

MERSEYSIDE FREE RADIO SCENE Week ending Sunday 17th May 1987

On Sunday, in Radio Merseyland's Free Radio News Round-up, it was announced that Widnes FM hadn't been raided by the STI on 3rd May, but had gone off the air with equipment problems, which are still keeping them off the air. This week has seen the return of Rick Dane and Steve Bishop to the local airwaves. Unfortunately, that is the end of the good news and the rest is all bad. Last Sunday (10th May) the DTI raided the phone box that Radio Mersey Waves were using for a "live" phone-in. Two of the RMW crew were caught and taken to the local police station. The authorities followed up with a raid on the station itself, early on Friday morning, and then went on to raid Radio Merseyland on Sunday afternoon. Station schedules have naturally been very disrupted and difficult to follow at times.

RADIO MERSEY WAVES 1242kHz: 9, Meadfoot Road, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside L46 7UW. News that the DTI had raided a telephone box being used by this station first came to light via Anoraks UK Weekly Report No.158. Radio Julie, whose location is said to overlook the local police station, seem to have been the first to realise that something was wrong when the Mersey Waves personnel were taken in. After that, the alarms were sent out over the air and the stations took their own precautions. So far as Radio Mersey Waves were concerned, they appeared on the air at 7am on Monday, with:-
 Mon: 7am Dave Collins; 10:30am Jeff Starr; 1pm DJC; 3pm Paul Woods (for Alen Bates); 5pm Mark Palmer; 7pm Steve Coltrane; 9pm Peter Thomas; 11pm Mark Wright; 12:30am close-down.

On Friday morning, Dave Collins opened the station up at 7am and was noted till 7:20am. When checked at 9:05am, the station had gone from the air. Later in the day, Radio City, the local ILR station, carried a news item that Radio Mersey Waves had been raided by the DTI and thousands of pounds-worth of equipment had been removed. I understand that the station was back on the air by midnight on Friday, when Burt Williams did a "test" broadcast for about one hour. This was not heard here. They were also missing on Saturday till 8:33pm, when they suddenly appeared on 1242kHz with a distorted, intermittent signal which improved as the night went on. It is difficult to tell whether the DJs heard were "live" or old tapes, but the former seems to have been the case. From time to time, Burt Williams announced the broadcast as an "Engineering Test Transmission" and confirmed that the station had been raided "shortly after 8am on Friday". At 9:38pm, they seem to have been satisfied with the adjustments that had been made and KtC began a proper programme. He said that they had been raided at 8:10am on Friday and had lost "the lot, including the station format off the wall". He hinted that the raid could have been avoided, and said that the DTI had come across them by "chance". He also said that the station would be back to normal for Sunday and Monday broadcasts. At 11:30pm he handed over to "Roy" and invited other DJs who wanted to do an overnight programme to contact Mark Palmer to find the details of the new location. The overnight programming wasn't noted, but the station was noted on Sunday with:

Sun: 9am Kevin Jordan; 11am Wayne Scott; 1pm Steve Coltrane; 3pm Peter Thomas; 5pm DJC. Some time after 5pm, they appear to have found out about the raid on Radio Merseyland and shortly before 6pm, DJC announced "technical problems" and closed the station down. They were back at 7:45pm with Dave Benitez(??) for a few minutes before handing over to Don La One, who was on the air till 10pm, when he handed over to Mark Newman. The latter was on the air till approximately 11pm when the station announced that they had decided to be "safe rather than sorry" and that they would be closing down till next Friday morning

RADIO MERSEYLAND 1395kHz: 18, Glynne Street, Orrell, Bootle, Merseyside L20 6DF. This station, due to the raid on Liverpool Pirate Radio last Sunday, decided to postpone its extended hours plan. The announced schedule for this weekend was:-
 Sun: 10am Mark Evans; Noon Jim Browne; 2pm Browne & Evans Show; 3pm Rock Steady Eddie. All went well till 4:15pm, when the station was raided by the DTI. I understand that they lost the transmitter, decks, leads, etc, but that the DTI left them with the records, tapes, main amplifier and various other items of equipment

As soon as possible, word of this raid was passed to the other stations who either closed-down or changed their minds about coming on. Knowing the people behind this station, they will no doubt be back on the air again as soon as they can manage it.

RADIO JULIE 104.8MHz: 112, Greenwood Road, Woodchurch, Wirral, Merseyside L49 8HU. With Andy Davies being due in court on 19th May to receive sentence arising from previous raids, this station quite wisely decided to play it safe this weekend. I understand that they came on the air some time around noon on Friday, but just for long enough to inform listeners that they were closing down to change location and that they hoped to be back on the air again later. They had obviously learned of the raid

on Mersey Waves earlier that day. I understand that they were on the air from midnight on Friday, but this broadcast wasn't noted here. They were first found at 1:50pm on Saturday, after apparently signing-on at 1:30pm, with:-

Sat: 1:30(?)pm The Lone Ranger; 3:30pm Paula "P";

At 6pm, the station announced that it was closing down, but would be back later, probably at 8pm to 8:30pm. In the event, they weren't noted again till 11:09pm, after apparently signing-on at 11pm. "In the chair" was Andy Davies, who announced a couple of DJs to follow. It isn't known what time the station closed down. They were not heard at all on Sunday, but Andy Davies announced that they would be back to normal by next weekend.

RADIO 976: 976kHz: No mailing address as yet.

Thanks to a tip off from Jim Browne, this station was noted briefly on Tuesday evening, with continuous music to 8:15pm close-down. They were apparently on the air:-

Mon: 11am to 6pm and Tues: 11am-8:30pm(announced) but 8:15pm in practice.. They were back on the air on Saturday, but not heard here, with:-

Sat:10:30am Cont Music; Noon Steve Bishop, 2pm Rick Dane; 4pm Cont. music; 5:15pm c/down They were noted here on Sunday with:-

Sun: 11am Cont music; Noon Steve Bishop; 2pm Rick Dane; 4pm Cont. music; 4:15pm c/down.

Steve Bishop advised listeners that a station with a different name will be heard on the frequency next Saturday. I understand that on Sunday, a blank carrier was heard on 976kHz between 7pm and 8pm, and also 10pm-midnight.

SLAG-OFF INT 105.2MHz: 132, Norwood Road, Poulton, Wallasey, Merseyside L44 4EG.

This station was noted on Monday night from 7:50pm with continuous music. They said that programming would start at 9pm, but by 8:40pm, a DJ whose name wasn't noted, was already on the air. He handed over to Mike Hughes at 10pm, but the remainder of the schedule wasn't noted. They were back on the air at 8pm on Friday, but playing tapes of Mark Ross and went off suddenly at 8:59pm, although the carrier stayed on the air. By 9:16pm, the station was playing continuous music with occasional SOI identification and at 9:40pm, Steve Mason was in the "hot seat", standing-in for Mike Hughes. Close-down time wasn't noted. They were next noted opening up at 5:45pm on Sunday, when all the other stations were closing down. They must very quickly have leared of the raid on Radio Merseyland, as they closed down about 20 minutes later. They were back on the air by 8:45pm, with Steve Mason till 10pm, when Mike Hughes took over. By 11:20pm they seem to have realised that they were the only local station on the air and at 11:27pm, Mike Hughes announced that they would be closing down in approximately 15 minutes. They went off the air at 11:48pm, saying that they would probably be back next weekend.

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Acorrection to last week's notes. The station from Liverpool reported by others but not heard here is SCOTT FM, and not ROSS FM as printed last week.