

Hi everybody with this second report for the month of May, which I started compiling on May 1st. Also a bright welcome to a lot of new readers including again some former offshore deejays who I came in contact with (or again). First of all I want to mention Nico Steenberg, who was one of the original Driemaster Team members, the famous live program from the MEBO II from 1971 on. Only the last year the show was pre recorded in studio's in Naarden, where the Dutch Service of RNI recorded a lot of their programs.

Nico nowadays is working for Dutch RTLZ, the financial news program on RTL5 during weekdays. Nico thinks the attention for the offshore stations and the memories is growing. He already got a copy of the report from his colleague Jan de Boer – who offshore people know as Hugo Meulenhoff in 1977/1978 on Radio Mi Amigo. Another guy who's working together with Nico on RTL is Jan de Hoop and following the words of Nico also Jan talks lately more about his past and the memories. Jan worked as Frank van der Mast on Radio Mi Amigo.

Secondly I want to sent you to Norway. Sven Martinssen, a well known DX'er has a marvellous site and one part of it describes the story of the mobile German transmitters during World War 2. An interesting site to visit:

www.northernstar.no/konings.htm

Next site to visit once again is: www.offshoreradio.co.uk/ as some fine updates can be found. Including another part of Roger Scott's photo album. In this month edition he takes you to his time on board the MV Oceaan 7, the Radio 270 vessel. Many more updates could be mentioned but just take a visit yourself. One thing I want to mention is the information on a special beer, which has seen the day light on the Isle of Man lately. Complete info you will find at the pirate hall of fame.



On May 1st also the next e-mail went into my box: 'May Day Mayday Mayday!

(I always wanted to say that, with my feet on dry land of course!). Dear Hans

Another fine report Hans, well done. Thanks to Chris Cortez for his list of people at the Caroline Party in London, but I saw that he missed out some important people from his list. Well, they were important to me and also added a lot of work for Radio Caroline. Chris Carey's first wife, Kate was there, as was their daughter, the lovely Louise, who was of course the little girl on the Radio Caroline car stickers at that time. Kate was running the Caroline House office in Van Hoogendorpstraat in the Haque in 1973/1974 and organised tenders too as well as paid our wages (when there was money!). She definitely played a big role, as you can read in Bob Noakes book about those days. Their daughter Louise also played a role, I remember people on the phone who could only speak Dutch, and so they put Louise on the phone, and this little girl would translate some of the words into English for her Mum. She also showed me the way to the post office at one time; remember taking huge bundles of 'international reply coupons' to exchange them for postage stamps. So two important members of the Caroline family. Also at the party was today's Mrs Chris Carey, a lady who many listeners know well as Sybil Fennell; she has a super voice and was heard on Radio Nova, Magic, and maybe other stations too as a presenter and a newsreader, and who does lots of other work too. Finally, Chris and Sybill's son Nick was there too. Oh, just one more important chap who Chris Cortez seems to have missed – Chris Carey himself of course, who really did do so much for Caroline, and radio generally at different times. We need more Chris Careys in our lives, not less! Paul Rusling.



Louise, Kate and Paul Rusling

Thanks a lot Paul for the update. Regarding Chris Carey I can mention that Cortez mentioned him under his deejay name Spangles Maldoon and so he was in the list.

Talking about lists we did run a series called 'female offshore announcers' and I did find out we forgot to mention Jasperina de Jong, who did a 30 minutes program on Radio Veronica on Thursday afternoons on Radio Veronica.

As far as from Australia came the next e-mail: 'Hello Hans. It's beginning to look as if there may be yet another Pirate Radio reunion and the latest proposed date is May/June of 2006, probably in London. This concerns mainly the Radio England/Britain Radio personnel. Mary Payne at Radio London was contacted by Rick Randall who was looking for me and we have made contact, with me now on the mailing list for all my former colleagues from that ship. I doubt I'll get to that reunion either, but will see what happens between now and then. I am so far away.

I thought you may be interested in the email I'm forwarding with this. It is from one of the former DJs. The Grey Pierson he refers to is the son of one of the founders of the Britain Radio/Radio England ship. Many thanks for your most welcome and regular Report. I always read it with mixed feelings - being so distant from all that now, both in the passage of time and in physical distance. I suppose it's not practicable for me to move back to the UK but I often feel like 'just doing it' and this has recently been one of those times. Best wishes, Colin Nichol.

Thanks Colin and the e-mail he referred to was one from Errol Bruce: 'To those of you who haven't yet been contacted, we are in the process of setting up a Radio England/Britain Radio reunion. It will be held in England either later this year or sometime in 2006 (the 40th anniversary year). I would appreciate your input regarding the preferred date, and I will keep you fully informed as plans develop. I, like Ron O'Quinn, have commitments that necessitate suggesting 2006. Weekends for me are filled with my radio programs here in Toronto and I'd need to 'clear the decks' far in advance. Having missed two recent reunions in the UK I'd like to be able to accept this, the third invitation. We are actively attempting to locate other SRE/BR participants and friends and your assistance will be greatly appreciated. Among others, we would like to locate: Julio Alonzo (the Cuban captain), Bill Berry, Brian Tilney, Ron Rose (Ted Delaney) and any others you can think of!'

In the meantime he knows where Bill Berry can be found. So if you know any people working on the Laissez Faire, please let me know their contact addresses and I will forward them. My e-mail address is Hknot@home.nl

Coming in from the USA was bad as well good news from Tom Lodge. He was the man who did rebuilt the format of Radio Caroline South after the station lost so many listeners to the then new competitor Radio London in 1965. Of course he did a lot more and is still active: 'Hi Hans. Thanks for your report. Great news. It seems to just keep going. God, I wish I could have been there at the reunion in the Red Lion in London. Bush's policies have brought to a halt my application for a green card, so I am a prisoner here. If I leave, I cannot return for 10 years. It's not that I want to be here, but I am in the process of working on this film, "The Ship That Rocked The World, The Radio Caroline Story" All is looking good, a major studio is very interested in it. So I will prowl on, and you are all in my heart, and I am with you in spirit. Thanks again for the report. Cheers and best wishes, Tom Lodge.'

Indeed good to have heard from you again Tom and good luck with your project.

You can all have your news and memories in the report by sending them to: Hknot@home.nl and if you have a photograph to add, don't hesitate and send it along with your e mail.

Another Caroline deejay, who could also be heard on offshore radio station Veronica in 1968/1970, is Robbie Dale – who did sent in the next one:

‘Hans, may I compliment you on the results you achieve in the report you produce. It makes fascinating reading and brings back many memories and also provokes thought. The amount of effort and research dedicated by you is remarkable. I also understand that you are compiling a book and have asked for contributions and information. What kind of things do you want to know about. I note that you mention Don and Nan Richardson. Don was in fact the chief radio engineer on the Mi Amigo in 67/68 his wife Nan helped out in the office at Singel 160 I wouldn't say she exactly ran the place. Don't forget Pinky Siedenburg also played a role in the administration of the Amsterdam office as did I. The April report also covers the Radio Caroline 40th birthday bash in the Red Lion, as you rightly mention I was among the many who attended and it was fascinating to read a full list of those there and enlightening, now after reading your report to be able to put names to and roles played by many of those at the bash who I did not recognize on the day but who participated in the Caroline saga at some stage. Roger Days effort organizing the event is appreciated. Some old amigos had not seen each other for 30 to 40 years for example I was delighted to meet up with some of the (behind the scenes) personnel like George Saunders, Carl Thompson & George Hare and of course it was wonderful to meet up with all the other old friends. Your report reminded me of those I didn't get around to talking with as is the case when there are so many people to talk to in a limited amount of time. Better luck next time. Thank you Hans and kind regards. Robbie Dale’.

Thank you for you compliments Robbie and seeing you way back in 2002 in London at the other Reunion so well organised by Chris and Mary Payne, seems already a long time ago. For those outside Holland, and that are most of the readers, I can tell you that Robbie did a radio and television program after his time on Radio Veronica. It was for the public broadcaster TROS (which was born out of the ill fated REM Island project in 1965). Robbie presented the program called ‘JAM JAM JAM JAM’. A pop program in English and Dutch and if you translate ‘JAM’ into proper English it brings you ‘Marmelade’, but it could also mean ‘let’s make the music together’.

A short response coming in on the international report from Tom Mulder, aka Klaas Vaak on Radio Veronica, tells it all: ‘Very funny to see all those men (the deejays from the past) getting the same excitement as the listeners from the offshore stations in the past. Quite so if you think it all happened such a long time ago and so much has happened since then with the radio- and music industry.’

Indeed a long time ago, as Tom Mulder himself started his radio career this month 35 years ago on Radio Veronica.

Then again two internet pages you could take a visit to. The first one was sent in by Mike Brand from Tel Aviv: Here is a page dedicated Kenny Page. It is only just been built, and is still under construction, but at least someone has done something to remember this great presenter who died a few years ago.

www.geocities.com/drawnfrommemory2/TheUnforgettableKennyPage.html

Secondly another address was sent in by Dennis King. He worked on Radio Caroline in the seventies and is now World Famous in Berlin and other places in Germany doing radio as well as television.

www.dennis-king.de/91551.html

Then a mystery question from former tender boss, Leen Vingerling, who organised the tender trips for Laser 558 and Caroline/Monique in the Eighties of last century. He sent me a photograph and asks anyone who’s reading the report who the lady on the photograph is. Nobody, except the crew of the Ross Revenge, was allowed to know her name as her father had – in those days – a high place within the British Authorities. It could be that her father was brought into quandary as it would be mentioned his daughter visited the radio ship. It was in the summer of 1984 that the photo was taken. The one next to the mysterious lady is deejay Chris Person. So who knows who the lady is?

The address for answering is HKnot@home.nl



The mysterious lady. To see her better, simply enlarge the photo.

As a joke I asked the question last time who gave Johnny Lewis the nickname 'The herdsman'. Several suggestions came in from Jay Jackson, versus Albert Hood to Robin Ross. The only answer is part of the chapter Johnny wrote for the forthcoming book 'The wet and wild history of Radio Caroline'. It was no one else as Simon Barrett, who nowadays is living in Spain and is also a reader you the international report too.

If you want information 'on how to order your own copy' when the book comes out, simply sent me an e-mail and you'll be on the list.

Next one in the mail is Mark Dezzani from the Riviera: 'Hi Hans, many thanks for this months newsletter. It was excellent that Chris Cortez put together such a comprehensive list of people at the Red Lion Pub for the Caroline reunion on March 28th. A couple of omissions that I spotted were; Grant Benson, DJ on board the Ross Revenge from September 1983 and into 1984. Grant is back with Caroline and has secured almost national coverage for Radio Caroline on Italy's DAB (Digital Radio) network. More details on this project will be available very soon. Another person present was Dave Finn. Dave used to run an electronics component and repair shop in Watford. From here he used to give significant technical support to Radio Caroline during the 70s and 80s and is very much one of the back-room boys who helped to keep Caroline on-air. As well as working in Caroline House in the 60s, George Hare was also based for a time in Ramsey, Isle of Man where he administered the operations for Caroline North. He was also involved again with the launch of Caroline from the Ross Revenge in the 80s. Mike Plumley was also there. He was involved in the 80s as an organiser in the office and was known as Mango Mike for his Jamming 319 broadcasts. Journalist Stuart Payne was also present. Although never a member of the actual Caroline team, he gained Ronan's confidence in the 70s and gave great coverage to Caroline in the press, especially the Evening Standard. He also wrote the article about the reunion that was published in the Daily Telegraph on Monday March 29th. Keep up the good work. Cheers, Mark Dezzani.'

Thanks a lot for the additional information on the reunion and keep the news coming in on the Italy project as well as keep up the good work from your part of Europe.

A part of another mail, this time from Keith Skues as a response on my comments on the BBC Pirate Radio Essex broadcasts: 'Thanks for your kind comments. Yes, the week on the LV18 was great fun. Sad that it had to end so soon. The BBC has now asked me to do a three-hour pirate special each Monday evening. I gave you a name check last evening saying how wonderful the Dutch people are - so friendly and warm and that you were the Master of the offshore radio world. The programme goes out live from 10.00pm - 1.00am. Thank you for all the coverage you so kindly give me in your valued newsletter each month. I enjoy reading about all the personalities and what they are doing today. With kind regards, Keith '

Thank you Keith and we will be in contact with each other soon. By the way, the same afternoon I received an e mail from someone in California who wrote that he's so happy with the plans of the BBC to put the local stations on internet too as he could then listen to Cardboard Shoes five days a week!

Don Stevens, ex Voice of Peace and Radio Caroline – next to another lot of stations wrote in:

'Hi Hans, As promised I have located the only images I know that exist of Tara Jeffries on the Voice of Peace. The images are from May 1976, when 1540 was the most happening sound around, Tara is seated on the hatch with other staff around her and she is wearing black framed spectacles. The other folks include Maurice who used to assist Bill Danse and the Ships Engineer, fine guy. I will write you in greater detail soon, I'll await your reaction to these attachments, I'll keep on downloading 1540 items for my Voice of Peace Golden Age site...1975 to 1976 time, keep you posted on developments in that quarter. For now Hans, enjoy the attachments and thanks again for International Radio Report.'



thanks a lot Don and can you tell me who the other lady is?

Mike Brand from Israel mentioned that there was another woman on the VOP, and her name was Linda Mason. She can now be found broadcasting on the American / Israeli Internet radio station 'Kol Halev' . The address is www.kolhalev.com. It is run by the former VOP deejay Arik Lev, who now lives in Florida.

Thanks Mike, had a view and listen already. From Belgium Herman Content wrote in and told me that he listens a lot to Nova Classic Rock a station that reminds him a lot to the sound of Radio Caroline when it came back in 1983. Go and have a listen: www.novaclassicrock.nl

Ingo Paternoster informed me on an internet site with memories to AFN. So whenever you've time it will be interesting to have some minutes there too: www.videopark.com/ktown.htm

May 14th an e-mail came in from Canada: 'Hi Hans: I hope everything is good with you and thank you for your monthly reports, they are a joy to read. Your passion comes through in your writing and it is a delight to read your column. Hans Mick Luvitz is having a reunion in Vancouver in July. Attending so far: Graham Webb(Radio Caroline) Bryan Vaughan (Radio Atlanta, Radio Caroline South and Radio Scotland) Mel Howard (Radio Caroline and Radio Scotland) Steve Young (Radio Caroline) Gordie Cruise (Radio Caroline) Mary Payne(Radio London Web mistress) Lorne King (Radio London) David Sinclair(Radio 390, 270) and the list will grow. I am wondering if you would grace us with your presence. It will be great fun and it is in one of the most beautiful cities in the World. Let me know we would love to have you. Best Wishes from Canada Ben Healy'

Of course I was very pleased with the invitation to come to this reunion. However I won't go and this is a part of what I answered to Ben: 'I'm very pleased to get the invitation to come over to Vancouver. However there's a massive obstruction, which is the reason I won't come A flight for 45 minutes too London from Amsterdam airport is enough to blockade my muscle-system for at least three days. So I've the airplane illness. It's a pity as in this way I've to say often no to invitation. I hope you will have all a wonderful time in seeing each other back (the most after so many years) and bringing back a lot of memories. It were such nice times and a luck that so many former offshore deejays are back at the scene due to internet and joining in more and more with the international report'.

May 15th is every year a special date to think about what happened to the MEBO II, the radio ship of RNI. A bomb attack took place. Three divers came illegally on the ship and put the ship on fire Dramatic transmissions were aired

in which people like Chrispian St John and Hans ten Hooge told us what was happening. Crew and deejays had to leave the ship at a certain moment as it became too dangerous. Lucky the vessel 'MV Volans', a fire extinguish ship, was in the harbour of Scheveningen. As the MEBO II was anchored off the coast near Scheveningen the fire could be stopped in time and the next morning the station was back on the air. In the program 'Theatre of the Sentiment' on KRO Radio 2 on Monday 17th attention will be paid and Hans Hoogendoorn (Hooge) tells for the first time after that tragic day on the radio what happened on that historical sad day 33 years ago.

In the first week of June 2004, three Dutch radio amateurs will activate the REM platform on the North Sea at JO22DG on as many HAM bands as possible. Depending on the weather the start of activity will be on Monday or Tuesday. The REM platform was built in the summer of 1964, just 8 miles off the coast from Noordwijk in The Netherlands. It broadcasted commercial television- and radio programs. After four months activity was stopped because of law change. These days the platform is in use by the government for meteorological use. Because the platform will be dismantled soon, plans have been made to activate a unique special event station PA6 REM. Exact bands and info will be put on the internet DX cluster and www.veron.nl. QSL cards can be sent to the QSL manager PA7DA, via the Dutch VERON QSL bureau.

Tom Mulder, aka Klaas Vaak on Radio Veronica during the period 1969-1973, celebrates his 35 years in radio on Sunday May 16th. Talpa Radio International, the owner of Radio10Gold, the station Mulder is working for, invited a lot of guests to join a special party. From a little place called Beekbergen a steam-train was travelling for some hours through the Netherlands and after that there was a party with live music in a hotel in Apeldoorn. A lot of Klaas Vaak's former radio colleagues and radio friends were invited, including yours truly. Tom was highly influenced in the sixties by the British Offshore Radio Stations, including Radio London and Radio England and a part of Tony Blackburn jokes could be heard on radio in Holland too. On his daily trip from Amsterdam to Hilversum, where the Veronica programs were recorded in the early seventies, Tom put his car alongside the road to make a few notes. The reason? Well he heard another 'one liner' on Tony Blackburn's program. In the studio he translated it into Dutch and recorded the jokes in his program. As the programs were recorded a week on forehand, the Blackburn jokes could be heard a week later in Dutch on the offshore radio station Veronica. But that was only the beginning of Tom his career. He was only one of the few deejays who loved to go to the radio ship to do some live programming. Famous is a years end show as well as the annual Veronica Sailing Trophy Program, which he did present together with the late Rob Our from the MV Norderney. It was in 1973 he said 'goodbye' to Veronica. He started to work for TROS Radio which also had programs on the national pop station Hilversum 3. He made big figures with programs like the 'Havermoutshow', 'Nachtwacht' and 'Poster'. In the late eighties he tried to start, together with some people – including Willem van Kooten (Joost den Draayer) to start the first cable radio station in Holland, Cable One. After a few years the Dutch government decided that the way the station was run was illegal and so they had to be closed again. In 1991 Tom Mulder became the program director of Radio 10 Gold, where he still presents his daily morning show which is listened very well, especially by women. Of course from all of the readers of the international report we wish you many more years on the radio and as Tom told to a newspaper: 'People can listen to me for many more years as I do like this game. In the USA are deejays who are already 80 plus, so I've many more years to go.' By the way, the festivities were in the steam train as Tom his hobby is 'trains'. Not only he is infected by this steam disease as the director of Talpa Radio International – Erik de Zwart – is also a train anorak. We know him from Caroline day in the period 1979/80 as deejay Paul de Wit.

I already told that I was invited but on Saturday May 15th I had to cancel the invitation due to serious back problems. A pity as I loved to give you an impression of the festivities.

In Groningen I'm still working on the forthcoming book 'The wet and wild history of Radio Caroline' in which a lot of former people who worked for the station or sister stations cooperate. Till now some 155 pages are ready and more to come. In Autumn the book will be out and if you're interested to get information on how to obtain the book simply write me at Hknot@home.nl

In this report I like you to give you an impression on one of the chapters which I wrote myself about Radio Caroline and my personal memories during the sixties of last century:

THE FIRST PART OF 'SIXTIES BITS AND PIECES'

When thinking back to those four decades in the history of Radio Caroline a lot of memories are coming back. Not only the many hours of listening pleasure I had (mostly for me in the first two decades) but also meeting a lot of (former) deejays, crew members and technicians. I was a lucky guy to be writing about the subject 'radio' since the sixties for several magazines and so I had the chance to meet a lot of these guys on countless occasions. Even now, four decades later, it's an honour to me that I'm invited during the last 8 years to parties where former offshore people get together for a reunion. And also it is nice to get a lot of mail from former deejays who read my monthly international report. In chapter three I want to take you back to a few of their and my personal memories I did write down in my logging book in the sixties. Why I did collect this? Of course you could say that I'm addicted to radio but next to that I only can say that for another guy in the class room it was important to collect the stamps of Tonga or Barbados but for me the articles in the newspaper on the subject radio were more important to collect.

I did find back a lot of items, which can be placed in the first decade of Radio Caroline. While listening to an old recording suddenly German Hans Last Band, later renamed the James Last Orchestra, comes by with 'Canadian Sunset'. When writing nostalgic stories I normally take a recording out of my 15.000 hours archive from the station I'm writing about. I presume it was not normal to play James Last on the station. It would be something for Radio Essex, Radio 390 or the ill fated Radio 355. Three of my favourite stations. Nevertheless Radio Caroline was a lot in the news. I don't pretend to put all the notes in my diary and the newspaper cuts in the correct following. Just grabbing around in a massive pile.

Probably the very first newspaper cut I've from a Dutch newspaper on the subject 'Radio Caroline', comes from the regional newspaper and was published late April 1964. It was stated that the MV Fredericia had a crew of 15 people coming from Scandinavia as well as Holland. Only the captain, 50 year old George MacKay, came from Manchester in England. Next to that there was a mentioning that the Postmaster General, Mr. Bevins, had made it impossible for the people on the radio ship to be in contact with the shore by telephone. Also it was suggested that Bevins would put a ban on people sending letters and cards to the station, asking for requests. A few days earlier Bevins had already declared on Dutch television (probably an item taken from the BBC) that the British Government would declare full war against the offshore station and that all further attempts to start such stations were useless. The journalist, who did not write his name down, went much further with his predictions: 'Radio Caroline will get it very difficult and probably will close down in a few months. It's to believe that the British advertisers won't buy airtime on the station. The British spokesman for the station, 23 years old Ronan O'Rahilly, told us yesterday that there are talks with big international advertisers and that he is not allowed to tell the names of the backers of the project, who have put 2,5 million of Pounds into Planet Productions, as the organisation behind the station is registered. Already the Caroline organisation is in a very difficult situation as the Panamanian government has withdrawn the registration and so the flag, which was flying on the ship. This has been done after a request of the British Government to their colleagues in Panama City.'



Fredericia in colour

As the Panamanian government had signed the international treaty covering the rules for Telegraphy and Radio Telephony they were, in the context of the British government, not allowed to give a registration to the illegal radio ship. Also that same day the news came in that the British Performing Rights Society had announced that the Radio Caroline organisation was not allowed at all to play music from records as they didn't pay any fee to the society. That the journalist didn't do proper research can be learned from the next line: 'Radio Caroline is now on the air from six in the morning till six in the evening. It is expected that soon commercials – not more than three minutes pro hour – will be transmitted. Compared with the costs of those commercials on Radio Luxembourg it will bring in proximally 30.000 Dutch guilders a day. The programs are now presented by a 28 year old Canadian deejay. In the future there are plans to be on the air 24 hours a day.' Well 12 hours a day programming presented by only one Canadian deejay?

And when diving in the archive it's always nice to find back those little cuts, which were not interesting in those days

but are nice to bring back as a memory. Also from late April 1964 came the message that a few girls in a barber shop in a little town in Kent had founded the Radio Caroline Defence Union. Everyone could become a member and the tasks of the members included to protests at the BBC transmitter plant in Wrexham, as it was suspected that from this plant a jamming transmitter would be on the air to get Radio Caroline off the air as soon as possible. Jamming by the British authorities didn't happen until 1970, when Radio Northsea was transmitting from the MEBO II.

Let's go to an item from the Television Mail dated February 25th 1966. I read the message that the Caroline Organisation got a new Sales Director in the person of Brian Scudder. The appointment coincides with the complete reorganisation of the Caroline Sales Department. They wanted a fresh appoint to the media world and Scudder replaced Anthony Welch. But the later wasn't out of working as he could join Radio Scotland. Brian Scudder had been in the advertising world for more than 15 years and Ronan and the Caroline Squad expected a lot from Brian.

Strange enough, when looking back in the publications regarding the history of Radio Caroline, there's always a mentioning that late 1966 Philip Solomon did take over from Ronan O'Rahilly as the big share holder in Planet Productions, the company behind Radio Caroline in the sixties of last century. In my archive is already a note in February of 1966 in which I wrote down that that the impresario Philip Solomon paid 200.000 Pounds to become the biggest single shareholder within Planet Productions, the shore-bases company responsible for programming and airtime sales on Radio Caroline. Solomon, who had had acquired at that stage 20% of the shares, announced that he wanted to make some changes in the Caroline format.

Who was Solomon. A big question as he didn't place himself on the foreground as Ronan uses to do. Let's go to some notes I did find back in my archive from 1966: 'Two of the biggest acts from Ireland come from Belfast and that's the Rhythm and Blues Group Them and the Bachelors. And it is significant that both groups were discovered by the same brotherly team: Philip and Mervyn Solomon.' So he was in the music business together with his brother, but they were not alone as their father Louis was also named as one of the three owners of the Solomon and Perez Distributing Company. Father Louis organised work from Dublin, while Mervyn did the same from Dublin and in 1966 also offices were opened in West End, London. Melvin told Record Retailer in March 1966 about their three offices: 'Between us we manage to have stakes in most aspects of the Irish show business world, as far as records and recording artists are concerned.' In London Philip got his headquarter, from where he not only paid attention to the industry of their Irish Artist and other bookings, but also sold the shares in Planet Productions. Mostly Philip is mentioned when talking about taking over the shares but Mervyn is never mentioned, but twice. Indeed they bought the shares together.

I did found back another note in my archive from March 1966 in which Marvin told a journalist about the shares buying and co-partnership with fellow Irish O'Rahilly: 'Radio Caroline North at present only broadcasts to Belfast and Northern Ireland with a weak signals reaching the Dublin area. But we plan to increase the power of the northern transmitter by 10 kW within the next week or so, and boosts it further in April, by 50 kW. This should ensure coverage of the whole of Ireland.' The then record company of the Solomon's was called 'Emerald Label' but not much later they came with a new label, which would bring in more money, called Major Minor.

Strange enough most addicted listeners to the station still think Ronan O'Rahilly is and was the boss of the organisation but when, at a later stage, Philip Solomon did take over more shares and became the main shareholder, he got a high influence. Not that we were all happy with that but next to the fact he did not pay many bills, whereby both Caroline ships, the MV Mi Amigo and the MV Fredericia, were taken away from international waters early March 1968, he brought us also nice memories. If Philip Solomon didn't got into the organisation we wouldn't had those awful long commercials for Albums which were released by his record company Major Minor.

Well I must say that I'm very thankful for a lot of the releases he made possible. Of course I know from the stories from the deejays that they threw a lot of those records into the international waters, but there were some nice ones too. Not only the Irish Dubliners became big all over Europe, so did Raymond Lévefre and his Orchestra with his albums. Above all it has to be mentioned that without Philip Solomon it was not possible that I had bought in December 2003 the double cd with all the early seventies material of the late David McWilliams.

Through an ever lasting instant reply of those marvellous commercials for Major Minor MMLP number 1 and so on,

we had never heard of that brilliant talent David McWilliams. Thanks a lot Philip to take over from Ronan, although it will never be confirmed by Mr. O'Rahilly.

Of course all avid listeners to the station in the sixties know the name of Philip but there were many more people working for the organization which are not known at all by the normal listeners. Lucky enough I did a lot of research through the past 35 years. It was in February 1966 that Michael Parkin did something within the organization. He was one of the persons who helped up to set on of the Independent Commercial Television stations, Channel Television, way back in 1960 as a Sales controller. From there on he became General Manager. A few years later he became Sales director for Radio Caroline. Early 1966 he got his own company Caroline films, producing commercials. In the meantime he remained a consultant for the Caroline organization.

An announcement of special tendering, using an airplane by the Caroline organisation, I did found back in the Television Mail from February 24th 1967: 'It was announced this week that Radio Caroline has concluded a deal with aviation specialist L'Aronaughte Limited. This may mean that the offshore station has plans to supply its two ships (north and south) by helicopter after the passage of the Marine Offences Bill, which has received it's second reading in Parliament last week. L'Aronaughte will be aviation consultants to Radio Caroline and to Ronan O'Rahilly, a director of the company, personally. A statement from Radio Caroline says is 'to provide helicopter and fixed wing support for exploitation and servicing of Radio Caroline. L'Aronaughte has access to a fleet of 275 aircraft from vintage aeroplanes through balloons, to the latest DH 125 executive jet. They are best known as consultants to the feature film industry; David Kaye is managing director.'

Decades further we know of course that Ronan himself never used a plane to tender the radio ships. Yes, it was done in the seventies when the weather was so bad that a plane had to be used to drop the program cassettes near to the MV Mi Amigo. Probably the news had been mixed up a little bit and that the contract has been signed by Ronan for use of a plane for the making of the movie 'A girl on a motorcycle', featuring Marianne Faithfull and Alain Delon. The movie was shot in France and England during 1967 and early 1968. The soundtrack was composed by Les Reed. Ronan O'Rahilly was co-director of the movie and 'Girl on a motorcycle' can nowadays be found in the category 'cult movies'.



Marianne Faithfull

Also I want to bring back a memory which Andy Archer did sent me some time ago: 'Hi Hans, Here's an amusing 'memory' for your readers. Back in 1967, I remember coming off the tender in IJmuiden and taking the train to Amsterdam and walking down to the office at the 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.'

And finally in this chapter with facts and memories I want to bring you to the pages of 'Television Mail' from May 19, 1967. In that issue a rundown of facts and figures under the header 'Caroline gets 4 m entries.' 'The other morning 180.00 letters poured into Caroline House. On May the 5th, the 4.000.000th entry to Cash Casino was delivered. Whilst

it was eleven weeks before the 1.000.000th was received, the following 16 weeks another 3.000.000 poured in. The response to a contest has been described as outstanding. It represents an income in excess of 67.000 Pound for the Post Office in 4d postage alone, and many people used registered and special recorded mail delivery services. The latest NOP Audience Survey Figures show that Radio Caroline has an audience in Great Britain in excess of any other radio station with 19% aged 16 and over, whilst Radio London have 12%. In the South East England new standard regions 4 and 5 Radio Caroline has 27% whilst Radio London has 24%.'

In my archive there are many articles from newspapers, official reports from the stations or advertising agencies about the listening figures on those offshore stations and I can truly tell you that most of the time, when you put the mentioned figures next to the others from the same period, there is a complete difference. In those days you didn't bother about the correctness of these figures; you only read that they were magnificent. Nowadays really I can say that they all used a 'big thumb' to get as much press attention as possible.

It's 15 minutes to eleven in the evening of Saturday May 15th when finishing this report and it's exactly 33 years ago the tragic bomb attack took place on the MEBO II, which was one of the main reasons the Dutch government decided there had to become an Act against broadcasting from international waters. My thoughts are every year at this time with the guys who were on the MEBO II that tragic day.

I wish you all the best and as always keep the information, memories, questions and other things coming in at my address: Hknot@home.nl