

Hans Knot International Radio Report May 2024

In my mind a song by Ray Charles is repeating and repeating during the past days. It reminds me that I've to start with editing a lot of e mails, stories, memories and site updates for all those thousands of readers in all continents of the world. So remember that magic song 'Here we go again'!

Let's go and remember the Caroline Roadshow, a story by Jan van Heeren

The Caroline Road Show started in December 1977 in the Grasshopper in Westham (Kent). The Tour visited East Anglia, the South East and the Home Counties. On many occasions the shows were completely sold out and the visitors number exceeded 500. Next to the regular Road Show presenters, the deejays from the Caroline ship attended the Road Show too, while on shore leave. In this way they earned some extra money.

Well-known from his activities for the Caroline Road Show is Robb Eden (ex-RNI and Caroline). Together with Simon Dee and Robbie Day he hosted the early Road Shows. Other people working for the Show were Harvey 'the Rabbit' and Barry St. James. The list of people working behind the scenes mentions among others, Roger and Carol, Mick, Alan, Charlie and Vic. Mike 'the Professor' Baron was responsible for the lightning.



Robb Eden during a Caroline Roadshow Photo: Theo Dencker

In the summer of 1978, after the success of touring in Britain with a double-decker, the Road Show visited the Continent. Dee-jays of this Summer Tour were Patrick Valain and Allen West. A remarkable event in the history of the Road Show was the invasion by the police in the home of Derek McCaumney, a student of medicine. He asked the Road Show for help to sell miniatures of the MV Mi Amigo. The profits would go to a children's hospital. Derek was arrested on Januari 1st 1979 and the models were confiscated. They never showed up again.

In 1979/1980 the Road Show dee-jays were Robbie Day, Harvey the Rabbit, Brian Martin (ex-Voice of Peace and Caroline), Tom Anderson and pioneer Robb Eden. They played heavy rock music (like AC/DC, Kiss, Status Quo and Led Zeppelin). The Show started normally at 9 PM and continued till midnight. Each dee-jay presented for one hour. After the sinking of the Mi Amigo "Britain's Best Heavy Metal Rock Road Show" continued . Robb Eden dreamed at the time of having the Mi Amigo lifted from the bottom of the sea and making a museum out of it. The Road Show was given the name Shipwreck Tour.

Enjoy the Caroline Roadshow **photo album** (with thanks to Theo Dencker and Mike Baron)

Jan van Heeren

<https://offshoreradio.info/the-caroline-roadshow-1977-1980/>

Then a message from Philip Crosby down yonder: 'Here's an interesting short documentary discussing CIA involvement in Big L. Not sure I agree with all of it (some factual errors noted), but might be of interest to your readers. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kDCIeHrcRc>

Comments on the subject by Mike Barraclough: ""Hogwash, claptrap" (The claim on the reasons for legislation). Most UK 60's offshore radio stations did not pay copyright fees and there are some examples of interference to marine broadcasters through harmonics and spurs. Radio City's religious service operated in the marine band when it first came on the air, Reg Calvert went out to the fort to get the engineers to change frequency.

The plan for seven stations on ships was Operation Vagabond. The MV Courier was the only ship used. The project came under criticism from a Congress committee shortly after it started for being too expensive. Joseph McCarthy was on that committee and was also claiming VOA personnel had connections to the Communist Party.

Chris Elliott's The Wonderful Radio London Story is based on extensive documentation and company files he got from Don Pierson. 4 lead investors who recruited more giving 17 shareholders, \$500,000 initial investment, nothing to show that the investment wasn't enough so the claim McLendon, who is not a known investor, got CIA funding has no basis in fact. The UK, as well as other Western European countries, had signed the Council of Europe agreement, not the Common Market, to take action against broadcasting from ships outside territorial waters, a breach of ITU regulations.

The USA had passed legislation against this pre WW2, Belgium and the Scandinavian countries had already done so. As to all complaints about interference came from members of the Common Market this again is false. As was well known at the time and is well documented complaints about interference from Radio London came from Yugoslavia as their Zagreb transmitter was on the same frequency which is why they moved from 1133 to 1137.5 and reduced power at night. The complaints from Italy were due to interference to their 855 channel which is why Swinging Radio England changed frequencies with Britain Radio.

The documentary's assertion that Italy, and presumably Yugoslavia, were "well outside the range" of UK offshore stations shows he or she doesn't know about skywave at night. Tony Benn was promoted rather than replaced. "Little doubt MI5 and CIA had involvement" conclusion without a single piece of documentation presented to justify the claim by this unnamed person. Ben Toney is quoted in Chris Elliot's book as saying that Don Pierson, who knew the Johnson's, got Lyndon Johnston to send a memo to the Florida Bureau of Shipping to let the *Galaxy* sail out of Miami. The reason they had initially prevented it was that the wrong gauge of metal had been used to build the shed on the deck of the *Galaxy* to house the transmitter which sounds fairly trivial. Philip Birch had nothing to do with the modified Fab 40 format. His original idea was 15 to 30 minute segments recorded on land to be sent out the ship. Format was Ben Toney's.'



Ben Toney publicity photo Big L

And here a comment from Phil in Australia after reading Mike's contribution: 'Yes, this video is mostly rubbish dreamt up by the conspiracy theorists that live on the internet. They are 'joining dots' when there is no evidence. But in a way it's fun to watch, and interesting that the whole topic of offshore radio still holds people's interest. Your reporter makes some interesting points. It is quite likely that the less professional stations did radiate some spurious signals at times due to inexperience and very basic equipment. But

the big stations made certain their signal was clean according to Peter Chicago etc. Nonetheless, Caroline, London, SRE, 390 could be heard at long distance at night. I regularly listened to Radio Scotland at my home in South London at night. So some complaints from the Continent were probably valid.

The video completely missed the real story of political games - the Radio Caroline story, which of course is now well known and proved. Even today, the BBC frowns on mentions of Caroline (despite Tony Blackburn voicing his personal memories). They just hate the thought of an independent voice able to influence millions of voters, and entertaining listeners without Government control.



Isn't it wonderful, Hans, that so many people are still interested in this amazing episode in European history? On 30 March, Bryan Vaughan and I will be presenting a special show on Radio 2RDJ-FM (Sydney) commemorating the start of Caroline 65 years ago, and I will tease out some fab memories of Bryan's first days on Atlanta and Caroline, then Radio Scotland. All the best Aussie Phil (aka John Dale)'.
'

More about that special program later on in the Hans Knot International Radio Report.

And it was Mike Barraclough responding on above: "Even today, the BBC frowns on mentions of Caroline (despite Tony Blackburn voicing his personal memories). They just hate the thought of an independent voice able to influence millions of voters, and entertaining listeners without Government control." Not only Tony Blackburn, Johnnie Walker did a series on BBC Radio Two Meet the Pirates, there were several weekend Pirate Radio Essex broadcasts, Keith Skues did many features on them including at one point his second hour featuring recordings of them, Roger Day often

remembered them on his BBC local radio shows, there have been documentaries on them both on radio and TV etc. My local station was Radio 270 and BBC Radio York and BBC Radio Humberside have done features on them. In comparison commercial radio stations in the main have done very little. The most high profile BBC documentary on Caroline was Arena A Pirate's Tale in 1991 which has been repeated, suggest he views this, Ronan O'Rahilly featured, available on YouTube in eight parts.'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apnOPU_U8Cw

March 8th: Sad news was send to me this morning about the passing of David Gapes co founder of Radio Hauraki, with thanks to David Miller

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/entertainment/radio-hauraki-co-founder-and-legendary-commercial-radio-pioneer-david-gapes-dies/LLDRRZNGVVB3ZBLWHOVKPYCNWM>

Next is an E mail from Kent: 'Hi Hans just found this pirate related photo in my archives and a jingle Steve England had given me.



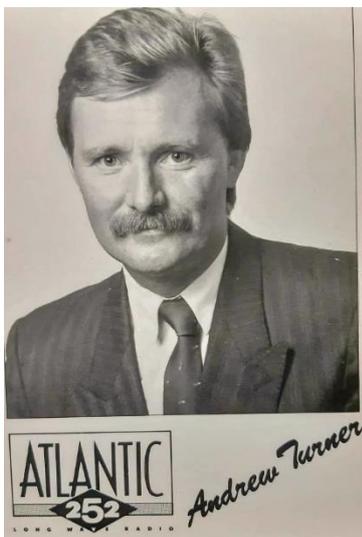
Myself (left) with radio DJ and jingle producer Steve England on Deal seafront on 18th September 2013. We discovered this vintage scooter quite by chance! Steve's family once lived in this historic area of Kent. Very best wishes Andy (Martin Kayne).'

Thanks a lot for sharing Andy nice memories. I met Steve for the first time early 1973 in the Caroline House at the Zeekant in Scheveningen. Also Debbie was there. Caroline was off the air and it was the time that in the weeks before listeners were asked to take a membership in the Caroline Club. When coming at the upper floor an enormous amount of Pounds billets were on the floor. Debbie asked me, in companion with Ate Harsta, to sit down and so I took a chair. Well I landed on the floor amongst the money as the chair immediately broke down. Strange after more than 50 years these small memories are coming back.

In last issue of the Hans Knot International Radio Report we already mentioned some of the links where photos could be found from the Robb Eden collection. We scanned some more, which were mainly taken during August 15th 1977 as well as a day earlier during Flashback 67. Photographer was partly Thomas Krüger from the Free Radio Campaign Germany:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720315290908>

Radio Today announced on March 9th: Former BBC and commercial radio broadcaster Andrew Turner has passed away.



Andrew's son, Jamie posted the sad news in the Atlantic 252 Facebook group, he said: "With immense sadness, I have to inform that Andrew Turner passed away yesterday. "His fantastic storytelling on and off air, and his booming voice will be so, so missed. His last show was with Tony Blackburn on Capital Gold breakfast show, and since then he continued to be a greatly supportive father and gave his weekly prompt phone calls, only like a professional newsreader would."

Of course we remember him from Laser Hot Hits and Atlantic 252. Read more: <https://radiotoday.co.uk/2024/03/former-broadcaster-and-newsreader-andrew-turner-has-died/>

Radio Broadcasting - A History of The Airwaves brought the next sad news on April 26th.

'Sadly, it's been reported that Graham Webb has died in Australia. In 1964, Graham headed for Europe, where he worked at several radio stations, including Deutsche Welle "The Voice Of Germany". He eventually moved to the UK during the mid 1960s, where he, along with several other Australian DJs, became prominent in the flourishing pirate radio scene.

Graham joined Radio Caroline in 1965, going on to become Programme Controller and later, News Director. He was one of the staff rescued from Mi Amigo, when she ran aground at Frinton in January, 1966. He left Radio Caroline and returned to Australia, before the proclamation of the Marine, &c., Broadcasting (Offences) Act, which forced the closure of the pirates.

He went on to have a long and distinguished career in TV and Radio in Australia.'

Graham died a week after he became 88 years.



Graham Webb and Jerry Leighton in 2017. Photo: Martin van der Ven

Comments by Nick Bailey:

'Really sad to hear that Graham Webb has died at the age of 88. I owe him a lot as he gave me my first job in radio when he employed me as a newsreader on Radio Caroline in September 1966. He also helped me in Australia after I emigrated, which is where I got my first presenting job. I remember riotous parties at his home in Sydney where he would replay his commentary for the wedding of Mick Luvzit where he said 'the ring has now been placed on Janet Terret's finger, and Janet in turn places the finger on Mick Luvzit'. As a consummate professional he just carried on with aplomb.'

A marvelous tribute is on Mary Payne's pages:

<https://www.radiolondon.co.uk/jocks/graham/tribute/tributepage.html>

Bryan Vaughn: 'Graham Webb (Webby) certainly had a fabled career in both radio and television and had a great radio voice. I knew him in Sydney before I travelled overseas in 1962 and he replaced me at Caroline South when I left the Mi Amigo at Christmas 1965. Apart from that, he was a friend to all he met and was always fun to be with. May he rest in peace.'

Pirate Hall of Fame:

New this month:

- It is forty years since Laser-558 blasted onto the air. To mark the occasion we have the second part of the Laser Story as well as pages of press cuttings from the period;
- we've added another RNI Super Hit 50 chart from 1971;
- and we pay tribute to Radio Caroline's Graham Webb who sadly died a few days ago at the age of 88.

My thanks, as always, to everyone who has contributed. All the best,
Jon

www.offshoreradio.co.uk

Dear Members of the Wet Feet Club!

Wouldn't it be nice to spend an afternoon celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of British Offshore Radio's birth with some of your old ship-mates, afloat in the Thames Estuary? On a large comfortable ship while cruising around the radio forts or the Ross Revenge one last time? Now you can and I'm offering a FREE ticket for YOU. The only qualification is that you must have broadcast on an offshore radio station off the British coast.

The legendary Paddle Steamer WAVERLEY is making several poignant trips around the Thames Estuary in September and October and on behalf of the Captain and Waverley crew I'd like to invite you to join us. I need to know names of those interested as soon as possible - the Waverley is big but we expect these trips to be very popular.

The dates of the four radio reunion cruises are:

- Forts Special (round Shivering & Red Sands + Knock John) on Monday 30th Sep' 30th

- Ross Revenge on the River Blackwater on Friday 4th October
- Swinging 60s Pirate Radio Cruise to the forts on Sunday 6th October
- Sealand Special on Tuesday 8th October.



The Waverley has three great locations below decks where you can dine and drink the voyage away with a range of cold and hot food, hot drinks and beverages of a stronger abv. Steamers are comfortable ships and Waverley can make 18 knots. Most cruises will sail from Tower Pier, Gravesend, Southend and Clacton - see the web site for details and timings.

Regular radio enthusiasts will be able to join this reunion too, but their tickets are £47. They can get a 10% discount on ticket prices using the special code shown on our World of Radio web site.

<https://worldofradio.co.uk/>

If you want to join us for this excellent day at sea, please let me know by email as soon as possible - numbers will be limited and the free ticket offer is strictly personal to YOU. (If you think I've forgotten to invite someone do let me know). My email address is Paul@Rusling.uk.

I look forward to seeing you in the Autumn.

Paul Rusling

E mail from Robert Parsloe: 'Hi Hans I have just read your latest report and enjoyed it very much. Thanks to you and all concerned for your hard work. It really is appreciated by so many. With best wishes Rob.'

Next it's Rick in Florida: 'It was great to see a photo in your Spring Edition of what the Swinging Radio England studio looked like after the Boss Jock's bailed out. I had quite a hand in installing what in your report was the Radio Dolphin master control room audio mixer, and wondered what fate it had encountered. I don't see the turntables, but expect they are in there somewhere.

For the record I had some more technical time lately in building a low power FM station here in Florida and operating it for about 4 years before turning it over to a partner, and retiring for the 2nd time in my career. The first time was from a nation-wide American television network I helped launch back before the turn of the century. I'm still programming my online radio station at MusicTampaBay.com, which I'm now starting my 20th year streaming local musicians. Otherwise I'm beginning to accept my membership in the senior citizen community and enjoying life in the sun. Your reports sometimes hit home in unexpected ways. Rick Crandall.'

Thanks for the memory Rick. Stil in good memory of the early hours breakfast we once did together with Graham Gill in Amsterdam, a long time ago. About the photo of the studio I can tell you that Tom Collins sent much more so have a look:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72157637973190296>

And after watching the Tom Collins series of photos Rick came back with: 'Thanks Hans. You are such a good friend to all of us who were part of that extraordinary era in your part of the world. Great photos on board the Olga Patricia a.k.a. Laissez Faire.'

March 13th again a new update in our offshore radio archive. 11 Photos from a 2014 visit by David Fawkes to see the Ross Revenge in the Tilbury docks.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720315412287/with/53585430758>

The generation over 60 is one that is especially spoilt for radio listening and each person has one or more favourite radio stations. Dick Offringa has a great love for Radio Luxembourg's broadcasts and has especially listened intensely to the English service and visited the studio in Luxembourg no less than five times over the years. It has been 32 years since the programmes ended in 1991. Dick Offringa also had his favourite deejay: Barry Alldis. In the month of April, he had a special encounter, about which he tells more himself.



'On King's Day, Radio Emmeloord's mobile studio stood in the busy centre of Emmeloord. Many people stopped by for an interview or to listen to the nice old music. My partner Annelies and I were waiting for visitors from Luxembourg after three o'clock. Quarter past three we met Janet Alldis and her husband Frank. Janet is the daughter of the Radio Luxembourg DJ who, among other things, always presented the English Top Twenty on Sunday nights in the 1960s.

Whether it was entirely accurate I don't know but it was said at the time to have 15 million listeners. Not only in England, Spain, Norway but also far beyond the Iron Curtain. Janet had contacted me to talk about that time. Also for the project they are setting up at the University of Luxembourg on the history of Radio Luxembourg. It should become an exhibition in Radio Luxembourg's original building; Villa Louvigny, from 2025 onwards.

We first strolled through the busy free market with items visibly from the attic. As it was quite noisy in the city centre, we decided to divert to Urk. During the walk, and coffee, I told about my five visits to villa Louvigny and how I got there. But I also told about the thrill of listening to 'fading Radio Luxembourg'. Even though all airtime had been bought up by record companies, and they only played two minutes of a song, it was still interesting for teenagers because Radio Luxembourg was the only pop station at the time.

Back home in Emmeloord, we enjoyed dinner cooked by Annelies. After this, we were in the Radio Emmeloord studio upstairs in our house. One of many home studios as there are 30 different home studios. Our great friend is the internet. We took pictures, just as we once did in Luxembourg. Throughout the evening, we reminisced. Janet was 18 when her father died in 1982. He had left for London in 1966 but returned to Luxembourg 10 years later.

I also showed Janet the BBC documentary about the end of English-language Radio Luxembourg in December 1991. Now more than 30 years ago. I met her father Barry Alldis in the studio in January 1977. By then, tapes from London were no longer used; everything was live, without a technician. Janet said she always got singles from her father: "Not For Sale".



Because they loved tulip fields, we went to three different tulip fields in the polder on Sundays. They found it fascinating. And took many pictures. Later in the day, we went to Lemmer. Quietly because of the cold weather. After lunch, we returned to Emmeloord. There Janet held a video interview with me for the radio project. In the background a picture of her father Barry Alldis. It was enervating for me to meet her. A daughter of the man I have long admired: Barry Alldis. Sunday night, in their car, while charging, they listened to my radio programme in which I played many memories of Radio Luxembourg. As if I was young again. It was a wonderful weekend!

Thanks Dick for sharing the information of what has been a marvelous long weekend for you as well as for Janet Alldis. In the

meantime she contacted me too and I've given her a lot of links to articles I wrote through the years about Radio Luxembourg.

Next we go to Raoul from Belgium with some nice memories and an excellent find: 'Hi Hans. This is Raoul from Belgium



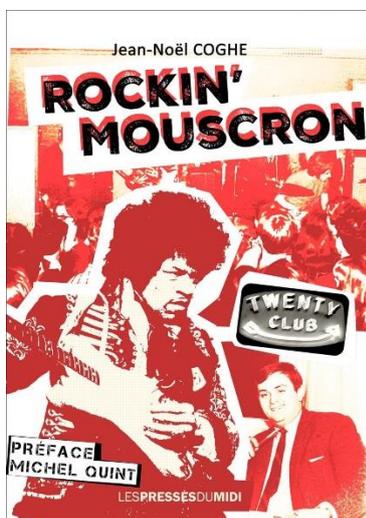
Raoul in studio Radio Scotland. Photo collection Raoul Verolleman

Having spent a couple of weeks on Radio Scotland's ship « The Comet » in July 1967 (my cabin mate was Tony Allan), I'm always interested in articles, info, recordings, CDs, DVDs, etc. about the station and its ship.

<https://www.offshoreradio.co.uk/album1.htm>

After the end of broadcasting, it's commonly known that the ship was towed into Methil Harbour in Fife, where the transmitter was removed. The studio equipment was left there untouched though.

The ship was put up for sale, but no buyer came forward and the ship was eventually taken to Holland to be broken up.



But I just learned a story recently, by reading a book published in French in 2023, titled "Rockin' Mouscron" by French DJ, writer, broadcaster, etc. Jean-Noel Coghe. Among the numerous books he wrote are biographies of Rory Gallagher, Bill Wyman and Jimi Hendrix. I've personally met Jean-Noël a couple of times, first in his apartment in Mouscron, Belgium while I was working for the local CATV company, and secondly while he was a disc-jockey working for Fréquence Nord, a powerful official FM radio station broadcasting in the Lille region of Northern France. But we didn't talk about Radio Scotland on those occasions.

In his book, Jean-Noël tells the story of how the Comet nearly had a second life as an offshore radio station.



Comet in Flushing. Photographer unknown collection Rob Olthof in SMC Archive

A project was born in 1968 by people from Germany, France, Belgium and The Netherlands to start a new ship-based station, with programs in English, German, French and Dutch. Funds were found in those countries. Jean-Noël was among the French who were asked to take part in the project.

The station would be called Radio Concorde and would transmit in the Long Waves band of wavelengths. At the time, the Comet was moored in the Dutch port of Flushing (Vlissingen), waiting to be broken up. The projected Radio Concorde staff went to visit the ship, and started bringing in new equipment. As the original studio

was still equipped for broadcasting, it was modernized with new electronics.

Test programs were recorded in various languages, using the original Radio Scotland ship studio. Secret meetings, secret trips, secrets financial transactions were happening on a regular basis.

Jean-Noël tells the story of when he was stopped at the Belgian/French border by customs officers (there was no "free traveling for goods" yet at the time); they searched his case and found records, tapes and paper sheets with "Radio Concorde" written all over the place, which they knew nothing about so they let him go. The tapes were actually the test programs intended to be broadcast!

The project didn't go through though, due to some money funders backing off, as some of the countries involved were preparing legislation to ban the offshore stations, just like the British had done with the Marine Offences Bill in August 1967.

According to most sources, the Comet would later be used as a houseboat before being broken up by Van de Marel shipworks in 1969.



Comet Flushing Photo: Rob Olthof

Later, in the mid-seventies, some of the Belgian citizens involved took part in the successful Radio Mi Amigo adventure with Sylvain Tack.



Comet at Shipbroker Van de Marel. Photo SMC Archive

Raoul Verolleman (Belgium)

Next a big congratulations to Mary and Chris Payne for having their excellent site filled with memories about Radio London 25 years on line



Mary wrote: March 29th is the Radio London website's 25th Birthday.

I've just completed my first major site update since having my cataract done and there are so many events planned over Easter that we have had to compile a separate page in What's Happening to cover them all. The Easter weather forecast for the UK is for cold and wet weather, but we hope our many site visitors living in other countries will enjoy some sunshine.

Best wishes, Mary and Chris.

<https://www.radiolondon.co.uk/kneesflashes/happenings/2012julyon/july2012.html>

News from David Miller a longtime radio friend in New Zealand: Battle of the Bridge A sign commemorating the beginnings of Radio Hauraki has gone on display at Bascule Bridge. It commemorates the day, in 1966, when a bunch of determined young people fled Viaduct Harbour to broadcast in the waters of the Hauraki Gulf in protest of the state-owned broadcasting monopoly in New Zealand.

On 23rd of October 1966 Denis "Doc" O'Callahan was at the helm of the Tiri, the 'unseaworthy' boat that the radio station would broadcast from as it made it's daring escape. "When we tried to leave the Viaduct basin, the police had the bridge operator lower the bridge. Some of the pirate crew positioned themselves to prevent the bridge closing completely. I tried to force the Tiri past the partially closed bridge, but the mast jammed, and we were stuck until someone ran out a rope and the crowd of supporters were able to heel her over and we broke free." Read more:

<https://www.ekepanuku.co.nz/news/radio-hauraki-pirates-sign-marks-the-spot/>

There were loads of programs celebrating 60 years of Radio Caroline. An interesting article I found on RadioToday:

https://radiotoday.co.uk/2024/03/tony-blackburn-takes-over-bbc-radio-2-breakfast-to-celebrate-60-years-of-the-pirates/?fbclid=IwAR3vJroelX7212TlzneaX4vlfIwnvt0qutgBljY20NvG57d55-IF86zKh-Q_aem_ActWwlKN00XS84rifgXF2ycEBU+XQ2sK1i2WY1ZOpFHS21fmbniCaK1hJTdFgCRedHhLSa_59EZfhT6Jy2rCO-II

A very interesting site with countless interviews with radio people done by David Lloyd can bring many hours of listening and learning pleasure: <https://www.davidlloydradio.com/conversations>

Radio Waddenzee - offshore event 3rd May 2008. What a day it was, warm weather and very nice people including visiting the ship off the coast of Friesland.

295 pictures from our own collection:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720316078106?fbclid=IwAR1ZWrZmRA4t7WkrBXdLagFwVWqalpemVOKa34oM3Ha1QeZEGOCyX6_iKUE_aem_AbEKSB3k8GF7Q0sGj9gVLosCMNYmVhBFdsD0l1bsHnnPe9CP7miwM4ZJeYdl1tcJagb3mIyfrCaQ5db8Do84iphQ

Next an own memory: I take you back to the month of April 1965 and the country of Sweden. There, Britt Wadner, the owner of Radio Syd, had been in a women's prison since the 22nd of March to serve a month's sentence for being the person ultimately responsible for the said radio station, which provided programmes aimed at Swedish listeners from international waters.

During her sentence period and thus absence from Radio Syd, her programmes were presented by her daughter Connie. It was expected that when Britt was released and resumed presenting her broadcasts herself, she would be immediately prosecuted by the Swedish National Prosecutor. The broadcasting ship Cheeta 2, located in international waters and the Sound delighted many listeners in southern Sweden.



But was Radio Syd still only actively targeting Sweden in the following months? Indeed, on the 23rd of April 1965, the Dutch

newspaper the Telegraaf reported that a certain Björn Sesam, a well-known figure in the showbiz world at the time, had planned to start a second offshore station off the coast of Sweden. It was his wish to launch Radio Center on the 1st of July. He claimed to have bought a scrapped lightship for the sum of f 35,000, with which he wanted to actively broadcast programmes from the Baltic Sea. He also planned to use another, smaller, ship to rebroadcast these Radio Center programmes with an auxiliary transmitter in order to reach a larger part of Sweden.

Talking to journalists, Sesam claimed not to be afraid of the little law that had been passed in 1962, which made it possible for the authorities to prevent these programmes being heard from international waters. According to Sesam, it was a law full of holes and, moreover, he claimed that he was financially supported by a large number of businessmen. Moreover, it was known that the business community in Sweden was big supporters of commercial radio. Radio Center, however, never got there.



After Britt Wadner was released, after a month in prison, a large crowd was there to welcome her and gave her a sea of flowers. She said in a comment that should the government try to thwart the station again in a subsequent trial by her and the lawyers would be beaten much harder against the government. Moreover, Britt felt that the legislation in place at the time regarding the offshore stations was in large measure against human rights. She spoke of a miscreant, and a disgrace to democracy in Sweden.



radiotag.erkrath@yahoo.com

OTERM never got off the ground.

In early 1970, when there was plenty of publicity in the Dutch and British press regarding the newest offshore radio station Radio Nordsee International, which later went down in history as RNI, other reports also stood out when it came to new initiatives. In early April of the year, for instance, coverage surrounding the OTERM Foundation could be found in a number of newspapers.

The abbreviation stood for Onafhankelijke Televisie Exploitatie en Radio Maatschappij and within the organisation there were plans to start broadcasting television programmes with a ship of around 2,000 tons sailing off the coast in international waters off Scheveningen.

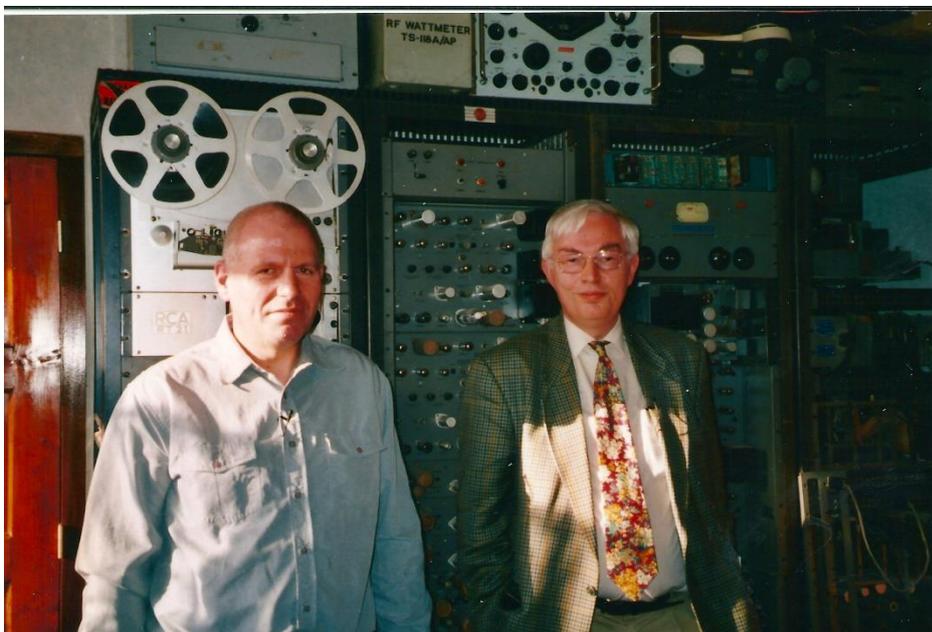
It was argued that the demand for television advertising was four times greater than the STER could bring via the existing two Dutch television networks and thus reason enough to purchase a large ship, which also needed a transmitter mast one hundred metres long and weighing ten tons. On seeing this information, things started spinning for me.

The director of the OTERM was Arie Swaneveld, then living in Vlaardingen, who stated that he was busy approaching various businessmen in the Netherlands and had tried to get them excited about investing in the television project. Swaneveld added that at least an initial capital of 1.5 million guilders was needed to start the

project. If successful, the programme would be broadcast on Channel 2 which would also become the name of the station.

So the foundation wanted to buy a television station for three tons, perhaps it was going to succeed in acquiring the equipment from former REM Island station. This had been confiscated by the government in December 1964 and was set up in one of the Dutch Domeinen's warehouses. Possible acquisition costs for generators and transmitter mast were budgeted at 200,000 guilders.

It was also announced the same month that the OTERM wanted interested parties to participate in a share package, with each share having an acquisition value of 1,000 guilders. With the sale of the first 1,500 shares, the starting capital would be reached. Interested parties were told that purchasing a large number of these shares would yield a hefty discount on future purchases of advertising airtime.



Arie Swaneveld and Rob Olthof in front of the REM island equipment. Photo: Collection SMC

Channel 2, should it have come on air, had a potential reach of two million television sets. Reception was guaranteed in the Randstad region and much of the west of the Netherlands. Certainly that was possible from Callantsoog in North Holland to Cadzand in Zeelandic Flanders and inland as far as Den Bosch and Amersfoort.

But more was being considered as Swaneveld also planned, once the ship was acquired, to take out hefty insurance with Lloyds in London. After all, he remembered very well how the owners of the REM Island had collected the sweet insurance amount of nine million guilders after its seizure by the government in 1964.

Despite various reports that the Dutch government was planning to ratify the Strasbourg Treaty and would thus make it impossible for the offshore radio station to work, Swaneveld had a different idea and that was that the intention of ratification would not be such a big deal. The latter came true as it would take more than four years before ratification became a reality. What also became clear not much later was that Swaneveld was given ownership of most of Radio and TV Noordzee's equipment, which was actively used from the REM island. However, the operation of the OTERM never materialised.



Part of REM equipment during exhibition 1994 in Hilversum. Photo: Hans Knot

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Interference and Interference in 1970, a reconstruction

It was towards the end of July 1970 and the Radio Nordsee International station ship had left the British coast before dropping anchor again in international waters off the Dutch coast near Scheveningen. It was the newspaper 'Het Parool' that was the first to report in its evening paper on 28th of July that not only had transmissions resumed off the Dutch coast, but there were also disruptions caused by the broadcasts.

At that time, RNI could be heard on 244 metres, 1230kHz, and on 102 MHz FM. It soon emerged that there was interference in the western coastal areas to the programmes of Hilversum III, which were entering the airwaves via the 240 metres at the time. The aforementioned newspaper reported that it was mainly due to the high power RNI was radiating. 'Hilversum III, due to international agreements, has a low broadcasting power'. It was also reported that RNI was using a frequency officially allocated to a radio station in Hungary.

The newspaper also reported that the radio and television department of the P.T.T. had now also discovered the interference and it would report its findings to the then Minister of Transport and Public Works as soon as possible, after all, any action against RNI had to be taken from the government side. Another comment from a P.T.T. (responsible for telecommunication) spokesperson added: "It would be a nice opportunity for the government to ratify the Strasbourg Convention against the offshore radio stations.

It was also announced in the Parool that the Central Management of the P.T.T. had asked the owners of Radio Nordsee, which was operating from the transmission ship MEBO II, to remove the interference caused on Hilversum III transmissions. This request was made towards the owners, who held offices in Zurich, Switzerland.

One of the Parool journalists also contacted the owners of RNI himself on 28th of July 1970, who claimed to know nothing about the alleged interference: 'the pirate leaders Erwin Meister (31) and Edwin Bollier (32) are currently staying in the Netherlands. Erwin Meister: 'Off the British coast we were deliberately disturbed. Now we are off the Dutch coast to avoid this interference and it is not our intention at all to disturb another person. We are not aware that we are disturbing any of your stations. If we receive a complaint about this we will have to switch to another wavelength. The 217, 259 and 270 may also be possible, but as long as we do not know anything officially we will not change anything.'

In the ensuing period, various newspapers wrote about the issue. For instance, the 'Radio & TV Journaal' in the Telegraaf on the 30th of July 1970 reported that the P.T.T. sought contact with pirate station'. As an opening, the article started with: 'What is considered a novelty in Hilversum broadcasting circles' thereby referring to what was not possible from these circles but did happen by a P.T.T. official, who - falling under the Ministry of Transport and Public Works - had sent a telegram to the owners of RNI.

It added that RNI, disturbed by a British jammer, was forced to move its transmitting ship to international waters off the Dutch coast in order to avoid the influence of this British jammer. And then Henk E Janszen, responsible for the aforementioned column at the time, wrote that although the station had been forced to pop up off Dutch beaches, it subsequently interfered with Hilversum III's broadcasts.

Big fans of RNI and Veronica probably reacted, whether in thought or not, angrily to the continuation of the article which reported: 'Hilversum III is Veronica's counterpart, an undisturbed listening

pleasure of light music, cum commercials, is the least that can be expected from the Dutch authorities'.



MEBO II on tow to the Dutch coast. Photo from the Carl Mitchell collection.

Quite remarkable since in the following years the editorial staff of the Telegraaf was mainly pro Radio Veronica and not in favour of Hilversum III. Moreover, the term 'pirate station' was used again when it came to RNI's programmes. 'If Radio Nordsee causes a kink in the cable, it seems logical for the patriotic authorities to do something about it. By analogy with the British authorities also set up a jammer?'

Janszen did conclude that in deploying a jammer, Veronica, a cherished child of countless multitudes of radio fans in the Netherlands, would be compromised. But he also concluded that an official of the P.T.T. - in consultation with colleagues at Verkeer en Waterstaat, took a more friendly route by sending a telegram to the owners of RNI in Zurich, reporting that they were causing interference on a transmitter of the Hilversum broadcasters. No request was actually made to remove this interference, but it had to be clear.

And then all was set because from the broadcasting world in Hilversum, people went on to express an outraged opinion that "such a courteous approach" was, to put it mildly, only going too far. A spokesman for the Ministry of Transport responded laconically to this reaction; "If there is interference then we always take this route. Perhaps the two illegal stations operating off the coast could now be cause for action by draft legislation, based on the Council of Europe Convention that seeks to make the operation of pirate stations impossible."

On the 30th of July 1970, the Parool carried the disturbing report that Radio Nordsee International's broadcasts were causing further interference. These included interference to the mobile phone traffic of the bus company West-Nederland N.V. in Boskoop. Meanwhile, the company's management had filed a complaint with PTT's mobile phone service. In this case, the interference was caused by interference with RNI's FM signal.

A P.T.T. spokesman informed the same morning that the interference, caused on Hilversum III's programmes, had since been removed. The transmitter on board the MEBO II had been changed from 1232 to 1228 kilohertz but it did not mean an end to the interference on the aforementioned mobile phone traffic. A spokesman for the P.T.T. had reported that they would see what measures could be taken to eliminate the interference.

The Parool journalist also got a spokesman for the bus company to speak, revealing that the breakdowns could cause serious safety consequences: for instance, it was not possible to properly hear incoming calls from bus drivers who were more than six kilometres from the depot. This had caused delays during a whole week and created an untenable issue in holiday time. The bus company provided bus traffic on several lines across a large stretch of the west in the regions of The Hague to Utrecht.

According to a spokesman for the bus company, reported in the Volkskrant on the 30th of July, the breakdowns meant that connections were missed and feedback of signals from the buses was completely impossible at one point. Not only was adjustment of frequency promised and implemented by the owners but they also announced that RNI would broadcast programmes only in English and German for the time being and the arrival of Dutch-language programmes, about which several newspapers published a week earlier, would not be initiated. The same day RNI disappeared from the airwaves.

On the 3rd of August, after the necessary technical adjustments had been made on board the MEBO II, RNI could be heard again and either via 1385 kHz or 217-metre medium wave. Also, the shortwave transmitter via 6205 kHz in the 49-metre band was back on air that day. In the dark hours, the medium-wave broadcasts were less listenable due to interference with a Russian radio station.

A day later, on the 4th of August, RNI's FM transmitter also came back on air and on 96 MHz. Finally, on the 5th of August 1970, the second shortwave transmitter also came on air and could be received on 31 metres, 9940 kHz. On the 23rd of August, RNI disappeared from 217 metres, only to return to the airwaves a day later via 220 metres or 1367 kHz. The decision to start broadcasting via the 220 metres proved to be a successful one without any major problems with interference. More even bigger problems were to follow but that's for another time.

@ Hans Knot May 2024

Christian Bergmann from Germany made a nice holiday in England and visited offshore radio related places. He wrote: I started my "60th Anniversary of Radio Caroline" journey on 27th March.

After visiting friends in Germany and The Netherlands I arrived in Harwich Good Friday. My first destination was the LV18, which was

damaged by fire in early February, unfortunately. Despite that situation it was managed to realise live broadcasts over Easter weekend. It is hoped that the ship will re-open to the public by the end of May.

My next target was Felixstowe Museum. The museum gives an insight into the social, military and commercial history of Felixstowe and the surrounding area. It contains various rooms and areas. To mention some of them: Navy Room, Port Room, Pleasure Steamer Room, Local History Room, D Day Room and Felgate Room. The latter one shows a lot of Offshore Radio items and information. I was friendly guided and informed by all members of the staff.

<https://felixstowemuseum.org>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720316380197>

Easter Saturday and Sunday I had the opportunity to visit the Ross Revenge. Together with Martien Stapper we took the tender Razorbill 3 from West Mersea to board the Ross Revenge. The weather conditions were excellent, especially on Saturday. We were dearly welcomed on board the Ross Revenge. It was most interesting to have a tour through the ship.

I discovered advancement, but it doesn't go without notice there's an urgent need for repainting parts of the ship and to go to dry dock very soon. What a great pleasure to meet Rob Ashard, Andrew Austin, Grant Benson, Robb Eden, Josh Holmes-Bright, Johnny Lewis, Peter Moore, Chris Pearson and Diane Pearson, Paula Shaw and Kevin Turner and to have nice and interesting chats with some of them.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720316379025>

Me and Martien Stapper went to the BBC/Caroline 648 transmitter site in Orfordness Easter Monday. During my journey through the U.K. and The Netherlands I tuned in to Radio Caroline in my car. I always received Caroline on 648 kHz with a strong and good signal.

I've been listening to Radio Caroline since 1966. The first Offshore Stations I ever listened to were Radio Caroline and Radio London. I remember I received them with a good signal in my home town Freiberg (located in the middle between Dresden and Chemnitz) in early 1966. Because living behind the Iron Curtain, I never would have guessed to visit Frinton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze, places where the Mi Amigo and the Galaxy were anchored offshore at that time. That's why I decided to go to those towns 58 years after my first reception successes of Caroline and BIG L.

In Walton-on-the-Naze I discovered at the R.N.L.I. shop lots of blackboards indicating maritime rescue actions to help amongst others Radio Caroline, Radio London and Tower Radio (Sunk Head Tower) between 1964 and 1985.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720316380197>



Using the ferry from Harwich, I arrived in Hoek van Holland on 6th April in the morning. The terminal is only 3 km away from the RockArt museum, which I visited again after 9 years. I was very surprised to see a lot of new rare items concerning music and Offshore Radio.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720316378090>

On my way back to Germany I visited Radio Veronica's former ship Norderney in Amsterdam at the NDSM-Pier. It's now used as a restaurant. While having a drink I remembered 19th August 2000,

when the Radio Caroline Supporters Day took place on the Norderney in Leeuwarden.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720316378365>

This week I obtained the Radio Caroline 60th Anniversary T-shirt. It looks very good!

The booty comes back

Following the raid on the radio ship Ross Revenge by the OCD and other Dutch authorities in August 1989, all seized items were stored at Domeinen Roerende Zaken in Bleiswijk which is near Rotterdam. Years later, negotiations took place involving Peter Moore from Caroline, Martin Raumer from the OCD, who commanded the raid, and mediator Herbert Visser. By 1992, these discussions led to the return of the confiscated items to the Caroline organization, on the condition that they would not pursue further legal action against the Dutch government. Regarding the transportation of the equipment back to Dover, where the Ross Revenge was moored at the time, a truck was rented at SMC's expense. This cost was covered by the Media Communications Foundation using proceeds from sales, which included the CD "The Legend Still Lives On."

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720316784732>



On July 22nd, 1984, Frank Schmitz participated in a trip to the Communicator (Laser Radio) and the Ross Revenge (Radio Caroline and Radio Monique). The trip was organised by Rob Olthof of SMC and Leendert Vingerling (Tour guide) organised the transport to the radioships. The trip started in Nieuwpoort (Belgium) during the night of July 21st and arrived at the radio ships in the early morning of July 22nd. On October 12, 1985 Frank visited the Ross Revenge for the 2nd time. Also Helmut Slawik was present on both trips. During one of his visits tot he Netherlands, Frank also made a couple of pictures of the MV Magda Maria, which was intended to be used by Radio Paradijs.



Please enjoy all the beautiful pictures, that Frank made during his visits to the radio ships. We have tried to list as many names as possible of the individuals, that can be seen on these pictures. If you have additions or corrections, please add these in the comments field under the picture or let me know by e-mail (in the latter case, please include the title id of the picture).

With a big thank you to Frank for sharing these pictures and Helmut and Hans-Peter for delivering these to my home, I'd like to present to you: Frank Schmitz (Offshore) Radio Photo's:

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/141014440@N05/3hLz2e3S0h>

Kind regards, Ben Meijering

Mail from Australia: I promised to send you the link to the recording of my radio show episode where Bryan Vaughan recalls life as a DJ on Atlanta and Caroline. Please include in the newsletter if you like!

(Bryan and I now share Saturday afternoon programs on radio 2RDJ-FM in Sydney)

https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/radio2rdj/episodes/2024-03-29T23_12_21-07_00



Join Radio 2RDJ's Top Jocks, John Dale and Bryan Vaughan, as they look back at the music of 1964 and celebrate the 60th birthday of Radio Caroline - the world's most famous offshore station.

www.podomatic.com

Well that ends another edition of the Hans Knot International Radio Report. I will be back in the month of July with the Summer edition. In the meantime share memories, photos and more versus

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