

## Hans Knot International Report 2026 (1)

Welcome to the first edition of the international report for 2026. It's a special year as, believe it or not, the report is this year 25 years of age. Originally it was named 'News from Holland' and as more and more international items came in the name was changed. Since 2001 284 reports were published and Martin van der Ven has put all those issues on line: <https://offshoreradio.info/international-radio-report/>

This time we have some exclusive stories in the report.

Peter Clayton next: 'Hello Sir Surprise I am still alive. Just a quick story about Tony Allan. I got a phone call, do you remember Tony. He is not well could you give him a call. So developed 2 cases a week etc. Tony had been given 3 months to live. The Ross Revenge was at the Isle of Sheppey and Tony came there. 11.0.clock the first morning I banged on his cabin door and said Yorkshire way "just because you are dying of cancer get out of bed." Tony commented with 'Just what I needed a kick up the ass.



Ross Revenge in Rochester Photo: Rob Olthof

Every time we went to the ship Tony would come along and we had a whale of a time. He came on two of the moves on tow. In Rochester I sent him shopping. My pal came pack with two trolley loads. I told I cannot pay for that lot but Tony told me: "do not worry dear the banks have given me a credit card. We used to drink a lot at night. We sat one night in the record library and he used certain smoking to ease pain. Cutting this round we tried a puff it ended up with old Tommy not 1 puff but the full length and don't reckon much to that stood up to go to toilet and walked into the wall. I told Tommy there was a gay man coming on cannot do with them. After a day they became great buddies.



*Gerhard Fiolka, Peter Clayton, André Hardy. MV Ross Revenge off Queenborough July 2000 photo: Martin van der Ven*

The three months rolled into years he came up north and stopped a number of times. I cannot typing on these things but could tell some wonderful stories. Everybody thought I was gay when Tony started 'the hello darling routine'. So we discussed the passing of time and he said do not let me be forgotten and said a prayer together only my team knew how close we were. And I like to think the 3 months to 3 years were because of meeting the Northerners and the Ross

Revenge. Well I have lots of stories if anyone wants to hear more like the invite to his flat. I spoke to him minutes before he passed away .Never forget the kindest lovely man.'

Best wishes Peter Clayton, the nearly forgotten 30 year engineer.

Thanks a lot Peter sharing your memories of a wonderful friendship with Tony Allan.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2026, the sad news of Bert Bennet's death was announced on the Mi Amigo 50 website: 'It is with a heavy heart that we say goodbye to a true radio legend. Bert Bennett (Bert Wijfjes) is no longer with us. For the generation that grew up with free radio, Bert was the familiar voice from the North Sea.

As the figurehead of Radio Mi Amigo, he brought the magic of the offshore radio stations to life; a pioneer who added colour to an unforgettable era in radio history.

I had the privilege of getting to know Bert closely during the Mi Amigo 40, 45 and 50 anniversary years. What will always stay with me is the man behind the microphone: an incredibly gentle and amiable man. A consummate professional with a wealth of know-how, who was always willing to share his passion and knowledge with a smile.

Bert, the waves of the North Sea sound a little quieter today. Thank you for the music, the stories and your warm personality. You will be greatly missed, but your voice will remain forever in the ether of our memories.

Rest in peace, Bert. Peter (Ad) Mi Amigo 50.



Frans van der Drift and Bert Bennet 2016 Photo Willem de Bruin

Of course, diehards also know Bert Bennet from the period in 1973 when he worked for Radio Caroline and made the switch to Radio Atlantis. From January 1974, he could be heard on Radio Mi Amigo. After his DJ period, Bert Wijfjes - his real name - worked for the regional broadcaster Oost.

For more see: <https://offshoreradio.info/in-memoriam-bert-bennett/>

In November we also heard of the passing of Don Robinson. Here's what Paul Rusling wrote: So sad to hear that the founder of Radio 270 and one time Chairman of Hull City, Don Robinson passed away this morning the 5th, aged 91.



Don started his business career renting out trampolines on the beach in Scarborough and was also a semi-pro wrestler as well as Rugby League player for HKR. He also brought the Stones to the area and booked Ike & Tina Turner into Brid Spa for £36. An amazing man, who will be much missed. RIP Don.'

December 9<sup>th</sup> the sad news came in from the nowadays Caroline organization: 'We are very sad to hear of the death of DJ Tony Christian. Tony worked on a number of radio stations, including land-based pirate stations, before joining Radio Caroline for a period in 1986 on board Ross Revenge. Since then he has broadcast on Caroline on a number of occasions, and until very recently had a regular weekly show on Caroline Flashback.'

The Pirate Hall of Fame brought us more information: Tony Christian was a mobile disco DJ then progressed to residencies in nightclubs as a compère and DJ. He got involved with a local hospital radio station and then joined the Radio Thamesmead community station. He was heard on a number of London land based pirates including JFM, LWR and Skyline Radio. He moved to RTM FM and Music Power Radio in Ireland, then Radio Sovereign International in Italy. He joined Caroline on 30th June 1986 but only stayed until the 21st July because of family commitments. He has been heard on Caroline again since, on land, on various Restricted Service License broadcasts and the satellite/internet incarnation, as well as on Radio Seagull.'



This photo shows Tony in the Radio Caroline studio during one of the RSL broadcasts. It is from his YouTube page.

Next an e mail from Gary Atkinson in Leeds: 'Hello Hans, I've just read your latest radio report, and as always much look forward to and enjoy, in particular the you tube link to a full track called Seagull, latter part relating to out on the rolling sea... I recall this segment being used on an opening jingle to the English service in, or around 1973 on Radio Caroline. The full jingle was a welcome to the Caroline, family on 259 spoken over the magical mystery tour by the Beatles, and ends with this rolling sea segment. I always wanted that jingle and also thought it was one of the best jingles of Caroline ever. I'm unsure who's voice it was, and was maybe produced onboard ship. ? Heard it on some collector tapes off air, in rather poor quality, same it was never included in any CDs, etc. the history of Caroline and other notable discs. My search continues and ironic I now know the end bit and where it comes from.'

(It's the voice of Mike Hagler ed.)

Anyway Hans enough of my babble, once again many thanks for another year of great reads and history segments and news in your much respected hard work in compiling these. Also another of many sad losses to people who gave us much enjoyment over the airwaves, wherever they was broadcasting from. I can recall hearing most of them, over the years I've been keen radio fan.

All the best to you and yours Hans, have a merry Christmas and a very prosperous and healthy 2026 and to the next read of your reports. Regards Gerry in Leeds, Yorkshire.'

Nest an update for our massive photo archive. 98 photo's from Veronica, RNI and more:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/offshoreradio/albums/72157682711719304>

Mike Grant on December 15<sup>th</sup>: I was well pleased to see Norman Barrington's post where it's stated that Radio Seagull will have loads of old shows rebroadcast over the Xmas holidays. It got me thinking was there ever any announcement on Radio Caroline back in 1973 to let listeners know that the station name was changing to Seagull?

In a similar way, was there ever any announcement on Radio Seagull telling listeners that the station was changing back to Caroline in 1974? Well on our special Facebook Page it was answered by Norman Barrington: 'Simple answer is no and no!



Now the long answer: Caroline had been off air a couple of weeks due to Generator trouble. During that period, we completed the last two sections of the de Kerf mast. This resulted in moving the 389 sausage from the center of the main mast to the starboard top crosstree. We had a deadline to get Radio Atlantis on air originally intended for 389. Peter was having trouble retuning 389 to the new position on the mast (not due to the loss of the 389 crystal as some have falsely written).

Ronan did not allow him enough time to solve it, so Atlantis went on air on 259. At the same time, Ronan had done a deal with Barry, Hugh, Phil and others to replicate what they had been doing on Radio Geronimo. So they turned up at the office full of excitement and plans and a sizeable collection of alt rock and underground LPs. This was the last straw for Chris, who then left without warning. They

were lovely guys, and we instantly bonded, Ronan was hedging his bets, in case the new sound was a failure and so didn't want the name Caroline associated with it.

So when I went on air on the 24th July, without previous warning, it was called Seagull. By February 23rd 1974 the station was deemed a success although we wanted to tighten the format somewhat. For example bringing in a top 100 album chart. Thus Seagull cemented the station as an album station although not quite so outlandish, and more accessible to a wider audience. Hence February 24th we reverted to the name Caroline, although in practise, there was no discernable difference to the day before.



Steve England and Norman Barrington Caroline House The Hague 1973 (Poster show Belgian Singer Paul Severs) Photo collection Hans Knot.

Thus Radio Seagull caused Caroline to be the first fully fledged album station, having matured, as had we, and no longer just top 40, although when a good release came along, we were happy to play it. So both changes without warning, not even we knew what was happening, until it did! Listening to those first shows in 1973, listeners can hear the embryo of what was to follow, and listening to 1974 you can hear Caroline once again beginning to take shape.

And what a nice thing is our fb group as Mike Answered with: Norman Barrington Brilliant Norman....Thanks for the info....I had often wondered about how and why the change happened. So...The first day of Seagull then was 24th July 1973 and Caroline "returned" on 24 February 1974....? That's very useful to know when sorting recordings. Thanks again Norman!

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**Bruno Brandenberger from his own collection**

Next a message from Bruno Brandenberger on Face book: 'Hello, my friends. It has been a very long time since you heard from me. There are many reasons for this, but due to family circumstances, I was banned from all forms of internet communication. Now the time has come. I am 80 years old and would like to share the best time of my life with you once again. It was after my time in Biafra, and I was fortunate enough to devote myself to my latest challenge. That was Radio North Sea International.

I was very lucky to be able to attend the biggest open-air festival, Woodstock, as a VIP. My special thanks go to the directors of the record industry, especially Larry Trumain.

That's where I learned what 'music' is. It was 'demonised' in Europe and around the world! That was a major turning point in my life. It has stayed with me to this day!

I brought these impressions and the acquaintances I made with me into my work as a technician at Radio Nordsee International.

More RNI Memories next: Back in early 1971, RNI returned to the airwaves with Dutch-language programmes under the name "Radio Noordzee". The Strengholt Concern, the company behind the Dutch section of RNI, hired an installation company to carry out the necessary work. It was Ton Polderman who entered the old villa working for the company for a few days. Fifty-five years later, here are some of his memories of that time: 'In 1971, when I was sent to Frans Halslaan in Hilversum to replace the electrical wiring, I ended up in a rickety attic. And in a pass-through cabinet, which served as a speaking booth. I was busy installing pipes.



Studio building Frans Halslaan (Source unknown).

Accompanied by the necessary noise. Willem van Kooten, alias Joost den Draaijer, started chatting in that speaking booth, because the mic was on. I didn't notice that. Until Willem uttered the legendary words into the mic. "Sorry for the noise, but we're still busy renovating the studio at MEBO 2". Yes, yes. So the recording came from Hilversum. That was a great time. I also experienced smoke coming out of a recording device during the recording of a programme. It ended well, but the recording had to be transferred to another device.

They also stuck silver guilders to the elements of the turntables to prevent them from skipping when someone stormed up the steep wooden attic stairs, causing the entire attic floor to shake.

The day it was announced that the perpetrators of the attack on the MEBO II had been arrested, there was a big celebration on Frans Halslaan. I was working on the electrical system in studio 2, on the first floor, and had to stop work for a moment to join in the party. Super. What a time and what memories.'

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*USCGC Courier — The Floating Voice of Freedom*

*A Retrospective by Martin van der Ven (2025)*

"Armed with the greatest weapon of all: Truth."

With this motto, the USCGC Courier entered the Cold War. This ship was no ordinary naval vessel, but a floating relay station of the Voice of America (VoA). Between 1952 and 1964, it broadcast news, music and political programmes in up to sixteen languages to the Middle East, Eastern Europe and North Africa — always contending with the forces of nature, technical challenges, and deliberate jamming from the East.

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From Cargo Ship to Floating Radio Station (1945-1952)

The story of the *Courier* began without fanfare: in January 1945, the Froemming Brothers company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, laid the keel of a new freighter. Originally named *Doddridge*, the vessel was launched later that year as *M/V Coastal Messenger*.

Designed for the transport of military and naval cargo, the ship served in the late 1940s with the Standard Fruit & Steamship Company and the Grace Line, operating along the coasts of North and South America. On one of these voyages, the *Coastal Messenger* ran aground off Venezuela — an incident that ultimately led to her being laid up in the reserve fleet.



*USCGC Courier* - <https://www.history.uscg.mil/Our-Collections/Photos/igphoto/2003216772/>

In 1950, the US State Department conceived the idea of establishing a fleet of six radio ships that would serve as mobile relay stations for the Voice of America, broadcasting around the globe. In 1952, the *Coastal Messenger* was chosen to be converted into the first of these ships. She received new technical equipment, powerful transmitters — and a new name: *Courier*.

Originally, she was intended for deployment off the Korean Peninsula, but her course soon took a different, historically significant direction.

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## The Radio Ship USCGC Courier (WAGR-410)

The ship's official designation was WAGR-410, meaning:

- W - Coast Guard
- A - Auxiliary (work vessel)
- G - Large
- R - Radio

Technical Data:

Displacement: 5,740 t

Length: 103.25 m

Beam: 15.34 m

Draught: 5.26 m

Propulsion: Norberg diesel engine, 6 cylinders, 1,700 SHP, single screw

Maximum speed: 19.6 km/h

Range: 24,273 miles

Crew (1952): 10 officers, 80 seamen, 3 radio technicians, 1 programme coordinator

On board were two Collins 207B shortwave transmitters, coupled to folded disconnect antennas: one medium-wave antenna for higher frequencies on the starboard bow, and another for lower frequencies on the port side. There was also an RCA medium-wave transmitter with an output of 150 kW. Its modulator and 9C21 output stages were cooled by a distilled-water system, while the Collins transmitters were air-cooled and produced 35 kW each. Three 500 kW three-phase generators supplied power, two of which could run the entire station at full load.



Jean Wycoff Seymour with Panamanian officer aboard USCGC Courier - Voice of America, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

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### Commissioning Ceremony with President Truman

On 4 March 1952, the *Courier* was officially commissioned in Washington, D.C. President Harry S. Truman honoured the ship with these solemn words:

"The name *Courier* is aptly chosen. This ship will bring a message of hope and friendship to all who are oppressed by tyranny — a message of truth and light to those confused by the storm of lies the Communists have loosed upon the world. This ship carries a precious cargo: the truth."

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### Trial Voyages and First Test Broadcasts

Before entering full service, the *Courier* undertook a six-week trial voyage that took her to La Guaira (Venezuela), Cartagena (Colombia), Panama and Veracruz (Mexico). On 18 April 1952, the first test transmissions took place in the Panama Canal Zone — under the call sign KU2XAJ, on 6110 and 9690 kHz (shortwave, 35 kW) and 1510 kHz (medium wave, 150 kW).

Broadcasts ran daily from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m., and were received not only in the Caribbean but also in Europe and New Zealand. A typical announcement ran:

"Voice of America broadcasting via the *Courier*, the floating station KU2XAJ in the waters of the Panama Canal. This transmitter is testing its electronic equipment with programmes in the Spanish language on 1510 kHz, 9690 and 6110 kHz. VoA technicians welcome reception reports to: *Courier*, Apartado 2016, Balboa, Canal Zone."



**Jean Wycoff Seymour with Panamanian officer aboard USCGC *Courier* - Voice of America, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons**

On 18 June 1952, the *Courier* returned to New York. A month later, she set out across the eastern Mediterranean — via Tangier, Naples and Piraeus — finally arriving in the harbour of Rhodes on 22 August 1952. On 7 September, she officially began broadcasting.

**Influence on Guatemala**

In 1998, the then Technical Director of the Voice of America (VoA), Edgar T. Martin, stated in an interview that the first missions of the transmission ship USCGC *Courier* were by no means mere routine or test voyages, as officially presented at the time. Behind the mission, officially described as a "Goodwill Cruise", lay in fact a deliberate

political operation in the context of the Cold War and the United States' efforts to exert influence in Central America.

At the beginning of the 1950s, Guatemala was governed by the democratically elected president Jacobo Árbenz, whom the US government regarded as communist and therefore as a threat to its strategic interests in the region. During this period, the CIA launched a series of covert operations which eventually culminated in 1954 in the overthrow of the Guatemalan government.

According to Martin's account, the *Courier* - a converted Coast Guard cutter equipped with powerful transmitters - was part of these covert activities. Before being stationed at its later official operational site off the Greek island of Rhodes, the vessel was deployed in the Caribbean and off Central America. Its purpose was to use radio broadcasts to influence directly the political situation in Guatemala.

Outwardly, the mission was presented as a friendly demonstration voyage - a so-called "goodwill cruise". In reality, however, it was a tactical propaganda operation, known only to a small circle of VoA personnel - a few in the programming division and several technicians. During this operation, the ship visited a number of Central American ports south of Guatemala, strategically selected so that they lay within the range of the medium-wave transmitter, thereby allowing targeted influence broadcasts to be transmitted.

The mission was strongly criticised by the public and the press. Observers accused the Voice of America of wasting valuable resources by sending an expensive ship on what appeared to be a pointless cruise in the Caribbean, rather than deploying it for militarily or politically more relevant purposes - for example in the Middle East. Martin later explained that those involved had to accept such accusations in silence, as the true background of the mission was strictly classified.



His account therefore confirms that the first operational deployment of the USCGC Courier formed part of the United States' psychological warfare efforts in the run-up to the 1954 coup in Guatemala. The mission, officially described as a test voyage, in fact served as a targeted political influence operation - the Courier's first real tactical mission, and the beginning of the ship's later legendary career within the Voice of America.

<https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/mss/mfdip/2004/2004mar09/2004mar09.pdf>

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Broadcast Base: Rhodes

Rhodes — the mythical island of the sun god Helios and the site of the ancient Colossus — provided a symbolically charged setting for this "ship of truth". The island, part of Greece again since 1948, lay close to the Cold War's geopolitical fault line.

After years under Italian and German occupation, Greece was still deeply scarred by civil war when the Courier dropped anchor. The location was both strategic and symbolic: Greece had just joined NATO, and the presence of the American broadcast ship stood as a visible sign of Western solidarity.

The Courier was usually moored by the Fort of St Nicholas at the Mandraki harbour mole, though at times she lay at anchor about one nautical mile off the Agios Nikolaos lighthouse.

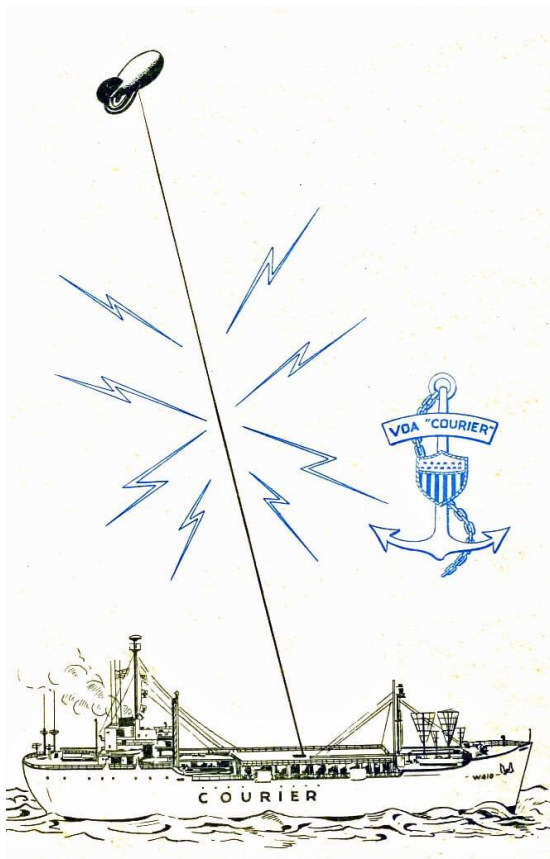
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## Unusual Aerials - and a Tale Involving Cows

For its medium-wave transmissions, the *Courier* initially used a tethered balloon antenna measuring 10.7 by 21 metres and filled with 4,250 cubic metres of helium. Five of these expensive balloons were kept on board. The system proved unreliable: strong winds often tore the antenna loose, sending it drifting — sometimes as far as Turkey.

This led to a curious diplomatic aftermath: several Turkish farmers were compensated after claiming their cows had stopped producing milk, having been frightened by a fallen balloon (Paul R. McKenna, *Naval History Magazine*, April 1991).

Eventually, the fragile system was replaced by a mast-supported inverted delta-loop antenna. For the conversion, the *Courier* was taken first to Malta, then to Thessaloniki, where new antenna installations were fitted. According to the Australian journal *Radio & Hobbies*, the ship even transmitted directly from Thessaloniki harbour for a time.



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## Between Jamming and Static

On medium wave, the *Courier* operated on 1259 kHz, while on shortwave it relayed VoA programmes in sixteen languages to the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

Unlike the offshore radio stations of the 1960s-1980s, the *Courier* did not broadcast outside territorial waters but within Greek jurisdiction — with the full consent of the government in Athens. This was diplomatically significant: the *Courier* belonged to the US Coast Guard and was under the control of the United States Information Agency (USIA), not the Navy. Her mission therefore remained officially civilian — a symbol of cultural rather than military presence.

Incoming VoA programmes were generally received from Tangier or directly from the United States. As the ship's own transmitters interfered with the receiving aerials at the stern, these were shielded with a so-called "birdcage" — an improvised Faraday cage. Even that proved insufficient, and a separate receiving station was built on the nearby Monte Smith (also known as St Stephen's Hill). The signal was relayed to the *Courier* by UHF radio — a far more stable and interference-free solution.

The *Courier's* call sign was NFKW. Her main tasks were to play recorded programmes and relay live feeds. But the airwaves were contested territory: from the East, Soviet and allied jammers tried to block her transmissions. It was a constant game of cat and mouse — electronics against electronics, or, as the Americans saw it, "truth against Communist propaganda".

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## Curiosities and Incidents

The *Courier's* immense transmitting power caused some unexpected side effects. Loose metal parts on board had to be earthed, as radio-frequency fields could otherwise charge them to dangerous levels, causing burns or even fires. One day, a helmsman was unable to reach a moored supply boat because the davit was literally too hot to touch — the soles of his shoes began to melt.

New arrivals were often greeted with a practical joke: a fluorescent tube that glowed brightly without being connected to anything — powered only by the ship's radio emissions.

The Mediterranean also held its surprises. One night, a fishing boat ignored repeated warnings to keep away. When the *Courier* began transmitting, St Elmo's fire — bluish discharges of electricity — danced along the aerials. A flash jumped to the mast of the fishing vessel, apparently striking its radio. The boat fled at full speed — and was never seen again.

Once, the *Courier* even served as a ferry: at the request of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of the Dodecanese, she transported him and a group of scouts to the nearby island of Kastellorizo — all while regular broadcasting continued.



Captive Balloon Supports 'Voice of America' Antenna aboard *CGC Courier*, 1952 - U.S. Coast Guard, Public domain

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## Life on Board and on Rhodes

Married crew members were permitted to bring their families to Rhodes. A small American community soon developed on the island, complete with homes, shops and a school where Greek teachers also taught.

At first, many islanders viewed the Americans with scepticism, but attitudes quickly changed. The Courier community stimulated the local economy, created jobs — and not infrequently led to friendships or even marriages between islanders and crew members.

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## The End of a Mission

After twelve years serving as the "Voice of Freedom", the Courier prepared to return to the United States in 1964. Final maintenance work was carried out in a shipyard at Skaramagas near Piraeus — and even there, while she hung in dry dock, she remained "on the air", earthed via a massive cable to the quay.

On 17 May 1964, the final broadcast went out over the airwaves. The technical equipment was handed over to Greece, and the ship began her voyage home — via Naples, Barcelona and the Azores. On 13 August 1964, the Courier reached the American east coast.

Two years later, she was recommissioned as a training vessel for the Coast Guard. In 1972 she was finally decommissioned, and in 1975 scrapped.

What remained was her legacy: a ship that fought not with weapons, but with words — and whose aerials for many years stood as symbols of a free and uncensored world.

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## Conclusion

The story of the USCGC Courier represents a unique chapter in the history of international broadcasting. It shows how, in the early 1950s, radio technology, diplomacy and ideology converged in the Mediterranean – and how a single radio ship became a symbol of faith in freedom.



There are also a Dutch as well as German version of this excellent in depth article, written by dr. Martin van der Ven on internet:

<https://offshoreradio.info/courier-nl/>

<https://offshoreradio.info/courier-de/>

Time for some interesting videos on you tube. BBC Radio Norfolk 2014 with Tom Edwards interviewing Keith Skues

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VowyrGQpOis>

Skipper Vic Davis and mate Brian Tyrrell supplying Radio 390 on the Red Sands Army Fort

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63q6EzSQKwY>

The story behind a photograph from 1973. Harm Koenders from the Netherlands was involved in the download club for many years, working with others to digitise old recorder tapes filled with historical radio recordings. At a certain point, this service ceased,

partly because Harm often changed hobbies. A few years ago, he committed himself to colourising a large number of black-and-white photos from numerous archives, including those related to offshore radio. This led to beautiful results.



But there were now too many photos, so in mid-November 2025, he dumped a large number of images whose creator he did not know, nor did he know what they represented. One of the photos immediately brought back memories of 1973 for me. Tineke from Veronica was in the photo, as were a number of other Veronica people, including Rob Out and director Bull Verweij.

But who were the other people who weren't from Veronica? It was time to contact Tineke in Laren again and ask her who else was in the photo. Her memory is still very good, because she replied within a few minutes with: 'Oh, this was the Veronica Flight In Show in 1973 with KLM. In the photo are the captain, a bride and groom, Rob Out, Tineke, Hans Mondt, Cees Man in 't Veld and Uncle Bull.'

At that moment, the bell started ringing for me, because there was quite a bit of information about this first Flight In show' in the world in the rich SMC archive. First of all, I took Hans Becker's beautiful photo book out of the cupboard. I had been in contact with him a few weeks earlier when he wanted the review I had written for his photo book in German. He had lost it, so I made sure he got it back. My memories were correct because his 2017 photo book also

contained a number of pages filled with photos of the 10-day trip for Radio Veronica listeners between 7 and 16 November 1973.

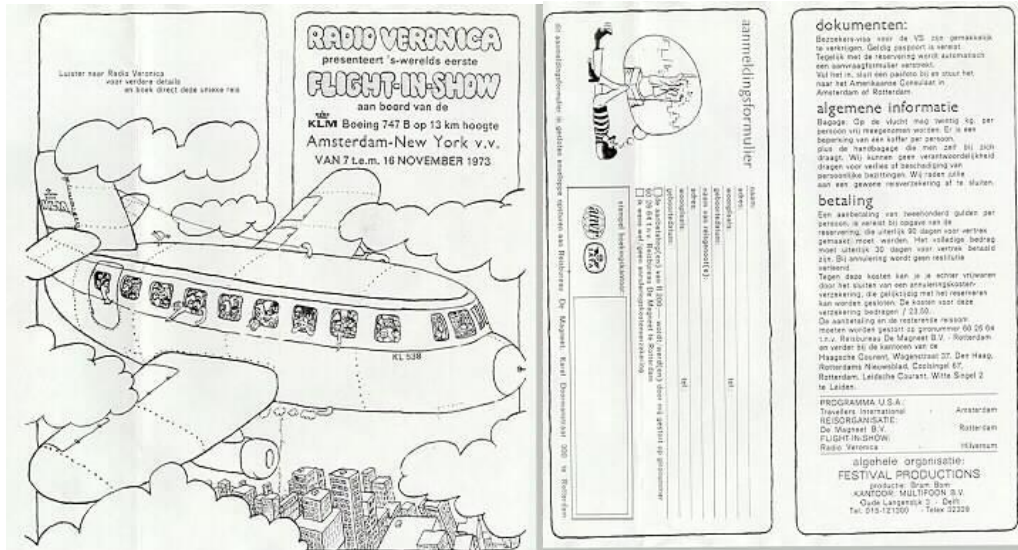
The photos had similarities with the copy provided by Harm Koenders. This made it possible to list the names of the people in the photo. The Captain was Mr. Ravenhill and the bride and groom were Anja Terlouw-Hoppenbrouwer and Joop Terlouw. In addition to the presence of director Bull Hendrik Verweij, it can be reported that his wife Emmy was also there.

There were also numerous artists on board, such as Nico Haak, Jaap "Boogiewoogie" Dekker, Vader Abraham, as well as Veronica technicians Karel van der Woerd and Ad Bouman. No fewer than 400 people in a Boeing 747, a beautiful new aircraft at the time. It flew to New York under flight number KL538. Tineke, 52 years after this special trip, recalls: 'It was fantastic, a conga line with many of the travellers high in the air on their way to a special trip. And then Jaap Dekker swinging to the boogie-woogie.'

The trip was organised on the initiative of Bram Bom from Rotterdam, who was the man behind Festival Productions at the time. Today, he is still active in the field of relations between the US and the Netherlands. Among others, the KLM travel agency participated in the financial support of the trip and various activities.

Tineke: 'We also visited a very well-known radio station in New York, which made a big impression. It was WCBS FM 101, one of the top stations at the time. There was also a female DJ who was hugely popular at the time, and after that visit, my colleagues understood why I worked at Veronica, and I never heard the boys complain again about it not being a woman's job.'

Other DJs included Bill Brown, Dick Heatherton, Norm N. Nite, Bill Winters and Don K. Reed. In 1973, Brown was also the programme director. WCBS-AM News Radio was also located in the same building.



Hans Knot November 2025

Our Offshore Library has been updated with the books we found this year were also the subject 'offshore radio' was mentioned, Have a look at: <https://offshoreradio.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Offshore-Radio-Library.pdf>

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Thumb sucker or pill spinner?

Let me take you back to 1970:

Thumb suckers have always been around

It was Thursday, 22 January 1970, when the former Dutch coaster Silvretta, renamed MEBO II, left the port of Slikkerveer for Rotterdam, where it was to be cleared for departure to international waters. The ship was destined to house the newest floating radio station, which would go on the air under the name Radio Nordsea International. An anchorage off the coast of the Netherlands had been chosen by the Swiss owners Erwin Meister and Edwin Bollier. In the weeks leading up to the departure, various newspapers had already revealed some details about the plans, prompting other people - who thought they had a say in the matter - to come forward.

# LEIDSCH DAGBLAD

DIRECTIEUR: E. A. E. van Dalen  
HOUTDRUKKER: Dhr. J. N. Dierckx  
DAGBLAD VOOR LEIDEN EN OMSTREKEN  
Wijk Regio 1, Leiden - Gelyk 9704  
Tijdschrift Directie en Administratie: Dinsd. 10.00  
F. 14.00 per week (postnummer 17.13); F. 4.00 per maand (incl. verzendingskost); jaarabonnement 42.00

RADIO NORDSEE INTERNATIONAL BEGINT VANNACHT MET UITZENDINGEN

## Nieuwe „piraat” op de Noordzee

DEN HAAG (CPD) — De nieuwste Europese piratenzender, de afwisselende Repetition Radio Nordsee International heeft vandaag ligplaats gekozen voor de Nederlandse Noordkust en heeft de eerste uitzendingen gemaakt. Als eerste vertrekt van de Zwitserse eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier vertrekt, komen de poppende vanaacht voor de eerste maal in de lucht.

Radio Duitse International, gevestigd aan de haven van de 'Van Riel' in Rotterdam, heeft de eerste uitzendingen gemaakt. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier.

De Centrale Directie van de PTT in Den Haag heeft aangekondigd dat de zender van de 'Van Riel' geen uitzendingen mag maken. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier.

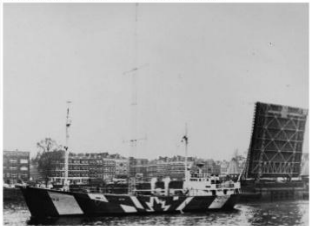
De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier.

Radio Meibach zal, aldus de eigenaars, voortdurend in de lucht zijn. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier. De zender wordt bestuurd door de eigenaars Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier.

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De nieuwe „piraat” op de Noordzee. De zender van de 'Van Riel' wordt bestuurd door Erwin Meister en Edwin Bollier.



On Friday 23 January 1970, the newspapers reported that, if everything went according to plan for Swiss owners Erwin Meister and Edwin Bollier, RNI would go on air for the first time the following night. The newspapers of the Gemeenschappelijke Persdienst (Joint Press Service) reported: 'The ship will be located off the Dutch North Sea coast, close to another pirate station, Radio Veronica. RNI will broadcast in German, French and English, initially on 102 metres and 942 metres.

A few days earlier, the owner of a number of chemists in Rotterdam and the surrounding area had indicated that he was financially involved in the new radio project. This man, Jacques Soudan, had previously worked for Radio Dolfijn - another offshore radio station active in parts of 1966 and 1967. On the day of departure, Meister and Bollier spoke at length to the press, where, of course, questions about Jacques Soudan's involvement were to be expected. It was Erwin Meister and Edwin Bollier who put an end to the fantasy story in a concise and powerful manner.

We have nothing to do with Mr. Soudan. We are the sole owners of the new broadcasting ship MEBO II. Mr. Soudan is a chemist and has

no connection whatsoever with our company MEBO Ltd, which is based in Zurich, Switzerland.

Let's go back to the article in which Jacques Soudan, then 33 years old, made his views known. He said he was commercially involved in the project and also had something to do with the programming. Jacques gave an interview to a morning newspaper, after which journalists (including radio and television) were crowding the pavement outside his chemist's shop in De la Reystraat in Rotterdam. Quite simply, some journalists took the story as true, noted down the necessary statements in their notebooks and sent the necessary information to their editors as a true story.

But on 23 January 1970, the GPD newspapers published the contradictory, but true, story of the Swiss owners: 'Bollier and Meister, two friendly Swiss gentlemen, say: "Mr. Soudan came to talk to us to see if he could be hired as a disc jockey for the Dutch programme. We decided not to work with him. He had nothing to do with our project, either commercially or financially."

Bollier and Meister, wearing smart suits and trendy ties, also state that they have nothing to do with other wealthy Swiss people when it comes to financing this radio project. 'We have had our own company in various telecommunications materials for several years and work mainly in African countries. We finance everything from our own resources and everything is arranged administratively from Switzerland.'

On the morning before their departure from Slikkerveen, both Swiss men expressed their surprise at Soudan's story in the canteen of the De Groot en Van Vliet shipyard. Meanwhile, at the Slikkerveen shipyard, the ship was being prepared for the trial run, which was to begin at ten o'clock.

They expressed their hope of mooring their broadcasting ship off Scheveningen in the afternoon. And during the night, they wanted to start the experimental broadcast on the high seas and outside



success, they predicted that they would set up a second radio station with commercially oriented broadcasts to Africa. It is noteworthy that when RNI disappeared from the airwaves for the first time for a longer period in September 1970, it was claimed that there was interest in the broadcasting ship from Africa. And speaking of Africa: Jacques Soudan, the thumb sucker, has been living in the southernmost part for years.

Hans Knot January 2026

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Hi Everyone, this is to let you know that Oldies Project is presenting one final run of our Big L charts, from 1965 to 1967.

By popular demand and with thanks to Ron and Jelle, the Big L Fab Forty returns on Sundays, 1100 GMT recommencing Sunday January 25th.

<https://www.radiolondon.co.uk/rl/scrap60/fabforty/index.html>

For the benefit of those unable to listen on Sundays and for overseas fans living in different time zones, the chart is repeated on Wednesdays at 1800 GMT.

Listen to Oldies Project via [onlineradiobox.com](http://onlineradiobox.com)

Jon at The Pirate Radio Hall of Fame:

'Last month we brought you some Swinging Radio England Boss 40 charts from 1966. Later that year the station switched to a Fun 50 and we have now added some of them, either new to the site or updated versions of charts which we previously published;

there is news of another Caroline Spirit of the Seventies broadcast coming in March;

and we have photos of offshore radio ships - and RNI DJs and their studio - from the collection of the late Geoff Quick, kindly provided by his wife Carol.

All the best, Jon [www.offshoreradio.co.uk](http://www.offshoreradio.co.uk)

Robert Jones has completed a new interview with the Emperor Rosko. Very interesting to read:

<https://www.soulmusicarchive.com/p/rosko-2026.html>

Another in depth article from Martin van der Ven: March 1970 marked a brief but symbolically powerful chapter in the history of offshore broadcasting, when a small group of Canadian supporters helped beam uncensored news to Greece from international waters.

Canadians for a Free Greece was a political advocacy group active in the late 1960s and early 1970s that campaigned against the military junta (the regime of the colonels) in Greece.

The group fought against the military dictatorship of Georgios Papadopoulos, who ruled Greece from 1967 to 1974. Its goal was to mobilise the Greek diaspora in Canada and the broader Canadian public to put pressure on the Greek government and advocate for a return to democracy. Karl Jaffary, a prominent Toronto city councillor and lawyer, was a member of the group's steering committee. Members travelled to Greece to observe political trials of opponents of the regime.

Read more here: <https://offshoreradio.info/the-yacht-hebe/>

And just before the editing of this edition was ready and e mail came in from Norway and Svern Martinsen: Things are going well here at the moment with great reports on 1314 kHz and some also on 1575 kHz: Germany, Salzburg, Liguria/Italy, Troon/Scotland, Newcastle upon Tyne, Skegness, and not least Finland. It is not difficult to hear us on Kiwi SDR receivers e.g. in Kotka, Arvika and Julussdalen. And reports and recordings are very welcome! 5895 kHz down at the moment due to transmitter fault. We hope to send it for repair soon so we can get back on air on SW. Last year it made it to NA, SA and New Zealand.

Our stations will be 17 and 14 years old this year.

Recording of the Mother Station on 1314 Bergen Broadcasting and sub-licensee Radio SPL with The Sea done in Finland:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XV1sUZOYXoQ>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u\\_mEUSQMOjU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_mEUSQMOjU)

All the best! Svenn in Norway.



Thanks a lot Svenn for the update, most appreciated. And that ends this edition of the Hans Knot International Report. Next issue will be out around the month of May. If you've questions, memories and more don't forget to bring these in for the next issues versus

[HKnot@home.nl](mailto:HKnot@home.nl)

Greetings from Groningen, Hans