

KNOT INTERNATIONAL RADIO REPORT DECEMBER 2005-2

The mail box of the Knot International Radio Report was filled completely every day during the past three weeks. Many thanks for all those wonderful wishes for me and Jana from all parts of the world. Tremendous to get so much mail for the Christmas period. Hope you enjoyed the days full of festivities. Some name checks of course, as usual during the report.

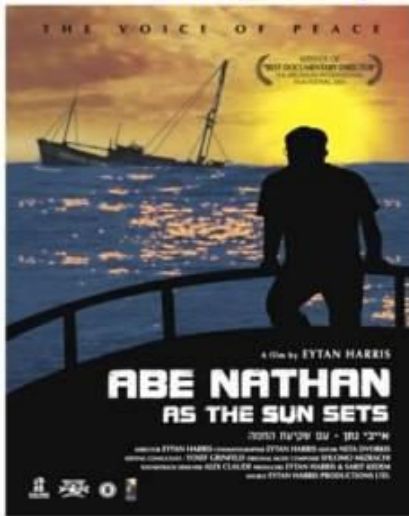
First to the Province of Limburg, where Alfons Jagtman is living. He wrote to me that he does enjoy every month with so much joy the international report. 'Just like the good old days at the end of the sixties and up till 1976 Hans when you were in the editorial staff of the Pirate Radio News. Still I've all those old copies in my house. Living in the smallest part of the province of Limburg, near the German Border. Alfons is no one else than Rob Ronder who worked as a deejay on Radio Atlantis in 1974 and went on to do his thing on Radio Mi Amigo. After that he was for 12 years one of the good guys at the AVRO Top Pop Drive In Shows. '

Another former offshore deejay with a variety of jobs is Dave Windsor. Already for years he has a very popular oldies show on BFBS2. He wrote in to tell us it can be heard back daily on internet:
www.bfbs.com/listenagain

Some weeks ago I had the honour to get a copy of the documentary Eytan Harris made about the life and work of Abe Nathan, called 'As the sun sets'. A most wonderful documentary which shows all sides of the character Nathan, his very good work in all over the world, his Voice of Peace Project and the sad life he lives nowadays. Not forgetting the documentary gives a very good inside look how Abe went on with his family and friends in past and present. Above that all it's very remarkable that Eytan and his team succeeded in getting very exclusive footage from Abe's live to include into this documentary. I can everyone within my readership recommend to buy an own copy of this wonderful documentary on VHS or on DVD. How to order?

Abe Nathan - As The Sun Sets

A documentary film by Eytan Harris



Rare Archival Materials !!!

Original sounds from the
1/4 Inch tapes of the VOP !!!

In those saturated moments of human truth that the film is so rich with, it reaches unusual extreme heights.
Meir Shnitzer – Maariv newspaper

"It's a very exciting and loving film!"
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78 minutes

English & Hebrew
English subtitles

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In our last issue there was a question about 'who knows which headphones were used on board the MEBO II in 1970'. Maybe it's Ian Anderson who's answer is correct. He writes in: 'AKG K65?' And just 2 hours later Ian confirmed that he was sure: 'I am now sure the headphones used on RNI in 1970 is the AKG K65, a variation of the AKG K60 developed in Austria in 1965. The attached picture is of a K60, but the K65 is much the same in looks. Ian Anderson.'



From Australia the next e mail: 'Hello from Sydney. Once again a very interesting newsletter. Thanks for all your work in putting it together.'

Just thought your readers may like to know what this ex Radio City and ex Radio Caroline deejay is currently doing. We've just launched a new online radio station which features only new, independent music from unsigned artists. The standard of music that we've received so far is extremely impressive. Boots Digital Radio can be heard at www.boostdigital.com

You will also see that we will be featuring independent short films. Greetings Ian Mac Rae.'

Elly van Amstel was one of the female deejays working in the eighties on the MV Ross Revenge and she has her own weblog where some parts are in English. There's an interesting swap of letters between her and one of the former females on board the Ross Revenge and far more about Elly and radio to be found at: <http://ellyvanamstel.web-log.nl/log/4018209>

Richard Jackson, so I can mention, has been found back. Herbert Visser has told me that he's much in contact with him by internet and sent me his new email address. So now we can inform Richard too about the VOP reunion as he has worked on the Peace ship too. Richard still lives and works in Bangkok. And of course thanks Herbie. (who was a former colleague from Richard in the eighties.)

In one of the news groups on December 6th a message about Sealand, this was published in The Times. 'Citizenship of the world's smallest country has gone on sale. The Sovereign State of Sealand, a wartime fort seven miles off the coast of Essex, can legally issue its own passports and currency after the Government and courts admitted that the 1,800 square foot steel platform, built to help to defend Britain from invasion in the 1940s, is outside British national territory and not part of the United Kingdom.'

Nonsense news is once again striking Britain. If you've followed Sealand and the Bates Family, as I've done since the sixties, you know that this so called news was brought in to the press by the Bates family several times and everytime there was again some young or inexperienced journalist who thought 'wow' this is big news.

When I did my research on Sealand for a book in the late 80's I took my 'almost ready chapters' to the house of the family Bates in White Cliff on Sea and after asking my last questions to Joan and Ray in their flat I told Ray that I had finally found a title for the book: 'The Dream of Sealand'. He became very furious and it was better to leave the house at once. Now 18 years later the title for the book still covers all promises the Bates family has done in the past on all their so called projects for Sealand.

From Sydney, Australia a next mention in the Knot International Radio Report:
'Dear Hans, I always enjoy your newsletters. Best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Wonderful New Year from a sunny & hot Sydney. Cheers Dermot Hoy, (Bryan Vaughan on Caroline).'

Some weeks ago Dutch newspaper NRC had a one page feature about our beloved radio hobby, including the trip to the REM Island, early September, as well as the Radio Days. I told the journalist about an 'illness', which some radio friends have, called the '31 of August 1974 disease'. A lot of people sent me afterwards a letter or e mail and this is one I got from Amsterdam from a guy called Martin van Dören: 'I just came back from Copenhagen where I've been researching to see if something has been left from former Radio Mercur.'



Well, I can tell you that almost nothing has been left. The building, where all the shows for the station were recorded (Radio Mercur City) in the sixties, is now a theatre again, which she was in earlier days too. The building is in København-Nørrebro. I knew just little about the station until I got hold on a book in Syddansk University, called 'Pirater I Æteren, which was published some years ago, when there was also an exhibition with the same name in the city of Odense. In the book I found the address and a photo of the former Radio Mercur City. Well the address helped me very quickly to the place. I took some photo's and really I can tell you that I yelled at the front door: 'De lytter til Radio Mercur. Also here's an interesting internet site about Radio Mercur:

<http://www.dr.dk/kroeniken/tiden/radio/radiomercur.asp> .



Thank you, Martin and indeed a nice way of reminiscing the good old days of commercial radio in Scandinavia

From Germany an email from Burkhard Nowotny: 'Ladies and Gentlemen, After nearly 16 years at Deutsche Welle I have decided to take early retirement from 31st december 2005. So let me thank you for your cooperation in recent years. Adelheid Feilcke-Tiemann will take over International Relations on 1st January 2006. Please stay in contact with her in the future. I will do some part-time work in the future, mainly for TV and radio.'



May I wish you a very lucky time with good memories to the working days?

Than time for Pat from Ireland: Hi Hans, I hope you are keeping well. Just a quick correction to your last report regarding Caroline on NTL: in Ireland. Caroline is available in Dublin, Galway and

Waterford but not in Cork as you stated in your last report. NTL do not hold the cable licence for Cork. It is held by a company called Chorus Communications. As far as I know they don't relay Caroline. Doesn't matter to me though as I use Sky to listen to Caroline or Big L whenever I want. Nick Richards (ex Caroline) is still going strong here in Cork on local radio station 96FM with his breakfast show every weekday from 6 am to 9 am local time. Also on line www.96fm.ie Keep up the good work and best wishes to you and your family for a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.



In the last issue I mentioned the sad news that world famous writer and former director of Radio 390, Ted Allbeury, died. Chris Edwards from Offshore Echoes Magazine in London writes me that he has put on line an interview with Ted. You can find it at:

<http://www.offshoreechos.com/Ted%20Allbeury.htm>

On a regular base station manager Peter Moore, from the Caroline organisation, writes his report on the organisation. One time he sent it out to Martin van der Ven's pages and another time to the Knot International Radio Report. His latest can be seen at: www.offshore-radio.de

Another seasons wish, this time from the USA: 'Wonderful and remarkable as always, the best of the holidays to you and yours and all the great fans of Pirate Radio. As I used to say: "You the Greatest of all Greats, you the entire Teen Population of all the Great Nations. The Geeter with the Heater. The Boss of the Hot Sauce. It is me Larry Tremaine, The Man with the Plan for the better sounds in life. While we go uptown, downtown and across town to rock the big tick tock on the CAROLINE TALL TIME & POWER TOWER CLOCK. It was only 35 years ago but seems like yesterday. Love to all and to all a good night. Larry Tremaine.'

Some months ago I mentioned for the first time there will be a reunion in Amsterdam for people who've worked for Abe Nathan and/or on the Voice of Peace. As many of those are reading the Knot International Report I had many people sending in e mails that they want to participate on that happening. Also I requested those involved in Abe's Peace Project to work together with me to publish a book with our memories to the station as well Abe Nathan. I met him in the late sixties for the first time and later at some other occasions. But above that I tried to follow him as much as possible through the past decades.

When it became known that I would publish another book on his work and life (I did earlier one in the Dutch language in the nineties of last centuries) surprises came in. From the USA, Australia, Ireland, Holland and even Israel chapters for the new book, to be released in November 2006, came in. Even a very friendly long e mail from Noam, a personal friend of Abe, who takes care of him a lot

while in the care center, was unexpected. Abe has told Noam about his memories about 'me' and has asked him to scan all his personal photographs for me. Really a very touching thing to hear. So for every former VOP man or woman (yes they're too in my readership) the question to take some hours to write your own chapter for this book. You can send it, probably with some nice photographs, to Hknot@home.nl

Here's one of the chapters to be appearing in the book next November: 'I also want you to give an impression of some of the things happening in Israel and also aboard the MV Peace at the end of 1973. It's really too much to give an exact rundown of all the facts which happened either to Abe or the VOP. It would be a reason of either sponsoring the book by The Diamonds People from Antwerp or buying a winning a lot from one of the many lotteries, to finance a book which gives you all. So, already at an early stage I decided to give you just a little view on the many things happening through the years. In this chapter we'll have a look at the last three months of 1973, where it the future seemed to be very bad and a very fast ending of broadcasting for the station.

But more things were happening in the Middle East in October 1973 as a war was fought between Israel on one side with Egypt and Syria on the other side. Above that the later ones were backed by Iraq as well as Jordan and financially by Saudi Arabia. On October 6th the war started and would last up till October 22nd on the Syrian front as the battle against the Egypt front lasted till the 26th of that month. The war and its outcome represent a watershed in Middle Eastern history. For the first time, vulnerability on Israeli side was evident, both Syria and Egypt proved their new strength, both military and in organization. It also left Israel with loss of territory, even if that was not its own, but occupied territory from the Six Days war.

The names of this conflict stems from the important Jewish festival of Yom Kippur, and the Muslim month of Ramadan, in which the annual fast of Sawm is performed. From a rare moment of flabbiness in Israeli intelligence and in the government, Israel did not expect any attacks from its neighbours just at this point in time. The background for this is that two very important religious festivals coincided in both Islam and Judaism, two festivals in which there was a prohibition against warfare.

Egypt and Syria used this laxity to launch a surprise attack on Israel. The goal of the war was to win back lost Arab territory from preceding wars, first in 1947-49, then 1956 and especially in the last, the Six-Day War of 1967. Following these wars there had been no political progress in solving the situation of lost territory and large groups of Palestinian refugees. A deep frustration had come over the entire Arab world, which came to motivate strong sentiments, and new political orientations in the populations. At the eve of the 1973 war, the Arab nations felt that they had every excuse to wage war against Israel.

The total cost off the war was estimated to US\$7 billion on both Israeli and Egyptian side, but much of the operations on Arab side were financed by Saudi Arabia.

But it was also the Voice of Peace, which played a small part during the war as Abe Nathan was more than normal on the air to tell the soldiers on both sides about his Peace ideas. He told them for instant that it would not be Premier Golda Meir from Israel or President Sadat from Egypt, who would die but the soldiers. "Be sensible, stop the war. Don't fight any longer and go back to your families as they need you the most." If the soldiers could listen to the Peace talk from Abe is of course another question.



One thing is for sure and that's that the Israeli Army Top gave the order monitoring the transmissions from the station. The Peace ship, which was at that stage at a position near the Suez Channel, got visit on October 7th from a gunboat. Order was given to stop the transmission at once. If not the ship would be entered and towed into a military harbour. Abe decided the best, made a short announcement and played 'Give Peace a Chance'. The station left the air, although it was only for a short time.

Just a few days earlier Abe mentioned already that the Middle East was at the edge of a new war: "The war can start any moment now and as we feel that it will break out any moment we're moving our ship to a new destination, to the top of the Suez Channel. We will try to ask the soldiers not to start a fight.' Just a few days after transmission was stopped in order of the government the Voice of Peace was back on the air. That time from a new anchor position near Famagusta (Cyprus). The station was almost without money and in those days making commercial radio was not part of Abe's knowledge about radio. So he ordered the deejays to ask in their programmes for money, whereby Abe expected that at least 75.000 dollars would be spent by those listening. But instead of that amount only 1000 dollar came in. Abe's comment: 'Far too less money came in and it became clear that people saw that it was war and they thought it was more sensible to use the money for weapons.'

At the new position also two new deejays were recruited: Frans de Wolf as well as Keith Ashton. The later one had left his very well paid job at Capital Radio in London to work for a period on the Voice of Peace. It was clear that he was an avid follower of offshore radio as in his programs we heard for instant a former Caroline jingle by Andy Archer 'Give us a bang when you're ready!' Also the voice of Graham Gill was heard several times in the jingle 'Hello good people' and special name jingles for Keith Ashton were produced by Kenny Everett, who worked together with him at Capital Radio.

Listening back to a program from those war days non of the deejays made any comment about the trouble in the Middle East, this as Abe had forbidden to do so. So deejays chat was regulated to things like: 'On a day like this listeners on the beaches of Beirut. Tel Aviv, in Cyprus and many other places I want to speak to you and accompany you while sunbathing. Each half hour I will give you the order to turn around, so you will getting a real brown skin. In the meantime we'll bring you a musical message on the Voice of Peace.' Only Nathan was allowed to talk about war and peace. "It's only to me to talk about the war situation as if everyone would talk about it in the programs we could get to the situation that some of the deejays are unknown about the situation and even don't now the difference between Greece and Egypt.' At the other hand Abe also new that next to war and peace there were other interests in human life as one of his links during his program went as follows: 'We're watching you, beautiful ladies on the beaches with our field glasses. We miss you so much and hope to be back soon at our original anchorage.' Not much later the captain of the Peace ship got the order from Abe Nathan to restart the motor and bring the ship back to the coast of Israel.



Voice of Peace (Photo Paul van Onzen)

Just hearing back the recordings after so many years I thought, when Abe promised to be back soon, that many of the listeners would be very happy to get their station on their transistor radio far much better than during the past days. They must have been very disappointed hearing Abe later that day: "On the background you'll hear the engines of our vessel and somewhere in the afternoon our anchor will be lowered somewhere between Haifa and Beirut. Due to financial problems we have to go off the air soon and see to find more backing for the Peace Ship'. Early November 1973 the VOP was silenced again. Nathan ordered the captain to go with the ship to the harbour of Ashdod and it took a long time to get the station back on the air, with financial backing from an unexpected source. It were, as the story goes, the hookers in the harbour who gave a one evening earnings to the Peace Project.

It was halfway December 1973 that we heard again in the Netherlands some news from the Voice of Peace. It was mentioned the ship took anchorage at the western coast of Italy, near Rome. Even rumours were going around that avid DX'ers heard the station on 1539 kHz for some hours but never it was officially confirmed by the technical staff of the Voice of Peace. At the end of December, that year, the Voice of Peace, entered the harbour of Marseille in France, to stay there for a very long time.

'The Station of the Stars' is the name of a special which will be programmed on Sunday January 15th from 20.00 hrs. CET and can be heard on www.RMNradio.de

It will be highlighting the International Service of Radio Luxembourg, which was on air until early 1990. In the program interviews with legends as Benny Brown and Dave Christian. Of course also a lot of air-checks and jingles can be heard back.

Another Christmas Card, which I draw out of the hundreds and hundreds of wishes we received: 'Hi Hans just a line to wish you a Merry Xmas and Happy New Year Hans, and to thank you for all the reports for 2005, and I look forward to 2006 reports and hopefully to meet you in Holland in 2006. As I retire next year, end of January. I have got to tell you Hans, following Mi Amigo feature on David Williams feature on Radio Day 2005 , I did not remember him on Caroline North as a newsreader. And I was on the Isle of Man in 1966, and I met Ronan O'Rahilly there at a football match then. Yes, offshore radio is very close to my heart, that is probably why I am so critical of radio today. Hope you have enjoyed your stay in the UK recently, all the best for now, Alan Cook.'

Thanks Allan and I must say, living in the North of Holland reception at certain times of the signal of Caroline North was much better than Caroline South so I did listen a lot to their programs and truly remember and recording David Williams as a newsreader. A very friendly man and a radio man in heart and soul!

AJ Janitschek sent in the next interesting news from America which could be found back at <http://www.radioink.com/>

'Free Radio 96.9 - a pirate station that was shut down by the FCC in July - is back on the air with a signal that reportedly sounds stronger than the last one. The station broadcasts from a rented shack in the South Park neighbourhood of San Diego. The operators have returned to the same location - despite the fact that federal marshals raided the building and tore down the antenna less than six months ago. "They can send as many gumbos out as they want," a 96.9 deejay said. "But, free speech is what we are all about, so we'll set up again." "I don't know what the latest statistics are, what, that six companies own the media?" asked Free Radio listener Justin Bergmann. "I mean, it's ridiculous." "I don't think it's so much a violation of the law as it is making a statement about our values and the values of the media," said Free Radio listener Eneri Rodriguez. "It's a decision they've made and it's empowering." "To my knowledge, I'm not doing anything illegal by renting to them," said landlord Dan Salter. "Do I go check their license and make sure they have one? No, it's not my job."

Thanks a lot for sharing it with us AJ J. Anyone who want to sent in material for this Knot International Report is free to do so and can sent it to Hknot@home.nl This is a non commercial publication and all the advertisements are published without any payment by the advertisers as I think anyone may also see which products are on sale at the moment.

Another wish taken from the enormous amount of wishes which came in from around the world: 'Merry Christmas Hans, to you and your family, and many thanks for all the great reading this year. All the best mate, Doug Wood.'

Yet another former VOP deejay reading the bulletin. Thanks all for the beautiful cards and all our walls in the living room are completely filled with hundreds of cards sent in by normal mail as well by internet. It gives us a very warm feeling.

Also taken out of the pile is this one by Willem de Bruijn, who wrote: 'I wish you and your dear ones a very nice Christmas and all best wishes for 2006. Very clear in my mind is Christmas from 1973. Onboard the Mi Amigo in those days Norman Barrington, Andy Archer and others. In the hours they were on the air Andy Archer played a lot 'Land of hope and glory' by Vera Lynn and I also do remember the 'Toad Campaign'. Whereby a lot of 'kneedepping'. It must have been a really good atmosphere on board the radio ship, although the circumstances on the Mi Amigo were not too good in those days.'

Again a nickname came in, this time from a reader in Liverpool who told us that during his time on Caroline North Martin Kayne was also mentioned Martin 'Fink' Kayne.

Well that's all for now, may I wish you a very nice ending of the year and a Happy 2006 with a lot of radio pleasure? See you around, for another Knot International Radio Report in January.

HANS KNOT