Peter. They were both Dutch
motor engineers from Den Haag who Chris and Kate Cary recruited
to repair generators in 1973. They were really nice guys too and we
had some interesting nights in bars and places in Scheveningen. They
got their own motor repair garage a bit later, but I lost touch with
them. So if anybody finds how to contact them I would also like to be
in touch with them and see them again.

They were both really friendly and very comical guys, always making
a good laugh out of everything they did. They were excellent at
practical jokes and caught me out a few times (Hey, I was very young
then, just 18!). One of those times was when they gave me a new
name. I was looking for an alternative name, (for a few reasons) to
use on the air. Jaap en Peter suggested I call myself 'The Flicker'.
To a young innocent Englishman, this was a great sounding name -
just one word, like ROSKO, or WOLFMAN . It suited my style too -
and I could have things like Flicker Stickers, and even Flicker
Nickers, which I could send to listeners. The next morning, a Sunday,
I began my programme using the new name - which maybe I would
have got away with for English listeners, as Flicker. But I made the
big mistake of adding some Dutch (well, maybe you Nederlanders call
it 'almost Dutch') IDs too - 'Goeie Morgen luisteraars in Nederland,
hier is Uw Engelse vriendelijke Flicker DJ.'

Well, after maybe two hours of this, Dick Palmer got out of his bed, and rushed to tell me what 'The Flicker' (rude word for a homosexual man) means in Dutch, and I had to go back to my old name once again. I was very embarrassed, but Peter en Jaap thought it was a great joke. And I do too now of course. So it would be great to see them once again.'

Stevie Merike (Radio Scotland, Caroline International and of course Radio Northsea International in 1971) can be heard on the airwaves again on SAGA Radio, an FM radio station for old people. They now have a regional licence for Nottingham and the east Midlands. Maybe Stevie is getting old too as he calls himself Steve Merike these days. Steve is one of the very few Caroline deejays, who had a chart hit in England - his version of 'Lady Jane' made it into the Top 50 in 1966. Steve now lives in Loughborough.

I do write a lot on former 'pirates' but nowadays there are still pirates, people who do transmit illegal radio signals. In the USA some people can not stop transmitting and then the next thing is happening: 'A former Orlando pirate was sentenced to 9 months in prison after pleading guilty to two counts of operating an FM station without a license. After his release, Rayon Sherwin Payne will be on probation for a year and must perform 50 hours of community service. The case stemmed from an interference complaint in 1999. In February of this year, Payne pled guilty and agreed to forfeit his equipment.'

Last time I briefly mentioned Radio Geronimo and the names of some of the guys working at the station in the seventies. And here's a response on that, coming in from Chris Bent: 'Hello Hans, I have a website all about Geronimo/Seagull at www.radiogeronimo.co.uk and since it went online 12 months ago it's had around 2250 unique hits. Mark Dezzani (Caroline South) has written advising me of your newsletter which includes Barry Everitt and Hugh Nolan. Could I please have access to this newsletter? It's interesting to hear that

Barry would like to be on terrestrial radio. I recently had an e-mail from one of the original people who helped set up *Geronimo* (Terry Yason) and he also would like to see a return for a station like *Geronimo/Seagull*, although he does not favour using the same name again. As you may know, although I have no offshore background, I have a daily program on Caroline NL. I occasionally tend to veer towards the outer limits of music, much like *Geronimo* and *Seagull*. I can accept that none of the original *Geronimo* team would probably like my tribute site - my experience is that the originators of things often had bad experiences and don't like to be reminded of them. However, now might be a good time for them to initiate a new radio station with the same ideals as *Geronimo/Seagull*...in collaboration with another radio station perhaps to share expenses? Best wishes, Chris Bent a.k.a. Chris B.

Then a press report which came in from our friends in Vauxhall at World Radio Network: ' World Radio Network (WRN), the London-based international broadcaster and transmission service provider, has joined the Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) Consortium. DRM comprises broadcasters, network operators, manufacturers and researchers who have created a digital system (also called DRM) for the broadcasting bands below 30 MHz. DRM is the world's only non-proprietary, digital system for short-wave, medium-wave and long-wave with the ability to use existing frequencies and bandwidth across the globe. WRN's participation brings DRM's membership to a record high of 81 members from 30 countries.

Placing his full support behind DRM, Karl Miosga, WRN's Managing Director said: "World Radio Network is delighted to be playing an active part in DRM which represents a combination of digital innovation and close cooperation between broadcasters around the world - two of the founding principles behind WRN. We have been a long-time proponents of the distribution of international, cross-border radio by innovative and sustainable digital platforms, be that the Internet, digital satellite, digital cable or mobile cell phone services in order to reach new listeners around the world. To this

list we add DRM because we believe it is going to offer listeners increased choice in radio listening combined with digital audio quality."

"Several of DRM's broadcaster members are also associated with WRN," said DRM Chairman Peter Senger. "The addition of WRN as a member of DRM is a great fit, and we look forward to working together in the future."

The world's first DRM broadcasts will be transmitted across the globe on June 16th, 2003. The precise moment of DRM's inaugural broadcasts will occur during the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) World Radio communication Conference (WRC 2003) in Geneva, marked by a reception at the Château de Penthes.'

One of the readers wrote us the following mail: 'I was going through my offshore collection and notice that I do not have the book Veronica - 'Speelbal van de golven'. Does this book ever appear in second hand shops in the Netherlands and is there a web site that might find such things?? Please let me know.' So if anyone has a double copy or knows where to find it, please sent me an e mail me to the attention of Ian at: Hknot@home.nl

Recent figures show that in Holland 6,5 million households make use of their local cable net when watching television. This is 93,4% of the total population. 509.400 households make use of their own satellite dish, which is 7.3%. Yet there are 97.700 (1,4%) households which neither use the cable or a dish but the original television aerial system.

John and Jenny Knight from the Horizon and Caroline Sales mentioned in their last issue that still people are needed to work on the MV Ross Revenge as a volunteer. A lot of painting has to be done as well as other maintenance work. So if you have some spare time this summer please lent them a hand. Contact John by e mailing: johnwknight@tiscali.co.uk

It now seems that the plans to have an RSL from the Ross Revenge this summer are passé. Nothing has been made official, but I read in the Horizon that there is a plan to bring the Ross Revenge to Southend on Sea in 2004.. By the time you're reading this the former Radio Caroline ship has also left the mooring at Queenborough. It is not known yet where the ship is at the moment. Reason for towing it away is that a mooring maintenance programme is undertaken in The Medway Ports. When this is completed the authorities will review their charging regime. So there will be more money needed to save the ship. Contact the above e mail for more info about how you can donate money.

Probably our good old friend from Highgate, who reads this news report from the first edition, could be so friendly to sent from time to time some more info about what he's doing concerning Radio Caroline and the radio ship. If so we could have informed everyone 100% this and other times. Read in the latest edition of OEM some comments again from Chief Apache Moore criticizing the editorial staff of this magazine. As long as you're not writing and sending decent press reports Apache Moore you will have to spent more time in criticizing. So stop this as those people have done a lot for you in the long past. Not only Chris Edwards and his people, also John and Jenny and Rob Olthof and his people. Do it like every other radio station. Just sent honest press updates like the Caroline family did in the sixties and than all will be happy and you don't have to take the upper step to get angry again.

Last time we talked a bit about the double cd on AFN and one thing I didn't mention was the times I crept into the radio to listen to the episodes of 'Chickenman'. A series of radio comedies about the world's most fantastic crime fighter. A brainchild from Dick Orkin. Well in total there were 273 different episodes and they've been saved all. Those who do remember the series when listening to AFN/AFRTS or versus American Radio, I do advice to have a look on the following internet site:

<http://www.danoday.com/offer.cgi?desc=1492&refpage=pref>

On May 21st we learnt something new on Yorin FM, one of the commercial radio stations aimed at the youth. In their daily schedule there is some space to mention the people within the entertainment industry who are celebrating their birthday. Today also Ronan O'Rahilly was mentioned as he celebrates his 63rd birthday. Congratulations to you, Ronan. But now to the fact that we learnt something new as the presenter told us that he was the famous owner of Radio Caroline and that he named his radio station after the wife of John F. Kennedy. Can anyone tell me what the name of the daughter was? Oh yes we did get, in the end, Radio Jackie, but that was a land based pirate station.

On Friday May 23rd on Radio 2 from de VRT (the Flemish Radio and Television) there was a special guest in the program from Albrecht Wauters. He invited the first Flemish deejay ever Fred Steyn. He got famous in Belgium in 1959 working for the Dutch/ Flemish service of Radio Luxembourg. After that he joined forces with the team of Radio Antwerp, which transmitted from a concrete vessel, the MV Uilenspiegel. A pity the interview lasted for only 5 minutes.

Sunday May 25th was the last day of the Libelle Summer Week on Radio 10 FM. On the beach of Almere a special radio studio was built, where the listeners could see live action. On Thursday morning (22nd) the listeners could dig for 'gold'. In the sand 100 treasuries were hidden. In one of them the big price could be found: 'A trip for two to France'. During The Libelle Summer Week (a women's magazine for many decades) live broadcasts were made by Peter Holland, Bart van Leeuwen and Ferry Maat. Yes, all former offshore deejays.

I know, some of you think the Dutch people are sometimes mad. Never mind, but reading this you should think we're insane: Op the public radio stations part of financing comes from Dutch government or from us the taxpayer. One other source is income from advertising, which is possible here in Holland. Each hour before the news on top of the hour and after the bulletin there is space for

commercials. Depending on how much listeners the station has the prices for those commercials are made. So the more listeners the more money comes in. The commercial airtime is organised since the mid sixties by the STER, the Foundation for ether commercials. More and more commercial radio stations want to have airtime to promote their radio stations within the advertising time on public radio. Until recently this was refused by STER and Public Broadcasters. Dutch government announced on May 22nd that refusal isn't possible anymore and that commercials for commercial radio stations have to be aired on public radio. However they still refuse to do so.

May 23rd the first radio station, which was going for a new FM frequency in Holland, got a letter from Dutch Government that they were not within the group which will get a new frequency (of course paying millions of Euro's to the Dutch government a year). Radio 192, the station which started a few years ago and did try to copy as good as possible the old sounds of Veronica, will not be on FM. Till now they used a regional AM frequency. It is expected that in the future Radio 192 will be a cable station only. Lucky enough they've a 90% plus cover of the Dutch cable networks.

In the evening of the same day I got an e-mail from Herbert Visser, by some of you the reader known as Herbie the Fish. He nowadays works as a newsreader for ANP Radio, a company which makes the news reports for public radio as well as for a lot of commercial radio stations. He wrote: 'Something very strange happened this afternoon, a quarter past five. Around the cabins, where the news is read for the several stations, on the walls are hanging several frames. In those are the logos for the stations and other companies we are working for. So they're hanging there very big, like the one of Arrow Classic Rock, Radio 10 FM, Sky Radio and many more. And Radio 192 was also included. On that very moment without anyone in the surrounding of the 192 frame and without any noise the 192 frame broke down to the floor. The glass could be found back in over thousand pieces. This is a real story, I was there and next to that

it's a very strange and bizarre happening.'

The Attorney from the Virgin Group in London wants action against the Dutch company ML Express Services. Boss of this company. Mr Van der Meer had talks with people from Virgin in which was agreed that the Dutch Company would relay the signal of Virgin Radio on the Dutch cable systems. He told them he had access on 90% of the cable networks, starting July 1st. Indeed the ML Express Service got a licence from Dutch Radio Authority last March using cable networks for starting a commercial radio station. However Van der Meer had not the idea to relay the signal of Virgin Radio but start a Dutch version of the station. In 1993, when former owner Richard Branson had started the station in London, he also registrated the word 'Virgin' worldwide as a brand and can only be used by companies run by him, either by companies who have an official licence from the Virgin Group.



Last time I did asked a question about the present whereabouts of Carl Mitchell. He worked on Radio Caroline as well on RNI. Chris Baird did see him after he left RNI in 1970: 'To fill in a gap in the knowledge of what happened to Carl Mitchell after RNI. Well, in early 1971 he, me and a lot of other English DJ's went to the I.D.A in Copenhagen. This was called the

International Disc Jockey Agency, run by an English guy called Laurie something. The I.D.A. booked English speaking DJ's into night clubs throughout Scandinavia. He was famous in 1971 at the 'Revolution Club' in Copenhagen for his Moody Blues and Jethro Tull tracks. Carl did me some jingles back then which I finally got to air on RN1 99, which sound so right on the RSL.

As far as I know he went back to a suburb of New York at the end of 1971 and no one has heard of him since. Shame as he was a great guy

and fun to be with. Do you have any other information I'd like to hear it. Keep up the fading spirit of free radio for as long as you can.'

Thanks Chris and a question to Roger and Andy or maybe Peter Chicago who are all reading: 'Does anyone of you know the real name from Carl Mitchell as this could maybe a little of help to me (and us).

In the meantime it was Roger who responded with: 'I think his real name was David Carmichael'. I surfed on the internet and found a lot of people with the same name, but not the one we're looking for. What Chris wrote me, after getting this information, that he remembered his real name too. Carl or David Carmichael his father, by the way, owned in those days a newspaper in New York

In Holland finally on Monday 26 May the decision was announced on the future for the commercial radio stations. It has taken, due to all kind of procedures, many years before Dutch government could publish the following results. In total 9 frequencies with the so called nationwide coverage could be bid for. From June 1st the following organizations will have such a FM license. Behind the name of the stations you will find the amount of money they've offered for the license in the forthcoming eight years: Sky Radio 56.025.000 Euro un-claused, Gouwe Ouwe Zender 33.600.000 Oldies, Noordzee FM 80.400.000 un-claused. Business Nieuws Radio 1.320.000 news radio, ID&T Radio 1.320.000 alternative, Radio 538 un-claused 57.000.000, Yorin FM 32.892.000 un-claused RTLFM 22.936.000 European Music and Dutch language. The classical frequency has not been given away. Next to that a lot of regional and local frequencies have been 'given away'. Big losers are Radio10 FM as well as Classic FM. Both organizations have to leave their FM frequency June 1st. Also some of the stations have to switch frequency. It will therefore be a hectic week. All stations shall try to attract as much listeners as possible.

The most strange thing is that the FM frequency from Radio 10 FM,

which is the oldest commercial radio station in Holland and 15 years on the air, has to leave the air for another group who went for a oldies format, 'de gouwe ouwe zender', This is a station which has been on the air years and years ago and is financed by the Sky Radio Group. During the short period it was on the air it showed it wasn't successful at all and it seems the Dutch commission, which had to advice the government had only Euro Signs in their eyes. I hope that Tom Mulder, director of Radio 10FM and his people will go to the highest court to fight for justice. As it looks now they're banned to the cable networks. Lucky enough the listeners were also very angry and within a day more than 30.000 people did sent in an e mail to the station. Within 48 hours more than 50.000 people did sent in e-mails, faxes or phoned the station to tell that the government had taken a shameless decision to give the frequency for a oldies format to an organization which only consist on paper.. Erik de Zwart, director Talpa BV, the company which owns the station, was on television and told it's now time to talk with other parties. Also he told they will go to court as he thinks their bid was higher than from the company behind De Gouwe Ouwe Zender. So maybe there's a little change to cooperate with others. The very near future will tell.

The most interesting is the news that the license for the 1008 kHz transmitter, which is a 400 kW transmitter, is given to Radlon Sales. It's Ray Anderson and his friends who want to bring back the sound of Radio London. With this powerful transmitter they want to target the station at 20 million people in the UK. Now they're very busily looking for investors and staff. Two other former offshore people who didn't make it in their bid for a new license are Ruud Hendriks en Look Boden. Ruud wanted a new license for FM and his Radio Nationaal but failed. The station will also stop with cable transmissions. Look Boden, former deejay in the sixties on Radio Dolfijn and Radio 227 wanted a regional AM licence. Also he didn't get one. The aim of the company is going for cable transmissions and maybe satellite. In the forthcoming years some more AM licenses are for sale so Radio 227 wants to go for one of them too.

Another former radio person who has worked for Tom Mulder, when he did run Cable One in the eighties, is Frits Koning. He started working in radio on the local pirate radio station of Amsterdam, Radio Unique in the early eighties. Then he went to the offshore radio station Radio Monique. During the last years he has worked for Business News Radio. He has left the radio scene and also the Netherlands. Frits now lives in Cambodia, under his real name Frits Mulder, and will from there inform newspapers and radio stations as a free lance journalist. Good Luck there Frits!!

Back to the licences which have been given away in Holland. As told there are also a lot of local licences which have been 'bought' by several organisations. One of the is Quality Radio, a company from Utrecht run by Ruud Poeze. Some years ago he worked very closely together with Bob Noakes but due to a big dispute they broke with each other. Poeze has found British people who are interested in making radio in England, so see the next press report: 'In association with our Dutch partners, Laser Radio Limited has successfully applied for broadcasting licences in the Netherlands. With our Dutch partner Quality Radio, we have won the following AM broadcasting frequencies: 828 kHz, 1035 kHz, 1224 kHz, 1395 kHz and 1557 kHz Andrew Yeates, Managing Director of Laser Radio Limited said 'This is a tremendous result and shows the strength of our applications and future plans for AM broadcasting. We have some exciting programming planned, which will transform AM listening across the Benelux and surrounding markets' Managing Director of Quality Radio, Ruud Poeze, was equally delighted with the result and was looking forward to building a strong radio brand in the Netherlands. The broadcasting licences will be valid for an eight year period.'

Who does remember Bob Lawrence from Caroline days? I do but lost contact some time ago and he wrote in during the past weeks: 'It's been a while since you stopped sending me your e-mail newsletter, I thought you'd stopped doing it. I had a look at Martin's website for the first time in ages today and found your newsletter there. It's good to see you are still keeping us all informed. I noticed that you

are asking for nick-names, as you know mine is Buzby. When I arrived on the Mi Amigo for the first time in August 1978 I had a t-shirt on which featured a cartoon bird called "Buzby" (the character was used by British Telecom to promote using the phone more, my tee-shirt said "Buzby say's Who's Tapping Your Phone"). Marc Jacobs decided that I should be called Buzby (although Kees Borrell said that my hair looked like a toilet brush, so he called me Toilet Brush!!!). I also noticed talk of The Voice Of Peace in the very early days. If you give me your address I'll send you a free copy of a double CD I am selling called "The Tony Allan Story". As you can imagine Tony tells some great stuff about sailing over to America in the very early days. With Best wishes, Bob Lawrence.' Good to have you back on the mailing list Bob. As soon as I've listened to the CD I'll write a review and inform you all how you can order the CD.

In the late days of the MV Mi Amigo (1979/1980) they broadcast Dutch as well as English language programmes. One of the Dutch deejays was Sebastiaan Peters. After his offshore days he went to work for KRO Radio, became voice over on several television stations and worked a period for Radio 10 FM. His real name is Eddie Keur and he has a new radio job. On Noordzee FM he does work as a side kick in the program of Gordon, which is transmitted every weekday between 7 and 10 AM.

Then my good friend Mike Brand from Tel Aviv reports the following about budget cutting: 'The commander of Galei Zahal - Army Radio, will cut his yearly budget by 3 million shekels (about 570,000 Euro). This is because of the budget cut made to the Ministry Of Defence, and the upcoming payments that the station will have to pay to A.K.U.M, The Writers and Performers Guild. The stations budget stands at 40 million shekels (just over 7.5 million Euro). 25 million from the Ministry of Defence, and 15 million from sponsored messages. The cut is to lead to a 10% wage cut of most of the stations workers, and might, in some cases, mean redundancies.



Today it's May 30th and I was away for two days. More than 400 e-mails were waiting for me, mostly questions about the frequencies. Well there is some latest news. First of all the amount of people who have protested against the fact that Radio 10FM has to leave the air has reached the 80.000 yesterday and heading to 100.000. Also it became known that Talpa International, the company that owns Radio10FM (read John de Mol jr) and Sky Radio (Ton Lathouwers) are in talk about the future of Radio10. As told before the Sky Radio Group got a licence for 'De gouwe ouwe zender', a station only known on paper. Both Ton Lathouwers as well as Erik de Zwart for Talpa confirmed that both organizations are in talk. It could be possible that Radio 10 will be taken over by Sky and so this station could be saved.

The company which got the licence for the AM675, Country Radio FM, has the same address as Arrow Classic Rock. Both companies agreed that until a later date Arrow can use the 675 kHz. They will also go to court to fight the decision of Dutch government. So I suggest there will be much more news to tell about this all next month.

Finally some questions from Jeff Gold, also mentioning himself 'Mebo Martin': 'I was hoping you could may be help me. Firstly someone has asked me the real name of Peter Philips and where he is working now? Also have you any idea of the whereabouts of Roger Kent and Mike Ross. I met Mike at the 'Driftback 20' event in London in 1987. We had a great chat and he was doing a slide show later. Unfortunately I had to get the last train home and missed it. As for Roger, I loved his shows on RNI it is a pity he did not have longer on board.'

So dear friends if you know an answer just write to me:

HKnot@home.nl

Till another time I wish you all the very best and don't stay in the sun too long as the batteries in your transistor radio are getting worse and worse in the sun.