

Hans Knot International Radio Report 2025(1)

Welcome to the first edition for 2025 and I hope to bring some more reports this year. In this issue a lot of informative items and of course I pay attention to the heavy losses.

On the evening of publication of the Christmas Report it was Pam Jeanetta Bird-Gaines who wrote: 'Hans Knot thank you for the excellent IRR. I read Don Stevens piece with interest. The FRA contingent regularly went to Sloopys in Coventry Street, just off Picadilly Circus, when Andy Archer was DJ there, early 1970s. I never knew George and Billy Walker owned that nightclub. They also owned a lot of businesses in Southend-on-Sea.'

Very informative, thanks a lot and I will go into the links on my desktop tomorrow. Listening to Caroline North at the moment.'

Also Ian Biggar reflected on last posting from Don: 'I would like to clarify something that Don Stevens has written in this report; 1) I have never visited the Public records in Kew 2) The only access I have to government papers are those published in Offshore Echos over the years 3) I did not "discover" anything about the late Mike Baker. This was an open secret for many years in the radio world. I have told Don on more than one occasion that what he writes does not accurately reflect any conversation we had. to be clear, I did email Don Stevens copies of the OEM pages with the papers, in which his name was mentioned along with other Caroline people of the time, several of whom did go on to work on Independent Local Radio in the UK. I find it intriguing that Don got so much attention from the

authorities given his short time on the Mi Amigo, compared to other Caroline stalwarts of the time who received none.'

And in the weeks before Christmas Jana and I received hundreds of Christmas cards and wishes by e mail from our readers from all over the world. From Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, USA, Canada, Ecuador, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, France, South Africa, Israël, Austria, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Eire and more. Thanks for all the wonderful wishes.

When sending birthday wishes to the Emperor Rosko in California, getting 82 years of age, a special answer came back: 'Many thanks for your kind thoughts, I've decided that would be a great idea if you would open a radio station because you have all the contacts get the guy from KC get an old short wave transmitter with 1,000,000 W and we can all party.'

A pity I still have a lot of work to do in different ways so no time to do such a project and so the only answer was that we would have a toast on him in the evening, so cheers!



Emperor Rosko from his own collection

The year 2024 ended on the 31st of December with the very sad news of the passing from Johnnie Walker. As we mentioned earlier this sad news would come in the near future, it was a

shock. Martin van der Ven and I are pleased that we could invite him to a few RadioDay Events in Amsterdam and have very good memories of Johnnie. We've selected some of the e mails and comments on our FB SMC Group as well as giving some links to newspapers and more as a big tribute to Johnnie Walker.

BBC News - BBC Radio 2 DJ Johnnie Walker dies at 79 with several articles, comments and memories.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ce9051nljd3o>

Gavin McCoy: Happy New Year 2025, and remembering all of those dear friends and family we have lost in 2024. And adding our sympathies and condolences to Tiggy Walker on the passing of beloved radio presenter Johnnie Walker.



Johnnie Walker, photo Ben Meijering

Norman Barrington: Farewell Johnnie, you enriched Radio, were an inspiration to us, and we'll never forget you.

Daily Mail: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14239579/Radio-2-DJ-Johnnie-Walker-dead-aged-79.html?>

Sky News: <https://news.sky.com/story/veteran-radio-star-johnnie-walker-dies-aged-79-13282201>

The Independent: <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/johnnie-walker-death-tributes-ken-bruce-b2672171.html>

Radio Today: <https://radiotoday.co.uk/2024/12/bbc-radio-presenter-johnnie-walker-has-died-at-the-age-of-79/>

Don Stevens: My interesting moment with Johnnie was in Nederland in 2014 while chatting and he noticed my Western boots and remarked he had a pair he never wore. I asked what size they were, and when he told me I said that they would probably fit me. Delighted Johnnie said he'd be happy to sell, we eventually agreed a price and a location to the transaction in the UK.

A week later on the A4 just East of the Firestone factory in an old gas station forecourt Johnnie and Tiggy pulled in from the London bound traffic jam and gave the driver's the strange scene of a large package passed to a cowboy in long black coat by a couple who received an envelope from said cowpoke, it all looked very suspicious.

When the Walkers got in their car to rejoin the London bound traffic a large gap was soon cleared for them, I did chuckle and they headed to the BBC for Johnnie's programme. Yes, I still have the boots and have worn them a few times and so comfortable. That's my Memorable Walker story.

Michael Terry: Top man, absolute legend. I am so saddened by the news even though it was expected.

Scott Ross: So very sad. A true hero of those far off days when he, amongst many others, willingly risked their freedom and careers to keep the turntables spinning so that we might legally enjoy the mix of radio stations now at our beck and call!

Brian McKenzie: Having just heard of the passing of Johnnie Walker. a true legend and inspiration for myself and I'm sure many other broadcasters. One of a kind.

Allan Krautwald from Denmark: Johnnies dead was even mentioned in Danish Newspapers.

<https://www.bt.dk/navne/radiolegende-doer-pludseligt-alle-er-soenderknuste?>

January 1st

Tiggy Walker on X: What does a new widow do on NYE? She listens to BBCRadio2, opens a bottle and toasts her amazing husband. Courageous, wise, strong, creative and never dull. They didn't call him the Pirate for nothing. Above all - the most devoted loving husband. Please raise a glass to Johnnie Walker!

Roger Twiggy Day on FB: As my listeners will know I played the Johnnie Walker them tune yesterday on Boom Radio at 15.15. At the time I had no idea he had died. Bob Harris had announced it only minutes earlier on Radio Two. I just wanted wish my old friend and colleague happy new year and say how much he was loved. How spooky is that. Tomorrow at 20.00 I will be broadcasting a tribute to JW on Boom.

<https://www.boomradiouk.com/player/on-demand/items/johnnie-walker-a-tribute/>

Bob LeRoi: This weeks programme dedicated to the memory of Johnnie, who I knew over the years from radio and private

gatherings. He even gave me a plug occasionally, mentioned the online archive and the Splash. Thoughts with Tiggy and family. RiP Johnnie Walker.

Gordon Haddrell: First listened to him on SRE in 1966 a radio legend one of the good guys. RIP Johnnie.

Elaine Spence: Absolutely heartbroken. Yesterday I lost someone who had been a constant in my life since I was 13. We kept in touch for many years, even spoke on the phone, and I met him on multiple occasions. He always remembered me and showed concern as to how I was. He was, in my opinion and beyond doubt, the greatest broadcaster ever, who was genuine, warm, passionate about his work and music and genuinely cared for his listeners. I feel privileged to have known him, regarded him as a friend and feel honoured to have been chosen as one of his 11 O'Clock Goodnight Girls when he was on Radio Caroline. A lovely man and a true legend. RIP Johnnie Walker. I will never forget you.

Lion Keezer: My hero from the glorious 60s. He was the best of them all, the real thing, "no man will ever forget..." I will always remember him, that's for sure.... RIP Johnny!

Ron Candy: Very sad to hear the news about Johnny Walker found the information out on Facebook my word what a great presenter and he at least stood up for Radio Caroline all those years ago and the principal and that's something to be admired so rest in peace Johnny we will all remember your broadcast from all those years ago even up until October of last year.

Dennis Hartley: Sad news indeed One of the UKs top presenters. He was once criticised for "being too much into the music"! What a compliment!



RadioDay 2007 Hans Knot, Robbie Dale and Johnnie Walker.
Photo Martin van de Ven.

John Roberts: My heart just sinks over this sad, sad news of the passing of Johnnie, what a legend this man holds for free radio. Caroline especially, Johnnie will be so sadly missed. R.I.P.

Trevor Adams: Sad to hear. One of my heroes. I will always remember my chat with JW at the bar during one of the Amsterdam RadioDays at Cassa 400. We had never met before, but chatted as if we were old friends. RIP Johnny, and enjoy the next stage of your journey.

Stella Robinson: So sorry to hear this sad news of Johnnie Walker's passing. I am sending love and strength to Tiggy. Girl I am thinking of you.

Pinky Siedenburg: Very sad news, wish Tiggy strength & love. You were his rock!

Ron O'Quinn: Johnnie you were a radio icon in Great Britain! Johnnie emailed me less than a week ago. He was my friend and will miss knowing he's no longer with us. God Bless and watch over Tiggy. Rest now Johnnie.

Paul Hutchins: I remember when He rebroadcast Mrs. Dale's Diary on Radio Caroline. It was even mentioned in Parliament. Top staff at the Beep were furious.

January 3rd: The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2024/dec/31/johnnie-walker-obituary?>

Ron O'Quinn versus Dick Offringa how JW got his deejay name in 1966: 'When I hired him I told him I had a great name jingle if he wanted to use it. He said, "what is the name". I said "Johnnie Walker". Larry Dean had brought some of the deejay jingles to Swinging Radio England from WPTR in Albany, New York and Johnnie Walker and Boom Boom Brannigan were the two choices. Ron O'Quinn.



Sarah Davies-Cash: 'It's with great sadness to report the legendary DJ and Pirate radio presenter Johnny Walker has passed away, my heart goes out to Tiggy is wonderful caring wife and his kids, thank you Johnny Walker you'll always be remembered for the music you played. RIP my dear, dear friend.

For more: <https://offshoreradio.info/legend-johnnie-walkerdies-aged-79/>



Radio Veronica - Joost den Draaijer - Noord-Hollands Archief, collection Fotopersbureau De Boer - 1967-10-16 - Radio Veronica - NL-HlmNHA_1478_05588K00_15

On 3rd of January 2025, the sad news came in that Willem van Kooten, the grandfather of Dutch pop radio, passed away at the age of 83. Countless reports via newspapers, television, radio and social media covered this great loss.

Born in 1959, pop historian Leo Weijers fell under the spell of pop music at an early age and successfully published several books about it. We found him willing to reflect on the death of Willem van Kooten.

'Disbelief and intense sadness prevail at the news that my radio hero Willem van Kooten has passed away at the age of 83. Willem passed away on the very day, it turned out, I was allowed to attend the official opening of the '60 years of Top 40' exhibition at National Pop Museum RockArt in Hoek van Holland.

During this festive gathering, his name was mentioned several times. Willem van Kooten, well-known Dutch businessman and former radio producer under the pseudonym Joost den Draaijer, began his career as a radio deejay and grew into an influential figure in the Dutch media world. He introduced highly successful formats, such as the Veronica Top 40, which was first broadcast on January 2nd 1965.



Noord-Hollands Archief, collection Fotopersbureau De Boer -
1967-10-16 - Radio Veronica - NL-HlmNHA_1478_05588K00_18

Sitting below Chiel Montagne and Joost de Draaijer. Sitting
upper row: Jan van Veen, Tineke, Gerard de Vries, Eddie Becker
and Rob Out.

As a student of Dutch literature, Willem joined Radio Veronica. He soon made a name for himself as Joost den Draaijer with his smooth, student-like speaking style full of wordplay, at a time when Dutch radio presenters still had a measured announcer's voice with little vocal expression. While working for the offshore radio station, he saw how commercial radio was made

in the United States. Besides presenting legendary programmes like the 'Veronica Top 40' and 'Joost Mag Het Weten', Willem developed into an influential programme manager at Veronica. He is widely regarded as the man who renewed the radio landscape in the Netherlands.

In his position as programme manager at Veronica and later at Radio Noordzee, Willem introduced many innovative ideas, such as horizontal programming in two-hour blocks. During the same period, Willem also ran his own record label, production company and music publishing company, all under the name Red Bullet. Between 1969 and 1988, he was the main investor of Dutch band Golden Earring in this capacity.



Willem van Kooten - Veronica 828AM (2004). Photo: Martin van der Ven

From the 1980s and 1990s, Willem increasingly focused on real estate trading, including houses and golf courses. He was particularly active in Portugal. In 2006, the successful radio personality was appointed officer in the Order of Orange-

Nassau for his contribution to Dutch culture and economy. In 2018, Willem received the Marconi Oeuvre Award.

I could write pages full here about Willem, but suffice it to mention two recognisable things. Willem was the originator of the term 'Palingsound', a term that referred to the Volendam pop music of The Cats, BZN and Left Side, among others. The recognition tune of his wildly popular programme 'Joost Mag Het Weten' was 'Asia Minor', an arrangement of the opening theme of Edvard Grieg's 'Piano Concerto In A Minor Op. 16', played by Kokomo. Fans will read all about Willem van Kooten in the period 1960-1974 from May onwards in my book 'Radio Veronica: 14 years of hits from the sea', which has taken on an even more emotional tone due to the death of my radio hero.

Willem van Kooten rest in peace!

Leo Weijers January 2025

Also in this edition of the International Radio Report an article I wrote during the Christmas period 2024: Crooks category: the SOR

It was in 1993 that I first reported on one Bob Peeters' alleged plans to create an offshore radio station and more. In the book: 'Historie van de zeezenders 1907-1973. About pioneers, thumb suckers and crooks' I highlighted a number of radio projects where the results were minimal when it came to the radio signals distributed.

Most of the projects described were never realised. So was the project in which one Bob Peeters turned out to be the foreman. More than 31 years after the first publication, partly because a number of people have started talking or rooting around in all the activities surrounding Bob Peeters and his delusion over the

decades, I can come to a comprehensive but partly muddled reconstruction, partly because questions remain partly unanswered.



Peeters on the bridge Noord-Hollands Archief, collectie Fotopersbureau De Boer - 1971-01-05 - zendschip Hendrik Jan (Bob Peeters) - Radio SOR - NL-HlmNHA_1478_09081K00_07

The story of Radio SOR, the Operation Radio Foundation, and the Hendrik-Jan. We spoke about this many years later, from our Media Communications Foundation, with Steph Willemsen and others. The then 36-year-old Bob Peeters, initiator behind the project, was able to report that 106 men were working diligently to complete the station. As many as 100 men were said to have been working behind the scenes in the administrative sector, in addition to a group of six young Portuguese, consisting of freedom fighters and deserters, led by Portuguese rebel Maria Sino Garcia.

Peeters himself stated, 'Radio SOR will be a freedom station with a Christian, humane, social and peaceful slant'. According to the planning at the time, it was planned that around March 1971 the 21-metre-long ship with a dozen-meters-high transmitter mast would leave Haarlem to storm the seven seas as a floating radio station. The North Sea was to serve as a test base. After that, the team would be deployed anywhere in the world, wherever needed in charitable areas.

According to Peeters, the project had a budget of 180,000 guilders, of which a ton was to be paid to Ms. Oosterveld. According to Peeters, she had previously bought the ship from the owner. The foundation, which never passed a notary, would pay this amount to Ms. Oosterveld in weekly sums of fl. 500 if the ship was sent ready. A little calculator soon finds out that it would take at least seven years to pay off this debt, let alone whether the amount reported was correct.

According to the Dutch newspaper Telegraph in a January 1971 article, the Portuguese were hard at work: 'The crew is already sleeping aboard the (still) draughty and chilly Hendrik-Jan, on which fierce tinkering is going on during the day. A brand new central ship heating system is ready on the quay. The wooden paneling is already in the ship. The crew also swapped 1970 on board the ship for 1971. Someone from the neighbourhood came to bring one chicken for the boys, along with 25 guilders. The seven of them quickly picked the chicken.'

Peeters: 'From that 25 guilders, we then bought oil. The late Reverend Toornvliet saw salvation in it and instructed Ms. Oosterveld, who was his secretary, to buy the ship. He thought he could cut through the loopholes by bringing 'The Good News' from the North Sea. Later, for financial reasons, Toornvliet came into conflict with the SOR and seemed to thwart its

charitable plans. Fortunately, Oosterveld had already ordered the transmitters and equipment and we could go ahead with the plans. Consequently, we made the buy-off procedure with her.'



Geert Toornvliet

Noord-Hollands Archief, collectie Fotopersbureau De Boer - 1971-02-02 - Ds. Toornvliet - NL-HlmNHA_1478_09170K00_12

Peeters thought to put Toornvliet in a bad light while he himself dwelled in the category of 'crooks'. 'Toornvliet was a good pastor, but you couldn't rely on him. Because he could preach so beautifully, we decided that we would broadcast his programmes but that he had to pay for them. And: 'if we pray, the money will come,' Toornvliet told us at the time.' In reality, Toornvliet himself, or from his organisation, did not pay a single penny.

A number of newspapers managed to report in January 1971 that Bob Peeters had ordered a transmitter in England for a sum of fl. 20,000, which was actually supposed to fetch fl. 180,000. The transmitter built for India would have a power of 3.5 kW which would give a radius range of 360 km. Peeters had other plans. One was to install a special hydraulic mast so that

during violent storms the mast could be lowered to prevent breaking off.

In early January 1970, the engine was offered to a machine shop for overhaul and Peeters reported that one would sail to underdeveloped countries to convert people. Through American example, jingle, play a record and short talk, people would be brought the message of the SOR. The Portuguese cause - at the time there was a fierce crisis in the country - would also be extensively exposed off the Portuguese coast.



Peeters and crew in front of the Hendrik-Jan

Noord-Hollands Archief, collectie Fotopersbureau De Boer -
1971-01-04 - zendschip Hendrik Jan (Bob Peeters en bemanning)
- Radio SOR - NL-HlmNHA_1478_09076K00_06

Of course, Peeters' ideas seemed nice but the first message immediately raised eyebrows among true offshore radio fans. Indeed, at the end of the article it was stated that they were not even able to pay the 150 guilders of weekly demurrage. So

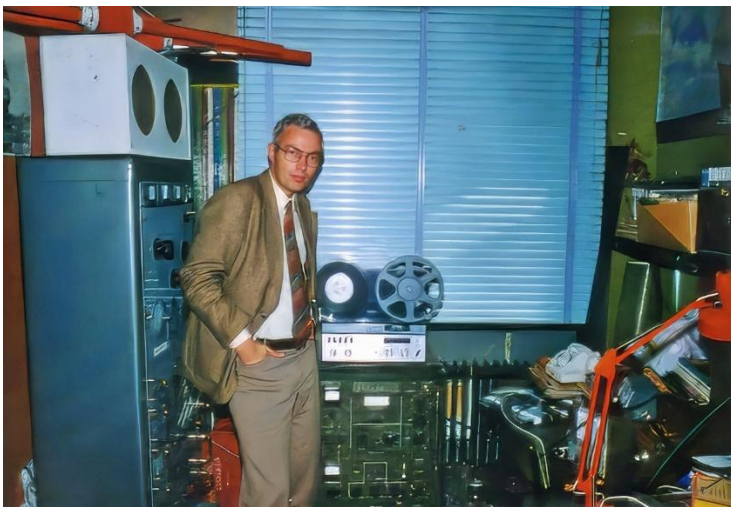
how was the ship ever supposed to function as a full-fledged radio station in the North Sea and elsewhere? The Portuguese, according to rumours, were staying illegally in the Netherlands. As previously reported, they were deserters from the Angolan army and members of the pacifist resistance who had fled Portugal.

However, one had reported them to the police and soon they were staying in our country on a temporary residence permit. They had struggled to get a job, but when they heard of Peeters' plans, they were quickly persuaded to join the project given that the Portuguese cause would also possibly be fought for. Just days after the first reports about the Hendrik-Jan appeared in the national press, 'the owner of the ship' had the engine and other parts safely stowed away to prevent Peeters and his Portuguese counterparts from setting sail to start programmes as yet. It had long been realised that they would not be able to pay the promised weekly 500 guilders.

Besides, the ship was not seaworthy at all and was in danger of sinking immediately in the first storm, even a few hundred metres off the coast. The Portuguese also realised that their Messiah, 'Capitano Peeters', was not the great savior after all, and decided to go into labour in Velsen. Peeters did not leave it at that and immediately went looking for another boat, which did have an engine. He found it in IJmuiden with Mr. H. de Boer.

Peeters himself stated that he could buy the boat for fl. 25,000, but de Boer reported that the ship would cost at least fl. 40,000. And so this plan fell through. Eventually, the Hendrik-Jan was towed away and scrapped by the yard's owner. Peeters was left with a hangover, although he did manage to fool someone within Reverend Toornvliet's organisation and get some publicity with his 'fake' offshore radio project.

But after the first two publications I wrote about the SOR, a lot more came to light. Partly because SMC got hold of Max Lewin's clippings archive around 2008, which included many radio-related topics. But also because of conversations SMC (Stichting Media Communicatie) foreman Rob Olthof had with Steph Willemse and recorded them on paper in telegram style. And certainly the name of Ary Jassies should also be mentioned here, who was an excellent research journalist at the time and also dived into the SOR project in early 1971.



Rob Olthof Photo SMC Archive

Among other things, Rob asked Steph Willemse why nothing had come of the SOR and in response he stated: "Bob Peeters' engineer figured out that he could put a mast in the middle of the boat. The boat was definitely not 350 tonnes, as people claimed, and so would rock like a match in the churning water on the North Sea. It was more like a depreciated luxury inland waterway vessel and so of course this mad plan to take the ship into the North Sea was abandoned.'

Rob was also interested what eventually happened to the Portuguese. Steph: 'They were no longer looked after, not even by Geert Toornvliet. Humanitarian was only the immediate surroundings, because at Christmas in 1970 the Portuguese were provided with wine and chicken with bread by residents on the

Spaarne in Haarlem. Nothing was ever heard of Bob Peeters again.

In the 1970s and 1980s, I received dozens of phone calls from people who wanted a boat at sea. For instance, one Belgian called me who had a barge full of gravel and wanted to start an offshore radio station with it. His question was if I could just provide the necessary financiers and auxiliaries. He also had extra generators on the quay and wondered where he could buy transmitters. At Vroom and Dreesmann in the Netherlands, I replied. Never heard from the man again.'



Steph Willemse Photo SMC Archive

The next question Steph was allowed to answer was: But hadn't Toornvliet, through his assistant, made a considerable sum of money available to Peeters for that time? Steph: 'Not true, but his adviser did donate the necessary money from her own budget. As early as May 1970, Rev. Toornvliet, who at the time was also active for Capital Radio and a station in Paramaribo and in later years could also be heard on Radio Mi Amigo and Radio Caroline, had been approached by Peeters. In a conversation, Toornvliet soon realised it was not a good plan to invest a hefty sum as he did not trust Peeters.'

The former investigative journalist Jassies published his article on Peeters on 16 January 1971, stating that Toornvliet had reported to him: 'The plan was nice but the figure too dubious which he also let his assistant know.' So in retrospect, it was not Toornvliet who invested but his assistant who appealed to her savings and suggested to Peeters to buy the boat, partly from her money.

Jassies managed to report that Ms. Oosterveld was certainly not the only person who had been swindled by Peeters: 'It was Mr. Weiler, staff officer at the Red Cross in Amsterdam who listened eagerly to Peeters' stories.' Weiler turned out to be so enthusiastic that he made as much as 85,000 guilders available, this partly Peeters' plans to also organise sailing trips with the ship, each time allowing disabled children to come along. A day out, as it were. But Weiler later stated that he had fallen for Peeters' plans with open eyes and could therefore whistle for his money, which also meant for Ms. Oosterveld that the investment she made in the Hendrik-Jan would never be recouped.

And Peeters had his fantasies because he assumed he could certainly take this pleasure yacht out to sea. In interviews, he went wild by claiming he could even sail to the African interior to provide books and medical assistance and certainly take a minister on board for religious and anointing messages.

At the time, Jassies also delved into the past of the Zaandam-born Peeters, who had worked as a street photographer, among other things, and concluded, 'Suspected of several offences against law and authority, he disappeared to Spain in 1963 but also got into trouble there for not returning a rented car.' Further investigation revealed his alleged involvement with the Belgian Foreign Legion.

Peeters himself stated in 1970 that he had done everything forbidden by God in his life. 'I have really been a bad dog who has been in touch with justice everywhere'. Mysteriously, the question remains whether some of Weiler and Oosterveld's savings have resurfaced. What is very clear, however, is that the Hendrik-Jan was never used as a broadcasting ship for a charitable or any other purpose and that Peeters disappeared from the horizon.

@ Hans Knot 2025



Hans Prakke

Photo Archive Beeld en Geluid Hilversum

It was announced on January 9th that Hans Prakke died in Zwolle on the 7th of January. At Radio Noordzee in the early 1970s, he was responsible for 'reporting' the Tour de France on board the broadcasting ship. However reporting he would do some years later from the Tour de France and then for a long time, together with Heinze Bakker and Theo Koomen, among others. Consequently, he was also employed by NOS for a long time. Later, he would become a councilor in the municipality of Zwolle and set up his own PR agency, among other things. Hans Prakke turned 75 years old.



January 13th from Jon at the Pirate Hall of Fame: We are sad to hear of the death of former Caroline South and Britain Radio DJ Garry Kemp at the age of 90. You can read about Garry's life and career at

<https://www.offshoreradio.co.uk/djsk.htm#kemp> . Our condolences to his family and friends.

And there's another update on our Photo Archive on Flickr with thanks to Martin van der Ven: Radio Day 2006 in Amsterdam Hotel Casa 400, James Wattstraat 75, Amsterdam. Martin Green (Groen) [Radio City]. Ferry de Groot [RNI]. Robbie Owen with his VoP slide show.

The Voice of Peace Reunion: Johnny Moss (Lewis), Bob Noakes, Don Stevens, Robbie Owen, Noam Tal, Chris Pearson, Richard Staines (Steve Silby), Keith York, Ray Sarsfield, Gil Katzir, Guy Starkey, Kas Collins (Kas van Iersel), Nigel Harris, Geoff Fitch, Bill Danse, John Dwyer, Avi Bar, Gad Bitton, Mike Galloway, Arbel Eshet (Israeli Television).

Enda Caldwell, Herbert Visser, Elija van den Berg, Peter Hartwig, Werner Hartwig, Jan Sundermann, Freddie Schorsch, Graham Gill, Ad Roberts, Wim van Egmond, Edo Peters, Hendrik van Nellestijn, Jan Veldkamp (Parent), Sietse Brouwer, Andrew Austin, Marc Jacobs, Ferry Eden, Peter (Age) Jager, Peter Chicago.

Photos © Martin van der Ven (mvdv) and Noam Tal [nt].

250 pictures at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720322649745>



Only Morag on Voice of Peace

At the end of November 2006 Hans Knot and Martin van der Ven received an email from Israel: 'My name is Orly Morag (Granit) and I was one of the DJ's on the Peace Ship in the mid 70's, for a short while (I have some pictures I could send if you are interested). I was not informed of the Radio Day that took place in Amsterdam recently. Since I am not a heavy user of the internet, I did not know about the gathering in Amsterdam until it was reported on Israeli TV. Anyway, it doesn't really matter if someone was physically there. As I can see, the good spirit is present, and that is what matters, isn't it. Eventually, otherwise there would have been no chance for peace.

Just for the record: I broadcasted on the Peace Ship only three times, during the mid 70's, each period - a week or so, during vacation from my University studies, and after my army service

as a broadcaster on Galei Zahal, the Israeli Army radio station. Today I work for the Israel Broadcasting Authority, dealing with classical music and poetry. I enclose some historical pictures with a few names I hope I still remember ...?'

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720322706766>

Ian Godfrey is one of our visual handicapped people and is living in London. He made a remarkable visit to Harwich from which he reports: 'Many thanks for the Christmas Report. I'm still not in a position to respond in the way I'd like to, due to an ongoing voice software problem.

I must say that on Saturday I spent about an enjoyable hour aboard the LV18. I'd booked to Harwich International, feeling sure I had a pretty good chance of getting a cab, but was advised that the Town station was a lot nearer the ship. On leaving the station, I turned right, down a narrow road, lined with parked cars and know trace of human activity, so didn't feel confident I'd be able to make it without help but, after a few minutes, a local lady offered to assist, and was determined to stay with me till I was met by someone from the LV18. I had a brief chat with Tony O'Neil; then Chris Cooper and Rick Marks gave me a guided tour but, as a wheelchair-user, this was limited to about two-thirds of the deck! One of them (a bit difficult to distinguish who was who, as they sounded very similar!) offered to take a few photographs of the studio for me which was great, as Keith Skues was on air at the time! After I got some pretty satisfactory shots of the ship from the quay, followed by a few minutes reminiscing about tuning into test transmissions of RNI and Caroline, they assisted me back to the station and, with a

good connection at Manningtree, I was back home just in time to get a namecheck! I'm glad I made the effort.

Happy New Year to you and your family. Best Wishes, Ian.'

It shows how very helpful unknown people can be in nowadays world. If anyone in the London area can help Ian with his computer problems please mail me at HKnot@home.nl for his e mail address.

About reporting is the next e mail from Jan Sundermann in Germany:

Dear Hans, dear Jana, a merry and a healthy and peaceful year 2025!



Over the decades, it has become more and more a rare moment, that I have been writing a reception report. But so I did in reaction of last Sundays Weekend Music Radio Scotland broadcast on shortwave. Then I thought: when possible receiving an electronic QSL card, then I also could send an electronic IRC.

Most of us will remember buying expensive IRCs at the local postal office for adding to reception reports aimed a schoolboy operated pirates or local stations heard in the tropical bands. Very understandable, such stations have had no budget for reply postage as the big state owned ones.

Best regards

Jan Sundermann'.

It was Herman Pothoven who sent us some photos from RNI days as well as Mi Amigo 272, which are now in our massive archive on internet:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720323459646/with/54293184834>

Jon Myer has updated **The Pirate Radio Hall of Fame**.

New this month:

- We have part 3 of the Laser Story - Here Come the Laserettes;
- some press cuttings from the Laser era;
- and, remembering the sixties, there is the chance to download "Making Waves", David Sinclair's excellent e-book about his time working on Radio Essex, Radio 270 and Radio 390 - *free of charge!*

My thanks to all the contributors.

Best wishes, Jon

www.offshoreradio.co.uk

Martin van der Ven has updated the Broadcasting Fleet with another interesting article about a Canadian who, during World War II, made his own radio station possible: Jimmy Tapp broadcasting from the HMCS Wasaga

<https://offshoreradio.info/hmcs-wasaga/>

Suriname missed out of offshore radio station

By Hans Knot

Radio broadcasts from ships have played an important role in international waters off Western Europe, often aiming to challenge government control over radio waves—and with success. Of course, there have been similar attempts outside Europe, with two major examples being Radio Hauraki off the coast of New Zealand and The Voice of Peace for the people of the Middle East. Off the U.S. coast, there was Radio New York International, which was quickly shut down by the authorities. Naturally, there have also been several failed political projects, such as Radio Brod during the Balkan crisis.

However, little to nothing has been written about the plans for a politically oriented offshore radio station targeting the government of the then-young state of Suriname in the mid-1980s. In 2007, Hans Knot came across a number of slide negatives and decided to finally make public the knowledge that he and Rob Olthof had gathered at the time.

Readers over fifty from the Netherlands might recall learning about Suriname mainly from geography and history books. Suriname was once a thriving overseas territory, part of the Dutch Kingdom, and home to a diverse population. Besides the indigenous Amerindians, various groups had settled there over time from all corners of the world, including Indonesia—another former Dutch colony. By the 1970s, the population consisted of Creoles, Javanese, Hindustanis, Chinese, and Europeans.



In 1975, a grand celebration took place in Suriname, as the country gained independence from the Netherlands, believing itself strong enough to establish its place in the world as a sovereign nation. But was the country truly ready to develop into a well-functioning state? Different groups had varying opinions about independence, largely shaped by their circumstances.

The Creoles were the strongest proponents of independence. As a sizable portion of the population, they felt confident in their ability to lead the new nation. Their political leader, Henck Arron, made this clear when the Creoles won the 1973 elections and immediately pushed for independence. The Hindustani community, however, had mixed feelings—while some supported independence, others saw no issue with remaining part of the Netherlands. Meanwhile, the Javanese believed it would have been far better for Suriname to remain a Dutch territory.

There was also a modest number of Dutch nationals living in Suriname at the time. Like the Javanese, most of them believed Suriname should remain under the Netherlands' protection and opposed the creation of an independent state. So, it all seemed like a grand celebration when Suriname finally gained independence, but the joy was short-lived. The country had been under Dutch rule for so long that independent decision-making and self-governance were unfamiliar concepts for its people. In fact, during the first years of independence, 90% of Suriname's funding came from the Netherlands. This was essentially development aid, making the new nation even more dependent on its former colonial ruler. Moreover, the politicians of the young state had no real idea how to govern, and everything quickly started to go wrong.

While the independence treaty allowed the Dutch government to influence Surinamese politics under the Development Cooperation Agreement, the Netherlands chose not to intervene.

As a result, corruption flourished, elections were plagued by fraud, and nepotism took hold. Eventually, the situation in Suriname deteriorated to the point where even in the Netherlands, confidence in the parliamentary democracy there was lost. An infamous date remains February 25, 1980, when a group of sergeants staged a coup and successfully installed Desi Bouterse as their military leader, head of government, and chairman of the country's highest political authority, the "Topberaad" (High Council). It didn't take long for many Surinamese and the Dutch to realize that Bouterse was the wrong choice. He ruled with an iron fist, eliminating opponents and crushing protests. In December 1981, at least fifteen people were executed for opposing his regime.

This occurred during the presidency of Henk Chin A Sen, who was appointed in 1980. Born in Albina, Suriname, Chin A Sen studied medicine at the Medical School of Paramaribo and graduated in 1959. He worked as a general practitioner until 1961, after which he moved to the Netherlands to specialize in internal medicine. Upon returning to Suriname, he worked at the St. Vincentius Hospital in Paramaribo and joined the Nationalist Republican Party (PNR), which supported Suriname's independence, though he was not an active member.

On March 15, 1980, following the Sergeants' Coup that brought Bouterse and his military council to power, Chin A Sen was unexpectedly appointed Prime Minister of Suriname. He formed a leftist government that included two members of the National Military Council (NMR). However, it soon became clear that he was committed to restoring democracy and limiting the power of the NMR.

Due to internal conflicts within the National Military Council (NMR) — which eventually led to an internal coup by Bouterse within the NMR — Henk Chin A Sen was initially able to strengthen his position. However, once the NMR regained control, a serious conflict arose between Chin A Sen and Bouterse in 1981 over the direction the

country should take. Bouterse aimed to establish a socialist and revolutionary society, with the NMR pulling the strings in the background, while Chin A Sen sought to restore democracy. In 1981, the NMR rejected a draft constitution proposed by Chin A Sen, escalating tensions between the government and the military.



Chin A Sen

Chin A Sen's birthday celebration on January 18th at the presidential palace was used by his supporters as a demonstration against the NMR's power. On February 4, 1982, Chin A Sen resigned after failing to reach an agreement with Bouterse on the allocation of Dutch development aid and the draft constitution. He left the newly independent Suriname and went into exile in the Netherlands. After the December 1982 murders, he was elected chairman of the Council for the Liberation of Suriname, which opposed Bouterse's regime from the Netherlands — though with little success. Chin A Sen later connected with Ronnie Brunswijk and his Jungle Commando, which waged an armed struggle against Bouterse.



Steph Willemse

Opposition could, of course, take many forms, such as financing Brunswijk's Jungle Commando, which often, albeit secretly, held meetings in the Netherlands. At one such gathering, Chin A Sen met Steph Willemse, who had previously attempted to set up two offshore radio projects. Inspired by Willemse's stories, Chin A Sen agreed that same evening to meet again and explore the possibility of launching a similar project off the coast of Suriname.

After several discussions, the two concluded that, provided they secured sufficient funding, Willemse and his associates would prepare a ship to serve two purposes. The vessel would operate as a temporary radio ship in international waters off Suriname's coast, broadcasting messages advocating for the country's democratization, something Bouterse and his regime strongly opposed. Additionally, Chin A Sen envisioned another use for the ship: as a troop transport. Small groups of 'fighters' could board in international waters and, under the cover of night, approach the Surinamese coast to join Brunswijk's guerrilla forces.



Planned radio ship for Suriname

Chin A Sen and Willemse set out to find a suitable ship, eventually locating one in the port of Scheveningen. The MV Maria (SCH33), a former fishing trawler, was inspected and deemed fit for the mission. A down payment was required to secure an option on the ship through a broker. Chin A Sen's direct contacts and financial resources provided the initial funds, while Willemse sought additional investors to equip the vessel as a broadcasting station. The former president also hoped to persuade former Surinamese nationals living in the Netherlands to participate in the project.

One of the first people Steph approached for radio transmission equipment was Edje Bakker. He asked him about the possibility of acquiring one or more "Harrys"—American-made transmitters that were being dumped on the Dutch market at the time. These transmitters were widely used by land-based pirate stations like Radio Centraal in The Hague and Radio Unique in Amsterdam. Steph wasn't only thinking about the Surinamese project but also about his own future. If the radio ship returned after completing its mission for Suriname, it could be repurposed for offshore broadcasting off the Dutch coast. In that case, the FM-compatible Harry transmitters would be crucial.



Transmitter engineer Edje Bakker

The first funds were spent, and the Harrys were delivered to Steph's place in Haarlem. One of the people he contacted was Rob Olthof, an avid offshore radio enthusiast since the early 1960s. Olthof had previously interacted with Willemse:

"In 1973, Hans Knot, the then-editor-in-chief of *Pirate Radio News*, whom you probably know, asked me to interview Steph Willemse. At the time, Steph's radio ship, the *MV Condor*, was anchored in international waters off the coast of Zandvoort. To meet him, I had to go to his home at Rijksstraatweg 683 in Haarlem, where he lived with Fietje van Donselaar.

During that first meeting, Steph told me that Radio Condor would broadcast on 270 meters (AM), featuring various religious groups and evangelists speaking on air. He also had a clear vision for the station's music format, as he was a huge jazz and blues fan. So, he promised that this genre would be a regular part of the programming. The following Saturday, he invited me to visit his 'plaything', the radio ship. The plan was to take a tender from the port of IJmuiden to the vessel.

That Saturday afternoon, I first visited my favorite seaside town, Zandvoort. On my portable radio, I picked up some faint beeps and

blips on 1115 kHz. The test tones were so weak that I had to turn the volume all the way up to hear anything. Unfortunately, those test signals were all that ever came of it. A major technical failure and financial troubles forced Willemse to sell the ship. However, it eventually made it on the air as *Radio Atlantis* under the leadership of the Belgian broadcaster Adriaan van Landschoot."

That wasn't Steph Willemse's only failed project in the 1970s. Rob Olthof continued:

"Steph was also involved in the planned broadcasts of the SOR (a project by Bob Peeters from Haarlem). The ship resembled a small weekend boat and had a few illegal Portuguese immigrants on board. Bob Peeters had absolutely no knowledge of offshore radio, and to my surprise, he told Steph and me that he was planning to have dockworkers drill a pole straight through the middle of the ship to serve as an antenna mast. Naturally, nothing ever came of that plan.

I stayed in touch with Steph, even after he moved to a beautiful house in Kenaupark, Haarlem. A few years later, the Dutch Radio Control Service confiscated a transmitter from his home, it was meant for *Radio Delmare*. That station was active in the late 1970s, led by Gerard van Dam, with Steph involved in the project. Peter Chicago was reportedly the one who modified a surplus military transmitter to be used by *Radio Delmare*. One Saturday morning, Steph called me, telling me to avoid phone contact for the time being, as Gerard van Dam was testing the transmitter in the port of Scheveningen."

A few years passed after Steph's involvement with *Radio Delmare* before he became engaged in another offshore radio project—this time, the aforementioned plan for a station off the coast of Suriname. He made phone calls to Amsterdam, including one to Rob Olthof, to see if he could find people willing to participate in the project. Strangely enough, despite Olthof's knowledge of Willemse's past failed ventures, he found the idea intriguing and even

considered financially investing himself. An invitation followed for further discussions.



Rob Olthof

Rob Olthof: "This time, around mid-1984, Steph was much more driven than in previous projects, and his story about Henk Chin A Sen inspired me to continue the conversation. He explained the dual purpose of the project and how it was intended to be financed. Steph mentioned that Dutch investors would eventually be able to recover their funds. The plan was that within six to nine months, the impact of the radio ship off the Surinamese coast would achieve its goal, replacing the Bouterse regime with a more democratic government. Upon the ship's return, it would shift to broadcasting a more commercial message off the Dutch coast, benefiting the larger investors."

Olthof became increasingly intrigued. After four discussions, he was convinced and contributed a substantial amount from his personal funds to Steph's venture. Soon, he was invited to inspect the future radio ship, which had already been partially paid for by Henk Chin A Sen.

Olthof: "Like many fishing vessels at the time, the future radio ship *MV Maria* was laid up in the port of Scheveningen, and we went to visit it. From the outside, it looked well-painted, and the interior had been adequately prepared for a decent start. The ship had been freshly painted, and the engine room was in excellent condition. I felt confident that my money was well-invested and would be easily recovered."

Meanwhile, Steph dug out his extensive record collection in Haarlem to contribute to the project. A mobile studio was also set up, which could be used during gatherings and parties held by Surinamese communities in the Netherlands. Through organizing *drive-in* shows, Sen's fellow countrymen were encouraged to donate funds to the liberation project.



MV Maria (Scheveningen 33)

All of Chin A Sen's activities were aimed at overthrowing the Bouterse regime. He was actively involved in the *Council for the Liberation of Suriname*, which had an office in Rijswijk. However, Bouterse and his allies had enough contacts in the Netherlands to closely monitor the council's activities.

In March 1985, the Netherlands was shocked by a brutal attack on the Council for the Liberation's office. The true motive behind the attack was never fully clarified. Three members of a music band were killed. At the time, media reports suggested that Henk Chin A Sen was also in the building, though this was never confirmed. The attack left him deeply shaken, leading him to reconsider his priorities. He ultimately decided to focus on leading a normal working life rather than continuing with the planned activities.

Olthof: "Overnight, it became clear that once again, Steph's dream of launching an offshore radio station would not materialize. All the equipment had been procured or was on order. Henk Chin A Sen had already made a down payment on the future radio ship, which was held by a shipbroker.

However, following the attack, the remaining balance was never paid, and the option expired. It was an expensive dream for all of us, one that, as of 2007, only lives on in our memories and old slides capturing brief moments in time."

Henk Chin A Sen passed away in 1999, while Steph Willemse died in 2004. Rob Olthof left us in 2013.

33 photos: An ill-fated project for Suriname

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72177720323571785>

More information about the MV Maria (Scheveningen 33)

<https://offshoreradio.info/m-v-maria-scheveningen-33/>

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Obituary by Paul Rusling

In the 60s, calls to Caroline International were handled by young Miss Rosalie Siedenburg, an Amsterdam dolly-bird, better known as Pinky, who manned the office at Singel 160, bleached Spangles hair, and looked after the hundreds of visitors (many slept in the studio upstairs). Among those in love with her was Johnnie Walker and even Georgie Best, who called the Caroline Office every week from his home in Belfast. Pinky was always an angel but developed some health problems in recent months. A few days ago the hospital treatments for her 78 year old heart and lungs finally got her, and now God has called her back to heaven. Pinky's love and affection for radio, music and DJs live on forever in many broken hearts.



Photos copyright Radio Caroline Bible

I first met Pinky many years ago while in Amsterdam with Mike Hayes, a dear old friend from Radio 270, who had made his home there. Mike had applied for a job on Caroline and Pinky interviewed him, but the weather was very bad so he could not go, and he took a job DJing at a club in Germany instead - and then the ships were towed in.

Pinky and I were both big enthusiasts for music, radio and the club scene and she told how she had worked in the Caroline office at Singel 160 before Caroline moved in. Her previous employer, called Investors Overseas Services was run from there and when she heard that Radio Caroline were taking over she visited and saw Terry Bate, busy moving boxes in from the London office. He interviewed her for the job at the Amsterdam Hilton and the next day Pinky sat down at her old desk in Singel 160 to organise the new base for Caroline International. Pinky: "They previously had a small office at the Koninginneweg in the south of Amsterdam, a long distance from everywhere. I always liked to live in the middle of the place that I think was the best city in the world. Amsterdam was where everything was happening, and now Radio Caroline"

"The offices was an official base for all our communications to the ship and the public face of Caroline. It was so busy, people looking for jobs, bringing music to be played, and DJs looking for jobs. Every day we had many listeners arrive at the office; they just wanted to see where the station was happening. We let them look at pictures and made some explanation of it all to them. Some had nowhere to stay and so the really nice people, we allowed to stay in the offices and sleep in a big room in the attic. There was a small recording studio there, but I dont think was ever used."

"Caroline's office, like most places in central Amsterdam, was not very big; we had a nice big reception room with a settee facing the canal, plenty of drinks, plus the operating office. Behind that there

was a private office that I used, especially for telephone calls, and a small conference room at the back, mainly used by Ronan when he was over here. Plus some rooms upstairs never used, just for storage of old papers and music."

"Telephone calls were a big part of our day, I don't know how many, but when we put the phone down from one call it would usually ring again. We had separate numbers for public and private, it was essential. The boys on the ships would often talk about the office on the air and many people would write to us direct, I still have a lot of fan-mail. Some of the telephone calls were interesting. A lot of people ringing were singers wanting us to play their music on the air. Long John Baldry called a lot, and many others."

"One regular telephone caller, every Friday morning, was a young guy from Belfast called George Best, who called with long lists of requests for all his friends in Belfast. He was lonely in Manchester where he played for Manchester United and wanted to send greetings to all his pals back home in Belfast, where we had thousands of listeners. He took me out to dinner and then got into trouble when I took him to the Amsterdam clubs, not allowed as he was playing the next day!"



Caroline kantoor aan de Singel in Amsterdam

Pinky and Johnnie Walker had a very special close relationship for some time; she really did love everyone and was also like a 'mother chicken' in Amsterdam for Caroline DJs, taking them out for a few beers and show them the sights of Amsterdam, which she was always very proud of.

Over many years I often met with Pinky and we would talk many hours about music and radio, and the life in nightclubs. She was always excited about a new idea or initiative, sometimes calling up at strange times with the latest news or idea. She never forgot anything - we could meet again after a gap of five years and she could remember our last conversation, and the music playing. Pinky had a special idea of time, in a Caroline world, everything was always alive and buzzing, night time was equal to daytime, the world never stopped, so Caroline people should continue. Always!

Over the last year or two years her health has deteriorated, and she frequently had to stay in the hospital for treatment for her heart and lung problems. She was waiting for a donor heart, but this didn't happen in time for Pinky. She became increasingly short of breath, but she continued trying to help others, right until the very end in early February. Her final mission was to find a home for her darling ginger cat, Pom.

And now this gorgeous, loving Amsterdam Angel has returned to heaven where she can again see so many Caroline heroes who are up there - Johnnie, the Admiral, 'Mucky Merike' (her name for Stevie), plus Jimmy, Ronan and Oonagh.

Pinky - it was an honour knowing you in your favourite place - old Amsterdam.

Paul Rusling February 13th 2025

We come to an end with this edition of the Hans Knot International Report. I hope you've enjoyed it and reflections, questions, memories, photos and more you can always send to me versus my e mail address HKnot@home.nl

You will hear from me again somewhere in spring.
Best wishes Hans Knot.