

Hello there & welcome back to the 255 newsletter-from the operators of the West Midlands most popular 'free' radio service-at least it was until last Easter Monday-----But a few things are happening, the brain cells are reactivating, we have a few ideas in the pipeline, 255 may be returning to the air soon.....

More details to be found elsewhere in this bulletin.

First off 255 would like to thank everyone who came to meet us at the Sandwell pub last Easter Monday after our official closure, a good time was had by all, and a few hangovers the following day.....

Sounds Alternative closed due to the maximum increase in fines for operating a station unlicensed became £2000 on May first, also the telecommunications act would soon become law. However it was 3 months later that the Bill became law, Sounds Alternative should have continued but other problems made that difficult.

What has happened since April ??????????

### B'HAM ACTIVITIES

As usual, the nations second city has little to show in respect to radio activity, however at the end of May strange happenings-actually within B'ham, a new station-not english but Greek. A traditional Greek language station began broadcasting Saturday evenings on 94.2 mhz fm, Midland Greek Radio playing popular Greek music could be heard Saturday evenings from either 8 or 9 pm until the early hours of the next day plus Sunday Afternoons/early evenings.

The station became popular with the small Greek community in B'ham, & then became the 2nd city's first 7 day pirate operating from 5pm until 11pm at night, unfortunately shortly before the Telecom bill became law Midland Greek Radio vanished from the airwaves, not to be heard again.

We do not know if the station was shut down by the Dept Trade & Industry or that they ceased broadcasts voluntarily. If anyone has any info on the station please send info to Sounds Alternative.

Pirate station E.S.T.FM having suffered 2 needless raids in the spring have made two late night Saturday evening broadcasts 11pm until 2am, the station has no plans for a return to the air on a regular basis, perhaps this may have something to do with court cases.....

A short wave station has popped up fortnightly in the 41 meter band, called Crystal radio, broadcasting on either 7325 or 7375 khz. Due to band conditions it may not be possible to receive them locally. Address, Crystal Radio 190 Monument Road etc -Mail collected by E.S.T.

Sounds Alternative would like to point out that we have not or have any desire to be connected with any other or the above stations using the Monument road mailing address.

### Sunshine Radio

Shropshires 500 watts of local radio is still broadcasting 7 days a week, and is still more popular than the legal station Radio Wyvern claiming to serve Hereford & Worcester, proving that it is possible to continue after the telecom bill.

The last time Telecom turned up at Sunshine the transmitter was as always locked up, and the inspecting officer was handed a piece of paper containing a list of 500 names each person claiming ownership of the transmitter. Needless to say no summonses.....

Long may they broadcast Sunshine Radio, Villa Farm, Grete, near Ludlow.

Tune down to 295 m 1617 khz, you can receive them in your area, just turn up the volume a bit higher than usual.

### County Radio

County are still going strong and station manager Stevie Merrick informs us that County intend to continue every Sunday evening on 94.4 mhz fm Sunday evenings to the West Midlands.

County Radio P.O. Box 319 Edenbridge, Kent.



G.K. Radio

Another long established F.M. station from Wolverhampton can be heard most alternate Sunday evenings on 103.5 fm from 6 pm.

U.K. Radio recently went down to Weston Super Mare for a holiday come radio broadcast recently and operated a two week daily radio service to the popular holiday resort under the name Weston Sounds on 94 mhz FM.. The response was very good as no one in that area had ever heard of a pirate station before. One report said that Weston Sounds claimed that they were operating from a boat in the Bristol Channel.

Another station heard on occasions on 94 mhz is Subway Sounds who operate late on Saturday evenings, the station teamed up with U.K. for the Weston station.

All over the country radio stations are operating in defiance of the new laws and the I.B.A. & B.B.C are getting hysterical about the lost audience to stations that are active, friendly, offer a variety of music, and treat the audience as people, not clones or morons, one thing about a lot of unlicensed stations is the fact that they are operated by the people for the people, unlike the current majority of I.B.A. stations remote from the listener.

At long last the department of trade are realising that the pirates are telling them something - that the current legal state of broadcasting in this country needs a good shake up, and at long last it seems that the government appear to be bending very slowly but surely, one thing you can do is to write to the Home Office, and ask them what they are up to & when they plan to legalise Community Radio, it's not an offence to write to the Home Office, you won't get arrested. The more people that write, the better, remember it was only public pressure by mail and by broadcasting illegally that brought about legal C.B.. It will work - but only if there is enough pressure by you.

The addresses; Douglas Hurd, Home Office, Queen Annes Gate, London SW1H 9AT  
Or Kenneth Baker, Dept of Trade & Industry, Waterloo Bridge House  
Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UA.

Or Your local M.P., House of Commons, London

In London there are several free stations operating 7 days a week, without any problems from the Dept of Trade, apparently the Telecom Bill and the transfer of the tracking of illegal signal to the Dept of Trade from the Home Office has created a mass of paperwork & hassles with people refusing to be transferred to the Dept of Trade, others still employed by telecom assisting on a contract basis & other personnel becoming civil servants.

One unofficial comment from the Dept of Trade is that they do not have and will not have the correct amount of manpower required to shut down the pirates & would prefer some sort of legalisation programme. However Kenneth Baker, Minister of state claims "WE have the teeth and we intend to use them" - I think that quite a lot of holes need filling .....

London Stations known to be still operating;

Radio Jackie 227m, Morden Surrey, Average weekly audience 250,000.  
A lot of support from local M.P.s and council, 24hrs a day.

Skyline Radio, South East London, MW and FM Audience around 100,000

London Greek radio, North London & Voice of the Immigrants are both very popular stations among the Greek community.

Two of the most popular stations are the Jazz-Funk/Soul stations on FM Horizon Radio and J.F.M.

In addition to the above there are many one or two days stations plus several ethnic stations. The best of luck to all of them.

Manchester/Stockport 24 hours a day on FM with an audience of 250,000

Black Street Floor FM radio station with over



### LIVERPOOL

Stourton community radio operate from Birkenhead, an allo oldies format and according to the mail on sunday newspaper a 100,000 audience.

Radio Elenore 254/1179 khz at least every weekend, one of the longest running Merseyside pirates.

---

### OFFSHORE RADIO NEWS

The biggest stirring in British broadcasting in years can be heard every day on 558 khz/538 meters mw. LASER 558. Broadcasting from a former Norweigan fishing boat the M.V. communicator, organised from America with the initial cash to launch the station originating from Ireland, Laser has an all American staff and a top forty non stop music format. Less chat more music, that's what music radio should be, once again it takes the Yanks to show (20 years ON) how to play pop music. The station is clearly audible and listenable in the Midlands, and is claiming a five million audience, although at press date no adverts have been carried.

RADIO Caroline with a weaker signal on 312m 963 khz and 576 khz a new channel, carry a few adverts, and seem to be altering their format featuring more commercial music. The station recently featured at Easter (and repeated August Bank Holiday) the top 500 records over the last 20 years chose by Caroline listeners. All the transmitter gear on Caroline is second hand with a maximum power rating of 50kw on 319, Although I do not think that the station has ever been on full power.

Laser 558 use 25kw, new gear, and travel further as the bottom end of the band is received better on many transistor and car radios. Radios are more selective/sensitive to incoming signals at the far end of the band resulting in the Irish station RTE 1 complaining about alleged interference from laser.

The Offshore revolution continues with another station on the way.....

The station WRLI Wonderful RADIO LONDON INTERNATIONAL will be based on the M.V. Four Freedoms with a mixture of U.K. & U.S.A. dj's. We know a lot of info about this station, but space does not permit us room for full details. WRLI will operate daytime only, closing at 7pm making way for the Religious station VOICE OF THE FREE GOSPEL which is licenced to come on air late 84 via facilities of the Atlantic charter broadcasting service aboard the vessel MV FOUR FREEDOMS. Both stations are separate and operate through 2 separate corporations. This is not a hoax, if it is it's a bloody good one as a couple of people involved just happen to be the same Texans that launched the first Radio London Offshore in 1964.

The 4 Freedoms Broadcasting Network, Southwest agents, 806 East Abram, Arlington Texas 76010 Tel: (817) 588 - 0941

---

### SOUNDS ALTERNATIVE NEWS

After a long discussion we returned to the airwaves on August Bank Holiday Monday 10am - 8pm, with Rick Marks Mike Richards, Keith Rogers Steve Dunne & Bob Barton. Although we did have a few hassles with certain equipment such as a ~~the~~ £300 studio reel to reel breaking down etc etc. There is a strong possibility that 255 will be back on air soon hopefully fortnightly from the end of Sept or start of Oct, Sunday of course. Can you help? Ideally we could do, with a couple of places to broadcast from, flats high up ideally. Disc Jockeys, Fund Raising, Adverts etc. If you have any ideas or can help in any way then write to Keith Rogers Dept 255, 190 Monument Rd, Edgbaston B'ham B16 8UU.

Thank you in advance, Any 255 future plans will be announced hopefully on air.

Several 255 staff were responsible for the one off Walsall Independent Radio Spring Bank Holiday Monday on 253m along with Dave Anderson & Pete Foster, Barton & Rogers have a lot to answer for.

---

Finally as the Home Secretary has hinted consideration of community radio at long last, The Community Radio Association is holding a general members meeting in London on Sunday Sept 23. We will be there (at least one of us) The C.R.A. can be contacted at 92 Huddleston Rd London N7 0EG (S.A.E. please).