

BIRMINGHAM SOUNDWAVES

ISSUE .1

Stop Press! :

SOUNDS ALTERNATIVE 255 T-SHIRTS !!!,
SORRY FOLKS, MEDIUM SIZE AVAILABLE ONLY,
£4.25 INCLUSIVE OF POSTAGE,
BLANK, UNCROSSED POSTAL ORDERS ONLY PLEASE,
ALLOW 21 DAYS FOR DELIVERY.....

Hello there, welcome to Birmingham Soundwaves, the newsletter keeping you informed on Sounds Alternative and other free radio stations both locally and nationally. We provide accurate information and news, and we hope that you will find the first edition interesting.

Sounds Alternative is an alternative radio station operating twice monthly on Sundays from 10.00 a.m. on 255 meters, however the current broadcasting restrictions that apply in the U.K. regrettably make us illegal, however our broadcasting creates no interference to anyone as we transmit on a clear unallocated channel of 1179 KHz, 254 meters medium wave with transmitter power of 80 watts.

Sounds Alternative believe in a policy of contemporary album music, a format ignored by the majority of legal IBA and BBC local radio stations. Here in Birmingham we most likely have the worst local radio stations in the country in BRMB and radio W.M. BBC radio W.M. have the lowest audience figures in the country for a local radio station while BRMB's listening audience has been dropping dramatically. Here at Sounds Alternative it is not our intention to compete with the likes of BRMB, but to provide an alternative radio service for you the listener.

By way of background it was back in October 1979 that several members of the pirate radio station Radio Free Birmingham left that station to form a professional radio station broadcasting rock and reggae music in Birmingham, this was the birth of Sounds Alternative. After several tests in December 1980 broadcasts were in March 1981 on a twice monthly basis. This alternative source of listening became most popular not only in Birmingham but also with listeners in the Black Country, Telford, Stafford, Derby, Oxford and even Cambridge. In addition to the medium wave service an FM service to Walsall was started on 94.2 MHz which proved most popular with listeners in that area; as popularity increased so did the work load, which meant reducing the medium wave service to bank holidays only, although the FM side of the station continued to thrive. It was at this time that the reggae staff left the station to form the short lived Radio Star. Throughout 1982 the bank holiday medium wave service continued and as christmas approached plans were made to operate a three day marathon with the strongest ever signal ever produced by a pirate radio station in the midlands. Reports were received from Ayrshire, Lancashire and West Germany !! After letting in 1983 with style broadcasts continued on bank holidays and as new members of staff joined, the station workload became spread more evenly and some new broadcast sites became available, thus meaning that Birmingham's number one free radio station was now in the position to resume medium wave services on alternate Sundays which we are operating at present.

Sounds Alternative is a non profit making radio station, we receive little or no financial backing, apart from that provided by the on air and backroom staff of:- Keith Rogers, Rick Marks, Steve Dunne, Dave Marshall, Andy Duncan, Mark Mc Connell and Peter Knight. If you feel that you can help us in any way please write to us. We depend on listeners help and support for our success, and Sounds Alternative thanks you for your continued support. Sounds Alternative continues.....

Campaign News

The newly formed Community Radio Association (CRA) are busy supporting groups who wish to set up non profit making, democratically controlled radio stations, and are campaigning for the removal of legal obstacles which stand in their way.

Four research groups have been set up in order to complete evidence for licence applications. Campaign plans have to be completed shortly in order to submit plans to the Home Office for consideration of community radio development before February 1984, due to B.B.C/I.B.A demands on the radio spectrum. The C.R.A has until christmas to assemble its case.

The research groups are:-

- 1 Licence Applications;
Norman McLeod 25 Ditching Rise Brighton BN1 4QL (0273) 671928
- 2 Regulation, supervision and resolving local conflicts;
John Gray 13 Comely Bank Row Edinburgh EH4 IEA 031 332 8270
- 3 Publicity and information;
Simon Partridge 92 Huddleston Road London N7 OEG 01 263 6692
- 4 Finance; membership individuals £5.00/ £2.50 unwaged/ £10.00 for groups
Iftikhar Sheik 197 Ribblesdale Road London SW16 6QL 01 667 2457
work 01 686 0505 ext 249

All are invited to requestor supply information

Next meeting; Sunday 25 September at St. Thomas Centre Ardwick Green North
Manchester M12 6FZ

In respect of Licence Applications Norman McLeod has compiled a questionnaire and guidelines for parties interested in making an application for a Community Radio operation in their area. Please write in for these very useful documents now. For further information contact N McLeod or P Garner 37a Park Crescent B Brighton BN2 3BH (0273) 605147

Radio Caroline returns to the North Sea

Over the last couple of months something strange has been happening in radio circles. Rumours and denials emanating from many a station basement in the south of England, programme controllers shaking in their boots when after several years of silence they now realised that Radio Caroline was about to resume broadcasting.

Several of the daily newspapers and t.v. stations gave a lot of publicity to the return of Europe's most popular pirate station, and so we all eagerly awaited for the first bout of crackles & whistles.

On Saturday August 20th at noon, after several days of testing Caroline returned on 310m 963khz (announced on as 319m).

Broadcasting from the m.v. Imagine, formerly the Ross Revenge with its 300 foot antenna and its powerful 50 kilowatt tx used at half power, The first announcer was a rather dreary Tom Anderson with a very low key launch and a look back at 20 years of music. Caroline was back, but was it worth the wait?

Listeners expecting the old album based format may be disappointed to hear the Caroline playlist of a mixture of album oldies, contemporary singles occasional soul & disco tracks plus reggae music. All tracks are played 3 or 4 in a row and back announced with very little talk between records and up until the end of September had not carried advertising.

Radio Caroline transmits 7 days a week 0700 until 0200hrs with a crew that includes old faces Tom Anderson & Simon Barrett plus Andy Archer who left his job hosting the breakfast show for Leicestershire Centre Radio. New staff include Robin Ross (who worked on the ship in 1981 installing equipment before the ship was impounded in Spain), an ex Irish pirate Tony Carath plus a Black New Yorker Dixie Peach who hosts the 2200 until closedown slot.

Reception in B'ham is generally weak or non-existent. Let's hope that the planned transmitter increase in October to 50kw will improve signal strength dramatically, I should hope so.

According to a reliable source the Caroline organisation are conducting audience listeners surveys in the South, France & Belgium, planning a transmitter increase from October first and are opening an office in Monte Carlo to handle advertising.

Why not tune in to 319, it's well worth a listen

Sounds Alternative 255m 1179 khz Alternate Sundays from 10.00am

Current on air staff; Keith Rogers, Bob Barton, Dave Marshall, Rick Marks Norman Nelson, Andy Duncan and Steve Dunne. Sounds Alternative continues.

Alternative Airwaves

Other free radio stations in and around the area:-

E.S.T Radio, 94.3 MHz FM, every Sunday 1100am - 1400pm., target area, mainly South Birmingham with an album music format.

Address :- Box 943, 190 Monument Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B16 8UU

County Radio, (announced 94.4 MHz FM), actual frequency 94.1 - 94.4 (drifts), target area, the Black Country every Sunday from 1600 or 1800pm to 2300pm with a format of top 40 and oldies. County created interference to BST over the last bank holiday due to an extended schedule, County broadcast on 226 meters medium wave on bank holidays.

Address :- P.O. Box 319, Edenbridge, Kent.

Please note that adequate reception of an FM Free Radio station can be difficult on certain FM transistor radios, when listening on a portable, extend and rotate telescopic antenna to obtain best reception.

Sunshine Radio (South Shropshire), 299 meters medium wave, every Saturday and Sunday 0700 am - 2100 pm, very professional, lots of commercials, transmitter power 260 watts with a target area of South Shropshire, IBA style format.

Address :- 93 Westcroft, Leominster, Herefordshire.

Stop Press.....SUNSHINE RADIO ~~LKREX~~ , South Shropshire

Sunshine radio has now extended hours to 7 days a week 12 hours a day.....New address P.O. Box 299, Ludlow, Shropshire.....

.....Antenna system 380 foot slung between to tall trees and Sunshine are erecting a 120foot steel mast to improve reception, and are operating with the full support of South Shropshire district councilThe local I.B.A. station radio Wyvern 35 mile away are not very amused because Sunshine are pinching Wyvern's advertisers at a 20th of the cost

Sunshine founder Graham Symonds along with Councilor Adrian Coles have set up a consortium to win the Telford & Shrewsbury I.B.A. franchise if and when its offered....

Sunshine format very similar to legal commercial radio e.g. BRMB, top 40 orientated with a more local community element.....

The best of luck to them.....I wonder if the idea of a 7 day a week 'community station would work in B'ham, Sounds Alternative have been strongly advised not to make such an attempt in B'ham due to reasons due numerous to mention. Why not write to us for details. Dept 255 190 Monument Rd Edgbaston B'ham B16 8UU.

B'ham Soundwavesnext edition available early December....reserve your copy now by sending an S.A.E. to us. Ta Ta from us Keith Rogers