

# HANS KNOT INTERNATIONAL RADIO REPORT

## APRIL 2007

Welcome to another edition of the Hans Knot International Radio Report sharing memories, photos and above all remembering the radio, as it used to be. Well a little name change as I've added Hans to it. A lot of e mails, from which a nice selection will be published, came in. Also in this issue another long story, this time from Colin Nichol in Australia. We have also an open letter from Caroline's front man Peter Moore and tell you a bit sensational news about the forthcoming Radio Day in Amsterdam as the first quest is known to us!

Let's start with some e mails from all around the world starting with Clive Warner who reflects on the questions from Phil Crosby from Australia. 'Hi Hans. Great report you sent us, fascinating story about the grounding of the MV Mi Amigo, way back in 1976. Many thanks! Here some comments on the question from Phil in Australia: **'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.'**

Well it's pretty difficult. The constant movement of the ship makes it dangerous to work on the transmitter when it's actually on power. Engineers often need to be in close proximity to high voltage when diagnosing some problem, and on dry land you simply act in a professional way and you're safe, but on the ship there is always the chance of a sudden wave that makes you lose your balance. Secondly there is the problem of all that brine. Salt is a pretty good conductor and causes arc-overs on the antenna insulators. So you have a lot of maintenance replacing ceramic insulators, I had to do that and it was an unpleasant job.

**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?**

'Factors? Don't think so! I remember that when the DTI began jamming us, I went to look for the crystals to see what I had to choose from. Yeah I was pretty radical in those days, I had a tendency to take unilateral action! I found a box that had three crystals in it. The one we were actually using, someone had engraved a heart shape on it as it was the 'heart' of the transmitter! But it was not as if we had a lot of choice. Re-tuning a Doherty type of transmitter such as the 50KW Continental would have taken quite a while, possibly a day or two, especially with the extremely limited equipment. I had brought a RF bridge with me from the UK but that was about it. Basically, on medium wave you want the lowest possible frequency because it goes a lot further. Long wave is known for its great range, for instance. But low frequencies mean high antennas and there are limits as to what you can put on the ship. So it's a big compromise, basically you find whatever spot you can, then check at night to see if there are any distant high-powers on that frequency, all the time thinking about antenna size, retuning components, stuff like that.'

Thanks a lot Clive, most appreciated and hopefully Phil down yonder is also happy with this answers. Next e mail comes from Frank van Heerde in Holland who wrote: 'Hello Hans, thanks again for your report. Always nice read. You mentioned a program on Radio 390 which was not 'Music from the Organ' but named 'Masters of the Organ'. During the period September/Oktober 1965 I've listened to this program which had an opening tune called 'Now is the hour'. I'm looking for this number already for years so maybe someone in your readership can help me. Before this program came on the air Radio 390 had 'Country style'. Who knows the title of their tune and who performed it? '

Well Frank hopefully someone can be of help and will send an answer to [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

Next an e mail from Henk in Friesland: 'Nice stories again in the Knot Report, especially the one about Laser and Radio Mi Amigo written by Peter Tankard from Sheffield. I never knew Laser had such a good reception in that part of England. Here in the province of Friesland reception was no problem during daytime and only during evenings it became worse. Listening to Radio London 1395 this afternoon on my old tube radio receiver I learnt that news was programmed directly after the news and the team was giving away travel goodies. I feel good with this station being on the air now.'

Next from Germany an answer on another question: 'Hi Hans, thanks for your second March report, interesting as ever. There was a question from Ad Tervoort where Tom Lodge made the interview with the Beatles in 1966. In his book "The ship that rocks the world-The Radio Caroline story", Tom included a chapter to this. There he wrote, that the interview happened in Chelsea, London in a mews called "The Vale" near Kings Road. Hope I could help. Best wishes and Happy Eastern Harald.'

Thanks Harald and I've forwarded the answer to Ad who wrote me back he's very happy with the solving of the question.

And again also an e mail from my big friend over in California: 'Hi Buddy, another great report on the past and present scene of British radio. I have to first and for mostly congratulate you on what I think was you longest report ! I have to agree with Peter Tankard in Sheffield. I totally agree with your letter about the state of radio in the UK The thoughts on the current scene echo mine. I was hoping IOM radio, which was to bring back the feel of free format radio, was going to be the answer, alas as you know it crashed again! I hear the rebuilding process (sans departed Paul Rusling) is once again in route. We will keep hoping. If nothing else seeing a lot of my old pals mentioned monthly is comforting ! roskoradio.net has had to offer pod casting now as we maxed out the server within 3 weeks. Happy to say were the fasted rising Internet station last month! If I might plug us for old mates and young mates of the future, we play soul, old new and rare! Thanks again for the best report around ! Emperor Rosko.'

[www.roskoradio.net](http://www.roskoradio.net)

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## EURORADIO 2007 ADVERT

Offshore Echo's & France Radio Club's annual event Euroradio, takes place in Calais France on Saturday 8 September at the Georges V hotel. Our special guests include the man who officially opened Radio Caroline on Easter Saturday March 28 1964; one of Caroline's early engineers; a man of many names and radio stations; plus a man who didn't play pop music. Find out more at:

[www.offshoreechos.com](http://www.offshoreechos.com)

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Like in the last issue of the report we have a special. This time Colin Nichol from Australia takes us

back to the sixties with an interview he had with Paul Hollingdale

Mr. Paul Hollingdale

Talking in his London studio to Colin Nichol (Colin Nicol) in February 1984.

Edited transcript of a recorded interview

Paul Hollingdale: In 1959 I was working for the British Forces Broadcasting Service, it was then known as the British Forces Network, and at that time I had been given a stroke of luck in the sense that within six months of joining the organisation I had the opportunity of presenting Two Way Family Favourites from the Cologne end. That programme was one of the most important radio shows going out at that period and was for more than two decades, in the sense that it very much appealed not only to the audience but also to the recording business because it had audiences of something like 12 or 15 million people a week. So it was my intention not to stay with BFN as it was then known for very long, because I wanted to return to England to continue my career and as I had now been given a programme where I could actually, you know, present my talents it came into focus as far as the BBC were concerned.



PAUL HOLLINGDALE AND ROBBIE DALE 1978

PHOTO:JELLE KNOT

But before that, when I decided to return to England, the BBC had to wait, or I had to wait for them, and I got the opportunity of working for Radio Luxembourg for the very first time and during the winter of 1960 and '61 I presented a programme on Radio Luxembourg called The Six O'clock Record Show which was sponsored by Phillips (*Record Company*). That gave me a certain amount of money, very low by today's standards, to be able to come back and live in London.

What happened during that period was, there was a Canadian-born disc-jockey, Doug Stanley, who I had met whilst I was serving with the British Forces in Germany and he was just ending his period of operation there and he was looking for other things to do. He came back to England and got involved with a company called Mitchell Monkhouse Associates run by Malcolm Mitchell who was running a trio that was very well known and Bob Monkhouse who of course needs no introduction. And they were producing shows for Radio Luxembourg which were sponsored by Cadburys Chocolates and people like

that and Bob Monkhouse was fronting this programme. Doug Stanley was one of the producers.



DOUG STANLEY AND SWINGING BLUE JEANS (ARCHIVE HANS KNOT)

But his interests had wandered to Holland where three Dutch brothers, the Verweij brothers, Dirk, Jaap and the third brother who's name was Hendrik, known as Bull. Now, they had set up a pirate ship in 1959 for the station Radio Veronica. They had made a lot of money in post-war-years by running a sort of stocking factory which was, of all places, centred in Hilversum, which as you know is very much part of the Dutch radio and television area.

They got in on some transactions in flogging nylon stockings and all that sort of thing and had made quite a lot of money and by 1959 they were running this stocking factory. But out of this particular area they decided to start this pirate ship. They got together a few business people but they mostly controlled the shares and together with an engineer they set up this ship. The ship was the Borkum Riff and it was run by an extraordinary Dutch sea captain. In fact they weren't the forerunners of the pirate radio because there had, as you know, been some other piratical situation going on off the coast of Scandinavia in Denmark and Sweden where some other load of entrepreneurs had got going with a boat. But the idea had ventured south and they had got this ship going and they were broadcasting in Dutch during the day and they were very successful and they got a lot of advertising. The studios were very makeshift, they were all done with egg boxes and things like that but it was enough to get it going and they had a team of young enthusiastic people.

CN: Weren't they taping on land?

PH: They were taping on land, they used to take the tapes to the coast of Holland, in Scheveningen near the Hague and then they used to take these tapes out by tender to the boat and that used to happen about once a week, so everything was taped on land.

Our involvement as far as we were concerned was that Doug Stanley put it to the Verweij brothers. How Doug came to know the Verweij brothers was that at the time he'd got a job at Radio Nederland, the world service of Dutch radio, and he'd gone from BFN to Holland and that's how he happened to know about the Dutch situation. He left Radio Nederland and went in with the Verweij brothers.

He came to see me and he said, "We are going to do this thing but we are going to have to do some

test transmissions". So a company was set up called CNBC, the Commercial Neutral Broadcasting Company, and the byline of it was, "Your friendly host off the Dutch coast". That was how it was going to be known. It was decided to open some offices in the then newly-built Royalty House which is not too far from I'm speaking, in Dean Street, and we took two rather smart offices from whence we were going to run the English operation.

For the first few months of 1961 we started to tape programmes; we went across to Holland and we were broadcasting test transmissions which were, being picked up in England. There were three of us: myself, Doug Stanley and a Canadian, John Michael, and the three of us recorded these endless tapes of pop music and so on and they used to be broadcast during the daytime with the Dutch taking over either at lunchtime or something of that nature.

We carried this on for the first three months and we were often visited by any one of the Verweij brothers and this station engineer who turned out to be a rogue because he was ripping them off left right and centre with money and all this that and the other. He was a young engineer who was two-timing his wife, who lived in the Hague, he'd got a lady over here who was pregnant, who was working in our office as a secretary - we didn't know anything about this whatsoever, it was kept extremely quiet until it was all revealed - and there was a lot skulduggery going on which of course, would be very amusing now when you look back on what the word pirate means and they certainly lived up to all of that.



**BORKUM RIFF IN STORM (SOUNDSCAPES ARCHIVE)**

CN: Were there other incidents that were..?

PH: Well, there were certain incidents going on over the other side which, you know, about bits of equipment that suddenly went missing and all this, that and the other and it's my opinion that this engineer was taking the brothers Verweij for a few thousand guilders, that is basically what I think.

CN: Was anybody involved in that with him?

PH: No-one, it was a single handed effort because he controlled what was bought and sold in the way of equipment. But we didn't know anything about this because we were young, naive and in fact from our point of view we were very excited about the prospect of breaking the BBC monopoly, even in those days, and the whole thing.

So, we went on for a few months and then during the proceedings we got a telephone call one day from the house of parliament and it was then Edward Heath, who was later to become Prime Minister, rang up and he was employed in the government at that time as the Lord Privy Seal. Now his department wanted to know just how far this pirate radio was going to operate. Was it going to come closer to London, or was the ship going to remain where it was. But certainly the Home Office was becoming very interested in the activities because they suddenly realised that on the horizon not too far away was an alternative form of radio from the then monopolistic BBC. We told him that we had no intentions at that time to bring the ship across because it was Dutch-owned and they wanted Dutch radio but at certain times of the day they thought the market could open up for the English situation.



EDWARD HEATH (PHOTO UNKNOWN)

During the time we were in the office, we were visited by a man called Allan Crawford who at that time was a music publisher and director of a company called Merit Music who operated from Manette Street just near Foyles book shop and he had quite a number of successes in the charts and including the Wheels Cha Cha, I am sure a lot of people will remember that.



LETTERHEAD (ARCHIVE HANS KNOT)

So he was not doing too badly as a music publisher, he was from Australia and he was also very entrepreneurial and he could see that with CNBC, as modest as it was, there was no doubt about it that pirate radio was going to be successful and effective, and he tried to come in with us in various ventures, and we would have had him in because he was quite bright and understood the whole set-up. But he decided to break away. Well, he broke away mainly because CNBC could not be effectively run with the ship on the other side of the North Sea, and so he decided to set up Radio Atlanta.

CN: So he was offered financial participation in CNBC?

PH: He was offered the opportunity - but because CNBC, we, were having a lot of problems with the Dutch, they didn't understand what we wanted to do, and they wanted to contain it for themselves. Of course, we were to learn later that Radio Veronica was peopled also on the board of directors by one or two people from the Dutch parliament and that's why they were able to operate for so long - because other people had vested interests. I mean, the thing came to an end eventually, but a lot of things were sorted out before Radio Veronica finally ended up.

CN: They went ashore and became legal.

PH: Well, they did, that's what I'm saying. It became legal because of the people that were on the board of directors and one of the brothers died - Dirk Verweij was the elder brother and he died - and so on. And Bull Verweij, who was the middle brother, actually went to prison himself for one or two bits and pieces that went on over there - I've no idea - so, you know, they knew that they were sailing close to the wind, if you'll excuse the expression.

But Radio Atlanta was really Allan Crawford's brainchild. And at that time - and we're going back now, we're talking about the early '60s, Ronan O'Rahilly had appeared on the scene and you probably know that his father was a leading Irish businessman; they actually, I believe, owned a port over there where they could actually kit out what was to become Radio Caroline.

CN: At this stage Ronan was involved in the Scene Club in Soho, is that so?

PH: Ronan O'Rahilly - I don't know exactly what - I mean, Ronan O'Rahilly was a face, was one of these characters that would stand out in a crowd, and you got to know him, but nobody - he was very, very quiet on what he was doing. I mean as soon as CNBC was almost fading out of the picture both he and Allan Crawford were arranging things, independently of course from each other, about what the next move was going to be. And Ronan O'Rahilly as I say because of his interest in this southern Irish port - his family's interest - was able to get hold of a boat and kit it all out in Southern Ireland, whereas I believe Radio Atlanta had to be kitted in a Spanish port or somewhere else further down, I don't know the exact history of it, and as it was later to become, Caroline was the first that was going to sail around the sea and get there before Radio Atlanta. There is a strange sense of irony actually because a few years later I was to work for Radio Luxembourg, and, in 1965 and I can remember it so well, I was coming back to England to join the BBC and I went to Holland, to Amsterdam for an Easter break and I can remember in my hotel, because we'd been told about it beforehand, switching on in Easter 1964 and listening to the very first words that Simon Dee ever said on Radio Caroline. And we actually - and when I heard this, I was with Don Wardell (*Head of Radio Luxembourg English Service*) at the time and I said this is going to be the biggest thing out, this, you could see it. And we saw it, too. I mean we, even in the Sixties, in 1960 - '61 we knew that this thing was going to be very, very exciting.



RONAN O'RAHILLY 1964  
(ARCHIVE HANS KNOT)

And I am pleased in a way even for the short time we were on the air to have pioneered the idea and we were the originators of the idea. I mean Ronan O'Rahilly came along later and so did Allan Crawford but we were the people that actually put it on the air and put the thoughts into their heads.

CN: Well there were the Verweij brothers, in association with yourself and with Doug Stanley - obviously the idea, though, had been around before, even with the Radio Veronica concept. Where did they pick up their ideas from?

PH: As I say, the first people that actually got a ship going, and it's already chronicled in a lot of books, was the business off the coast of Scandinavia, in Denmark and Sweden, Radio Mercur. And they were the first people that got the idea of broadcasting off the coast. I mean, the point was, that off the Scandinavian coast, there was no doubt about it, that because of the weakness of the government in terms of the media, they obviously decided that there was a thing for that, but the Dutch people got in very quickly afterwards in 1959 with Radio Veronica.

I think that most books will tell you that Mercur and Sud (*Syd, off Sweden*) were the first, certainly in the European area, to do this and I don't know of any other set-up. You see, if you look at radio in the post-war period, as it got going in Europe - Germany, France, Holland and so on - it was quite obvious that the monopoly was going to exist for quite a number of years. That nobody had ever thought about commercial radio, other than Radio Luxembourg, which had been going since the Thirties and they had a bit of trouble after the war, going - they got some support from the post-war government, Churchill was very keen on the idea of Radio Luxembourg, but I think he had other areas in mind for that.

CN: Such as?

PH: Well Churchill realised the important of Radio Luxembourg because of its transmitter, because it had been used by the Germans during the war - Lord Haw Haw and all that sort of thing - and he wanted to reverse the procedure because he thought that broadcasting propaganda into Europe, particularly behind the Eastern Bloc, that those transmitters that they had were very powerful. But

when he was out of office and the Labour government got in they were told, Luxembourg, that they would not have the support of England and they would have to get on with it themselves, and they did, as a commercial entity.

I think people were frustrated generally, in radio. As far as England was concerned I think most people just accepted the fact that the BBC was a reality, Radio Luxembourg was the foreign infiltrator and nobody really worried too much about the radio and I think you also have to take into consideration that in 1955 most minds in Britain were preoccupied by the then up-and-coming independent television service and so therefore it was a diverse thing and they moved across to television.



DICK OFFRINGA AND COLIN NICHOL  
ARCHIVE: DICK OFFRINGA

And so those five years from 1955 to '60, which I suppose we could have been one of the first in on pirate radio, they were not interested, there were (*television*) stations opening up all over the place and radio was allowed to drone on in the background you know unimpeded because nobody cared too much. But it was only the Scandinavians - I think the Scandinavians were definitely the first people to see the advantage of having these stations and they did a very good job. But they were short-lived, weren't they - they didn't last all that long.

CN: Let's go back to how you became a pioneer of pirate radio.

PH: I had presented the Six O'clock Records Show for the Phillips (*Record*) Company (*on Radio Luxembourg*) from September 1960 through till the following spring in 1961.

CN: It was taped here? (*In London*).

PH: Yes, it was taped here. And during that time I'd re-established my contact with Doug Stanley, and when it became known - I'll tell you this - you only have to look back at the newspapers of the day - we had national coverage like you'd never believe, because of this pirate thing (*CNBC*), the papers went berserk.

CN: What year was this?

PH: 1961. What happened really basically was that I was then blacklisted by Radio Luxembourg, Geoffrey Everett said that I would never work for the station again. Now Radio Luxembourg was

hardly in a position to do that sort of thing seeing as they were unofficially broadcasting to England, but they were more legitimate than we would ever have been. And as for the BBC, well, up in the Gramophone Department, my name was mud. And in fact I have to tell you the circumstances as to how I got back into favour again.

After the pirates, after I'd finished with CNBC, I went to see Frankie Vaughan whose agent I knew and managed to get a job one night with Brian Matthew compeering a big concert at the Royal Festival Hall in aid of the National Association of Boys Clubs for which Frankie Vaughan has an interest. And at that night, which was a gala night, it was the first time I'd ever done anything like this before, there was Lew Grade, Richard Attenborough and a whole load of people, you know the luminaries of that time and Eric Maswich who was then Head of Light Entertainment at BBC television and after I had done this concert I went to see Eric Maswich and said to him you may remember I was the Disc Jockey presenter of this particular concert for the National Association of Boys Clubs, what is the possibility of me going on Jukebox Jury. I refrained completely from saying that I'd ever had anything to do with pirate radio and I don't think he was a person who was particularly interested in that anyway and I always remember because he got Bill Cotton Jr, who was later to become very famous in the BBC as a Controller, at this time he was working as the producer of Jukebox Jury, and Eric said to Bill, look I want Paul Hollingdale to do this programme, and that was the turning point.



CNBC BUILDING LONDON  
(PHOTO: COLIN NICHOL)

CN: So you became respectable.

PH: I became respectable through one programme.

CN: Stories I would love, and anecdotes. And also, any kind of skulduggery and nonsense on the ships ..

PH: I'll tell you a wonderful story. When we were with CNBC, as you might imagine on board the Borkum Riff, with the storms and gales and things like that, there was trouble technically because they hadn't mastered the idea of sticking the dirty great mast up on the - I mean, sticking up a pole on a ship and making it remain still for very long. So inevitably there was a big technical problem. Well if we hark back to the idea of the engineer ripping them off left, right and centre as far as equipment is concerned there was no point in asking him to do anything. So we heard of a BBC senior engineer, a man called Thomas, a Welshman ..

CN: What was his first name?

PH: I can't remember, but he actually was the head of the Tatsfield Listening Post. Now, I don't know whether you know what that is but basically it's a listening post with the BBC, they have several in this country, where they can pick up foreign language broadcasts and interpret the news and use it for their own situation. We'd heard that this man was coming up for retirement and I don't know how he came about it but anyway he came up to see us and we said look this transmitter needs sorting out and you're the man that knows all about these things and of course it was the height of cheek to ask a BBC senior engineer to go out to a pirate ship. Well, he said, "Well, I'll go and do the thing," and we arranged the money.

So he flew to Holland and unfortunately for him as we sent the tender out from the Dutch coast in the direction of the Borkum Riff, a gale like you'd never believe blew up, and it was horrendous. And this guy got on board this ship. Well he came back to England, he was distraught, the man said, "Never again will I go on board a bloody ship." But I always remember him because to me that was what piracy is all about - getting extraordinary people. If the BBC had known that we'd taken their senior engineer out to fix this transmitter, I would have been in more trouble, but it was "those were the days" and we thought, well this is a hoot, let's go and do it.

CN: Did you hear any of the stories that came up during the saga of the pirate ships, during the years of Caroline and London. Did you come across direct contact with any of these?



Colin Nichol (Archive Colin Nichol)

PH: I never had much to do with Caroline although I did apply for a job on Radio England which was another ship that was running at that time ..

CN: Yes, I was involved in the early stages of that ..

PH: .. and I went and did some bits and pieces for them. And er, but by that time you see - by 1965/66, I'd gone legitimate and joined the BBC, so there we are. But I have to say this also that again, if it hadn't been for the pirate ships I doubt if I'd have made much progress at the BBC because at that time it was very much a closed shop and you either knew people or you didn't and that was it.

My greatest regret is that we did not achieve what we set out to do, because if you can look at the passage of time, 1961 was when CNBC operated, 1964 is when Radio Caroline started, followed by the others. And, if you look at the political implications at that time, the conservative government were in power, very much in 1961, '62, '63 - '64, and in fact the mood was right and if they had seen the possibilities and I am sure that they were beginning to realise that commercial radio could have become a reality, ILR (*Independent Local Radio*) as we know it today would have been brought in in the 60's and not in the 70's.

It would have brought the whole thing forward by a decade, because, I mean Wilson (*Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson*) was forced to close the pirates down in the late 60's - '67, whenever it was finished - and employ a large chunk of the people direct from the pirate ships in order to ensure continuity, so that, what he thought, the British public would not notice much difference between what was going out on sea and on land and in many ways in 1967 / 8 / 9, up until about 1970 while the BBC sorted itself out, many of the people were actually employed in one form or another on Radio One. But again as I said going back to the pre-period of that I had really had hoped that in 1962 we would have got the thing off the ground.

Another thing that's quite interesting - can you imagine that if we had gone one more year we were then into Beatle mania, the Liverpool Sound and all of that, a commercial radio station at that period would have been able to have capitalised on the new Swinging Sixties, image that was to emerge during the next four or five years.

CN: That you'd have anticipated by a year or two.

PH: We'd anticipated the thing, and I wish we'd have carried it off.

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Thanks a lot Colin, a wonderful interview! Most appreciated to share it with us.



See what we have above! An original coffee dish stand featuring Radio Caroline. It's from the eighties and I don't remember how I got it during that time. So who knows who produced these dish stand and also if there are any other available featuring other stations. Answers as normal to [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

The next small text comes from the last report. It can from a reader Phil in Australia and will be answered by another reader: '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'.

Hi Hans, I have cut and pasted the above from your excellent monthly digest. I was a listener to the offshore stations in the 60's during my early and mid-teens. I was always wondering how they broadcast from offshore and it was finding out that got me a job with the BBC Transmitter Department in 1970. I'm still employed in transmission in one of the three privatised companies that came from the Government inspired sales of the IBA and BBC transmitter departments in the 1990's. So to answer the question...

It's really quite simple... how high can you reasonably [and safely] rig a mast on a boat? Until the 300' Ross Revenge mast of 1984 the highest was probably Radio London's 212' design. They chose the 1133kHz, 266m spot on the dial and the antenna height was equal to about a quarter of the wavelength. The formula is  $234/\text{freq in MHz}$ ,  $234/1.133 = 206$  feet. Similarly for Radio Caroline '199' in the early days the mast height was about 160-170 feet.  $234/1.520=153$  feet. so they had a bit to spare. it helps the efficiency. A quarter wavelength antenna gives an efficiency approaching 90% especially with a sea-water 'earth', and so as you would expect good coverage was predicted and indeed found with this sort of system.

As the frequency is decreased, say to 773 kHz, the Radio 390 channel, a quarter wave antenna needs to be  $234/0.773 = 300'$  and I am given to understand they used a 250' mast on their Red Sands fort. A ground-based structure like a fort allows you to be more adventurous with a vertical antenna and

even a 50' reduction in mast height from the quarter-wave optimum still affords good efficiency. This, coupled with the fact that the lower MF channels propagate better [provided you can get the rf to leave the antenna in the first place] shows why Radio 390 had such a large coverage area, in spite of sharing the frequency with Sweden.

Radio City on 1034 kHz used a 200' mast, again from their Shivering Sands fort,  $234/1.034 = 226'$  and enjoyed good coverage on what was a relatively clear channel. When it came to the transfer from 192m / 1562 kHz of Radio Veronica to 539m / 557kHz then the antenna on the Norderney would have been a more tricky problem and in effect an awful lot of it would have been coiled up at the base within an Antenna Tuning Unit. Most likely it would have been in a large loading coil, whilst it's possible to make the transmitter work into a small antenna the efficiency of the antenna system falls and the advantage of the better propagation of the lower frequencies is lost. Laser 558 suffered the same fate as did the 576 kHz and later 558 kHz service from Caroline, even into the 300' mast on the Ross Revenge.

With regard to frequency selection the common-sense method would indeed be to monitor the frequencies in which you are interested and then pick the best, it's important to remember that in the 1960's the use of the MF band was more important to countries than it appears to be today. Indeed a lot of European countries all had services on MF whereas today some countries have no presence at all eg) Sweden, Finland with others only using one of possibly three or four channels allocated to them. I'd like clarification on the next point but I'm given to understand that Swinging Radio England and Britain Radio were planning to use 640kHz for one of their services, obviously they had not done their research as the BBC from 1950 to 1978 used 647kHz for the high power Third Programme Classical music / Culture service and no doubt the BBC would not have been pleased to have a station on 640kHz.

Even Radio London were not thinking when one night they tried tests on an announced 277m which one would guess as 1079kHz, not a good choice of channel as the BBC Home Service was using 1088kHz at 150kW from Droitwich, central England and more of concern at 10kW from Postwick near Norwich, in the east of England. Again a high-powered pop-music station literally next-door would have caused all sorts of technical and political problems.

So as you can see it's important to consider many aspects when designing and specifying antenna systems and frequency selection. Dave Porter, ex BBC Transmitter Engineer, G4OYX. Hope that's ok for you Hans.

Regards, David Porter.'

Well David thanks a lot and I think not only Phil in Australia and me but a lot of other readers of the Knot International Radio Report have read with most interest this very interesting answer to the questions. Keep enjoying the report!

We stay in the UK and go to Johnny Stevens: 'Hello Hans, Still receiving your report which is still interesting and full of info. I have been listening to the internet service of Mi Amigo 192. I contacted Ferry Eden thinking he was on the station but I now know he is writing books on transport. He said the station was not pulling in enough listeners, so maybe you could plug Mi Amigo 192 in your report as thousands of us in the UK loved Mi Amigo as much as Caroline. No offshore fan can ignore our Dutch brothers who contributed so much to offshore radio, in fact without them we would not have had Caroline. Veronica was also there years before Caroline, and some of the best music comes from our

Dutch brothers who have a knack of putting good oldies shows together, like Ferry's old Mi Amigo shows back in 1977/78. Some of us were as sad to lose Mi Amigo in 1978/79 as we were of Caroline in 1980. So to all our ex Dutch offshore deejays let me say we still miss you. Johnny Stevens, Norfolk UK

Thanks Johnny, and indeed if you go back onto older reports (find them at [www.hansknot.com](http://www.hansknot.com) ) you will see we haven't forgotten the Mi Amigo boys. If you go to [www.offshore-radio.de](http://www.offshore-radio.de) you'll find a lot of photographs taken during the Mi Amigo 192 days with Eastern on the Norderney in Antwerp. So will find some familiar Mi Amigo and Caroline Dutch faces too.

Talking about Radio Mi Amigo in the early days there was a deejay called Mike Moorkens who also was heard on Radio Caroline and Radio Atlantis in 1973. I have to come with the sad announcement that Chrétien Dewaele - which was his original name - died after having a heart attack on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Next it's Kenny Tosh: 'Hello Hans Just a quick few lines to let everyone know about a great 60's show featuring the offshore sounds and memories. C.J. Munroe every Sunday afternoon from 4 PM on Palm FM 105.5 FM for Torquay and [www.palm.fm](http://www.palm.fm) Wonder where the jingles came from?????? Regards Kenny Tosh'.

Well knowing a certain guy with the name Tosh I could win a fortune guessing it was him providing the jingles! I stay in Ireland and go to the next e mail:

'Hans. Many thanks again for the reports. Always a good read and always something new and interesting in it! I enjoyed reading about Caroline's return in September 1976 after drifting. It mentioned one of my favourite deejays from that era Ed Foster. Anyone know where he is today and what is he doing? I noticed that Steve Szmidt in his recent report on [www.offshore-radio.de](http://www.offshore-radio.de) said that Ed Foster had dropped out of the circle of ex Caroline deejays and no one knows of his whereabouts. Going back to the drifting in Sept 76 there's a good recording of Ed Fosters first show after the drifting along with 1000s of other great recordings on <http://azanorak.com> .

Reading of our piece about Communicator Club reminded me that I was also was a winner of 3 albums in 1985. Living here in Cork, Ireland I could only receive Laser558 during the hours of darkness so I decided to join the Communicator C Club and send my membership number to a lot of people in England and ask them to keep an ear out in case my number was called out! One day I got a letter from England telling me that my number had been called out and I immediately wrote to Laser in US and a few weeks later my 3 albums arrived. Can only remember that one of them was a Prince album! Finally Nick Richards is still on the breakfast show here in Cork on 96fm. On air from 6 to 9 Monday to Friday you can listen live on [www.96fm.ie](http://www.96fm.ie) Keep up the good work. Patrick (Healy from Cork Ireland) <http://www.rfsoc.org.uk/>

Thanks Patrick. There was a reunion in London lately with some of the Mi Amigo and Caroline people from 1975/1980 but also there no Ed Foster, which is really a pity. So someone knowing where to find him please let us know.

Good news next from Mary and Chris Payne from England:

'On March 29th, the Radio London website celebrated its eighth birthday. We've marked the occasion with a big site update, including a feature about

Kenny and Cash's single 'Knees' from the song's co-writer David Cummings. Jempi Laevaert has put a huge amount of time and effort into creating a unique collection of Caroline charts, but has now found he can no longer continue to host and update his website, The Stonewashed Collection. As we already have a Caroline section on our website, he asked us if Radio London would be prepared to take over the collection. In honour of our eight birthday and Caroline's 43rd, we are proud to announce that Jempi's Stonewashed Collection [www.radiolondon.co.uk/caroline/stonewashed/index.html](http://www.radiolondon.co.uk/caroline/stonewashed/index.html)

is now part of the Radio London website. The charts collection will continue to be completed from existing information and will be updated as other data becomes available. Mary Payne, Director RADIO LONDON Ltd Exclusive Radio London Merchandise <http://www.radiolondon.co.uk>

And from Chris and Mary to Jon at the Pirate Hall of Fame is just a small step: 'Hi, I have just updated The Pirate Radio Hall of Fame. What's new this month? We have a Radio Atlanta special with a fascinating in-depth interview with station founder Allan Crawford, courtesy of Colin Nicol. If you thought you knew how Radio Caroline got its name, you may have to think again. Allan has a different story! Colin has also provided an original Radio Atlanta advertising rate card. Another former Atlanta DJ Johnny Jackson has sent some great memorabilia from the very earliest days of this short-lived station. We hear from an even shorter-lived station - Radio East Anglia. It mysteriously appeared - and disappeared - on April Fools Day forty years ago. We are sad to report that Alan Black, of Radio Scotland, Britain Radio and Radio 355, died a couple of weeks ago. We pay tribute to this fine broadcaster. Pinky Siedenbug, who ran Radio Caroline's Amsterdam office after the Marine Offences Act, has provided a couple of photos of DJs from that era. And we have added some more information and audio to the Seventies Supplement. All in all - a bit of a bumper update! The Pirate Radio Hall Of Fame was launched in March 2000 which means it is now seven years old. Thank you to everybody who has contributed photos, tapes, cuttings, memorabilia or information since then. We couldn't have done it without you. All the best, Jon [www.offshoreradio.co.uk](http://www.offshoreradio.co.uk)

And next not forgetting to plug Bob Le-Roi

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Welcome to the very full April Website Update

'In this this months Scrapbook a new feature begins with the real story of Radio Lazer which of course became the highly popular to Laser 558 From the initial idea to it's opening as told by Lazer's brainchild John Kenning The story is linked to Radio Sovereign and we've now added a "Where Are They Now" to the Radio Sovereign Story - Part 4, if you've any more detail let us have it? Coincidentally whilst spotlighting Laser we also announce a brand new Power Amplifier produced by Stuart Vincent once radio Engineer on Laser 558, the amp's a real quality piece of kit & available to order now, see Equipment Sales Also in Equipment Sales prices have been reduced and so there are bargains to be had. And a plea from Musician Paul Trip for help in finding a AKG D19 microphone connector

"One Subject One Link" a view on being on air everyday is good for the listener let alone presenter? Shift Change takes an alternative view. In the A-Z of Pop & Rock it's the letter (N) with a highly collectable Bob Newhart 7" EP record & the Best of The Newbeats on CD. Enjoy your visits [www.bobleroi.co.uk](http://www.bobleroi.co.uk)

A question next from Oscar de Pater. Not long ago I heard a story of problems with inhabitants living in IJsselstein very near to the transmitter mast from the AM 675. Illnesses like brain damage, leukaemia would occur more than in other places in Holland. I wonder if former deejays and technicians on radio ships, who have worked and lived in the short distance of a electromagnetic field can get health problems like those are mentioned?

Difficult question Oscar and probably one of the deejays or technicians can answer the question at [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

A Message from Peter Moore: 'Many years ago, a party of Caroline enthusiasts travelled from Britain to Holland to sail past our ship Ross Revenge and so to celebrate Caroline's 25th anniversary. Ronan O'Rahilly spoke to the crowd and wondered if we might meet up again on the fiftieth anniversary. It seemed like a foolish comment, but come this Easter that milestone date will only be seven years away. How quickly time and life passes by. There have been Caroline anniversaries that came around without much to celebrate at all, such as when our ship was impounded and when we were either not on air, or were broadcasting in some insignificant, or obscure, or demeaning way.

Our 43rd anniversary is better than that. The ship is in fair order and we are broadcasting reliably and nationally with the potential of a large audience, if we can only persuade them to tune in and to impress them with what they hear.

Conversely, technology is racing ahead and we can scarcely keep up with it. Also, Caroline is sometimes offered broadcast opportunities that we simply cannot afford to take advantage of. Determination is admirable, but at the end of the day, money talks. To keep the interest of both the Caroline staff and the supporters and listeners, we need to be seen to be moving forward. Each advance is welcomed, but soon becomes commonplace. Our last expansion, in June 2006, was to take Sky audio channel 0199 but the cost of this has prevented us from looking at any fresh broadcast opportunities.

In hard terms, our situation is simple enough. By being frugal, we can probably continue as we are. Our supporters are astonishingly loyal, but if they drift away, we may have to contract our activities, which would be very sad. We cannot rattle the begging bowl too loudly, since generosity can turn to resentment. But, the truth is, we need more money to stabilise what we do, to expand with either new or old technology, to cover more territory. The opportunities are all out there. Concerning the Caroline staff, since we all work for nothing, whether on air or behind the scenes, we are obviously not looking to line our own pockets. We have no shareholders, no finance house, no merchant bank wanting to see a return on their money.

In pure terms, we exist in order to broadcast, to any place and by any means we can achieve. At Easter 2007 I can only hope that you will all be ambassadors for Caroline and that you will stay with us and help us as much as you can. Happy Easter, Caroline continues.'

Thanks Peter and sorry we couldn't sent the report out before Eastern as we were committed to other work.

Peter Moore,  
April 2007.

<http://www.rcsg.co.uk/rc/rcsg.htm>

Talking about Eastern Caroline brought us Tom Anderson with memories to Caroline's Overdrive. A pity all the internet connections were completely used and brought problems in listening. Is there anyone who recorded without problems the show. If so let us know as Maria Depuydt in Belgium also tried to record the show, a pity without success.

Also Tom Lodge could be heard, sadly for the last time. He wrote to me: 'Hi Hans, I thought you might like to know, that my last show on Radio Caroline will be this Sunday April 8th at 9.00 pm English time. This is a special show that I am doing. It is my reading from parts of my book, "The Ship That Rocked The World", along with music that we were playing at that time. It tells the whole story, at that time, from my perspective, creating a feeling of those early years.

I hope you get a chance to listen. It is the 43rd anniversary of the Easter Sunday. You are welcome to record it.



Tom Lodge Caroline 1995  
Photo Hans Knot

Thanks Tom sorry I couldn't make it to listen to the program but surely it will come to me by an upload from one of the other Caroline addicted listeners. A pity you have stopped making programs for our lady. Above a photo as a memory to the day we met each other for the last time, way back in 1995.

In Germany there is quite a large group of Offshore Radio followers and one of them is Jan Sundermann who wrote: 'Hallo Hans, according to some literature, Johnnie Walkers name might not be a pseudonym, but is his real name? So the old joke, who was taking the name at first, the whiskey or the dj, is clearly decided. But, this name has some maritime background by itself. This I found reading a book out of my fathers in the very large maritime library, I have here.

The title is "Sailing around the world", Boston 1899, by Joshua Slocum. Boston based captain Slocum was the first man sailing single-handed (alone) around the world in 1895 to 1898. On his return course thru the Atlantic from South Africa back to Boston he had a hard storm and a stay of the sailing boat masts broke. His comment in the book: "if the mast would have not had a so very good fixture (at the inside of hull bottom), he would have made the John Walker, when breaking one of the stays". So, a breaking mast on a sailing ship must have been named like that in seamen's daily language. Best

regards to you and Jana, Jan Sundermann'.

Thanks a lot for this wonderful historic explanation and maybe sir Johnny could comment himself on this as he's a reader of the Knot International Radio Report himself!

Message from Israel: Hi Hans and Martin. It's only days till Abie's 80 Birthday and I want to tell you what we are planning to do. On the 20th of April there is going to be the opening of special exhibition dedicated to Abie's 80 Birthday with paintings of 30 of the most leading painters in Israel. It is going to be in a art gallery in Yavne (20 km south to Tel-Aviv) and it's open to the public for a month. On Abie's birthday on April 29th there is going to be a special broadcast on Radius 100 FM from the morning till evening with the voice of peace jingles, former DJ's and recordings of Abie from the VOP. In the evening we are going to have a small - "family type" celebration with only 100 guests. Among them are going to be Abie's daughter Sharona and his grand son Daniel, Shimon Peres, Yuli Tamir - Israel minister of Education, the Mayor of Tel-Aviv, chief Rabbi of Tel-Aviv and others. A group of 17 years old boys and girls from the Naval school Me'vout Yam had organized 3 weeks ago a special sailing as a salute to Abie. They visited him and made him very happy. The writing on the ship mean: Mevoot Yam(the name of the school) salute Abie Nathan.

The Tel-Aviv municipality is going to dedicate on a sign-board to Abie and the Voice of Peace on the beach promenade where the Peace Ship had anchored outside for nearly 20 years. It's going to be inaugurated by the Mayor of Tel-Aviv on the 18th of May. Today I visited Abie with a journalist from the most leading newspaper in Israel. He was tired but I think he was happy to see us. So that is all for the time and I'll give you more news when I know more. Best regards, Noam Tal, photos from Noam are on Martin's site: [www.offshore-radio.de](http://www.offshore-radio.de)

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Talking about Martin I have the following text from him about the forthcoming Radio Day in Amsterdam. For nearly 30 years, the annual Dutch "Radio Day" has been a "must" for all (offshore) radio experts and enthusiasts. About 300 people are normally attending the event each year. The 2004 Radio Day saw the Radio

Caroline 1973/74 reunion with many former deejays, technicians and crew members, and in 2005, "RNI in 1970" attracted several former Radio NorthSea employees who had a magnificent discussion on the podium. In November 2006, the Voice of Peace reunion formed a major highlight, as 20 former VoP jocks and technicians got together from all over the world.

More details plus countless pictures from former Radio Days can be found at:

<http://www.offshore-radio.de/radioday/>

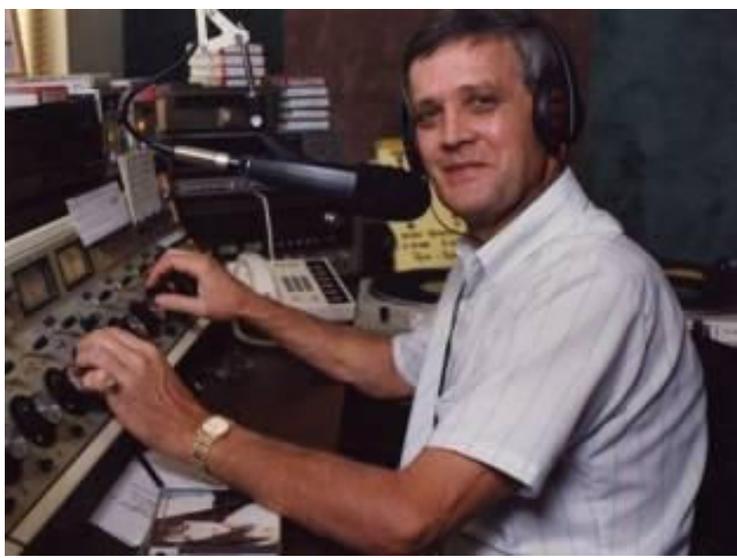
Hans Knot, Rob Olthof and me are now busily planning this year's event which will be held on Saturday 10th November 2007 in Amsterdam's Hotel Casa 400 near the Amstel railway station (James Wattstraat 75). This coming August, it will be 40 years ago that the Marine Offences Bill came into force. Both Radio Caroline North and South ignored the new law and kept on broadcasting until the fateful 3rd March 1968. That's why this year's Radio Day will commemorate "Radio Caroline resisting the MOA". There will be a round table discussion focussing on the topic "Caroline and the MOA" and we're definitely hoping to have many well-known guests taking part.



This year's Radio Day will also emphasize the Swinging Radio England broadcasts from the Laissez Faire. We are preparing a "mini-reunion" with several guests from all parts of the world. So that's another reason to join the crew in November. In the meantime, Roger Day, Roger Scott (Arnold Layne), Graham Gill and Ron O'Quinn have been assuring us that they will take part. But you may look forward to many more guests who will attend this year's Radio Day! Just watch this place - we will constantly keep you updated.

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Of course we want to share as much as possible with you the reader of the positive response after our mailing went out inviting people to take part in the Swinging Radio Reunion as well as the 40 Years after the MOB event which will both take place on the Radio Day (with some other guests too to attend). A very nice mail came from Roger Scott, who we all know also as Arnold Layne: 'Sounds like fun and I hope to be there. Since it is so far off, I had better say God willing. It might also be wise to also say Lorraine willing! The reason that I have not got my own email address is fairly shameful: it is simply that I can barely get my head round computers at all and would have no idea of how to set up an address. It is just very fortunate that my radio days were spent in studios run on steam power and bits of string, rather than on digital technology. I still have a deep, deep interest in radio but since 1990, I have not been able to avoid noticing that my age (only 58, mind) and style are not compatible with modern commercial thinking on how to do radio: i.e. treat the listener as a complete and utter moron. I'm sure I never did that. Certainly not. I invested my listener with so much intelligence that most of the audience went away scratching their heads in bewilderment. Existential esoteric surrealism ahoy! Anyway, I look forward to memories of early 1968 when I worked with Don Allen, Martin Kayne, Freddie Bear and others on Caroline North. I spent only a very short time there but that was because we got towed away and at least I was aboard at the end of a legend. Best wishes, Greg Bance / the original Roger Scott etc.'



Ron O'Quinn (Archive Ron O'Quinn)

And what about a part of the email coming in from Ron O'Quinn: 'Hi Hans, I am very pleased that I will finally get a chance to meet you. I think that the "pirates" get a lot of credit that actually belongs to you, Martin van der Ven, Svenn Martinssen, Steve England, and many others who have kept the memories alive all these years. We that were there simply started the fire but you guys kept the fire burning long after we would have been forgotten. I think Pirate Radio and Dutch Radio instilled a desire in the UK and Europe for "free radio". People finally realized that radio could be so much more. I want to shake your hand and thank you for your contributions. See you in November.

Best regards, Ron O'Quinn.'

It was very silent during the last 6 months when I mention the name 'Mike Brand'. Mike is an Englishman who lives already decades in Israel and was reporting about the radio scene in the Middle East for several magazines and internet sites. Suddenly he's back and told me that he finally made it what he always wanted to do: working in radio. He has the weekdays breakfast show now on 93.6 RAM FM in Jerusalem. We wish him all the luck in the world.



Mike Brand on air at 93,6 RAM FM.

Mike ends this edition of the Hans Knot International Radio Report. I will be back next month with a lot more memories from the past and some news from now. If you want to share your memories or

photos and so on, well you know the address to sent it to: [Hknot@home.nl](mailto:Hknot@home.nl)

Till next month with best wishes Hans Knot