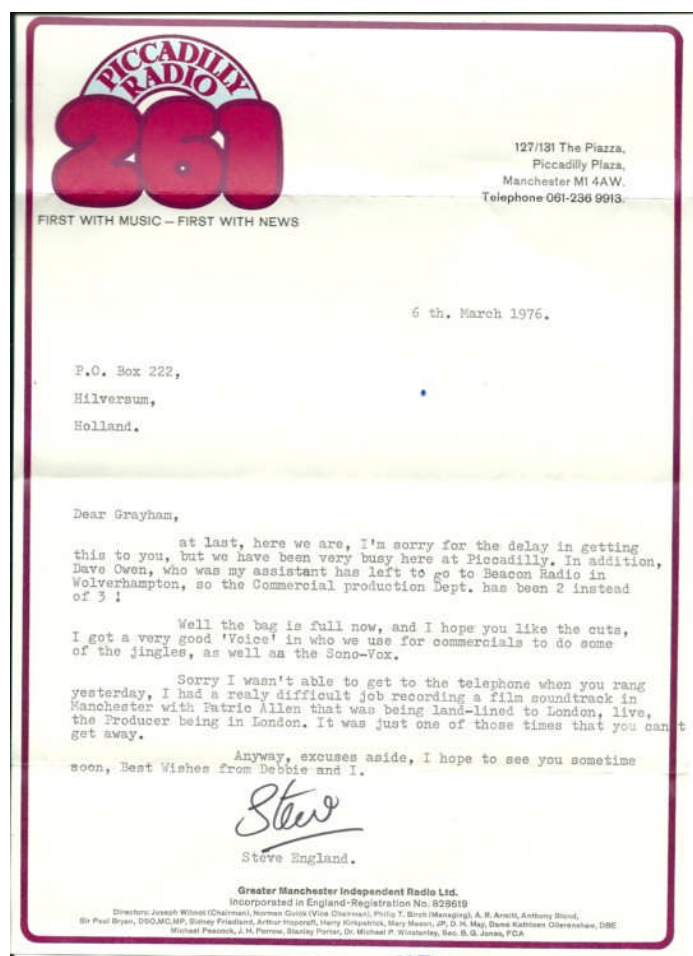


## Graham Gill Archive Volume 17

In the years after his offshore days, when Graham Gill went to work for Radio Netherlands, he still tried to get in contacts with former colleagues from offshore days, which we saw earlier in this series. It was in 1976 he wrote a letter to Steve England and also tried to phone him. Steve took some of his expensive time to write a letter to Graham from the offices of Piccadilly Radio, one of the first ILR stations after Capital Radio and LBC started in London. Steve was responsible for the commercial production department of the station in Manchester. One of the things he mentioned in the letter was that his department was reduced from 3 to 2 persons, as his personal assistant, Dave Owen had left the station to work for Beacon Radio. Well Graham and Steve worked together on Radio Caroline in 1973 while Steve England and Dave Owen earlier worked together on Radio Atlantis in 1974.



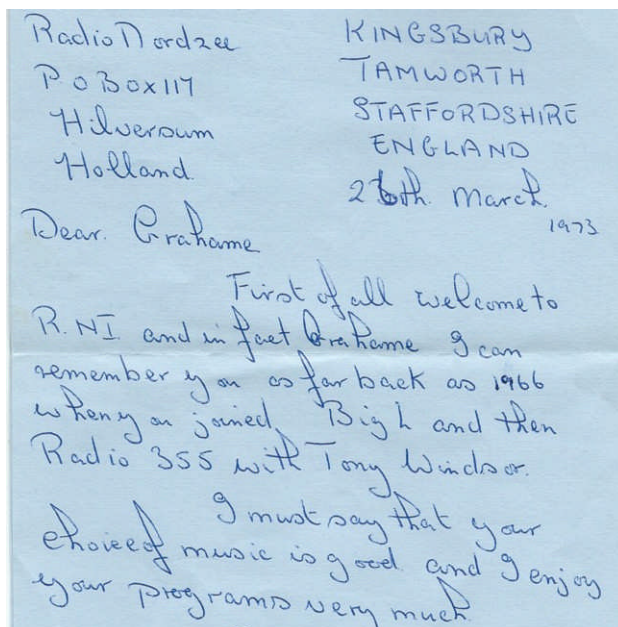
In Rainham it was Nigel Martin, who wrote on March 21<sup>st</sup> 1973 a long letter to Graham, which opened with: 'I have been listening to RNI since it started way back some years ago. I find the music very good. I can always tell when you're on the air by your accent. As I have been listening for this past few years, I have always wondered why some deejays only stay for a short while, then leave. I particularly liked Mark Slate. I was used getting listening to his shows when he left. Do you know why some leave? I think the longest serving deejay is Mike Ross.'

Mike Ross indeed did a few stints in 1970 and was, next doing shows, also technician aboard the radio ship MEBO II. He also did long periods between 1971 and 1974, including - together with his wife - Sheila. It were very relaxing shows for family entertainment. The last time I met Mike Ross was at the Driftback 20 Convention in London. After that I never saw him back or heard anything from him. It seems I'm not the only person who isn't anymore in contact with Mike as in the past several readers asked where Mike Ross is living nowadays. So the big question to you the reader is: If you know something about the present whereabouts of Mike Ross, please let us know at [HKnot@home.nl](mailto:HKnot@home.nl)

Another letter was written on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1974 when Graham was working for a while as program director on Radio Caroline. It was the 18 year old Allan Pennington who wrote some wise words for his age about the Loving Awareness: 'I appreciate you there with Loving Awareness on the Mi Amigo, but I think it is impossible for the whole world to be at peace and practicing 'LA'. Well it is better than none, so keep plugging 'LA'. As a shortwave DX'er I listen to all parts of the world and receive literature from many countries. From this I've discovered now completely different the attitudes and ways of life in some countries are. Each country has its own ideals and aims and through selfishness and ignorance they harm other people in trying to achieve these aims. I think wanted unity is impossible but I think everyone should respect and appreciate other people's aims however different they are.'

Instant listeners to RNI should remember the names of those who wrote the deejays almost weekly or more. Two names to be mentioned were Peggy Sheldrake in Stowmarket, Suffolk and Robert Tidmarsh from Tamworth in Staffordshire. They were regularly mentioned in the several programs on RNI and although both lived a long way from each other, it seems they were terrible

'in love', which they spread around in writing letters to the deejays on RNI and tell in their letters their special feelings for each other, letter after letter. Many of those I found back in the Graham Gill archive. And I think the very first written to Graham Gill by Robert was on March 26<sup>th</sup> 1973, welcoming Graham to the station.



Radio Nordzee  
P.O. Box 117  
Hilversum  
Holland

KINGSBURY  
TAMWORTH  
STAFFORDSHIRE  
ENGLAND

26<sup>th</sup> March 1973

Dear. Grahame

First of all welcome to  
R.NI and in fact Grahame I can  
remember you as far back as 1966  
when you joined Big L and then  
Radio 355 with Tony Windsor.

I must say that your  
choice of music is good and I enjoy  
your programs very much

When talking about tunes and mentioning Graham Gill on RNI and Radio Caroline in the seventies everyone would say immediately 'Way back home - instrumental b - side' performed by Junior Walker and the All Stars on Tamla Motown. Well Graham used on RNI another tune for some time. It was an instrumental version of the song 'Day by Day' a song from the 1971 Musical Godspell, written by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak. Also on the use of this number listeners took pencil and paper to make him compliments. However we still don't know after so many years who performed this instrumental version. Everyone who knows please contact me [HKnot@home.nl](mailto:HKnot@home.nl)

101 Great North Road,  
Bosforth,  
Newcastle upon Tyne 3,  
England.  
14<sup>th</sup> April, '73.

Dear Graham,

Several weeks ago I sent you a postcard to say how much I enjoyed one of your shows when you were working for "Radio Caroline", but as reception over in these parts was pretty bad --- I was very pleased to hear you again coming over loud and clear on the more powerful station R.N.I.

I would just like to wish you all the best and say how much I enjoy your choice of music (a goodly mixture) of quality and popular music.

Your theme music that you play out with "Day by Day" is good and sometime could you possibly play on one of your shows the "Holly Sherwood" version --- as I think she makes a very good job of it.

Once again Graham, best of luck, hope you stay with R.N.I. a long time --- not many quality D.J.'s around just now.

Yours sincerely,  
Jan Sanderson.

When digging in the boxes I also found a letter from Lothar Pinno from Germany, who directly after he tuned into RNI and the Graham Gill show, for the very first time in June 1973, wrote to the station and he had a very special reason for that: 'It was the very first time I tuned in to your show and I was delighted as I missed your kind of music for a long time. I just returned home after a two year spell in the Middle East, particular Persia and Israel, where I worked for that time as an irrigation and hydrogenation specialist. Understandable, that I am raving about your show, after all that Arabic stuff down there.' Next he wanted Graham to read out his letter as he wanted 'girls, girls and girls after his long stay from home.

A remarkable amount of letters, about the same subject, was written to RNI in October and November 1973. The reason was that 'The Sunday Times' had a long article about several radio stations, including RNI. I quote from the article: 'Radio Northsea International, 275 medium wave. Pirate ship operating off the coast of Denmark for more than three years. Danish Government trying to get it closed down, so could disappear any week now. Nobody could possibly miss it. In the style of Radio Luxembourg, only much worse.' Of course a lot of readers of 'The Sunday Times' got angry and some of them wrote a letter to the editor at the newspaper, pointing out the various mistakes and telling how popular RNI

was. It was for instant a letter sent by Mrs. J.W. Wyndham-Kaye from London who wrote the next letter:

The Editor,  
The Sunday Times,  
200, Gray's Inn Road,  
London, W.C.1.

17 October 1973

Dear Sir,

I had been enjoying reading The Sunday Times Magazine until I came to the 'Radio Close Up - Calling The Tune' by Gordon Burn. I saw with interest that it included Radio North Sea International, but was infuriated when I looked more closely. I could forgive the dogmatic arrogance of Mr. Burn if he were at least correct in his facts. For his information and that of your readers, I should like to tell you that Radio North Sea International broadcasts on 220 metres and not 275 (approx.). (Surely a careful writer takes the trouble to verify facts such as wavelengths? Either it is 275 or it is not.)

Furthermore, R.N.I. broadcasts off the coast of Holland - not Denmark. It is true that the government of the Netherlands is intending to close down R.N.I., together with the enormously popular Dutch station Radio Veronica and Radio Seagull, which Mr. Burn finds more to his taste. The three stations are all anchored a few miles off the coast of Scheveningen.

It is quite maddening to be told that none will miss R.N.I., when I for one have been greatly saddened by its imminent closure. In my opinion, Radio North Sea International is the most enjoyable station for evening listening.

In conclusion, I shall add that I find it very worrying that such inaccuracies are present in what - until now - I would have called a responsible newspaper and hope that this is not typical of your normal standards.

Yours faithfully,

J.W. Wyndham-Kaye.

Some days after the letters came in at the desk of the editor, one of them was published and rectification of the errors was made.

Some artists got more attention than the others and Graham Gill, who in the sixties worked on several stations, including the middle of the road formatted Radio 390, was into the music of Ray Conniff and his singers. It was Lois Hollands who wrote Graham as secretary of the International Ray Conniff Club: 'Thank you so much for your dedication to play so much of Ray's music in your shows. Seems we have the same favorite track from the new Conniff Album: 'It never rains in Southern California', a really knockout number. I will give you a mention in my 'round the radio' column in the Fanclub Magazine in April.'

There were many listeners who followed the offshore radio scene instantly and wrote to the stations about what they knew as well as what they wanted to know. Let's take, for instant, a letter from Anthony Carrick in Harrogate, Yorkshire. He wrote in July 1974 how happy he was to hear Graham back on Caroline 259: 'I have been an ardent follower of the offshore scene since the beginning of 1964. My favourite station of all time is of course Radio Caroline. Although I did prefer the original broadcasts between 1964 end 1967. Today's

sound on Caroline are a totally different format but remain very interesting. Am I right in saying that while you worked on the MEBO 2, you were also doing the news on Hilversum shortwave service? My wife and I used to listen to RNI last year and one of her most valued possessions is a couple of taped request we have from the RNI Request Show, which you were kind enough to play for us. I keep on reading articles that the 389 service will reappear soon. Are these rumours true? Or is it really impossible to broadcast two medium wave transmissions from one ship? Last year, when Radio Caroline restarted, the program was really good with an alternative pop/progressive program on 259. At the moment the signal is really quite good. Daytime is excellent and from ten till midnight there's some fading. Unfortunately that's your time slot at the moment. We have a baby daughter seven weeks ago and of course this means waking up into the middle of the night. I find that whilst my wife is feeding baby Elisabeth I can enjoy the sounds of Radio Caroline in the early hours.'

Just one other for this issue of the Graham Gill archive brings us to the Record and Radio Mirror from June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1974. In that issue Robb Eden, who did a lot of things for the landbased operation in England, told to a journalist of the weekly that the Caroline ship, MV Mi Amigo, would be going to the British coast before the Dutch law came.

**Caroline poised**

RADIO CAROLINE is poised to sail back to England for 24-hour English programming as soon as the Dutch Marine Offences Act goes through — probably on September 1.

At present the organisation — based in The Hague — is searching desperately for a motor torpedo boat to use as a high speed tender.

Robb Eden would not confirm a specific date for the switch to England but said the Mi Amigo would anchor off the Brinton / Clacton area because of the favourable conditions there.

Meanwhile the disc jockey complement on board has been upped to 12 with three Americans coming in recently following the departure of old stalwart, Norman Barrington.

Eden said: "We are also ready to start broadcasting news on the hour and our English service has been extended by an hour, now starting at 8.00 pm.

"Things have never been better on board. Radio Mi Amigo's advertising space is fully booked and when Ronan O'Rahilly brought George Harrison and Jonathan King to Amsterdam to hear the station recently, they were all impressed."

Eden says political troubles in Holland may prevent the Dutch MOA from going through in the next couple of months but September 1 is considered "the absolute deadline."

**Beeb bulletin**

RARE public airing this week for one time Stones' manager Andrew Oldham who will be revealing all and perhaps more to Brian Matthew on My Top 12. Wonder if there'll be any Stones' tracks or there again whether it'll just be a narrated performance of Let It Bleed? Also amid the football from Munich take time off on the Saturday before to catch Camel and UFO in concert.

June 15 John Peel — Bob Sargent, Global Village Trucking Co, and Henry Cow; 15 Beach Boys Story Part 6 — Making Waves Again; In Concert — Camel and UFO; 16 My Top 12 — Andrew Oldham; 17 Bob Harris — Jesse Colin Young, Blue, Winkies.

