

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



Enormous was the response Jana and I got on my last newsletter. We do try to pin the Christmas wishes to the walls of our living room each year and soon had to stop as there was no place anymore. Thanks a lot for all those wonderful nice cards and wishes and let's hope all of you will enjoy this New Year and keep on reading the report.

You all showed that you appreciate my work, which I hope to go on with in the years to come. Here's the last report for 2003.

One of the guys from Radio Caroline, which I met several times was Andy Archer. From earlier memories in the report you know that already. Some weeks ago Andy asked me if I had a negative from the Veronica vessel as he would like to have a photo in his office from the ship he always looked at from board the MV Mi Amigo in the seventies, when he worked for Radio Caroline and Radio Seagull. I sent him some negatives after he did promise to sent some memories for the report. Here's his response on last month report: 'Hi Hans, Another fabulous report, thank you very much. Here's an amusing "memory" for the next issue. Back in 1967, I remember coming off the tender in IJmuiden and taking the train to Amsterdam and walking down to the office in Singel 160. The woman who looked after the office was a formidable lady named Nan Richardson who was a real sweetheart. She was married to one of our transmitter engineers Don Richardson. On this occasion, she was telling me about some of the happenings on board the Mi Amigo, things that would not have been broadcast by the deejays. I asked her how she knew these things and she replied "through telepathy, Don and I communicate every night" When I got back to ship, I told the guys on board who were all amazed - that is until Johnnie Walker got up in the middle of the night to go to the lavatory! He noticed that the red light outside the studio was on so went to investigate. He stood outside the door (which wasn't soundproof!!) and could hear the voice of Don giving an

account of what happened on the ship today. It seems that Don wouldn't switch off the transmitter, all 50 kW of it until after he had spoken to Nan at the pre-arranged time of 3 o'clock in the morning. No one had the heart to tell them they had been rumbled! I wonder if Don and Nan are still around or if anyone knows what happened to them? Best wishes, Andy Archer.'

With in mind that it's next Easter 40 years ago that Radio Caroline came on the air, there are plans to publish a photo book on the history of the station. This will be a co-publication between the Caroline organization and SMC (Rob Olthof and Hans Knot).

Therefore we would like to ask all those former Caroline deejays who read the report - and we know that there a lot of those - to sent in their personal favorite photo taken on one of the ships. Also we would like to ask so write done a small story to it, so we can publish it next to the photograph. The jpg as well as the little stories can be sent to [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

Of course I also would like to add that those who worked on Radio Caroline in June 1970, when it was transmitting from the MEBO II during the Election Days, can sent in their memories of those days. So Larry time to sit down and write the things you always wanted to write.

From the Eastern parts of the USA came the following mail from René Burcksen: "I've read with great pleasure your newsletter. Very nice to read not only the news but all those nice memories. Meanwhile it's December and I've some time to listen back to some of my old recordings. Of course we do tune in to Dutch radio stations on internet. I've a lot of pleasure listening to the programs of Radio 192. This afternoon I was listening to Peter van Dam, who did as he was working at the Costa Brava, where the Mi Amigo studio's were during the period 1975/1978. Even old Mi Amigo commercials and jingles were played.'. Well René and his family originate from Holland and he was in the 70's an addicted listener of Radio Mi Amigo. Suzie Waffles was one of the commercials which Peter van Dam did play. I

think that must bring some memories back to readers like Norman B and Brian Anderson.

In Belgium a voting took place with the readers of RadioVisie site whereby they could vote for the all time radio personality from Belgium. Already days before the voting was stopped I got an e-mail from one of the editors with the question if I could give them several facts in the career of Mr X as he would be definitely number one in the poll.

I won't mention the name yet as the official voting still goes on. It's like some computers in the radio studio's who doing the program as the presenter is already in his car on his way home listening to his own program.

Talking about Radio Mi Amigo it was just 30 years ago that on New Years day the station came on the air from the MV Mi Amigo. After just 68 minutes and a beautiful first hour, produced by Ad Petersen, the station went off the air after a generator breakdown. More than a week later they came back on the air. On Gran Canaria there's a German radio station which wants to bring back the idea of Radio Mi Amigo and celebrates on January 1st the birthday of Radio Mi Amigo by playing old programs and jingles of the former offshore station. Of course it's possible to listen to the new Mi Amigo on internet or to visit the Mi Amigo shop where all kind of memories are for sale: [www.radio-miamigo.com](http://www.radio-miamigo.com)

Then an e-mail from a guy called Mark from England who's desperate for country music: 'Hi Hans I love the reports. What I want to know is what is happening about the Dutch country station? Have they a website or anything where I can find information. We need a country station on the east coast of England'.

The only answer I can give is that Arrow Classic Rock haven't answered a request for more information. Still they're bringing classic rock and all info on this can be found on [www.arrow.nl](http://www.arrow.nl). Also

there you can find information about the planned three days rock festival, which will be organized from 11 up till the 13th of June this year. Artists already booked for the festival in Lichtenvoorde are David Bowie, Judas Priest, Ufo, Scorpions, Yes and Hearth.

This forthcoming year it will be, as mentioned before, 40 years ago that Radio Caroline came on the air for the very first time. It was from the MV Fredericia and the programs, which were transmitted in the very first weeks were probably - by relistening now - as dull as other programs on British and Dutch radio. But, as an avid listener to the station since Eastern 1964 - you didn't here that by then. They played a lot of music we didn't knew and also there was more chat then we used to hear on other stations. What I learned more later was that in those early days a part op the program came from a tape which was started by the deejay from the ship. Later, in 1966, it was my good friend since decades, Graham Gill, who was playing around with the carousel on the Laissez Faire - which hosted a lot of radio stations. He was doing a live program but after each record he did start the carousel, in which another program was scheduled. I never asked Graham if he was drunk but the co-presenter, who had recorded his bit and peaces in the USA, did announce records which never came, as Graham did break in with his own spin. Lot of things have been written through the years on the subject 'Offshore Radio' and I'm proud that I've written more than 35 books on the subject, featuring a lot of the stations. Also I was lucky to be allowed to write for a lot of magazines who wanted my articles through the past decades. Therefore a big thank you for all those editors who gave me the change to make it through those years. As a result it's now 2004 and thousands of pages further. I thought it would become time to go back to those memories we did or didn't share till now.

Starting with an article I wrote way back in 1989, when Caroline was 25 years of age. But before that I want to say a big thank you to Malcolm Smyth, aka Peter Moore. Not only for the long evenings we had together drinking red wine and good beers, but also the work he

and his fellow people did since he became in charge of the Caroline organization in, I think 1987. This is not only just one story you will be reading this year. Yet more too come and at the end of the year all will be packed together in a book, celebrating the fact Radio Caroline was born 40 years ago. With that I would like to ask all the former Caroline people reading this, put together some pages on their computer to become part of the family again for this special publication - to be published at the end of the year 2004. And above all, the organization will get 50% of the profit of the forthcoming publication. It will be published by the Foundation of Media Communication. Also for the readers it is possible to write their memories. Oké, we go back to the end of the month of September, way back in 1972.

### SATURDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER 1972, A DAY NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN



Edward Cole together with yours truly in 1996  
Photo SMC

On December 15th 2003 an e-mail came in from John Ross-



Barnard, who worked together with the late Edward Cole: 'Dear Hans, I was very sorry to read of Edward Cole's early death

at 63. I first met Edward on Radio Invicta-cum-KING Radio-cum Radio 390 in 1964/5. Like many of us he desperately wanted to join BBC Radio. But without experience you could not join the BBC - and the only place to get experience then was the BBC -. Morton's Fork! On the Red Sands forts I recall that we huddled in a make-shift dormitory and shivered separately, but never severally, in our ex army bedsteads together with Patrick Mark Hammerton (Sloane) and Paul Levy (Beresford). In the corner a female cook - a lovely girl - shivered under her one blanket and a rough pillow, but without a slip. She was quite safe from any inappropriate advances. We may not have been gay but we were gentlemen to our fingertips! But my God was it hard on those forts. But that is all recorded in Keith Skues his



It was a matter of some regret to him that despite many auditions and demo-tapes submitted to ILR programme directors none of them ever offered Edward a job. It was not surprising really, his delivery was just so BBC. Even offshore Edward was a BBC man in the making. Lord Reith would have been proud of him.

John Ross-Barnard, Chairman Sound Organizers'

Thanks John Ross for this marvellous memory and I know that Edward has some glance on his face now!

Than back to the old ladies who still have a favour for the one and only Keith Skues. In last issue I did had some pillow talk and it's reader Barbara to respond: 'Thank you again for the Monthly report. Very interesting: May I take the opportunity to send seasonal greetings to all who participate .I was amused to read the yarn about Old Cardboard Shoes... and his fans consisting of little old ladies. It is true, but there is another side to this. Many of those 'old ladies' (and gents) first heard RKS way back in the early sixties when they were in their late teens or early twenties and have grown up with him. Some go back even further having known him from BFN and BFBS days. 1959/63 I think the loyalty stems from the fact that he was one of the first broadcasters in this country to break the barriers and befriend listeners: Prior to Skues there was only the BBC...the old school of broadcasting and a tad 'stuffy'. As to having a pillowcase printed with his picture...well, I think that is stretching things a tad too far..... but it is good for a chuckle. Cheers Hans. Thank you. Barbara.'

Thanks a lot and again, as my lovely wife Jana comes originally from the DDR, we will have a toast on ourselves (selfish) and all our radio friends at 12 o'clock in the New Year with a good glass of Rottkapchen which is a very good 'Champagne' from the former DDR.

More than 200 wishes came in with wonderful cards for the Christmas period and the New Year. We did close our eyes and did

chose some for this report. Here's one of them coming from Germany: 'Dear Hans, it is always a great pleasure to read your very informative report. Thanks a lot for sending it to me. Greatly appreciated!! I also like to send you and your family my best greetings for the Xmas season and the New Year. Please keep up the good work in 2004 and stay healthy! LA from yours truly, Jörg Hoffmann.' Thanks for that wishes and all the others which came in.

Since Friday December 12th there is a test transmission on 828 kHz in the AM band from Radio Paradijs. The frequency was officially awarded to Radio Tropical, which is also from the same owner, Quality Radio in Utrecht. The stations uses a 5 kW transmitter at a site in the surrounding of Rotterdam and the signal is real good into the late evenings up till Amsterdam. Also many receptions are reported from England. In the programs a variety of oldies is played and an address is given out: Quality Radio, PO Box 11122, 3505 BC Utrecht, The Netherlands. During time of writing it was not known yet how long these test transmissions will be on the air.

Again some people were asking if there's any news on the former Laser vessel MV Communicator. Well here's what the owners wrote on December 16th: 'The weather is not ideal at the moment and we are still awaiting a departure date for IJmuiden, we will update as soon as we know. The Communicator will be coming to the North for a refit. One location in Scotland and one in England have been offered to the company and we will be making our final decision on the destination later today.' More recent photos can be find on [www.mediapages.nl](http://www.mediapages.nl).

Oké, here is another wish chosen to be mentioned. Eric C did sent me a wonderful Christmas Wish from France thanking me for all the work through the years. But not only that, he did sent me also an audio-file. In this file there was a piece of Radio Caroline 30 years ago which was transmitted 30 odd years ago and in which Andy Archer wished me a Happy X Mas. What a wonderful memory. More and more readers are monthly joining us in this e mail letter. It will



not take long before more than 3000 copies are sent away to many countries around the globe.

This time also a bright welcome to family Reynders in Peru and hope the forthcoming time will be as good and workable as you wanted. Enjoy the memories and news by the monthly report. We keep in contact!

On December 17th it was announced that, when weather conditions are good, the MV Communicator will be towed to a new position. It can be in Northern England or in Scotland. A real new position is not given and still Dave Miller and his people are not open about the project, which I think (and I'm not alone in that) is a bit pity. Why you have to do so vague? Everybody knows it's not going to be what they hoped would happen to the Communicator. So let the news come in and I and my readers wish you all the luck in the world.

The same day the news came in that radio presenter Ben Zwaan will stop making programs for the regional station Radio West in the Hague and will retire from working. Ben his career started way back in 1964 when he was one of the presenters of Radio Noordzee, which made programs from the REM Island. Today, by the way, it's exactly 39 years ago the Dutch authorities entered the REM platform off the coast of Noordwijk, to make a final end of the REM island project by closing down their radio and television transmitters.



Behind the microphone Ben Zwaan in 1992  
(archive Le en Vingerling)

But the people behind the REM had already started to get members for an official broadcasting society so in 1965 radio and television programs officially started from Hilversum. I already mentioned in an earlier report that the former Island will be used by the TROS to celebrate the fact it is 40 years of age. Well, from February a new weekly informative program will be transmitted from the isle in the evening on Dutch TV. Guests to the program will be brought to the

isle and stay there overnight. The name of the new program is REM and the presenters will be Wibbo van der Linde and Harm Roelands who both are big names for decades on Dutch television.

Cesco van Gool, who's like me reporter for the trade magazine Radio World and is based in Poland, brought the following news on December 17th: 'Radio Eska Kraków signal got disturbed by a one kilowatt transmitter that, according to telecom regulator, URTP was located somewhere close to mound Kopiec. Coincidence has it that Kopiec is also the location of competitor RMF FM. But, according to URTP 'by the time our van came close to the RMF FM building, the signal was switched off'. RMF FM denies the signal came from her transmitters. Says spokesperson Anna Kozcowska 'The now defunct Blue FM also has a transmitter in this building.' Now it gets slightly complicated. Earlier this year Blue FM lost its license. One of the reasons regulating body KRRiT gave was unclear ownership relations between Blue FM and RMF FM. 'Not true' says Blue FM chairman Andrzej Lenert. 'and we also have nothing to do with this signal!' In the meantime, Blue FM's frequency was given to Radio Eska Kraków, that has rapidly been stealing listeners from RMF FM. Blue FM in their turn, earlier this week, won a court case against KRRiT. NSA, the highest administrative court annulled the decision to take the license away from Blue FM. So what's next? Will Blue FM get their frequency back? What will then happen to Radio Eska Kraków? By the way, Blue FM already sold their name to Agora Radio and most of their team is already working for Region FM that, of course, is not related to RMF FM at all. To be continued.'

Thanks Cesco and reading the trade magazine you can see that a lot is changing in the former Eastern European Countries. On line you can see weekly reports too by going to [www.rwonline.com](http://www.rwonline.com)

And on November 19th we got from several sources the news that the MV Communicator, once the home of Laser 730, Laser 558 and Laser Hot Hits way back in the eighties, has left IJmuiden harbour where it has been at the quayside since July of 2003. At 3.30 PM

Dutch time the ship was towed out of the harbour with a then unknown destination. People behind the planned Super Station ordered the towing vessel to bring the ship to a new destination - which was the harbour of Lowestoft. JWR Apollo and 'the Old girl' where the two tugboats which did the job. In Lowestoft the further rebuilding will be done. Piet Treffers took a lot of photographs which I sent to Martin van der Ven who's published them [here](#).

If it's coincidence or not I've to mention that it was exactly 20 years ago that the MV Communicator left on the Friday for Christmas 1983 the harbour of New Ross, bound for the North Sea. And watching the many photos circulating on internet we all can see that a lot of work has been done while the ship was in IJmuiden as it looks much better than some months ago. When the ship arrived in Lowestoft and the photos were on the net I informed a friend of mine, who originates from Harwich but is living in the USA already for many years. He responded with: 'As Ronan would say, "amaaaaaazing." Hard to believe this is the same ship that was in the photos from a few months back. I thought the Communicator was bound for Davy Jones' Locker. It's going to be interesting to see where the ship goes, and what she ends up doing. I can't, for the life of me, see anyone being brave enough to launch another offshore unofficial station but...who knows. There's some brave people out there!'

Some days later I did get an e mail from Johnny Moss aka Johnny Lewis who did - together with Paul Rusling the very first test transmissions on the Communicator as well as the last program ever transmitted from international waters as Radio Sunk: 'Hi Hans Hope your well, always nice to read your reports each month do keep them coming. Not had too much time this past 6 months to do any Caroline shows as I'm double shifting each day here in Kent, Breakfast show on one station KMFM Dover/Folkestone and Afternoon Drive on another KMFM Thanet. I'm going to take 3 days off after the new year so might do an afternoon show as a one off on Caroline, do still like doing Caroline when I can. Over Christmas I'll

stick some of my memories down for you about the Offshore Caroline, which you can use in the book if you wish. OK Hans have a great Christmas and a happy New Year. Best wishes, Johnnie.'

Thanks Johnnie and we'll see you and our other friends in February, when I'm over in Kent. Probably we could go into 'The Fog' again down in Whitstable. Also thanks that you promised to write a chapter for the



forthcoming book 40 years Radio Caroline. Several former Caroline people have already promised to be part into the project including The Emperor Rosko, Leendert Vingerling, Steve Young, Marc Jacobs, John Ford, Frits Koning, Herbie 'the Fish', Simon Barrett and others.

Again a nickname came in, this time from our good friend Martin van der Ven from Meppen in Germany. Ray "Black Magic" Sebastian worked on the MV Mi Amigo (Caroline South) in the sixties. But Martin also sent a photograph, which was taken in the seventies by his brother Thomas and Martin does remember that every year, when going on holiday to Katwijk at the west coast of Holland, the family saw this piece of graffiti.

Talking about Radio Veronica I've to mention the very sad news of the death of Rob Out at the age of 64. Rob died on Christmas Day in an hospital in Leiden. Rob Out started his radio career as a free lancer in late 1960 when he presented programs as Bob on Radio Veronica doing shows called Muziek Parade. He worked for this magazine as an editor in those days. In 1964 he went to work for the REM island as deejay Bob on Radio Noordzee. When the then Bob of

the Veronica presentation duo Bob and Brenda (Krijn Torringa and Brenda Keuker) got a good offer from AVRO, the public broadcaster, to work for their radio and later television section, it was Out who became the new Bob in the duo. Later he changed his name to Rob Out (officially his name was Simon Robert) and in September 1970 he became the program director for Radio Veronica. When Veronica became legal he was very important for the organization as director and he brought the then legal public broadcaster to the top of all organizations. At one stage more than 1,3 million people were member of the organization. Rob went into a commercial project in the late eighties RTL Veronique, but stayed as an adviser for Veronica until late 1999. He was already ill for a long time. One of the biggest names within Dutch radio history has gone. On the Dutch Public TV News was a very special in memoriam about Simon Robert Out, as his real name was. Some very exclusive 8 mm material from Offshore Days could be seen, as well as later footage. Also on several radio stations attention was paid to the death of Mr Veronica, as Out is remembered. On Radio 192 for instance an old program of Veronica Offshore Days was repeated as well as Sieb Kroeske paid later in the evening a one hour special on his former colleague. Also the newspapers brought articles on his death. Even Flemish TV brought the news in their main bulletin.

On December 26th the already mentioned program on West Deutsche Rundfunk about the history on Offshore Radio was transmitted. Two hours long several people, including Dennis King, Hannibal and other German people involved in Offshore Radio were interviewed as well as Martin van der Ven and yours truly.

Well that's all for now, let's hope to have all a very nice ending of the year and above all a very good and healthy 2004. I will be back with you at the end of next month. And you know where to sent your memories and comments: [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

Hans Knot