

Now Radio

THE Magazine for
Today's Radio
Industry

December 1, 1987

1152 AM **LBC** 97.3 FM

PROGRAMME GUIDE

Monday - Friday

6am. A.M. **DOUGLAS CAMERON** and **PETER DEELEY** head the Best Team in Town—the team that keeps you informed and in touch.

10am. **BRIAN HAYES.** The always controversial phone-in programme that captures the very heart of London.

12 noon. **STEVE JONES.** News and information at its most entertaining. Informative and fun with celebrity guests, a fast moving quiz and advice from top experts.

2pm. **THE PHILLIP HODSON HOUR.** LBC's counsellor with your emotional, marital and sexual problems.

3pm. **PETE MURRAY.** The phone-in on the lighter side of life.

5pm. **UPDATE.** **RICHARD DALLY** with all the latest international, national and London news.

7pm. **THE NIGHT IS YOUNG.** **GILL PYRAH** (Monday to Thursday) and **STEVE ALLEN** (Friday) with all the people who matter in town tonight.

9pm. Monday: **MICHAEL ASPEL**
Tuesday: Country Music with **JIM KELTZ**
Wednesday: Jazz with **KEITH HOWELL**
Thursday: Classical review with **RICHARD ROBINS**
Friday: Nostalgia Street with **SANDY FORBES**

10pm. **NIGHTLINE** with **MIKE ALLEN** (Monday to Thursday) and **BOB HARRIS** (Friday).

1am. **THROUGH THE NIGHT** with **CLIVE BULL**, **THERESE BIRCH** and **MIKE CARSON**.

4am. **THE BEST OF LBC.** Another chance to hear the best of LBC's specialist programmes.

5am. **DAYBREAK.** Classical music to wake up with.

THE Magazine for
Today's Radio Industry

Now Radio

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

ISSUE # 41

DECEMBER 1, 1987

In Ireland the pirate radio stations have finally won the day and a Bill to allow a new commission to licence up to 225 new commercial and neighbourhood radio stations has begun its trail through the legislative process.

The 'campaign' for some kind of alternative radio service to that provided by RTE began in the late 'seventies and during the coming years mushroomed - giving the Irish public such professional services as Sunshine, Nova, Energy, ER1, ABC, Boyneside and Carousel to mention but a few of the many stations giving listeners a choice.

Now, in what could be as few as four months, licences will be awarded - and the so-called 'pirate' stations will be able to apply.

It's going to take the Irish 4-months to do what here will take at least 4-years.

Is it no wonder stations like SIBC in The Shetland Isles (and many others around the country) have become so frustrated with the waiting game played so often over the years with British broadcasters?

If Ireland can do it - why not Britain? If not, let's see the transmitters tuned up and some real alternatives on offer!!!

HGLR

RADIO CAROLINE
SILENT

300-FT ANTENNA MAST
CRASHES INTO SEA

ENGINEERS KNEW MAST WAS
UNSAFE

At 3.20am last Wednesday (November 25) a loud, crashing and whipping sound was heard as the radio ship ROSS REVENGE shuddered, jolted and swayed violently during a North-easterly gale.

Immediately crew members rushed to the Bridge and discovered a twisted mass of steel hanging most dangerously over the side of the vessel.

RADIO CAROLINE has lost her 300-foot high antenna mast. 12-tonnes of steel and hundreds of feet of steel guy wires had crashed into the sea.

Within six minutes the crew of the ROSS REVENGE had checked their position, ensured everybody on board was safe and uninjured and were reporting concern for the stability of the vessel to Dover Coastguard control.

Lifeboats and air-sea rescue teams from RAF Manston were placed on high alert - ready to lift the entire crew from the stricken vessel.

Luckily it was soon realised that, even with so much twisted metal dangling over the side of the vessel, the radio ship was, in fact, stable and no lives were at risk.

Dover Coastguard was notified and the alert was called off officially.

As the hours went by, CAROLINE staff both aboard the vessel, and on dry land, were beginning to check the serious position they found themselves in. Engineers checked the vessel and went about planning a new antenna system to replace the stricken mast.

Ashore families of the crew were informed of the situation and assured that everybody aboard was safe.

The organisation also had to set about ordering a number of parts required for re-building a mast.

Thoughts of taking the ROSS REVENGE to port for the repairs has been ruled out because of anti-offshore radio laws in most European nations. A trip to Spain has also been ruled out due to the likely appearance of one James Ryan.

The work to re-build what will more than likely be a "T" antenna will have to be carried out in international waters of the North Sea.

How long the work takes, and sources 'within' the organisation speak of anything from two to six weeks, a lot will now depend upon the weather - which at this time of the year is at its worst in the North Sea.

A crisis, however, is not new to CAROLINE - and as most who know her believe, things happen fast when under such pressure. This simply a temporary 'pause' for her. GK.

Now Radio

ARE YOU
GETTING IT
EVERY WEEK???

NOW RADIO REPORTS is the fortnightly 'newsletter' for readers of NOW RADIO MAGAZINE designed to keep them full up-dated with developments from throughout today's radio industry.

Published in the week between the magazine, NOW RADIO REPORTS is already a winner with very many subscribers. Like the magazine, all areas of radio are featured, plus the latest job vacancies, comment, etc.

Printed in larger format (larger print and A4 size pages) NOW RADIO REPORTS is available to subscribers at the special rate of £15 for the whole year - that's 26 fortnightly issues.

Don't miss out!!!

TO SUBSCRIBE: SEND YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND SUBSCRIPTION NUMBER (THE FIRST FOUR NUMBERS OF YOUR ADDRESS LABEL) TO:

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FREEPOST
KETTERING
NORTHANTS
NN16 0BR

Overseas Readers: Mail £20 to NOW RADIO (REPORTS), PO BOX 45, KETTERING, NN16 0NW, England.

**BMS
WARNED OVER
AIRTIME PRICE
HIKES**

At the RADIO '87 conference in Malta, organised by BMS, the national airtime sales company was warned about increasing the cost of airtime on ILR.

GORDON RANKIN, marketing manager for HP BULMER, warned BMS that their sales practices were, in the view of the INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF BRITISH ADVERTISERS, "not satisfactory".

Chief Executive of BMS, TERRY BATE, was told by RANKIN not to bite the hand that feeds him and: "don't start behaving like an unacceptable monopolist."

BMS was also accused of either limiting airtime or simply overcharging for it.

TERRY BATE defended the station's right not to sell all its available airtime. He said: "Stations can only sell five minutes if they want."

**DE-REGULATED
RADIO WILL
INCREASE
AD-REVENUE**

Speaking at the RADIO '87 convention, LEAGUS DELANEY media director JERRY FIELDER told delegates that under the Government's proposals to de-regulate radio advertising revenue would increase to around £400 millions in the early 1990's.

This is about four times the

present earnings for the current stations, numbering just over 40, run under IBA franchise.

**BEWARE OF
PIRATES..
ADVERTISERS WARNED**

The INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF BRITISH ADVERTISERS (ISBA) has warned advertisers to steer clear of land-based unlicensed (pirate) radio stations.

In a letter to members the ISBA says that although such stations are becoming more and more professional in their selling of airtime, there are still dangers that advertisers with little knowledge of radio could suffer financially.

ISBA claims that whilst it is not illegal to advertise on shore-based pirate radio, clients could lose money if a station was either closed by the DTI or simply ceased broadcasting of its own accord.

The organisation appears to be most worried that national advertisers might be attracted to buying airtime on pirate stations.

In the past ISBA has warned its members about the legal issues involved in placing airtime orders with offshore radio stations, in particular RADIO CAROLINE.

The DTI has also written to advertisers using both offshore and land-based unlicensed radio stations in the past, including to US-based clients.

BRITAIN'S NEWEST
COMMERCIAL
STATION ON-AIR

Britain's newest commercial radio station went on the air on Thursday last, November 26th, following a series of test-transmissions and some of the most extensive quality-control checks ever carried out on transmission equipment.

The station is SIBC and is operated by the SHETLAND ISLANDS BROADCASTING COMPANY Ltd. Managing Director of SIBC is IAN ANDERSON, who has been seeking a licence for a community service for the islands since the early seventies - whilst there has been a movement calling for some kind of full-time local radio service since as far back as the sixties.

ANDERSON's company did make an application for the Community Radio licence for the Shetlands when the Government announced there was to be a two-year experiment. That experiment was called off at the last moment, and despite repeated appeals to the Government, and support from throughout the broadcasting industry, Home Office and other Government bodies, calls for a licence have not been met by positive action.

SIBC faced calling in the Receiver if it didn't get on the air and start to provide some return on the more than £100,000 invested in the company. The final decision to go-ahead and provide a full-scale service was arrived at by the board a

few months ago.

They decided that SIBC should make itself as legal as possible. It was a legally established company, paid tax, vat and all other requirements of a normal company. It lacked only a licence from The Home Office for broadcasting.

The transmitter for SIBC is capable of reaching a fair proportion of the islands 24,000 population. It is on an FM channel officially listed as for use in the Shetland Isles.

Music on SIBC is almost continuous; only interrupted for brief, factual local information and news bulletins and for commercials. Most commercials will be live and cost advertisers around £3 per transmission. Spots are sold in week-by-week packages by the station.

Whilst SIBC can be described as an unlicensed station, in all but one respect (not having a licence) it is not a pirate radio station. It is avoiding the 'interference' problem, it has located a frequency scheduled for use in the area, set about paying taxes, insurances and so on and has also made allowances to cover dues for needletime.

The fact that there is no ILR station in the area also means there is no chance of such a station suing SIBC "for loss of earnings" as in the case between RADIO MERCURY and RADIO JACKIE.

IRELAND RADIO BILL PUBLISHED

FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY

The Irish Minister for Communications, RAY BURKE, introduced the Dublin administrations SOUND BROADCASTING BILL to the Dail on Friday November 20th.

225 LICENCES

The Bill calls for the licensing of a new national commercial radio station; up to 24 'ILR' type county-wide services; 100 Town and Surrounds and 100 Neighbourhood radio services.

PIRATES

Existing pirate stations will be able to apply for licences though the Minister warned "There will be no bonus points for them" they will have to apply in the same manner as new prospective entrants.

The SOUND BROADCASTING BILL is to be pushed through the Dail fast and the Minister says he hopes that the first licences can be issued in the Spring of the new year.

The existing WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY ACT will be updated. Any pirate operation found guilty after the introduction of the new SOUND BROADCASTING ACT will be liable of a fine of £800 rising to as much as £20,000 or a jail term. Pirate stations will be expected to

closedown "one or two weeks" before the new licenced operations begin. "It would create a public outcry if we were to ask them informally, or through legislation, to close before then." said a source in the Ministry.

RTE

RTE, the state owned radio and television service, which operates RTE Radio 1, RTE Radio 2, FM-3 Radio, RTE 1 TV, RTE 2 TV, a local station in Cork and a Gaelic language service, is not to be allowed to have any financial involvement in the new stations.

LICENCES

The Bill calls for the new licences to be issued by the Communications Ministry, which would be advised by a special Commission, or advisory body.

However, immediate criticism came from all opposition parties. They wanted an independent body to be responsible for the awarding of licences.

Within hours the Minister had agreed that, because of the demands, he himself would be calling for an amendment to introduce an independent body to give the licences to applicants.

STANDARDS

The SOUND BROADCASTING BILL gives a minimum quota of airtime on the new stations which must be devoted to News and Current Affairs. 20 per cent of broadcast time

must be given over to this area of programming.

FEEES

Each successful applicant will pay 3% of its income from advertising to the Ministry of Communications as a licence fee.

Each licence will run for either 5 or 7 years.

COVERAGE

The national service will be expected to provide a signal receivable in every city, town, village and hamlet in Ireland. To ensure good coverage the Communications Ministry has already negotiated an agreement with the state telecommunications company to use its towers throughout the Republic.

The 24 'ILR' style City-based stations will cover the City and surrounding County. There will be 2 such licences on offer for Dublin, with the rest spread around the country.

The smaller stations, of which there will be 100 Town & Surrounding Area stations will have a range of 5-miles, and the smaller Neighbourhood operations will be broadcasting with a range of around 2-miles.

NEWSPAPERS

Publishers of newspapers will be able to have interests in the new stations, but any concentration of interests by any media group will not be permitted.

RTE ADVERTISING

A claim by RTE that the proposals will mean they could lose as much as £10,000,000 a year was quashed by the Minister on Sunday when he pointed out there were thousands of businesses which were not yet able to afford radio advertising because of the high cost of RTE's national rate card.

"It (the new plan) will permit these businesses to emerge as advertisers - a whole new market will appear."

A few months ago the Ministry removed a condition where by RTE had to have each and every rate card approved by the Government department.

SUPPORT

The news of the content of the Bill has been warmly greeted throughout the existing non-RTE radio industry in Ireland.

However politicians did step forward immediately after publication of the Bill claiming that there must be an independent body to issue licences.

As reported, the Minister has already agreed to introduce an amendment to set up such a body.

NO DELAY

"The latest we want to see this whole business in force is by late spring," said a source in the Dublin Government to NOW RADIO.

MERGER OF
ENERGY 103 & NOVA
IS PREPARATION
LICENCE
APPLICATION

ENERGY 103, one of the leading private unlicensed stations in Dublin closed down at 1pm last Wednesday, November 25th and immediately became part of a new service identified as NOVA POWER 103.

The ENERGY 103 company has merged with the recently revived RADIO NOVA which had taken to the air with an all compact disc format.

Whilst both stations had been operating from the same Herbert Street building, using separate studios, they had been using the same Independent Radio News service.

APPLICATION

The decision to merge the two stations to form one is in order to submit a strong application for one of the commercial radio licences which should be available next Spring.

DIRECTORS

Chief executive of NOVA POWER 103 is Sybil Fennel and directors are BRIAN MCKENZIE and TONY MCKENZIE. CHRIS CARY has been contracted as Programming Consultant to the operation.

PROGRAMMES

The new station will broadcast around the clock with a format of music, news

and Dublin information. Each night at 6pm a sixty-minute news and current affairs programme will be broadcast, called DUBLIN TODAY.

NOVA POWER 103 is broadcasting on 738 kHz AM, 99.9 MHz FM and 103 MHz FM.

RADIO CITY MAKES
£400,000 PROFIT

RADIO CITY, the Liverpool ILR contractor, has reversed last years £94,000 loss into a £400,000 operating profit for the financial year ending September 30th, 1987.

Turnover was up to £2,874,000 against last years £2,385,000.

Profits before secondary rental payments to the IBA will be £641,000.

Because the company had to write-off its BEATLE CITY operation the company was faced with that extraordinary charge of £297,000 which leaves the business with a loss of £92,000.

Earnings per share were 7.88p against a loss of 5.35p last year.

The company will not be paying any final dividend to shareholders.

Having finally managed to dispose of the loss-making BEATLE CITY (exhibition and premises) it is reported that the radio station as a stand-alone operation is continuing to improve its financial performance.

LOCAL COMMERCIAL RADIO SPOT REVENUE IN £20 MILLION HIKE

Local Commercial Radio in Britain (under IBA franchises) saws its advertising revenue increase to £94,099,300 in the financial year to September 30, 1987. That is a 26% improvement over the previous year.

The increase was recorded as consistent growth throughout the year - but the most substantial hike was in the final July - September quarter.

Between July and September there was a massive 39.75% increase on the same period last year. Income for the period was £25,655,000.

The five biggest advertisers on ILR in the year were:

DHL International	£1,540,000
BRITISH GAS FLOAT	£1,425,000
ARIEL AUTOMATIC	£1,306,000
DEWHURST	£1,062,000
NESCAPE COFFE	£ 977,000

Brands on ILR for the first time included CODA-MED tablets, BROOKE-BOND D Tea, NATIONWIDE FLEXACCOUNT, PEDIGREE PETFOODS and WALLS Ice Cream.

Commenting on the picture, GEOFF MOFFATT, Chief Executive at the RADIO MARKETING BUREAU said: "His has been a tremendous year for Radio. Brand advertisers are clearly finding Radio a valuable addition to their media mix, with the growth of big spending brands

showing that advertisers are planning Radio into their schedules. In the changed financial climate the cost-effectiveness of Radio will become more valuable to advertisers in 1988."

The growth had appeared across the board with biggest increases in financial, entertainment, food, publishing and recruitment sectors.

Brands spending more than £250,000 rose from 33 in 1986 to 75 in 1987.

CAPITAL RADIO IN PIRATE RADIO WITCH HUNT

London commercial station CAPITAL RADIO says it is asking listeners to send it as much information as they can about Pirate Radio stations operating in its area.

CAPITAL then compiles a report which it forwards to the DTI and its RADIO INVESTIGATION SERVICE in the hope that the RIS will take action to closedown such stations under powers it can use with the Wireless Telegraphy Act.

"We have had several complaints about these foreign radio stations causing interference to our signal on 95.8." said a spokeswoman at CAPITAL.

The 'foreign' station mentioned by the CAPITAL spokeswoman, NOW RADIO discovered, is the North London-based LONDON GREEK RADIO.

PICCADILLY FILES RECORD PROFITS

PICCADILLY RADIO (Manchester) has seen its pre-tax profits rise to £764,587 on a turnover of £6,115,000 in the financial year to September 30th. The turnover of the company rose some £1,715,000 compared with last years figures.

Holders of non-voting shares will receive a final payment of 1.375p a share, making a total of 2.25p for the year. Last year it was 2p. A final dividend of 2.75p is to be paid on A shares, making a total of 4.5p - up 0.5p on last years payment.

SECRET

In a secret table, PICCADILLY RADIO was top among non-London ILR stations in attracting national advertising revenue.

NEARLY FOUR MILLION PROFIT FOR CAPITAL RADIO

In the financial year ending September 30, 1987 CAPITAL RADIO plc recorded a pre-tax profit of £3,940,000 - compared to £1,700,000 in the previous year.

The company was floated on the Stock Exchange in February.

DEVON-AIR RADIO, which CAPITAL took over in June, showed an improvement and recorded what CAPITAL describes as a "small" profit for the year. Last

year the Exeter station lost £81,000.

The DUKE OF YORK THEATRE improved its pre-tax profit to £160,000.

Commenting on its position, SIR RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH, Chairman of CAPITAL said: "In our first year as a listed company, I am pleased to announce these strong results. CAPITAL RADIO's advertising revenue steadily strengthened through the year, particularly the second half, giving 17% increase over 1986. The indications are that, despite continuing competition from other media, especially TV, independent radio's share of advertising increased over the year."

CAPITAL will pay a final dividend of 4p net per share payable on 11 January 1988. When added to the interim dividend of 2p already paid this will make a total for the year of 6p net per share.

In October CAPITAL purchased for £416,000 a substantial shareholding in IRW. It should result in CAPITAL having a 25% interest in INDEPENDENT RADIO NEWS.

Turnover for the year was £22,342,000. Taxation was £2,502,000.

CAPITAL paid about £1.7 million to the IBA for transmitter rental and levys.

Profit after taxation at 35% will be £2,502,000.

DOWNTOWN RADIO OPENS NEW TRANSMITTER

DOWNTOWN RADIO is now being heard on another FM transmitter.

It is at Brougher Mountain in County Fermanagh and gives the station an extra 75,000 potential listeners.

REQUIEM

A memorial Requiem Mass for EAMONN ANDREWS will be held at Westminster Cathedral. It will take place at 11am on December 7th.

SCOTTISH BROADCASTER DIES

MURDOCH McPHERSON, one of Scotland's most well-known broadcasters has died. He was 52 years old.

He was widely known for his production of sports programming for BBC RADIO SCOTLAND.

The man, who was a Minister, was often a front-man for TV programmes.

He leaves a wife and three sons.

NOW RADIO NEWSLINE

Just a reminder that the NOW RADIO NEWSLINE continues to operate outside normal office hours on our regular office telephone number - (0536) 514437.

In effect, you'll be able to call the NOW RADIO NEWSLINE from 5pm until 9am on weekdays and around the clock at weekends and during Public Holidays.

The NOW RADIO NEWSLINE provides up-dates and items

in brief. You can also leave your own reports and information at the end of the message, if you wish.

In recent days, callers to the newslines have been asked to answer a few questions as part of an on-going survey into readers' interests, likes and dislikes.

MUSIC AND NEWS UNLICENSED STATION TAKES TO AIR IN LONDON

A new unlicensed radio station took to the air with full programming at the weekend, following a series of test-transmissions. Reports indicate a good signal over a fair part of London.

The station, NMR, broadcasts on 89.6 MHz FM.

The owner of the station told NOW RADIO that they plan to expand the service from its present 10pm until 4am operation in due course. The station aims to operate 24-hours, 7 days in the new year. The format is a mixture of oldies and news. A team of 3 Disc Jockeys has been engaged by the station, with more to be hired to extend the hours of broadcasting.

OLDIES STATION WILL EXPAND

The South-West London oldies station HITS-FM plans to increase the amount of time it provides its service on 105.5 MHz.

At present the station broadcasts Saturday's only, but a spokesman for the station has informed NOW RADIO that they will soon be looking at providing a service throughout Sunday as well.

L O S E

K N D S

SOLAR RADIO down on The Algarve got a good in-screen plug on BBC2's TRAVEL SHOW a couple of weeks back.....

Runner-up in the battle for the post of Chairman of the ASSOCIATION FOR INDEPENDENT RADIO CONTRACTORS was no-less than Managing Director of HERWARD RADIO, STEWART FRANCIS.....

Talking of AIRC, they're planning to move offices this month. The new address will be in Westbourne Grove.....

BBC WORLD SERVICE programming is being re-broadcast by four stations outside the UK in Europe now...in Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and Greece.....

JONATHAN ROSS will front the tv campaign for this year's IBA YEARBOOK. He'll appear in a 30-second spot.....

In Spain, commercial radio has seen a healthy increase in spot revenue up by 18.7% on last year.....

Meanwhile, next door (in Portugal) commercial radio, now legalised by a new Act of Parliament, should see not only new channels appear - but ad revenue increasing at the same time.....

As if you didn't know - and just for the record - OWEN OYSTON, former Chairman of RED ROSE RADIO, pulled the plug on the left-wing NEWS

ON SUNDAY on November 20th, having failed to get MGA agreement to cut some wages and introduce some redundancies in an effort to save money on the 'paper he rescued earlier in the year.....

And, as OWEN OYSTON continues to look towards that awful television medium, we record the fact that SIR ALASTAIR BURNET is becoming a director of the OYSTON FAMILY GROUP Ltd - the holding company of Mr. OYSTON. Not only that but SIR ALASTAIR BURNET is also to be the Chairman of OYSTON PRODUCTIONS, a new independent production company. He's a director of ITN and assistant editor of News at Ten.....

Back to the IBA YEARBOOK...our review copy has arrived and we can tell you that it will be the last. Seems that the IBA can use the £100,000 it spends on subsidies for this glossy propaganda book on promoting itself in other ways! The amount of coverage given to Radio is minimal, as you might expect! See our review for more about this book.....

IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE TO EXPIRE ON OR BEFORE ISSUE 45, PLEASE RENEW IMMEDIATELY TO AVOID ANY DELAY CAUSED BECAUSE OF THE CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS...WE WON'T BE AWAY BUT OTHERS WILL...RENEWING TODAY WILL MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS AN ISSUE AT ALL DUE TO THE HOLIDAY SEASON....

L O O S E

E N D S

COUNTY SOUND, the Guildford ILR station, has had three sponsorship deals sewn-up for it by CAPITAL SALES, their national sales reps. TUDORBURY SECURITIES are sponsoring weekday financial reports; they have nine bulletins across the day. CONTINENTAL AIRLINES sponsor travel reports - running to seven daily and VEUVE DU VERNAY sponsors a weekly Bride of the Week on the breakfast programme.....

Sixties star DONOVAN presented RADIO 2's SOUND OF THE SIXTIES on Saturday November 28 from 9.03am. Amongst the favourite tracks, broadcast were performances from ELVIS, THE ZOMBIES, FOUR TOPS and ADAM FAITH.....

On the same day, at 2pm on RADIO 1, BARRY WHITE kicked off a new series of MY TOP TEN. The programme gets a repeat on the following Thursday at 9pm.....

SPORT ON TWO, Radio 2, (from 1.30pm) on Saturday November 28, began a four week celebration of the programmes 40 years on the air. Expect archive clips including sporting highlights, news clips and musical memories.....

For The Record, chart-topping group T'PAU were discovered by BBC RADIO SHROPSHIRE. That station's MIKE WAYLOR, mid-morning programme presenter, first aired a series of early

demo-tapes on his programme, maintained contact and has followed them through to the top of the charts. Though the Band has become so big, BBC RADIO SHROPSHIRE has been one of their regular 'haunts' and a great relationship exists between them.....

LONDON GREEK RADIO are back and broadcasting on 95.4 MHz FM. Not just that, but CAPITAL RADIO are upset! It seems that the mega-commercial station has complained to the POST OFFICE that the Greek station should have its Post Office Box facility withdrawn as it is being used in connection with illegal broadcasting. Though there is actually no trouble with interference - they just can't stand the competition from a Greek language radio station!!!.....and have registered an official complaint...dear oh dear!!! A Question about the 'interference' was also raised in the House of Commons....more on this elsewhere.....

Kent's INVICTA RADIO has a new OPTIMOD unit on its FM transmissions...if you think it sounds better (and you do, don't you...) drop them a line and say so. For the over-worked Presenters it will perhaps they won't have to worry too much about watching their levels anymore!!!.....Mind you, you must convince their management as the unit is only on loan at the moment - a testing period, so to speak!!!.....

L O O S S E

E N D S

Canadian-born Radio veteran DOM ALLEN has again surfaced in Ireland presenting programmes on ERNESIDE COMMUNITY RADIO in County Cavan. He's on the am drive show (breakfast).....

Wondering why LBC RADIO is looking for a PRODUCER for the STEVE JONES programme? Seems that COLIN PARKES wants to return to the IRN desk...and a bit of sanity????!!!!.....

If you missed it the first time around on RADIO 4, don't miss the repeats of 6 episodes of RADIO ACTIVE on RADIO 2. The time, 10.02pm each Thursday night starting on December 10th. Great doses of Britain's only National Local Radio station featuring such mega-stars as MIKE CHANNEL, MIKE FLEX, ANNA DAPTOR, NIGEL PRY and SIR NORMAN TONSIL will keep you more than entertained!!!!.....

Can you get 'into' CITIZENS (RADIO 4 and BBC WORLD SERVICE) - we certainly can't. So, leave THE ARCHERS alone!!!!.....

So, STEVE PERKINS is leaving the Radio division of the IBA...aren't they all????!!!!.....

The national newspapers, television, etc, really didn't give much thought to covering the downing of the 300-ft tall antenna mast aboard the ROSS REVENGE last

week. However, INVICTA RADIO in Kent, off whose coast the ship was stationed, did give it a good amount of coverage, if somewhat inaccurate, during the morning.....

If you haven't ordered your own copy of RADIO ON THE MOVE yet - do so! It is selling like hot-cakes, and the ideal book to have with you when you are motoring (or moving about by any means, really) around the country. For £3.50p a copy it's value for money and most professionally laid out and produced.....

Staff at Z-100 in Naas, Ireland are like many others around the country, in thinking that most of the commercial stations now broadcasting in Ireland will be given licences under the terms of the SOUND BROADCASTING BILL now before the Dail.....

For the record, then-CAROLINE staffers BLAKE WILLIAMS, JOHNNY LEWIS and JAY JACKSON did sit on the deck of the ROSS REVENGE a couple of summers ago, wondering how they might replace the 300-ft high tower if ever it did collapse. Seems that they considered 48-hours was a possible time, subject to everything being available on board. There was a spare mast of the type for'd of the ship and this could have been erected astern, allowing a temporary "T" type antenna to be erected. Seems the longest bit of the job would have been the tea-breaks!!!!.....

HOW
THE WAVE
IS MAKING WAVES
IN AMERICAN RADIO

FEATURE BY PAUL EASTON

It's been called everything from 'Audio Valium' to 'Beautiful music for Yuppies', but there's no denying that THE WAVE, or similar-formatted programming, has become the latest 'in' programming fad in the USA.

It all started last February in Los Angeles. Veteran album-rock giant KNET-FM - The Mighty Net - sacked its DJs, and changed call letters and formats, to become KTWV - THE WAVE.

This new format is a mixture of the so-called 'new age' music, contemporary jazz, soft-rock and fusion. What's more, these, mainly-instrumental, tracks are presented without presenters! KTWV uses specially-produced 'vignettes' by actors to identify the station; and specially-produced announcements by the artists themselves to identify the tracks played. However, it is something of a bone of contention amongst many record company executives that very few tracks are actually announced, usually only 25 - 50%.

THE WAVE has certainly worked in L.A. In last winter's ARBITRON ratings books, the old KNET only managed a 1.9% share, making it number 3 of 3 album-rock stations (KROQ and KLOS beings numbers 1 and 2 respectively, as well as being well behind classic-rock KLSX). In the Spring book, the first since the format change, KTWV rated a 2.5% share. In the latest book, for the summer - published in October - the gain was more modest to 2.7%.

This rapid rise didn't pass

unnoticed. Certainly THE WAVE is now being distributed by SATELLITE MUSIC NETWORK to many other stations in the USA. Chicago, in fact, has 2 'new age' stations. Adult Contemporary (what we in Britain call AOR) WRXR has now become WNUA, and in the past few weeks, VZRC, which formerly carried SATELLITE MUSIC NETWORKS (hard-rock) 'Z-ROCK' format, has changed format and call letters to WTUV, carrying SMN's WAVE programming. Other stations carrying the format include KNUA Seattle, KTCZ Minneapolis, WBMW Washington DC and KIFM San Diego, although it should be noted that not all of these are necessarily faithful to THE WAVE original format.

Could it take off here? Probably not, unless an enterprising unlicensed operator decides to do something different from what's currently on offer elsewhere. That isn't to say that 'new age' music is devoid from British airwaves. CAPITAL's Sunday-only FM service, CFM, regularly plays new-age tracks, and now has a new-age programme, hosted by RICK WAKEMAN, now a new-age artist in his own right. In addition, LBC RADIO recently sponsored AN EVENING WITH WINDHAM HILL (the primary new-age record label) which was recorded for later broadcast.

Whether THE WAVE is yet another passing fad in American radio programming we shall have to wait and see. One thing is certain, if any radio 'battles' between competing stations in the same city take place, they sure won't be picking at each other on air!!

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L O O S E

E N D S

The laughing Gnome of offshore radio has returned to the salty climes of the wintry North Sea! MIKE BARRINGTON is back aboard the MV COMMUNICATOR after quite a long attempt to live a normal life in the East of England!.....

Stand-by in the Winchester area this Sunday for the launch of THE LIGHT FM...or OCEAN SOUND NORTH as it is otherwise known. THE LIGHT FM will be offering its own programmes between 6am and 2pm, then taking a feed of OCEAN SOUND WEST. OCEAN SOUND EAST & WEST offer their separate programmes between 9am and 5pm daily. Confused?!.....

They're using an MBI desk at OCEAN SOUND NORTH - THE LIGHT FM, by the way! Well-done, Mel!.....

After two-years, KIERAN MURRAY has presented his last free radio show on RADIO RAINBOW INTERNATIONAL, the shortwave station in Ireland. KIERAN MURRAY joined LIBERTY 104 FM in Dublin to host their 7am start breakfast programme yesterday (Monday). He presented his final airshift at BOYNESIDE RADIO on Sunday evening.....

Latest signings for the VOICE OF PEACE are PAUL DRINKWATER and STEVE CROMBY.....

STARFORCE 576 - when it arrives (when?) will not

feature the traditional sung jingle package but a whole series of voiced production IDs and a variety of messages to make you believe that STAR FORCE 576 is a radio station run by beings from another planet who have come to Earth to inject good hit music and golden oldies. Wired to the Moon, as my Irish friends would say??!.....

ROB CHAPMAN's next installment of discovering what his knob was for will appear in NOW RADIO issue 42. Don't worry, we haven't forgotten it - we have just (a) run out of pages and (b) already printed more pages than we should have. You certainly get your money's worth, don't you??!.....

The DTI claim that their recent raid on offices of PCRL in Birmingham should serve as a warning to others in the same business....

Oh! BRENT COUNCIL have been making payments of several thousand pounds to TIME-FM, according to allegations made by THE LONDON PROGRAMME on LWT at the weekend.....

CHILTERN RADIO's 828kHz channel was being 'interfered with' by CAROLINE 819kHz transmissions, we hear. No problem at the moment then, Mr MASON?!!.....

Will the COMMUNICATOR be able to get on air before CAROLINE returns? Will the COMMUNICATOR manage to "take back" 558kHz?? The saga continues. The COMMUNICATOR has the Crystal.....

L O O S E

E N D S

TELEVISION & RADIO 1988 - The IBA's yearbook arrived a few days ago. In the bookshops it'll cost you £5.90p. We had thought of a full review, but as radio is only the "also ran" in this publication, we decided against it. Most of the information at the back, such as station names, addresses and what not, are available free from the IBA in any case. And where each ITV company receives a couple of pages per station, each ILR gets around a fifth (or less) of a page. There is an article telling you why CHILTERN running three stations is better for the community, and how SIMON CUMMINGS presented his COUNTY SOUND show from a hospital bed..but that's about it. We're not too sad to note that the £100,000 subsidy the IBA has given to the Yearbook is to be saved and the money spent on other types of publicity. This is the last edition, then. Perhaps for that reason you might like to part with £5.90p - each page of radio costing you, in effect, more than 53p ! But then you might like to see colour pictures of all the soaps and what not. TELEVISION & RADIO 1988. Published by the IBA. £5.90p.....

JOHNNY LEWIS (and you are not going to believe this!!!) is back at RADIO WYVERN. Remember he left to re-join the COMMUNICATOR (has any radio facility ever received so many name-checks

without broadcasting?) and became disillusioned so flew off to Ireland. Well, Ireland became Worcester and a return to the air on WYVERN. Expect to hear JOHNNY hosting some swing-shift's until the station puts him on breakfast on one transmitter and leaves HOWARD HUGHES on the other. WYVERN has transmitters at Worcester and Hereford, of course.....

Don't forget - with the next issue of NOW RADIO magazine you'll be receiving FREE our first issue of FRESH AIR.....

Stand-by for increased coverage of Irish Radio, Satellite Radio and Unlicensed Radio in future issues of NOW RADIO.....

The CHILDREN IN NEED appeal run by the BBC raised pledges of £8.75 million at the weekend. Figure could double. BBC very pleased. So will be children!.....

Out of the 44 ILR stations, 18 have taken up the offer to take shares worth a million pounds in IRN. Biggest shareholder with 25% is CAPITAL. It paid £416,000.....

PENNY GOVER and DAVID BRADFORD are presenters for the LIGHT FM (OCEAN SOUND NORTH)...The format will concentrate on the easier hits of the past 30 years.....

Increased power noted on two of London's unlicensed stations. CHICAGO 87 and CDR.....

THE
STEVE MERIKE

INTERVIEW

CONDUCTED BY ROB CHAPMAN

It seems a long time ago now; but in March of this year I set off one foggy Monday morning to interview STEVE MERIKE at RADIO TRENT. A lot of anecdotes have flowed under the bridge since then, but the interview with Steve still remains one of my favourites. In it he talks frankly and candidly about his days with offshore radio and about the future of radio broadcasting. He was keen at times to disassociate himself from the 'anorak' mentality but at other times a natural enthusiasm shone through; the enthusiasm of an idealist who although not currently working in radio, obviously lives and breathes the medium.

SM: When my father, who was in the Navy, was in Malta we had a Forces Broadcasting Station. I was about 14 then, I think. I did a Sunday morning request programme which I enjoyed very much indeed but it was very ad hoc. The first sort of radio I really did was when I was in the ROYAL AIR FORCE. I was at RAF College at Hereford and they had a Rediffusion type closed-circuit station. And how I really started was I had a load of albums that my mum had bought for me, and I wanted to hear them on the radio. This was 1960/61. I wandered up and said would you mind playing these to the guy at the radio link station. And he said, well if you want them playing you

play them yourself. That's how it happened. At the time it was just on weekdays, sort of 6-9 at night, and occasionally at weekends. But then they expanded and put someone in charge of it and I did breakfast programmes all the time I was at College; which was 6 until 8.30am. It had to finish at 8.30 because we were in class at 9! There I was until 8.30 every morning, which was great because it excuses you all the duties at RAF College you have to do like Bedmaking and all that garbage. It was supposed to build the man in you. It just built the boredom in me.

RC: Was this all invaluable training then? Doing your apprenticeship so to speak?

SM: Training is a funny thing. People go into these training courses and they come out at the end of it no better off or no worse than when they went in. Principally being a Disc Jockey is different than being a Presenter, and being a Presenter is different to being an Announcer. They are separate jobs, there's no doubt about it. You have to have talent to be a Disc Jockey. But to be a Presenter you need to be able to talk clearly and announce and have a fairly good knowledge of the English language and have a fairly inventive brain. To be an Announcer you just have to be able to announce somebody else's words.

RC: *So you don't come from that same tradition as KEITH SKUES and PAUL KAYE who had done their BFBS apprenticeship?*

SM: Well they did that because there was nothing else. The BBC LIGHT PROGRAMME was the only music and from what I remember it was pretty boring and was half an hour a week. You know, "we'll give the teenagers what they want."

RC: *Pick of The Pops?*

SM: No, not even that. It was JOE LOSS and his Orchestra and SHEILA SOUTHERN. And whatever was at number one they did their cover of it. And this cover version ended up on the EMBASSY label in WOOLWORTH'S. It was garbage and typical of a monopoly situation.

RC: *When the pirates came along presumably you wanted to be involved?*

SM: When the pirates came along it was a question of two things. First of all that somebody else could actually broadcast from a ship actually fascinated me. Because we had all be filled up with all this propaganda - and I mean that in the worst sense of the word - that broadcasting was something totally divorced from the general public. That you needed £80 million and this that and the other. The BBC beautifully hid behind this wonderful sheen of "we can do it, but you can't." And then ROMAN O'RAHILLY came along and in

the best tradition of the rogue and the reprobate told the BBC to go stuff themselves, which was wonderful. And the fact that he did it from a ship! The British love the sea anyway. So there was two good things. First of all it was radio with music, which there wasn't at the time. I mean (RADIO) LUXEMBOURG was appalling. It only played half the record. But I mean again - a monopoly situation. And when people are in a monopoly situation they can do what they like.

RC: *Do you see it very much in terms of, this was the Irishman cocking a snook at the British Establishment, or do you think of that kind of thing as overplayed?*

SM: I think it's totally untrue. I think ROMAN O'RAHILLY did it to make money. For all the cocking a snook stories that have gone around...that's the language of the FREE RADIO ASSOCIATION. He did it to make money. Why is LASER out there now? [EDITOR: *It was when Stevi was interviewed*] It's not out there to assist the cause of free radio. It's out there to make money. It's why (RADIO) CAROLINE is there on the ROSS REVENGE. The BBC wouldn't play his records. So ROMAN said I'll put my own station on and play my records. And that's what he did. It cost him a lot of money, but then he had a lot of fun with it as well.

RC: *What stations did you listen to before you joined RADIO SCOTLAND?*

SM: CAROLINE, RADIO CITY, SWINGING RADIO ENGLAND: which was fabulous. If you listen to tapes now of RADIO CAROLINE in 1964 it's what RADIO TWO ought to be today. You have to look at what the world was like when RADIO CAROLINE started in Easter 1964. Britain was just coming out of its memories of the war. It wanted something. There was the 'I'm Backing Britain' campaign by the radiator workers in Havant in Hampshire. British designers were finding themselves on the top of the pile for a change. British music was taking off with THE BEATLES, STONES, PRETTY THINGS. And the BBC simply refused to move with the times. They were still back in 1936. ROMAN's music was what would be now Middle of the Road but there was no market for it on the BBC. I mean, HOUSEWIVES CHOICE was all full of the BUFFALO SONG and OLD MAN RIVER. So ROMAN put a station on the air that he could relate to and what he could relate to was that sort of music. So SIMON DEE came on the air and played FRANK SINATRA and people thought it was wonderful because it was 12 hours a day of music. This was what people wanted and what the BBC had never given them.

RC: *So if in retrospect it sounds a bit old fashioned now, it was actually very 'hip' then compared with what there was?*

SM: On yeah. Very much so. And they zapped along until RADIO ATLANTA came along. ALLAN CRAWFORD and his ship. First there was the battle over frequencies. They were on 201 and the others were on 199 but in fact both were on 200 metres and there was this famous meeting between CRAWFORD and O'RAHILLY in a rowing boat between the two ships. They came to an agreement and next day appeared 3 or 4 metres apart. But of course when RADIO LONDON came along that introduced American format to listeners and they played the whole record. LUXEMBOURG had a heart attack on the spot!

RC: *How did you get involved with RADIO SCOTLAND?*

OK. This is a true story! The blokes name was TOMMY SHIELDS and he was a wonderful man. He was steeped in radio. I made a tape for SWINGING RADIO ENGLAND which was rejected. I sent the same tape to (RADIO) 270 and half-a-dozen others saying I hadn't any experience but I was willing to learn. I sent the tape to RADIO SCOTLAND with a list of stations I had worked for as long as your arm - and they accepted it. I sent it on the Monday; they accepted it on Tuesday and I was on the air on the Wednesday!! This was the early part of 1967. I was only there for a few months before the (Marine & Broadcasting Offences) Bill came in. The reason they took me was because they thought they were going to be exempt from the M.O.A. There was no

other radio in Scotland; not even BBC Scotland. There was just a regional insert every so often. RADIO SCOTLAND were led to a certain degree to believe they would be exempt. It turned out in the end, of course, that they weren't and they had to close down on the 14th August.

RC: *What about the costly towing round the coast? Was this symptomatic of the way the station was run or was it just unfortunate error?*

SM: I don't think it was an unfortunate incident. You see the thing about radio, especially the pirates, is that huge amount of rumour and legend and misinformation has grown up around it. There are an awful lot of children in free radio. When I was in BBC Local Radio these people appeared at the door, day in, day out. They don't so much at (RADIO) TRENT because we're a different sort of radio station. But they wanted something to cling onto and when disaster didn't happen they invented it. There was nothing untoward about moving the ship. The ship was moved quite simply because they were in the wrong place. They realised they were in the wrong place so they could hardly go down the southern route, could they? So they had to go the northern route. They were in the Forth of Clyde for 3½ to 4 months. They were in the Firth of Forth for getting on for two years. So where is the disaster in that? They simply moved the ship.

It wasn't symptomatic of the way the station was run at all. It was extremely well run. Tenders turned up when tenders should turn up. The music turned up when it should have turned up. The transmitters were permanently on. The only thing that ever put them off the air were the Air Force who took great delight in buzzing the ship.

RC: *Was the format popular with Scottish people? Did they see it as their 'local' station?*

SM: Yes they did. That's why the station thought it was going to be exempt. We had a request programme every day. It was called the SNOWBALL REQUEST HOUR and was sponsored by these people who made little confectionaries. And you know you couldn't move for the mail. It was phenomenal.

RC: *Did you learn your craft in Scotland?*

SM: No! We were all too busy living it to care about the future. We were all too busy thinking 'Christ! I'm on a ship! It could sink! I feel ill' You know?!

RC: *You left SCOTLAND when? Before the 14th?*

No. On the 14th. I went to work in Portsmouth. I sent a tape to RADIO CAROLINE in Amsterdam. And I just kept hassling them until they gave me a job. It's as simple and straight-forward as that. I was 22-years-old. I didn't have any contact with anyone who had gone out

there. I just kept on ringing until they gave me a job.

RC: *When did you join the station?*

SM: It was September 1967. About the 7th or 8th. Actually I'd sent two tapes. One to CAROLINE and one to RADIO ONE- which hadn't actually started. It didn't start until September 30th. I never thought I'd get anything from RADIO ONE because they were the TONY BLACKBURNS and all of that. I got the job with CAROLINE and two days after I'd joined the ship my mother got a phone call from RADIO ONE saying can I come down for an interview. My mother phoned me when I got off the ship into Holland and said "RADIO ONE want to talk to you." I said no. I've got the job with CAROLINE.

RC: *What were your impressions of CAROLINE when you first joined? Did it seem like it was going to succeed as a standpoint against RADIO ONE?*

SM: Well, I can remember what I felt at the time, which was that I wasn't interested in all of that. All that I was interested in was the fact that I was on RADIO CAROLINE. I wanted to be on RADIO CAROLINE and I'd done all I could to get on RADIO CAROLINE. CAROLINE was the one station I wanted to be on. I never wanted to be on RADIO LONDON. I felt it was very plastic and very non-communicative, which it was. The only thing that was communicative on the ship

was KIRNNY EVERETT, and that only in passing with occasionally. So all I was interested in was just being there.

RC: *So what were those early days like after the Bill?*

SM: Early days were mayhem. It was run by WIJSMULLER basically. And PHILLIP SOLOMAN. JOHNNIE WALKER got so fed up with the MAJOR MINOR plug records one morning that he just played the BATCHLORS for an hour and a half solidly and called it everything that he should have played on the plug list. We just fell about laughing on the ship that day! We were all fed up with the plug records. But from my point of view all I was interested in was just being there.

RC: *Did that feeling last all the time you were there?*

SM: It has now. I wouldn't go out to the ROSS REVENGE to work, but I'd love to go out to see the ship to see it and talk to the guys there and see if they have the same feelings now as I had then. But it was chaotic. Tenders turned up when they weren't meant to, and they never turned up at all. I remember we were out there for three or four weeks at one point without anything. Or a ship would turn up with the records and the mail but not take anybody off. But you've got to remember we were all very young. Only ROBBIE DALE was older. We all did it for next to nothing and had a whale of a time.

RC: *You did 3 - 6pm didn't you? Who decided programming? Was that ROBBIE DALE?*

SM: I assume so. I can't honestly remember. I remember when I first got on the ship at four o'clock in the morning; I couldn't believe it! I was in tears. There I was on this ship I'd heard for years and loved. It was four in the morning and the lights were blazing and I had a little tranny radio and everything. It was magic. I got on the ship and ROBBIE DALE said: "You must be STEVE MERIKK!" I said: "That's right!" and he then says, "Right..this way..." Remember this is about ten past four in the morning. At twenty-past I'm in the main studio, and he says; those are the volume controls, these are for the gramophones, that's the microphone...You're on!! So at twenty past four in the morning I'm on the radio going um..er...talk about on the job training!!

RC: *Who was there when you joined the station? Can you remember?*

SM: JOHNWIE WALKER, ROBBIE DALE, ROGER DAY with his American jingles, SPANGLES MALDOON...

RC: *ROSS BROWN?*

SM: ROSS BROWN was still there, just. He was reading news.

RC: *He later joined the North ship, didn't he?*

Yes. There was a New Zealand

guy, GLENN ADAMS. An American of dubious character called CARL MITCHELL. ANDY ARCHER. Some of these are later on. A lot came and went. But you're talking of twenty years ago. You remember incidents but you don't remember what they were like. I remember that WALKER was very helpful. WALKER is a radio man which is why I'm so pleased he is back on RADIO ONE. He loves the medium. I admire people like him. In fact I wrote to him when he got the job at RADIO ONE just to say "nice to hear you back". And it is. Just to digress a minute on the current stock of RADIO ONE DJs - they're garbage. They were picked because they were pretty. They weren't picked because they know how to be Disc Jockeys. And the recent departure of their listening figures goes to prove that all these chickens are now coming home to roost. If you're going to have a radio station, you've got to have radio people on it.

RC: *It always strikes me, looking back at RADIO ONE over the years, the amazing amount of talent that doesn't stay. The ROSKO's, the KENNY EVERETT's, the STUART HENRY's. There's only really JOHN PREL left as a kind of maverick. The fact that none of those people are there anymore seems more than coincidental.*

SM: It's the BBC way of doing things. Unless you fall within strictly defined parameters you cannot get on at the BBC. I found this at RADIO ONE, and to a lesser

extent in BBC Local Radio. You've got to narrowly define what you are doing all the time which is why the Green Paper is going to have most radio managers having heart attacks. It says quite simply radio is boring. It's time we kicked it up the arse. There's no way as it stands at the moment - ILR or BBC - that it's going to compete with 25 TV channels and 16 DBS Radio channels. And like everything else in this country they all moan about it after the event but they never do anything before the event. They're more interested in Politics than how the thing works. I'm very emotional about it because radio is a much better medium than television. But all the inference has gone to television.

RC: *Going back to August 14th, 1967. Did you feel you had the audience after the Marine & Broadcasting Offences Act? Because regarding what you just said people complained when the pirates closed down but they all went passively over to RADIO ONE when it started.*

SM: If anything we had a bigger audience because RADIO ONE wasn't all it was cracked up to be. A lot of it was live music. Half the time it wasn't even on the air. It was combined with RADIO TWO. People felt cheated. They had TONY BLACKBURN in the morning and thought it was going to be RADIO LONDON. And of course that's what it really wanted to be. They went out and got

RADIO LONDON Disc Jockeys and RADIO LONDON Jingles. But it wasn't RADIO LONDON... it was the BBC. If anything we had a bigger and more loyal audience after August 14th. For a start we didn't have the competition, did we?

RC: *That whole period fascinates me. The fact that CAROLINE was out on its own making a stand against the legislation.*

SM: Yes, but it was nothing to do with free radio. It was there because the people who were running it at the time thought they could make money. I think they just about broke even in fact, but they certainly didn't make money. They thought they could.

RC: *Where did they think they could succeed where RADIO LONDON couldn't? Because LONDON were originally going to continue, weren't they until they checked out the continental advertising situation.*

SM: Yes, but the management of RADIO LONDON wanted to get into commercial radio proper. Indeed, PHILIP BIRCH went to PICCADILLY didn't he?

RC: *It did get pretty rough late in '67 didn't it? There were newspaper stories of DJs having to clean their teeth in Coca-Cola ..*

SM: Yeah. There was a period where nothing turned up. There was a period where we were down to the last 25-

gallons of drinking water and we were running out of food and all sorts.

RC: *Did people on board think it wasn't going to last much longer when that sort of thing happened?*

SM: No, not at all. But of course at about 4 a.m. in the morning of March 3rd a lot of very large men from VIJSMULLER turned up with extremely well loaded pistols and said: "You will close zeez transmitters, pleez.."

RC: *So there had been no hint that anything like that was going to happen?*

SM: No. They just turned up, hi-jacked us and away we went back to Holland. I knew it was the end then. I mean there was no way it was going to come out of Holland. The Dutch government would see to that.

RC: *You were involved in the plan to get the RADIO 270 ship out of harbour?*

SM: Yes. That was done through GEOFFREY PEARL (of the Free Radio Association). I went with him to see the OCEAAN 7 in Whitby Harbour. We looked at it but it was fairly obvious that there was no way that ship was going to get back to sea considering the state it was in. I got involved simply because GEOFFREY PEARL rang me up and said would I go up with him to Whitby. As far as I can remember, after that there was nothing for months but mayhem and

rumour. Wherever you were some free radio freak would find you and twist what you had said.

TO BE CONTINUED

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IN THE NEXT PART OF THE STEVI MERIKKE INTERVIEW, HEAR ABOUT HIS TIME WITH RADIO ONE, RADIO NORDSEER INTERNATIONAL, HIS FURTHER VIEWS ON THE GREEN PAPER AND RADIO'S FUTURE, ILR, TODAY'S RADIO MANAGEMENT, CAROLINE IN 1987, AND SO MUCH MORE....

FREE OFFER!!

NOW RADIO subscriber JULIAN WELLINGS is offering edited highlights of the DRIFTBACK 20 event in London on August 15th to our readers. The recording includes the JOHNNIE WALKER interview and interviews featuring JOHNNY LEWIS and CHARLIE WOLF. If you would like to take advantage send 2 x C60 cassettes (good quality), a 9x6 s.a.e. with 32p stamps, and a 10p coin to help with administrative costs to: JULIAN WELLINGS, 3 Hammond Court, Front Street, Slip End, Luton, Beds, LU1 4DA.

COMMUNICATIONS

WE ALWAYS WELCOME YOUR LETTERS FOR PUBLICATION. PLEASE SEND THEM TO:

THE EDITOR
NOW RADIO
PO BOX 45
KETERING
NORTHANTS
NN16 0NW

St Lawrence Avenue
Snaitth
Goole

Dear Sir,

After reading NORMAN McLEOD's latest comments about RADIO CAROLINE (CAROLINE REVISITED - NOV RADIO MAGAZINE #40) I felt that I must write to you.

The whole of the article is correct; but the last paragraph is absolutely right. This is just what CAROLINE should be again - An alternative...she certainly isn't one at the moment. I love CAROLINE and have been listening since she first started up.

But, I'm certain she has lost her way. I can go along with the religious programmes etc because someone has to pay the bills. But there is no reason at all to be playing the material we are getting on 558 at the moment.

There was a lot of criticism of her in 1984 when it was said that she didn't have a direction, but at least a station without direction is one which is different.

If PETER PHILLIPS is responsible for the format which we have now then the sooner he leaves the better. If he is carrying out orders from the top then I am sorry.

There is absolutely no justification for playing the type of singles they do...or even playing any singles on 558.

There are no advertisers to please, only the listeners. And I don't want this stuff. I say "I" because I don't

know anyone else who listens to CAROLINE - and I am not joking. So, please CAROLINE get back to being as you were. A specialist radio station. A true alternative.

Yours sincerely
J E RICHARDSON

St Lawrence Ave
Worthing
West Sussex

Dear Howard,

I read with interest NORMAN McLEOD's article 'CAROLINE REVISITED'. To be fair to CAROLINE, its format does have a couple of important 'plusses' - firstly, the music policy is consistent, and the listener knows what he will get whatever time of the day or night he tunes in. No other station maintains day-long consistency in its output. Secondly, the emphasis is on music and not waffle and interruptions. (This is just as well as my main criticism of CAROLINE would be the inconsistent quality of its air staff, particularly on news, where I am surprised NEWSWEEK continues to associate itself with what can sometimes sound like pretty amateurish news reading!) This is surely one of the reasons why LASER, with its polished and professional sound raced ahead in the ratings.

However, NORMAN McLEOD does raise an important point on a wider scale, which is why do all our stations base their formats to a greater or lesser extent on the TOP 40, thus offering no real alternatives to the listener? The forthcoming projects from STAR FORCE and RADIO TARA give every indication of offering 'more of the same', yet on a recent visit to New York, I was able to listen to a whole range of stations selectively targeting different audiences. One of the most popular stations in New York is WCBS which programmes

Solid Gold. Given the rich wealth of good music produced during the past two decades such a station, skillfully programmed, could hardly fail to be a commercial success. WCBS attracts a large audience in the 30-45 age group (the post-war 'baby-boomers'), but also appeals to younger audiences who discover that the originals of so many current chart songs like 'MONEY MONEY' were so much better!!!

Other New York stations offer formats such as Soft Rock and 'light music', again catering for the over-30 age group who are effectively not catered for at all currently by any British radio station. CAROLINE could do worse than consider targetting this uncatered for age group who are definitely not too old to rock 'n' roll, but not yet ready for life with JIMMY YOUNG! To many, the name CAROLINE is itself synonymous with the sixties, the time during which it enjoyed its greatest success. Many people who grew up with CAROLINE would like to feel their station had grown up with them too! But whatever the future for CAROLINE, let us hope its not too long before SOMEONE is bold enough to break away from TOP 40 and offer that elusive REAL alternative.

Yours sincerely

PATRICK C HEELEY

*Penlands
Kintbury
Berkshire*

Dear Sir,
On reading recent issues of NOW RADIO I often note you refer to Satellite Radio. I refer, in particular, to the article about CHRIS CARY/RADO NOVA where the words "wait until NOVA goes Euro-wide via Satellite!" What always puzzles me is how eventually the general public will

be able to listen to this. There are so few people throughout the United Kingdom connected to cable - if that is how it will be distributed. What would be very useful is if you could prepare an article on this (and any other proposed Euro-channels) explaining how these new services could be received, bearing in mind the 'cut-price' satellite dishes coming on sale late next year.

Look forward to the article. Keep up the excellent work.

Yours faithfully

D S LEADBEATER

*Newtownards
Northern Ireland*

Dear Howard,

Having been (until now !) a silent subscriber to NOW RADIO can I say that we value the magazine's broad coverage of radio news and opinion. Issue 39 carried an item about the proposed legislation in the Irish Republic which will create legal independent radio. This stated that the pirates attracted a 'healthy 14% share of listening' in DOWNTOWN's original TSA. That is not so. The 'other stations' figure also relates to RTE 1 and 2 which are clearly audible throughout Northern Ireland, MANX RADIO which is heard in the South-East, WEST SOUND available along the North Coast as well as the six or so pirates which were broadcasting at the time of that survey. This means that the audience to unlicensed radio is in fact quite limited.

By the way, NORMAN McLEOD's comments about leaving the BBC, or indeed any single organisation, alone to define and deliver public service radio are echoed in our own thinking. His article on the reshuffling of the Corporation's networks was an excellent piece of analysis, and no doubt NORMAN will

be delighted to know that at night RADIO 2 can be heard in Northern Ireland on 19 different frequencies, but then it must be too good to miss!

Yours sincerely,

JOHN ROSSBOROUGH
Head of Programmes
DOWNTOWN RADIO

From:
ASSOCIATION FOR BROADCASTING
DEVELOPMENT

Dear Howard,

I must write in response to an article by NORMAN McLEOD in the last issue of NOW RADIO.

Norman can be forgiven for his unfair assumption that the ASSOCIATION FOR BROADCASTING DEVELOPMENT is a "one man band". The ABD's unity of purpose, its having a single, clear, corporate voice and its co-hesive strategy might well convey this. However, such a view does not do justice to the loyal and dedicated team with whom I have the honour to work (details of which were reported to this magazine, November 1986).

As to the matter of credibility, I believe our achievements speak for themselves. The ABD has;

- had eight key points (proposed to the Home Office last November) incorporated into the Green Paper.

- sought, through the Home Office, the further expansion of the VHF band for broadcasting purposes, to take us into the next century.

- devised in-conjunction with MARCONI RESEARCH an outline frequency plan for hundreds of frequency assignments, for use by voluntary and commercially orientated new entrants.

- pursued programming issues, and formulated a total re-think of needletime, hitherto regarded as a limitation on the amount of records played by radio stations.

In addition, by the year end, no fewer than 9 points recommended in the ABD's Green Paper response will be well on the way to becoming reality, and all this before ANY broadcasting reform legislation reached the statute books. At this point one should ask, what has the other three organisations referred to in the article achieved for the New Entrants?

As to the rest of Mr McLEOD's article I would respectively point out that H.M. Government are custodians of, and control frequency spectrum useage and allocation. Should the BBC wish to replan the revised networks allocated to them, post the Green Paper, then so be it. The appropriate place to make individual views known would have been in direct response to the discussion document - RADIO, CHOICES & OPPORTUNITIES and the appropriate time, before June 30, 1987, not now.

In closing I would say that history is full of mavericks (his words) who have been trodden on by the big boys. Individually, there is little we can do except perhaps stand on the side lines and winge, but collectively, are far, far stronger. So NORMAN, why not join the ABD? Organise some public meetings for us and help lobby, after all, actions speak louder than words.

Yours sincerely,

PAUL L BOON

Clareville Street,
London SW7

Dear Sir,
NORMAN McLEOD's piece (NOW RADIO #40) was intended to provoke comment. Here's mine!

I've just returned from Florida with an armful of tapes. 61 stations in South Florida! A whole range of consistent formats each with a competitor or two to keep it meeting the demands of its

listeners. This goes for news stations, classical, country, oldies, ethnic, etc, etc. When we have that choice in the UK, then CAROLINE will have achieved its primary purpose and if not amongst them itself, can meet some minority niche market. But today, in London, there is not one consistent uninterrupted music station in any format. While UK radio remains in this primitive state (and BBC plans to make it even worse with even more speech on RADIOS 1, 2 and 3!) let's be thankful for a CAROLINE successfully targetting the 'mass' market (that's you and me!) with a format where consistency is the main virtue.

Yours sincerely,

*BRIAN WATERS
MA RIGA MRTPI*

*Albert Street,
Whitstable,
Kent.*

ROGER KEMP

Dear Sirs,
I feel that NORMAN McLEOD has completely missed the point regarding what is really wrong with RADIO CAROLINE.

It's not the music, the presentation or anything to do with 558 at all. The problem surely is the evening programming on the other (819) transmitter.

Because, presumably, advertising income is hard to get, the station has stooped to broadcasting what it can get, religious (sic) programming, some of which is of the ugliest and most disreputable type to be heard anywhere.

By broadcasting this material the station does itself no credit but is certainly providing ammunition for the DTI by proving that it really does not maintain the high standards of yester-year and that virtually anybody with something to say, can just as long as they pay.

Is that acceptable? I don't think so.

ROSS'S RAMBLINGS

I must admit that the news from the ROSS REVENGE concerning the collapse of the massive antenna mast has rather thrown things here in the NOW RADIO office this week. I can't tell you exactly how many, but the number of calls to our evening NEWSLINE must have reached record numbers in the past few days. Of course there are people who want us to devote all the available time on the NEWSLINE to this one subject; alas we cannot. The details, as they say, will be in "next Tuesday's NOW RADIO Magazine!" The magazine is the main thing - and certainly is the earner of the pennies that pay for the free service on the NEWSLINE, so never expect us to be in a position where we will go in to great detail...and risk losing subscribers!!!

It has been a busy week! The stories were mounting up long before Wednesday's events in the North Sea. Then the two stations in Dublin decided to merge and go all out for one of the 225 licences that will be on offer in the new year. Then we were checking out a few reports about another major story when another piece of information came our way. I'll be honest - I was asked to "sit on it" for a few weeks so the "source" wouldn't be identified. I wanted to run it as "top story" but due to all the other developments, I am going to "hold it over" until next time. I can't even hint what it might be - but I know it'll shake a few people.....

NORMAN McLEOD has got you going, hasn't he!? Just look at the COMMUNICATIONS pages - everyone, including PAUL BOON has been forced to grab their quill's and respond to his out-pourings. I know one thing, it's great to see you react. Now let's see more response to all the other matters we touch on in our many pages!

Now, I might be the Editor, but due to all that we have in this issue ('tis better than just one page of radio news and a blood advert for a tv production company, isn't it???) I am forced to close early. I shall, by wishing those of you involved in CONSTRUCTIVE work the very best of British (and Irish) luck.

HGLR.

BLACKWELL EXITS ESSEX RADIO

EDDIE BLACKWELL, Chief Executive of ESSEX RADIO has resigned. He left the station on Clifftown Road, Southend-on-Sea for the final time last Tuesday evening.

The departure of BLACKWELL, a radio veteran and a pioneer of commercial radio in the sixties with RADIO LONDON, was not unexpected. (see report NOW RADIO issue #40).

A major row had broken out between EDDIE BLACKWELL and two of the station's largest shareholders, PAUL RAMSAY BROADCASTING and BRENT WALKER, over BLACKWELL's decision to ditch national sales rep BROADCAST MARKETING SERVICES in favour of the smaller SOUND ADVERTISING SERVICES set up by PICCADILLY RADIO.

The major shareholders did not agree with BLACKWELL's decision.

Now the station will remain with BMS.

A new Chief Executive will be appointed shortly.

NEWSLINK INKS FIRST CLIENT CONTRACT

The first contract in the new NEWSLINK package has been arranged.

ABBEY NATIONAL have signed a 13-week contract for spots to run in prime-time across the Independent Radio system.

The first NEWSLINK deal is reported to be worth around £300,000 to the stations and their national sales representatives.

IBA CUTS COMMERCIAL RADIO RENTALS AGAIN

The IBA has cancelled plans to introduce a 6% cost-of-living increase to ILR rentals which were due to start from October 1987.

This would have cost the stations £265,000.

Secondary Rentals, charged to the larger and more profitable stations, are also being adjusted.

Secondary Rental will now be introduced and charged for companies making £150,000 profit instead of £75,000.

The IBA says this latest decrease is part of a continuing downward trend started in 1984.

ROCK STATION PLANS BY RED ROSE

RED ROSE RADIO has added to its future plans for a national commercial Classical station (to be applied for in conjunction with the Australian CHALFORD COMMUNICATIONS operation and ANDREW LLOYD-WEBBER's REALLY USEFUL Group) with news that it wants to start up a new station on its FM channel, called ROCK-FM.

ROCK-FM would broadcast from Blackpool studios and offer a round-the-clock split service. A separate news service, designed to appeal to the AOR audience would also be operated.

The IBA has been approached by managing director DAVID MAKER and HOME OFFICE approval is now awaited.

Programming on the AM service of RED ROSE RADIO would remain unaltered, according to the station.

NEW EDITION **1987**

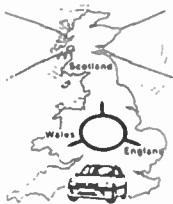
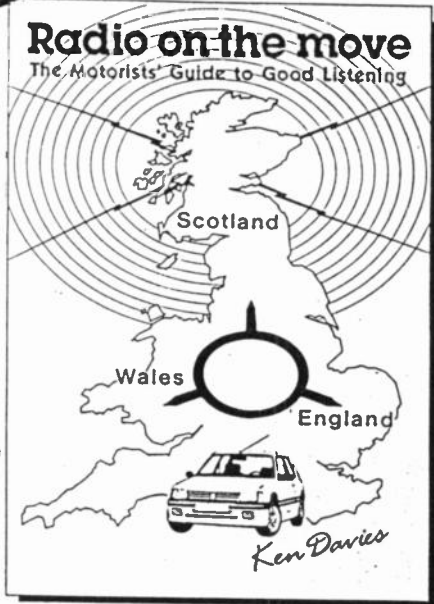
Radio on the move

This is the fifth edition of the ever popular guide to a smooth passage through the air waves in the UK. The unique layout enables the programme of one's choice to be located and tuned no matter what part of the country one finds oneself in with the minimum of wasted time and no technical knowledge.

In this day and age the ever increasing sophistication of radio receivers and their ability to reproduce high quality transmissions can be used to the best advantage with the use of this guide which has been thoroughly updated after the three years of almost constant change brought about by the international agreement reached in 1984.

With this guide listeners will get the best possible results from whatever equipment they may possess for some years to come.

The glossy cover and perfect binding makes it an attractive addition to any bookshelf. Alternatively the convenient size will fit comfortably in the glove compartment.



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THE MARCH OF PROGRESS

COMMENT BY NORMAN McLEOD

I'm not a believer in progress. Don't get me wrong: it's not that I believe progress can't be made in various fields - of course it can. But I am automatically suspicious of any new development, and the more hype it attracts the more wary I am.

Take portable radio sets, for instance. I wish it were true that as the years go by every new set from a manufacturer was better value and had better performance than its predecessor. But I can't help feeling that the heyday of the portable radio (without the now obligatory cassette deck or two) was a good fifteen years ago, and that since then the trend has been steadily downhill.

I remember looking forward to the first generation of sets using the new-fangled integrated circuits which first became available for this purpose around 1970. Once I actually had one of the new IC sets in my hands, however, I found it a mighty disappointment. The selectivity curve (formed by the parallel development of block ceramic filters) was quite horrible, being narrow and squawky at the 'nose', and wide as a barn door down the 'skirt'. The rest of the performance from the TAD 100 based design was pretty unremarkable too.

The very best radio I ever clapped eyes on was the Normende portable set which the Aberdeenshire Education Committee saw fit to furnish our sixth form common room with. It used to bring in RNI like it was anchored off the Scottish coast rather than 500 miles away, and it kept on going even with half its batteries missing! The audio was powerful and clear, too.

Nothing I have seen since has quite borne comparison with that Scandinavian portable. I believe Normende are still in business, and if anyone knows of their current output, do drop me a line. It's a devil of a job trying to find a decent portable radio these days.

Oh yes, you can get fully-synthesised sets that tune very precisely and have umpteen memories. But a synthesiser never made a set sound any better, and there's never room in these slim modern sets for a decent speaker. More current goes to keep the synth clattering away than goes into making sweet music in most of these radios.

The nicest sounding sets seem to date from the late sixties and early seventies: names like Hacker, Dynatron and Roberts from the UK, or B&O and Grundig from Europe, have an honourable place in the history of the quality portable receiver.

Sets of this era had no nasty steep-edged ceramic filters obliterating all AM audio above 3 kHz: instead they used gentle tuned circuits which could be carefully 'spread' to give a smooth roll-off. And they knew that a decent-sized loudspeaker in a box with some attempt at acoustic loading was the only way to get a satisfying bass response.

There's been much more effort put into developing car radios than has gone into refining the portable receiver. Some of this work (albeit only some) has paid off, but AM in particular suffers from a lack of standardisation of the audio response, which means that no two sets sound the same. Nevertheless, some modern car radios have a lot going for them.

But I do wish you could buy a nice-sounding, thoroughly analogue tranny!

--- © N McLeod 1987 ---

Now Radio

Openings

ESSEX RADIO seeks a dynamic new CHIEF EXECUTIVE. Excellent Remuneration package for the candidate of the highest calibre. Write to: DAVID KEDDIE, Chairman's Office, ESSEX RADIO, Maitland House, Warrior Square, Southend-on-Sea.....

RADIO 210 is seeking an experienced SENIOR RADIO JOURNALIST to join their team at the Reading newsroom. The salary will reflect the responsibility that goes with the job and will match age and experience. Applications in confidence to: PHIL COOPE, Head of News, RADIO 210, PO Box 210, Reading, Berkshire, RG3 5NZ.....

BBC RADIO NORFOLK has a vacancy for a REPORTER to be based in Norwich. Three years Journalistic experience required. Work is primarily reporting, interviewing, bulletin writing and news reading. Salary £9,357 - £11,610 plus annual allowance of £624.00p. Reference Number 4709. Application form from BBC APPOINTMENTS on (01) 927 5799 or write London W1A 1AA.....

SWANSEA SOUND is looking for a JOURNALIST with both radio experience and a knowledge of Welsh affairs. Applications to: DAVID THOMAS, Programme Controller, SWANSEA SOUND, Victoria Road, Gowerton, Swansea, SA4 3AB.....

THE VOICE OF PEACE Radio Station requires an AM/FM BROADCAST ENGINEER. Further details from NOW RADIO COMMUNICATIONS, PO Box 45, Kettering, Northants or telephone (0536) 514437.....

NOW RADIO COMMUNICATIONS are looking for an ADVERTISING MANAGER to work on the development of all areas of advertising and marketing for its titles; NOW RADIO MAGAZINE, NOW RADIO REPORTS and FRESH AIR. Position need not be located at our Kettering office, but a telephone is essential for this position. Applications in writing, with cv, to: HOWARD G L ROSE, Editor, NOW RADIO, PO Box 45, Kettering, Northants, NN16 0NW.....

BBC RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE, due on the air next autumn, has openings for NEWS PRODUCERS and REPORTERS. PRODUCER salary range £10,881 - £15,388 plus £1,066 allowance, REPORTER salary £9,375 to £11,610 plus £624 allowance. For both posts call BBC APPOINTMENTS for an application pack which will include a cassette and brief on making a 4-minute demo. Telephone (01) 927 5799 no later than Friday, December 4th...quote Ref 4735 for PRODUCERS (NEWS) and Ref 4736 for REPORTERS.....

METRO RADIO have a vacancy for a top daytime PRESENTER. Aircheck cassette and cv to: GILES SQUIRE, METRO RADIO, Swalwell, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE99 1BB.....

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A selection of current radio vacancies around the country (and beyond!). Entries in this section are free of charge to subscribing stations. Details should be sent in writing or by telex.

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