

# HANS KNOT INTERNATIONAL RADIO REPORT MARCH (2) 2007.

Welcome to this bumper edition of the Radio Report. Included is a long story about what happened on the Mi Amigo more than 30 years ago including some exclusive photographs by Marc Jacobs. Thanks by the way for all the contributions and keep them going to the regular e mail address:

Martin van der Ven wrote to me: 'Chris Parkinson, former Hauraki offshore good guy has an own internet site, including photos of the Hauraki reunion, which took place in last year:

<http://www.parkinson.co.nz/>

If you want to hear how Radio Hauraki sounds today in New Zealand just go to: <mms://ac1-bak.streaming.net.nz/trn-hauraki-wlg>

Thanks Martin and after Germany time for Scotland, where the next e mail comes from 'Hi Hans, This article about Leith FM appears in today's (27th) Edinburgh Evening News.

## Radio station signals intent to buy ship

THE broadcaster behind the bid to move Leith FM on to a ship beside the Britannia has turned his attention to an Orkney vessel.

Stewart Lochhead, the community radio station's chairman, originally targeted the home of pirate institution Radio Caroline, but has broadened his search in case that approach falls through.

He is now looking at the MV Communicator, which has been anchored off the Kirkwall coast for some time, as a back up to the offer to take Radio Caroline's Ross Revenge. It is thought the Orkney-based boat, which was once home to Superstation, could be Leith FM's for around £25,000.

"I'm waiting for the current owner to reply at the moment," said Mr Lochhead. "I've heard from some sailors in Leith that it is sitting there unused just now."

The newspaper cut came from Edinburgh and Bob Baird who wrote also: 'It has been said many times before, but a sincere thanks for all your hard work in compiling the excellent 'Radio Report'. I'm always amazed at the continuing amount of interesting material you publish in it. I found an old cassette with some bits of Radio Scotland from early 1966, which reminded me of the station's time checks. The end of a Pete Bowman show from 10pm to midnight was closed with 'Have fun now and keep in touch', with an invitation to join him again at 6 in the morning for 'Rooster Call', the breakfast programme. The station I.D. was then given with 'Check your time by the chime'. This 'chime' annoyed many people as it was a standard household 'ding dong' door bell! One can only imagine the scene throughout the land with dogs barking at the top of each hour, warning their owners that someone was at the front door! After a number of listeners complained, a compromise was made - only the 'ding' was used from then on. I wonder if any other readers of the report remember anything (or anyone) that annoyed them on the offshore stations? Now a confession - I once had a record played on Radio Scotland by presenter Paul Young - literally. I found an old small sized 78rpm record which had belonged to my grandparents and, feeling that it might bring some fun, sent it to the station. The title? 'He played his ukulele as the ship went down'! Thankfully, that never came to pass, and, sadly, I didn't manage to record Paul's show. Take care and best wishes, Bob Baird.'

Thanks Bob for this marvellous memories. Yes, directly an annoying thing in offshore radio came to mind and it reflects to one of the four favourite stations for me in the sixties, Radio 390 brought the program 'Music from the Organ'. Any reader who also remember annoying things please share it with us!

Next, talking about Radio Scotland, as Bob did, sad news from Mary Payne:

'Hi Hans, Not unexpected news, as we knew that Alan Black was gravely ill, but very sad nonetheless we heard he passed away. It was lovely to meet him at the Radio Scotland mini-reunion in 2005, and Alan thoroughly enjoyed the entire weekend.

Alan Black, Pirate DJ who joined Radio 1 Published: 22 March 2007

'Alan Black, disc jockey and cartoonist: born Rosyth, Fife 15 January 1943;

married (one son); died London 5 March 2007. When it comes to naming the key disc jockeys at Radio 1, Alan Black is unlikely to come to mind, but for a few years he was part of the fabric of the station and the highly influential In Concert series was his idea. "I thought Alan Black was a terrifically good DJ," says the broadcaster Bob Harris, "He had great warmth on air and that is hard to achieve."

Black was born in Rosyth, on the Firth of Forth, in 1943. He was educated locally and had plans to go to art school. At the last minute, he changed his mind and spent six months with a band of gypsies. He joined a commercial art studio but became disillusioned with the weekly pay of £1 10s. Taken again by wanderlust, he took casual labour on coasters and ocean liners. He developed his talent for drawing cartoons by working for the D.C. Thomson

company in Dundee and contributing to a wide range of comics and magazines. In 1963, Black moved to London, working for agencies as a commercial artist. He was intrigued when offshore pirate radio stations started, and secured a job with Radio Scotland, joining the ship in the Firth of Forth for its launch at Hogmanay 1965. He established himself as a popular broadcaster but he then moved to Radio England, which soon went into voluntary liquidation. He was with Britain Radio when its ship, Laissez Faire, suffered considerable storm damage - not helped by some of the crew jumping ship. When the Marine etc Broadcasting (Offences) Act 1967 became law, the stations were forced to close down. Meanwhile, the BBC had been shaken from its lethargy to create the new teenage station Radio 1, and Alan Black made his début with Midday Spin in July 1968. Black was one of several

animators involved in the highly innovative film *Yellow Submarine* (1968) and, during a holiday in France, he met his wife, Mariepierre, known as Pierre. One of his producers at Radio 1 was Jeff Griffin, who remembers, Alan had heard a programme in France in which bands would both play live and be interviewed about their music, which gave them a certain credibility. He thought that this would work in the UK and we did a pilot with Led Zeppelin, who chose Liverpool Scene as their special guests. Alan introduced the programme and it was broadcast in August 1969. It was well received but the station's management wanted John Peel to present the subsequent concerts. I felt sorry for Alan Black . . . a few months earlier, they'd all been criticising John. The programme later had a number of presenters, each

chosen according to the performer, and Alan did some of those. Bob Harris recalls, I started at Radio 1 in August 1970 and slotted into a strip of programmes called *Sounds of the Seventies*. I took over the Monday programme and Alan was doing the equivalent programme on Friday night. Each of the programmes had a different musical style to them, and Alan's great musical interest was jazz-rock. He is the first person to be playing *Chicago* and *Blood, Sweat and Tears*. We co-presented an album review programme together for about a year and a half and it was a good combination because we overlapped very little. I didn't like a lot of the stuff that Alan liked, and vice versa. This led to us having some heated discussions on air. Black also presented the *What's New* programme with Anne Nightingale, which was produced by Bernie Andrews. He proved a delightful companion: a laconic Scotsman who would entertain his colleagues with sharply observed caricatures. However, he never attained the popularity of a Dave Lee Travis or Tony Blackburn. "You have to have a big ego if you are going to be a big DJ," says Jeff Griffin, and it's to his credit that he didn't have a big ego. He was a genuinely lovely man and I don't think I ever heard him say a bad word about anyone. In the late 1970s, Black developed new talent for Polydor Records and did some presenting at Radio 1. In the end, he decided that he had had enough and took jobs outside the industry, but he continued to draw cartoons whenever the opportunity arose.' Spencer Leigh  
Mary Payne, Director RADIO LONDON Ltd



Thanks Mary for sending the Spencer Leigh article. Sad to hear another one of the fleet of offshore radio deejays has gone. One day more will be gone than be alive.

It's some time ago I saw Tony Christian for the last time during a radio day. He's back with the next e mail: ' I hope you are keeping well. If it is of interest to you, I will be forwarding some pictures of me while working on Radio Sovereign to Bob Le Roi for his story on his website. I also have a video

that I have now converted to DVD from a recording of a live show on the Ross Revenge in the North Sea courtesy of the Southampton Branch of the Caroline Movement, around 1985, that I believe has never been seen in anorak circles. Let me know if you are interested in a copy of that. Also, I have many cassette tapes that I really should convert to CD of my shows on Caroline, another memory of that little cassette recorder that used to sit on top of the desk in the 558 studio. As you probably know, I had to give up my Saturday show on Caroline some time ago, due to my workload and earning a living with my full time job to pay bills. I have enjoyed the break, but am back with a new show. The Weekend Warm Up on Friday nights between 18.00-2.00 GMT which is so refreshing and fits in with my life now without taking over it. Hopefully you are enjoying it. I am still working hard with TNI Radio [www.tniradio.co.uk](http://www.tniradio.co.uk) and a local radio station [www.blrfm.co.uk](http://www.blrfm.co.uk) Keep up your good work, I look forward to your news. Take Care, Tony Christian.'

Well Tony really great to be hearing from you again and also that you really doing well these days in another part of your life. Good to hear you back on Caroline these days and of course we wish you with all your radio work a lot of success. And yes always nice to see Bob's site too and he did indeed a very good special on Sovereign. Bob and I, who know each other almost 30 years, will have some surprises in time to come. Visit Bob site go to [www.bobleroi.co.uk](http://www.bobleroi.co.uk) Anyway, it would be lovely to see the '558 video' and my postal address is PO Box 102 9700 AC Groningen Holland. Thanks in advance!

And talking about Bob Leroi: 'Welcome to the March Website Update. In this months Scrapbook a return to the Sunk Head for the Part 3 of our now 5 Part Series on the Tower-Radio-Tower adventure. New generators, a Fort clean up & TV dropped in favour of Radio, but it's too late moneys fast running out. In "One Subject One Link" the BBC has come under criticism for the way it's responded to the generous deal to increase TV license fees by 3%. In the A-Z of Pop & Rock it's the letter (M) with Madness on record & Bob Marley CD. Plus we launch phase 1 of our new look sales pages, take a peak in the Offshore Shop, we've more new book titles. Whilst you're there have a look at Equipment Accessories, Audio Books & leisure Wear. Enjoy your visits. [www.bobleroi.co.uk](http://www.bobleroi.co.uk)

But also the Pirate Hall of Fame has a nice update: 'What's new this month? The last offshore station to launch off the UK coast during the sixties, Radio 355, commenced broadcasts forty years ago this month. We look back at the [Radio 355 Story](#); we get an update from one of the mysterious DJs who was heard briefly on Caroline South after the Marine Offences Act of 1967, [Stevie Gee](#); and we continue to add to the '[Seventies Supplement](#)' with a [second page](#) of DJ biographies. See the [contents page](#) and DJ directories of the [sixties](#) and [seventies](#) for news of the latest updates. [www.offshoreradio.co.uk/](http://www.offshoreradio.co.uk/)

Phil Crosby is one of the many readers for the Knot Radio Report living in Australia and telling some more about his background: 'Well firstly I have a fascination with radio that started as a kid building crystal sets in my home town Coulsdon (about 35 kms south of London). But once the offshore radio stations started I felt I was a teenager in heaven, combining my favourite topics of 60's pop music, radio transmitters, and being a rebel against the government! I developed an encyclopaedic knowledge of the stations, and of course attended the Free Radio rally in London. After August 1967 Radio Caroline was my hero, and I watched and listened as the station's fortunes rose and fell. Meanwhile a group of us started two land based stations, Thames Radio from my garden shed (closed down by the authorities very soon), then the more powerful and higher quality Radio Britannia on 254m and occasionally shortwave as well, each Sunday from secret locations in the countryside. We financed the station from a mobile disco, which a friend and I later took through Europe on an adventure that

ended up in Scheveningen, where the MV Mi Amigo was supposed to be being prepared as a pirate museum. We learnt that it was really about to set sail as Caroline once more and agreed to join the ship (I adopted the very unoriginal DJ name of John Dale), but on closer inspection conditions were quite bad, and we doubted it was seaworthy. I then emigrated to Australia, working in various enterprises around the radio business, and gaining my legal "ham" licence. Marriage and kids followed, and I didn't give much thought to pirate radio, other than tuning around the bands on my periodic visits to the UK. Then the internet exploded and guess what? Here was my old friend Caroline broadcasting again, re-kindling my interest. Then last year (2006) I returned to the UK and emailed Peter Moore to ask if there was any way I could visit the Ross Revenge in dock. He said he could arrange it, and even though I had some trouble getting past the Security Police, I eventually got to spend a couple of hours on the ship re-living old times.



That's a very short version of my radio interests. I look forward to the newsletter, Hans. Cheers! Phil.'

In an other e mail Phil asked me questions about Peter Chicago's skills and I sent him an interview I had with Peter many years ago: 'I listened to the interview with Peter Chicago, it was indeed very interesting. It would have been good to hear more about his technical challenges with managing high power transmitters in the difficult environment of a ship on the ocean. And also discover what has happened to him since leaving the Caroline organisation. Hopefully you will be able to have another interview one day? Another point that I sometimes think about is the choice of frequency for the offshore stations. I wonder what factors the station took into account? In the early days (pre 9KHz spacing) I guess it was simply a matter of tuning around to find a clear spot day and night, then locking the transmitter on that frequency (or getting a crystal manufactured). But generally, there was a trend towards the pop music formats being above 1000Khz (or below 300 metres), and the easy listening stations above 300 metres. Maybe the location of the BBC light program (247m) and Radio Luxemburg (208) originally encouraged this? Of course later on the shift to 558KHz for Laser/Caroline broke this tradition. Or was there a deeper technical reason (later overcome) for choosing higher frequencies, perhaps more range with less power, or maybe the antennas could be shorter. Has anyone done any work on the logic of frequency selection? Phil'.

Well who can help me out in answering this technical questions from Australia? It will be most welcome to get it on [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

Next news from Sietse Brouwer, once the guy behind Radio Caroline Holland from Harlingen. 'Yesterday, after a long and thorough preparation the mast was erected on the LV Jenni Baynton (a.k.a. LV 8). Today most of the guy wires were put into place. The coming weeks will be used to increase tension as the guys will no doubt stretch. As the pictures prove, it looks immaculate. All of the crew were completely knackered from both physical strain and enormous stress. We were lucky to choose the two days with the best possible weather to do this. The ship will be relocated tomorrow. One more reason why it had to happen when it did. We were rapidly running out of time at our present moorings. Thursday the dredgers will come in. We are moving back to our previous location. Thought you might like to know, regards Sietse Brouwer



Photo Sietse Brouwer

Norway and Sverre and his ever lasting love for The five from the Olga Patricia brings the next: 'Dear all associated with Radio England/Britain Radio/Radio Dolfijn/Radio 227/Radio 355 and their "cousin" station Radio London: You may already have noticed, but here comes a quick note about another update to "The Radio Rose of Texas." This edition coincided with the 40-year anniversary of the demise of the most-missed Britain Radio and Radio Dolfijn at 12.45 pm on February 28th, 1967. The last known recording is that of Look Boden on February 26th, 1967 on 1322 kc from 1400-1502. The new web reference, with a new layout is at [www.northernstar.no/olgapatricia1322845.html](http://www.northernstar.no/olgapatricia1322845.html) The first sound recordings are on [www.northernstar.no/sound.html](http://www.northernstar.no/sound.html) You may access both these pages and their links(best way) as well as many others via [www.northernstar.no/heritage.html](http://www.northernstar.no/heritage.html)

Back to England: 'Hi Hans Knot from Peter Tankard in Sheffield. I totally agree with your letter about the state of radio in the UK .I was 15 when Laser 558 and Caroline were on the air in 1984 I could get them very strong in Sheffield south Yorkshire day and night even though we are 80 miles inland from the sea the signal was even strong in the built up Sheffield city centre I have got many hours of Caroline and Laser which I recorded on my workman, which I will always keep for the rest of my life. It is very fine to play them back it brings back the 1980's and the wonderful sound of Laser and Caroline into my living room. Very good deejays and the wonderful Laser and Caroline jingles of the time. Laser 558 and Caroline were very popular in my school and Charlie wolf was a house hold name at our house. I used

to go to town from lower Wincobank in the north east part of Sheffield next to the M1, where I lived, on the bus and I would regularly hear a bus driver or someone on the bus with a radio listening to Laser 558 or Caroline on 576 or 963 they were very strong even on a bus. Even some of the busses had Laser 558 and Caroline car stickers on them and I even once saw a Laser 558 car sticker stuck in one of the windows of Sheffield town hall. Radio Hallam on 194 MW was the local ILR radiostation at the time and I have to say it was boring and still is today as Hallam FM. BBC Radio Sheffield was just as bad and still is today. I used to see a lot of Laser 558 and Caroline car stickers in car windows and in many shop windows around Sheffield many more than Radio Hallam or Radio Sheffield car stickers, most of my friends were Laser 558 or Caroline listeners. We all had Laser club cards but I can not remember winning anything with mine. I still have got mine. I wish Laser 558 and Caroline would come back on air. I listen to Big L now on 1395 AM it is very strong in Sheffield day and night. It goes distorted from time to time but it is a very good station. But I wish they would play more music from the 1980s and the 1990s. I listen to Arrow Classic Rock a lot on 675AM and Radio 10 Gold on 1008AM Both signals are very strong in Sheffield. I would not listen to any of the British radio stations even if you paid me. Ofcom is killing radio in the UK today it is all about the fat cats making lots of money and the listener comes last these days. I get sick of listening to Capital Gold, Magic AM and Classic Gold all playing the same old rubbish, day in and day out, it is time to bring back the offshore stations. PS if you come across any Laser Hot Hits AM 576 or Caroline 558 car stickers from the 1980s, please do let me know I will pay very good money for some Caroline 558 and some Laser Hot Hits car stickers from the 1980s that are in mint condition. My email address is [peter.tankard@bigfoot.com](mailto:peter.tankard@bigfoot.com) if you can help me.'

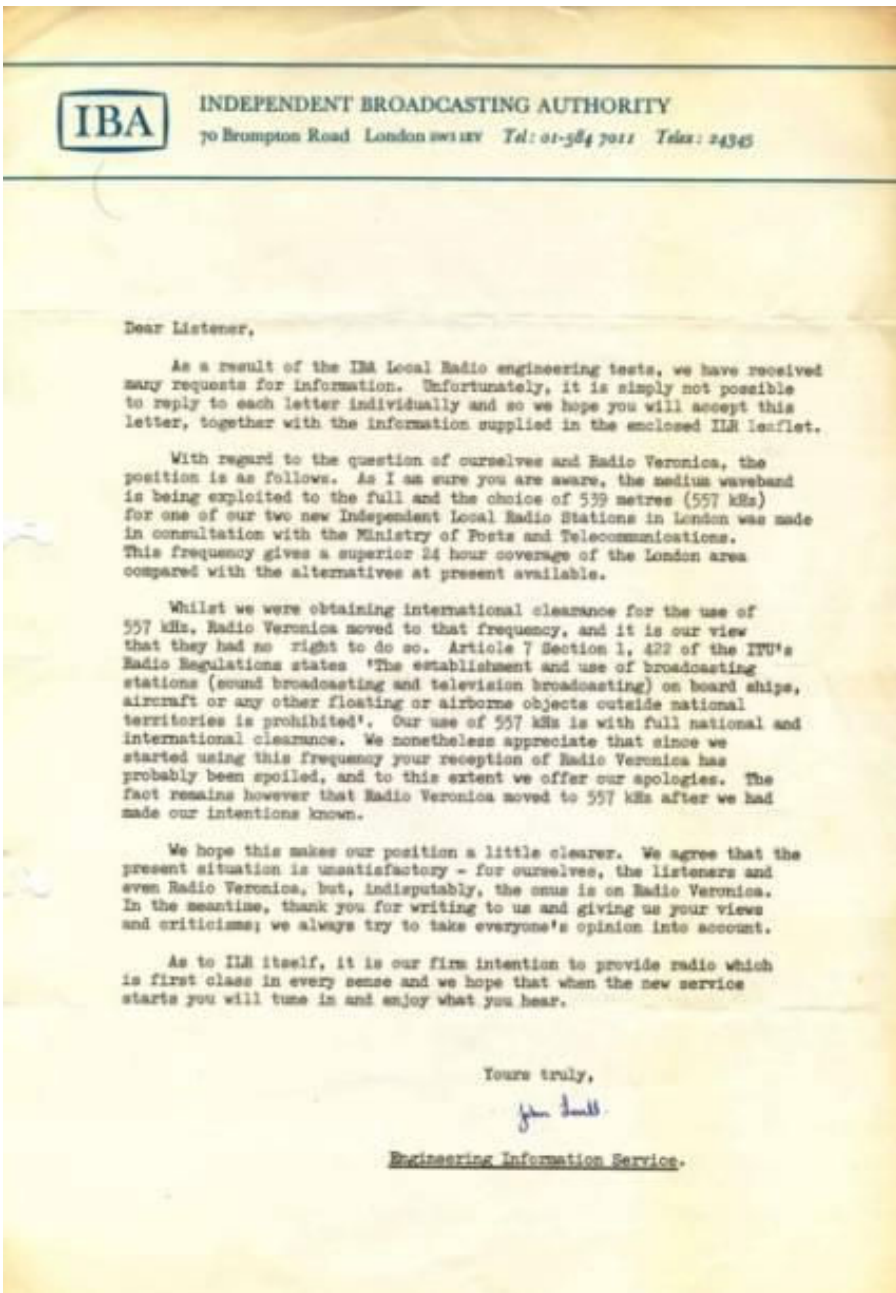


Thanks Peter for your e mail explaining the love for Laser and Caroline and of course your walkman, which recorded a lot for you in the sixties. I must admit I loved the stations in the sixties like you did in the eighties and still the stickers are left too! Only my recorder has changed through the years. Hope any one of the readers can help Peter by sending him some of the wanted stickers. By the way Peter sorry to hear you were never chosen by the Laser deejays with the Club Card. I must confess that I was the very first person mentioned as a Laser Club Card Member and that I got three LP's sent from New York to Groningen!

We stay in England to hear from Mark Aston: 'Hi Hans, Reading Geoffrey's interesting article reminded me that 1989 was not the first time the UK government had used 558KHz as an unofficial "jamming" signal for offshore radio stations. Radio Veronica was also blocked when the IBA station Capital Radio started its transmissions, in fact the same transmitter as Spectrum (500W) was used from Lotts Road power station in Chelsea, this electricity generating station was used to partially power the London Underground Railway System. The antenna was a "T" strung between the buildings' chimneys. There was a noisy demonstration outside the offices of Capital Radio at Euston Tower to protest against the loss of Radio Veronica reception in the London area, I was there, and remember (the late) Tommy Vance, very embarrassed, pushing his way through the protesters to get into the building. Attached is a

letter of excuses received at the time from the IBA in response to the complaints, later of course Capital Radio moved to 198m. The British authorities have always used the argument about either lack of frequencies or interference against Free radio stations, the number of local stations nowadays using every available channel proves they were wrong. Mark Aston.'

Thanks a lot, with all our memories history is getting completer and completer. Also thanks for the letter.



## THE LAST TIME THE MI AMIGO ENGINE WENT ON

During the second weekend of March several people from several countries will get together on a certain secret location in London to take part in a reunion of former Radio Caroline and Radio Mi Amigo deejays and crewmembers, who have worked on the MV Mi Amigo during the period 1975-1980. Of course a lot of memories will be shared during that meeting, but on forehand also things from the past, a lot almost forgotten, came up. I exchanged e mails with former Mi Amigo deejay Marc Jacobs



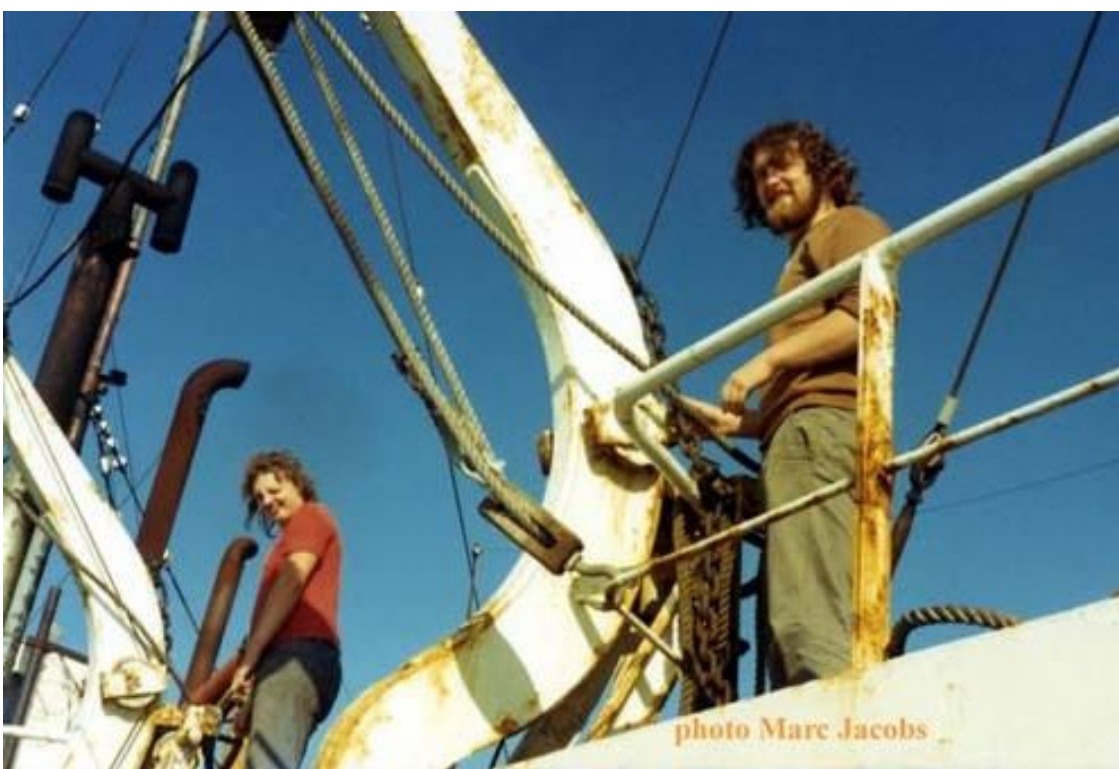
and one subject which came heavily back was the problems with the MV Mi Amigo, due to the heavy weather in September 1976. A heavy storm which brought the Grand Old Lady in severe problems, probably the heaviest since 1966.

Let's go back to the Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup> when the whole of England and Holland were in the very stormy weather. On the North sea, twenty miles off the British coast, the storm was so heavy that the people on the MV Mi Amigo were thinking they had to deal with a hurricane. During the morning, when the force of the waves lashing the vessel shattered one of the portholes, the one of the upstairs studio in use by Radio Mi Amigo. Water came with heavy loads into the studio and as a result the Dutch programmes were put off the air due to the sodden state of this studio. Later we learnt that water was six inches high in the room. The records in the racks got also a lot of water and when the storm became heavier the racks broke partly down with the result that the records went into the water on the floor. Lucky enough downstairs in the ship, where the Caroline studio was situated, they had - at that stage - no problems with the water level. However, due to fact the ship was heavy rolling playing music from records was impossible and therefore special non stop storm tapes were put on air. What we, as listeners, didn't know was that the Mi Amigo had drifted on a sandbank.

But also the signal coming from the transmitter was not a normal one as the transmitter was cutting out several times, even once for twenty long minutes. So around 9.45 CET in the morning the Caroline crew decided that the studio could be taken over by the Mi Amigo boys. Peter Chicago went to the transmitter room and linked the two transmitters in parallel and the sound of Radio Mi Amigo, which was bringing in the money, could be heard on 259 as well as on 192 metres. First the daily taped program between 11 and 12 from Playa de Aro, which was called 'Stan Haag Vandaag', which was followed by the news in Dutch read by Marc Jacobs, in which he also thanked the Caroline guys for using their studio, then Radio Mi Amigo went off the air.

More than 30 years on Marc Jacobs remembers: 'The Old Lady drifted onto a sandbank and the weather was so rough, that the waves came over the ship, leaving us actually under water every time a wave came over. We were still on air that morning from the Mi Amigo studio. Suddenly a huge wave broke the porthole in the Mi Amigo studio. I was in there and the splintered glass was all over and in my face. The Gates mixer started to give funny sounds as all the valves inside blew apart. The studio equipment was covered in seawater and Radio Mi Amigo went off the air. I was cleared of the glass in my face, no real injuries, and after about an hour Radio Mi Amigo continued broadcasting from the Caroline studio. I told our listeners what had happened and I think we stayed on the air for a few hours more. By noon we had taken in so much water, that it was unsafe to keep the generators running so we went off the air.'

The Caroline deejays thought it shouldn't be a problem to go on the air in the evening and so the station took to the airwaves at 19.00 CET with Ed Foster telling what had happened earlier that day. So the English listeners heard that the porthole had broken and the Mi Amigo studio was totally soaked, including Marc Jacobs. What he however didn't tell his listeners was that the anchor chain had broken. It was around 20.30, the day before, that the good old Mi Amigo ran aground a sandbank. Captain Werner de Zwart asked Ed Foster to send out an SOS message, which he did by interrupting a record at 20.35 hours that evening: ' This is Radio Caroline broadcasting on 259 metres in the medium wave band from the radio-ship Mi Amigo. We are on a sandbank and in distress and require assistance from shore.'



Mark Lawrence and Ed Foster

Although the captain is always in charge on a ship it was Peter Chicago who stopped the SOS calls after twice broadcasted. Ed Foster later remembered: "The captain is always the boss on a ship and so he told me to broadcast to shore requesting for assistance. I'd repeated the SOS twice and suddenly it was Peter Chicago bursting into the studio and told me immediately to stop the SOS calls as he thought, as responsible man for the radio-crew, that we were not in immediate danger."

During that Friday evening, September 10<sup>th</sup>, strange enough programming went on without any of the Caroline deejays talking about the earlier mentioned problems. At 22.00 Mark Lawrence took over and at 1.00 o'clock Saturday morning the 11<sup>th</sup> it was Tom Anderson taking over for his show. Shipping weather forecast from the BBC was monitored late in the evening by Buster Pearson: "Southerly gale, force nine, Imminent, Thames Estuary. I could make only one conclusion that after a day of gales and another storm on his way with the ship - as mentioned in the SOS - on a sandbank, that this could only mean that the Mi Amigo and their crew was in a most precarious position."

Buster stayed on the main part of the night and made a logging of what happened that night, in his home in South Benfleet (Essex): ' At approximately 00.40, the 192 meter transmitter went off the air; hours later than usual. As we listened to Tom Anderson we could clearly hear his chair sliding around. Also we could hear the regular clanging of the broken anchor chain as it struck again and again against the steel hull of the radio-ship. We could also hear records tumbling out of their racks and the noises built up in intensity, showing that the storm was reaching it's climax.'

It must have been around 3.30 CET that night that the lights at the 31 Avondale Road could be switched of as seven minutes earlier the transmitter on the Mi Amigo, which was still on at 259 metres, went totally suddenly silent, not to come back. It was Ed Foster who later told what was happening around that time on the Mi Amigo: ' The breakdown in the night was caused by the feeder from the transmitter to the mast cross-bar being snapped off by the wind, a break that couldn't be fixed without the help of a welding team.'

There was only one newspaper, the Daily Mirror, who mentioned in a short article the next day about the problems on the Mi Amigo: 'Pop, on the rocks. Pop pirate Radio Caroline sent out an S.O.S. yesterday, after it's ship went aground off Clacton. Disc-jockeys continued broadcasting from the vessel, which is normally anchored outside territorial limits.' Buster was at the British side in contact with several people and informed me that he had no idea if the ship had a total other position as a spokesman from the coast guard in Walton on the Naze had informed him that there was no noticeable change in the Mi Amigo's usual position.

It stayed silence on both frequencies for several days. But silence didn't mean that nothing was happening on board the MV Mi Amigo; in fact, at the time when the transmitter left the air the excitement had hardly started; for on Saturday morning, when a boat pulled up alongside to offer assistance, the Captain Werner de Zwart, his crew and the Radio Mi Amigo deejays Marc Jacobs as well as Jan van De Meer were leaving the ship, heading for the Belgian coast. That left the four Englishmen from Radio Caroline alone on the ship: Ed Foster, Tom Anderson, Peter Chicago and Mark Lawrence. And although the station was not on the air anymore, there was no time to rest. In stead of that they had to work very hard to keep the ship afloat. Many buckets were filled with water as many parts of the boat were several feet deep in water.

In the week after the ship stranded it was the late Ronald 'C' Pearson who remembered the stranding of the MV Mi Amigo in 1966 compared to the one in 1976: 'When the ship beached once before on Frinton Beach, she chose the only stretch of shore and the only point on that stretch where she could set down without landing right over a concrete breakwater. She brought the same survival-instinct into play again when she choose her sandbank. She landed right in between the remains of two wrecks; had she been forced onto the wrecks just a few feet to either side of the resting position, she could not have avoided being broken up by then. So once again she played her part again, like way back in 1966, in saving the persons on board the radio ship. After that four of the deejays had the faith to stay aboard and save the lady. They worked very hard aboard her and gradually getting her dried out.'

One of the English deejays, Ed Foster remembered the hours after the Captain and others left the ship: "For hours we hauled buckets until Peter rigged up a pump. This was kept going night and day; but the hose had no filter and we were constantly wading around, cleaning out the paper and muck that choked the hose. A very nasty and messy job, but one which prevented 'the Mi Amigo' taking in enough water to burst her seams and sink."

But the pump and the buckets and the enormous input from the four on the ship were not enough and so contact was taken with the organisation asking for assistance from a welding team. The danger wasn't over when a tender arrived with welding equipment to repair the damaged hull. The weather reports at that stage were still predicting even worse weather for the area. Only if the sea remained calm could the necessary repairs be effected and the ship saved.

In the meantime I was informed by telephone during the very early hours of Sunday morning September 12<sup>th</sup> of the save arrival of the abandoned crew. In heavy weather one of the tenders brought them to a save harbour, were temporary accommodation was arranged for a few of them. Others decided to leave for home. I can now reveal they stayed in Oostende in Belgium for some time. It was Marc Jacobs contacting me and asking me to be contact person during their stay in Belgium. In no way they wanted to be on the phone with family neither the Mi Amigo/Caroline

organisation directly. This as they were afraid their private family phones were tapped by the authorities. I could tell everybody involved some of the bad news as well as the good news and hoped that both stations would be back soon. And luck came for the Lady again.

More than 30 years later Marc Jacobs tries to recall the things happening when they abandoned the radio-ship: "What happened afterwards I can't really recall. At some point our tender managed to come alongside. There is one thing I do remember the first one to jump to safety, to leave the ship, was our captain Werner de Zwart, the coward. We, the Dutch, were forced to abandon ship too, quite against my will I remember. We were taken to Oostende in Belgium. Chicago stayed with Ed Foster, Tom Anderson and Mark Lawrence and they in fact saved the ship, because they never stopped pumping out the water. If they hadn't stayed on the Old Lady, our story would have ended there on that sandbank in 1976."

Ronald C Pearson told about the legend MV Mi Amigo in late September 1976: 'Yet, the Spirit of Caroline again proved stronger than the weather! The predicted northerly gales ravaged the country, producing more havoc than many of us have ever imagined, much less seen; until they reached Cambridgeshire. Then, they reached no further. As if held back by an invisible barrier, or as if part of the North Sea had suddenly been caught up in a protective bubble wherein the weather could have no effect, the winds died even before they reached the coast. Around 'Caroline', the sea remained calm. As the days passed, the Mi Amigo was repaired, towed back to her moorings and fitted with a new anchor. For, it emerges, it's not the anchor that holds the ship in position, but its chain, There should be at least twice as much chain actually on the seabed as there is stretching from the seabed to the ship. The chain that had broken had been far too short, and so had had far too much strain put on it when the ship began to move about.' Buster Pearson, as Ronald's nickname was, went on to tell his readers about the use of an anchor on High Seas: 'Caroline has not only a chain that is fully long enough but also a spare anchor mounted on deck where it can be dropped just by the action of cutting a rope.'



Marc Jacobs and the 'new mixer' (Once on the MEBO II)

The new anchor and chain was brought to the radioship with the tender coming from a Belgian harbour. Not that the organisation had put any money into buying a new and proper anchor and chain; no some within the Radio Mi Amigo organisation, who shared the ship with the Caroline organisation, thought they had a cheaper idea. In the eighties two guys from Holland were heavily involved in bringing Radio Caroline back on the air from a new radio ship the Ross Revenge: Leunis Troost and Koos van Laar. But also in the seventies both had done a hell of a job by building a new aerial mast on the Mi Amigo on open sea. Also tendering the radio ship from illegal places was for them a normal job. As they came with their ship in several larger and smaller harbours they knew how to get the anchor and chain for free. So very simply the anchor and chain were 'lent' from a big tanker, which was chained up already for many months in a small Belgian harbour.

Marc Jacobs tried to remember coming back to the MV Mi Amigo: 'A day or two later we went back to our ship with a new anchor-chain, which turned out to be too short, cause months later that chain would break also. As our tender tried to pull the MV Mi Amigo off the sandbank it tore off part of our starboard railing. It was welded back on later. Anyway we were pulled off the sandbank, started the ships engine and on our own force headed back to our anchor-place. Halfway there the engine sort of exploded, there was a loud noise coming from the engineroom and that was the last of the ships engine; it never ran again. Our tender then towed us back. I can't remember how long that new anchor-chain held us. It was too short, in storms we would directly pull the anchor which always gave a loud noise and a shiver throughout the ship. Frightening that was. It broke early 77 or thereabouts.'

After a long silence suddenly on Thursday September 16<sup>th</sup> for the first time a signal could be heard again at 7.27 CET on 259 metres. Really they guys had thought about good songs to play as the first one was 'You're my best friend' from Queen, of course pointing to the Lady. For the next 90 minutes it was non stop music and at 9 o'clock that day. The Mi Amigo deejays had yet arrived on the Mi Amigo but only playing the cassettes with Mi Amigo programs, recorded in Playa de Aro. Spain. This went on until 19.00 hrs that evening, when Radio Caroline once again went on the air.

First deejay was Ed Foster, who opened up the service with the words: "Thank you Radio Mi Amigo for the last twelve hours of broadcasting -- this is Radio Caroline back on two five nine'. Then the first record was played on Caroline for that evening 'The boys are back in town' from the Scottish group Thin Lizzy. After the song he came back with: 'Yes. We're back in town, Radio Caroline on 259 metres in the Medium Waveband. Most apologise for the past three or four days - or was it five days? - that were without transmissions, but we had some difficulties out here. The weather was rather rough a couple of days ago. You can probably hear the work going on still, they're welding something, I don't know quite what it is".

And indeed in the background several noises could be heard when the microphone was on. And of course Ed and the other deejays told the Caroline listeners what had happened and told some interesting details. Almost the whole discotheque was under water and they had to dry the record covers on the radiators, which were lucky enough still working. Next to drying the covers all the records had to be cleaned up as the water had left a lot of salt on the vinyl. Without cleaning them they could not be used again on the air.

About the moment that the Mi Amigo drifted and went on the sandbank Ed Foster remembered in his program: ' One of the interesting things that happened last Friday when we went off the air the storms dragged us. onto a sandbank and we were bashing up and down on that, which, was quite painful

and painful for the old radioship as well. Like to say hello to the boys, that came out to us from the Trinity House lightship thing - I think it's called 'Ready' and is registered in London. They came out and were measuring all the sand and everything, and how deep the water was at low tide around us, and that was quite interesting. They were standing in a little dinghy that came across, and there was one guy standing with a 'piece of rope with knots an, going 'Three... three... one-and-a-half... two...' I think he was, measuring fathoms and things; but it's a bit beyond me. Anyway, hope you're enjoying yourselves... I must apologise for the banging, like I said before, there's repairs and welding going on. Actually I think they're welding up a gantry for launching the spare anchor, because we've got two anchors on board and it was falling off the wall or something so they decided to weld it...'

Deep Purple was played next with the song called 'Lazy' which presumably they were not at all on board the Mi Amigo. During the then passed five days the four guys on the ship hadn't seen too much of their beds because they had to clean up the totally mess on the ship which was left by the heavy storms. Foster told his listeners that the mess-room was a total mess: 'It was actually three or four inches deep in water. One of the windows, or portholes if you prefer, got smashed and waves came through that and we had to mop up all the mess. All, the generators packed up and it was quite chaotic here for about three days".

After Ed Foster it was time for Mark Lawrence to present some hours of entertaining and started off with 'The boys are back in town', followed by "Hello, it's us again! If you went away for your holidays to the Outer Hebrides or somewhere far away on Friday night and you -just got back today and turned on your radio you won't notice any difference. But believe me, there's a lot of things gone down since then. Oh, you've got no idea. It would make your hair curdle or your blood curl, or something". When Mark Lawrence came on one of the first things he told was why the daytime service from Caroline had not yet returned. "We had, to put not too fine a point on it, a chronic storm. It really was a bit terrible; we had a couple of windows pushed in by the waves and consequently a lot of things got soaked in water. The 192 transmitter was one of them, so until that's repaired we're just on at night time, with Radio Mi Amigo during the day".

Hectic days formed a complete week in the life of a lady and either Buster Pearson in Benfleet nor myself in Groningen had too many sleep during those days. That night we were able to sleep, and sleep easy for the whole night, for the first time in a week: After hearing the Caroline program we knew that everyone aboard was safe; that was all that counted. And yes, the 192 metres transmitter also came on the air again and it was on Wednesday September 22<sup>nd</sup> that at 6 CET non stop music was heard for the following four hours. Next was Ed Foster, who did a show up till 11.15 hrs when the Caroline crew decided to go over to taped programs. People were still working very hard on the ship and it gave to much noise when the microphone was open. Later that day, at 16.47 CET, live programming restarted and Radio Caroline was back like nothing had happened at all.

#### Sources

Freewave Media Magazine Amstelveen 1976;

Monitor Magazine Benfleet, 1976;

20 Years Radio Caroline, Hans Knot (ed) Groningen 1984.

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Back to the news as a brand new English language radio station launched officially at 2pm on Thursday 1st March.91 FM RADIO ATLANTA, which has already run test programmes launched its 24-hour a

day programming from its new studios in La Unión. The station features a line up of top British broadcasters including Carl Kingston, who has previously worked for Radio Caroline and radio stations in the USA, Israel and the UK, Keith York ex-Atlantic 252 and Glenn Pinder from Radio Aire. The station will serve the Costa Cálida with a staple mix of the best of today's contemporary hit music together with the best from the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. Programme and Operations Director Carl Kingston informed us that in the near future regular features are to be introduced to the station's programming including the latest UK, Spanish and worldwide news. The station uses state of the art technology and is also able to bring programming live direct from the UK. Andy Wilkinson will be responsible for co-coordinating outside live broadcasts for 91 FM RADIO ATLANTA and says: "we intend to bring live remote broadcasts from along the Costa Cálida coast throughout the summer of 2007". Steve Warren who heads up the 91 FM RADIO ATLANTA Sales and Marketing department is looking forward to working with local businesses in the area. The international feature of 91 FM RADIO ATLANTA is the music. Even though speech will be in the English language, Spanish listeners along the Costa Cálida will understand the music as the message. 91 FM RADIO ATLANTA has a format that is aimed at 25 - 65 year olds and is best described as a mix between CHR (Contemporary Hit Radio) and the Gold format featuring the best of today's hit music and the classics that make up the music of your life. The 'more music, clutter free format' will include concise coverage of news events of the day as well as the latest weather and beach reports. Throughout the week, and at weekends, you will hear experienced broadcasters from such famous broadcasting organisations as the BBC, Radio Luxembourg and Radio Caroline plus new talent on 91 FM RADIO ATLANTA. 91 FM RADIO ATLANTA'S studio includes the latest state of the art computerized broadcast playout system used by radio stations worldwide and houses a library of thousands of songs.'

Well Carl and the gang good luck and who knows, maybe readers to the Knot Radio Report will be on holiday in the area and can tune into the station the forthcoming summer!

Last May I lost my beard after 28 years and still people reflect to it: 'Hello Hans, I love your web site, I have been going to your site for the last few years and I am glad you shaved your beard off as you now look very younger. I hope you like my new web site at [www.radio390.de.ms](http://www.radio390.de.ms)

Erick

Soon there will be no more Radio 10 Gold on the air on AM. The owner, Talpa International - who bought the station in 2003, has decided to dismiss most of the deejayteam including Jos van Heerden and Peter Holland. A minor part of the programming is still presented. Soon the AM will be switched off and only the station can be heard in Holland on the cable networks and on internet. With 19 years of age Radio 10 was the oldest commercial radiostation in Holland. A pity the work for so many years has be thrown away, especially after Tom Mulder became ill some years ago. Good luck to all the guys who have left the station.

Now we go to Israel and a message from Noam Thal. 'I'm very busy now a days on organizing several events for Abie. Jim Jonson- the DJ from Radius 100FM in Israel - is visiting Abie every week or 2 and there are several other new visitors that come to him. He wasn't very well for few weeks but I hope that now he is getting better. There is a group of 250 kids that learn in a naval school in Israel and want to organize a cruse with several ships and yachts on Abie's Birthday day from the northern part of Israel to the south and back. About 30 of them will visit him soon, and you will get all the pictures and info ASAP. Another thing: 30 of the most important Israeli painters will make and devote a picture for Abie and the opening will be in A Gallery in the Tel-Aviv Area on April 20th. We will also celebrate his B-day with all the good friends. I'm doing my best to gain some PR for that,

but its more important for me to make him happy then to waste time on convincing people that don't care. I'm still working on the Archive but its too slow. I hope that on the Jewish feast of Passover. I'll be able to do more. Again I want to thank you Martin, Hans and Rob, for all you did and still doing for Abie and the memory of the VOP. I hope you feel good. Best regards,  
Noam'.

Thanks Noam for all the good work you're still doing for Abie. May I already ask you to congratulate Abie on the day he's getting 80 years of age! And for our readers: please sent a congratulation or wish for Abie's birthday too and I will forward all wishes so Abie get them on his birthday party. Let's make it an international birthday by getting wishes to him from as much as possible countries around the world. Like Abie, who helped with his humanitarian work people all over the world too in the past! Please sent the wishes to [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)



**Capital Radio Crew in 1970 after floating with the King David**

Got a very rare photograph from Vincent Schriel and also an e mail from Martin Streefkerk who wrote: My mother was in 1970 part of the crew of the transmitting vessel King David. Enclosed a photo shot at the police office, probably in Noordwijk, after the King David ran aground at the beach. Part of the crew was taken to the police office. On the right downside my mother Florence Pijnacker with ships dog Batscheba. My mother was cook/deckhand on the ship. The man standing on the right must be Bob, originating from Great Britain. The Asian girl on her knees is Sanny Hsiang Hsiang Fa, and next to her Gerry Preus from Amsterdam. The other lady next to Bob is Lisa from the USA.'

Well Vincent and Martin thanks a lot. Another photo from the MV King David was sent to me by Coaster Lover Paul de Haan from Schildmeer.





Another e mail: 'Just a note to say we're testing online at [www.northcotswoldonline.com](http://www.northcotswoldonline.com) click on listen to hear some of the unsigned acts I am working with. We're inviting all the unsigned acts from around the world to send their music. We want to establish the area as the first stop for unsigned music. I have been trying to persuade the BBC (via my own website [www.jacobsladder.org.uk](http://www.jacobsladder.org.uk) to do this since 1999, they seem to think that commercial music is part of their brief. It's up to other stations to take a lead. At some point we will establish a stand alone service that other radio stations can opt in and out of. Happy for other stations to take our music output (subject to notification). Regular programmes will start Easter weekend. Studio base is in The Cooler at The Old Police Station in Chipping Campden (that's in the cells).  
With best wishes, Robb Eden'

So to everyone put on the calendar to have a listen soon, maybe on Easter Sunday! Good luck Robb!

Stuart Dobson wrote in: 'Colin Ward has asked me if I could find out Nigel (skull) Roberts address, phone number or e mail address and I wondered if you had any of these. Thanks!' Well sorry I met Nigel Roberts for the last time in the Boddington Hotel in Russell Square (London) in August 1987 and never heard from him again. So anyone knowing where Nigel Roberts, ex Caroline, is living nowadays, please contact me at: [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

Hi Hans, You probably have this link already but I'll pass it on anyway:

<http://lost-in-tyme.blogspot.com/2007/03/radio-caroline.html>

Regards, Steve Pragnell

Next time for Ad Tervoort in Heemskerk Holland who wrote: 'Dear Hans I read with much pleasure your reports. My second passion next to Offshore Radio are The Beatles. Already 11 years long I present every Friday evening The Beatles Show on [www.radioheemskerk.nl](http://www.radioheemskerk.nl) They must have been very thankful to those on the offshore radio stations for playing a lot of their material. However I think the Beatles haven't done to much promotion for the stations. On the web I found an interview from Tom Lodge with the Beatles which could be heard in a Bob Stewart Show on Caroline in the sixties. The interview took 22 minutes but it was not too interesting. Just two weeks after the program went out The Beatles went into the studio to record the Revolver LP. A pity no questions about the forthcoming project were asked. Do you know where this interview has been recorded?'

Thanks Ad, well maybe the question can be answered by Tom Lodge himself as he's reader of the

Knot Radio Report too! I think we must not forget John Lennon offered Abe Nathan 'Give Peace a chance' as station tune. Also George Harrison did put some interest as well as money into Caroline in the seventies and I remember, when Laser was 1 year old, Linda and Paul McCartney had special wishes for the team on the MV Communicator.

From Pat Anderson and Radio Caroline the next: 'Hi Hans, I am putting together a video documentary on the conversion of Ross Revenge, from a famous trawler into an even more famous radio-ship, and would welcome some of your readers help. When the Ross Revenge was being converted at Santander in Spain there must have been many opportunities for people to film the proceedings and I wonder if anyone knows if this was the case and who may be approached to get the rights for using some in my project. We know of some photographs of the mast being erected but to date no footage has materialised. This is a serious project which is being filmed on behalf of Radio Caroline and will be released on DVD in due course. My I also put a crafty plug in for my landbased pirate documentary DVD '**Free Radio - The Story of Clandestine Radio in the UK**' which is still available from the Radio Caroline Web Shop! Best regards, Pat Edison

Radio Caroline

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[www.radiocaroline.co.uk](http://www.radiocaroline.co.uk)

Next we go to Germany and Harald Hummel: 'Dear Hans, my Dutch is not too good so I write in English to you: 'I listened to Stevie Gee in 1967 on Radio Caroline. Right down here in Rüsselsheim in Germany, which is between Mainz and Frankfurt. There was a jingle "Stevie Gee's happening" or perhaps it was he himself continually saying that. I cant quite remember. I didn't like his show very much, because he sounded rather unprofessional. Perhaps I even have got bits of his programmes on old tapes I haven't listened to for at least 30 years. But I don't know. Your site and your news are absolutely =fantastic. We all should be very thankful to have someone like you doing such a marvelous job. By the way, I also met Buster and=his mother and Jeanne in 1975 or early 1976 when I went to Benfleet twice. And its always great to hear of Andy Archer, whom I met on the MEBO II or later in Caroline House. Did you listen to his sitting in for Keith Skues some months ago? Do you remember the name of Dorothy Stigwood of Newmarket? I think her name was the most mentioned on RNI. I wrote to her and still have her letters (I think of 1971 or 72). But we lost contact."

Thanks Harald for this info and 'yes' I listened to the Andy Archer sitting in for Skues, very relaxing and entertaining shows. But Harald had another question:

'Dick Klees did some live night time shows from the Norderney for Radio Veronica in early 1971. Do you know what he is doing? I met him in 1970 on the motorway between Amsterdam and Den Haag, when we both had giant "Fight for free Radio"-Stickers in our cars and had a talk on the parking place. He invited me to see the Veronica Villa in Hilversum where we were welcomed by Bull himself. Memories, memories. Thanks again, Harald Hummel from Rüsselsheim.'

Well Harald Dick worked after his Veronica days for Radio Netherlands and the AVRO. Due to his age he's not working anymore and enjoying life. Anyway that's all for this bumper edition and news, memories and so can be sent to [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

You'll hear from me in April and may I wish you a Happy Eastern?

Hans Knot