

The next meeting of the Merseyside Free Radio Association will take place on Wednesday 19th October 1983. In the meantime, I don't think that I can remember a time when so few local stations were on the air. Maybe my first item will explain one of the reasons:-

CENTRAL RADIO were raided by the authorities at 4:20pm on Monday, whilst carrying out a short "test" transmission. The 150W transmitter and the tape-decks were taken away, and Station "M" report that prosecutions are almost certain to follow. Not surprising that neither Central Radio nor Liverpool Pirate Radio have been heard this weekend, but a heterodyne was heard on Manx Radio, so someone could have been testing with an unmodulated carrier.

RADIO ELEANOR signed on at 10am on Saturday, but any opening announcements were "missed" so I don't know whether there was any reference to their non-appearance last Sunday. Paul Rogers made reference to the raid on Central Radio, and said that he was looking forward to a chat about it with Jim Brown at next Wednesday's meeting. At 11am Paul Rogers handed over to Barry Cullen. Shortly after 11am I checked the other local frequencies, and when re-tuning to 1449kHz at 11:20am, Radio Eleanor had disappeared, and have not been heard since. Paul Rogers said that they had three "lookouts" on duty, and another expected later, so it is difficult to believe that they were also raided.

Apart from STATION "M" INTERNATIONAL, the above are the only stations that have been heard

STATION "M" INTERNATIONAL signed on without any apparent Tx warm-up at 11:20am, with the Phil James Show. Heard today have been:- 11:20 Phil James; 12:20pm Pete Heaton; 1:20pm Kevin Palmer; 2:20pm John Freeman; 4:05pm Tom Lodge; 5:20pm Dave Wilson; 6:20pm Eric Monaghan; 7:20 Kevin Palmer with the phone-in requests and dedications; 8pm close-down.

Eric Monaghan announced that the station was planning something special for the last, or next to last, Sunday in November, but no details were given.

Tom Lodge announced the next local meeting, and gave some details of the raid on Central Radio. I didn't hear any announcements about Peanut Kenny's station, or anything special about Caroline, except that Station "M" would shortly be interviewing one of Caroline's DJs with strong local connections. Tom Lodge read out a statement that he had received from M.A.R. (the one on 266m and 241m). He pointed out most carefully that the views expressed were not necessarily those of the management of MAR. The statement read:-

"REASON FOR FOLD-UP OF MAR - STATEMENT

MAR was started around July with the intention of making money for its staff, rather than competition to other stations, which is why the music format should be chosen. There was no mailing address needed as the existing ^{stations} provided the necessary "gaff" (?) for the weekend pirate followers, so, Steve Bishop, Nick Catford and John Dwyer were put into contact and the agreement. John Dwyer would be General Manager and Advertising Manager, and Steve and Nick were to run the station, provide location, provide transmitter and organise DJs for a weekly fee of £50, to be paid by John Dwyer to them. After many weeks, no money had been received from John Dwyer. Steve and Nick had spent 48 hours every weekend putting it on the air, and the feeling by now was very low. Also, Dwyer had still not come up with any adverts necessary to finance the station. The crunch came initially when Steve Bishop's Radio North West transmitter was raided and Dwyer's reaction was simply "Can you get it back on the air?" rather than "I'll pay the fine and buy a new transmitter for the station". So Steve, still with faith in the station, purchased another Tx with his own money, not Dwyer's, for £70, John Dwyer claimed that he had a backer to finance the station and he also stated that he had paid £21 for a 1143kHz crystal and that we were to use MFR's frequency of 1242kHz until the crystal arrived. These comments made by John Dwyer were found to be lies, totally, and were invented to give Steve and Nick more incentive to run the station. Eventually, after a few weeks, Dwyer had still not fulfilled his job of obtaining adverts. He was initially chosen for the job because of his good abilities at obtaining adverts for the first MAR (Tom Lodge: I think everybody will agree with that) At a meeting, it was agreed that Dwyer was to purchase the high-power MFR transmitter, with special technique (Tom Lodge: Ha Ha! I've heard that before somewhere), FM links and remote control for a bargain price of £240, and Dwyer was to supply the 1143kHz crystal. Dwyer was also to pay his DJs £2 per hour and Steve Bishop £80 per week to run the station, which was now going to be a 7 day per week operation. Running the station meant that Steve had to sit with the Tx for pre-recorded or live programmes all day, 7 days per week. Of course, Dwyer then changed his mind and was not actually going to pay for anything,

wanting everything to go ahead as normal on 'borrowed time' He said that he would eventually have the money to pay us. During this time, therefore, all items were provided without finance from John Dwyer and were consequently at risk from the TELECOM. The MFR gear was immediately withdrawn and Steve Bishop used his own transmitter again for an agreed price of £15 per week hiring charge. After one week, no money was received from John Dwyer for the hiring or anything else. He talked his way out of each item in the usual way. By now, feeling was at its lowest. Dwyer had paid no money to the location for the studio or anything at all, agreed at £35 per week, no money for the transmitter site, no money for the staff, still had not produced a crystal and had in fact produced nothing. The station was, and had been after several weeks, financed by Steve and Nick and later financed by Steve, Nick and Paul West. Steve, Nick and Paul West gave Dwyer one last chance. They were to run the station for him and play his pre-recorded programmes for one more weekend. That final weekend, Steve had to pay for the location out of his own money and to supply the TX and 1242kHz crystal. This station was to run all day Saturday and Sunday overnight and terminate at 12 midnight on Sunday. Trouble started at 1:30 on Saturday, when Steve Bishop had already reached a depressive state after having to fork out £8 of his own hard-earned money. He turned the Tx off during the Paul West Show for no reason at all (Tom Lodge: He was also very naughty in as much as he rang Radio Eleanor and told them that he had been 'raided'. I'm afraid that we can not condone activities like that, so it was a bit naughty to do that at all. ~~That's something that he did that's not in the letter~~) and he didn't turn it back on again until 6pm Saturday. All went well until Sunday morning around 2am, when pre-recorded programmes were being played by John Dwyer and Dave Graham who were both moaning on their shows how tired they were at having to stay up all night to do their shows, and how hard they worked, when in fact they were home in bed. It was Steve and Nick who were stuck in the studio playing Dave Graham's and Dwyer's pre-recorded shows and obviously these statements made on the Graham and Dwyer Shows gave no credit to Steve and Nick, who were the ones doing without the sleep and taking all the risks and supplying all the equipment. MAR was by now ready for collapse. Had Dwyer or anyone else turned up to help, all may have gone well. But the next day, Sunday, all went well. Paul West went round to the location to provide food for Steve and Nick and also to insert some "live" equipment so that Steve, Nick and Alan Ross could go "live" in the evening. Paul West also stayed for most of the day to ensure that his programme went out on the air. The crunch came at midnight when Steve and Nick made one simple request over the air for John Dwyer, which was to ask him to the studio and collect Steve and Nick and their gear and simply take them home, about one mile away. Bearing in mind that Dwyer had stayed away all weekend, and was probably 'clubbing it', he did not turn up and Steve, Nick and Paul West had to walk home, each carrying parts of the studio and Tx in their arms. This was about lam on the early Monday morning, so MAR was no more. The basic reason why MAR folded up was that John Dwyer promised too much and provided absolutely nothing and no help at all. It also folded because Steve Bishop and Nick Catford did not make sufficient demands and agreements with Dwyer and allowed themselves to be used without fighting back and therefore left themselves open to being used in this way. Hopefully, a lesson has been learned from their experience and next time they will network every hour God sends for the promises of some 'so-called' artificial fame and fortune. This statement was prepared on 10th October 1983 by Paul West". Tom Lodge says that the letter continues:- "Nick Catford is now attending University and will take no further interest in pirate or free radio. Steve Bishop and Alan Ross will start up another station on their own, called Wirral Community Radio, Every Luck to them. Paul West is looking for new openings on other stations, and John Dwyer, Dave Graham and Andy Scott are probably looking for someone else to play their pre-recorded tapes". Tom Lodge said that this was only one side of the argument, but it had proved to be impossible to contact John Dwyer to get his side of things. However, if JD was listening, Station "M" hoped to be able to broadcast his version of the story in some future transmission.

From my point of view, the moral is quite clear: JOIN THE MERSEYSIDE FREE RADIO ASSOCIATION and resolve any difficulties over a few pints!!!

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