

CAROLINE 558

MV ROSS REVENGE

Anchored in the international waters of the North Sea,  
at the Falls Head; 27 kilometres off Kent, England.

LATITUDE : 51.27.00 NORTH. LONGITUDE : 01.49.32 EAST.

MAIL: RADIO CAROLINE,  
P.O. Box 146,  
Playa D'Aro, Gerona,  
SPAIN.

Dear

*Gerry*

Thank you for your reception report dated *28<sup>th</sup> Feb '88*, the details of which we confirm to be correct. At the time of your report the station was broadcasting with the following frequencies and powers; 558 kHz medium wave at a power of 5 kilowatts, and 6210 kHz at a power of 5 kilowatts. The antennas in use at this time were a " Tee " for 558, and an inverted " Vee " fed by a 600 ohm open wire balanced feeder for 6210. Until November 1987 the medium wave antenna was a 90 metre tower shunt fed, but weakened by a Hurricane of unusual strength for these latitudes and subjected to a further violent northeasterly gale three weeks later the tower was lost over the side of the ship. Since then several temporary antennas have been employed, as we move towards replacing this tower, which held the record for having been the highest mast ever erected on an a ship.

The following stations are run from the ship:-

Caroline 558 Twenty four hour a day pop music station, the best of the current U.K. chart and new releases, with a mixture of classic sixties, seventies, and eighties tracks.

Radio 819 Broadcasts on 819 kHz from 0500hrs C.E.T. until 1900hrs C.E.T. This is a Dutch language station, with a popular format slanted towards easy listening MOR style.

Viewpoint 819 Religious commentary and music from a variety of contributors, from 1900hrs to between 2300 and Midnight C.E.T.

World Mission Radio On the 6215kHz frequency from 0600hrs C.E.T. until Midnight C.E.T. Religious commentary and music. After Midnight C.E.T. Caroline 558 is also carried on this frequency.

On a further technical note the two medium wave transmitters are run into the one antenna using a special tuning unit known as a Diplexer.

The home for all these services is a converted ex-Icelandic Trawler, actually the largest side trawler ever built, at 72.64 metres overall length and a registered tonnage of 988 tons.

The ship is at permanent anchorage, however is capable of being moved under her own power having a ten cylinder engine of over two thousand BHP output. The ship is crewed with about fourteen people at any time.

The radio stations have four studios available, plus two newsrooms; to which it is planned to add further studio facilities.

The Transmitters are all built by RCA of America and comprise of a BTA 50 H fifty kilowatt ampliphase, BTA 10 G ten kilowatt, and a BTA 5 H five kilowatt modified to shortwave operation by our engineers.

CAROLINE 558

Page 2.

The power to run all this equipment is provided by three MAN generators which can provide nearly half a megawatt of power at any time if required.

It is hoped to expand our services in the near future to include a VHF transmission facility.

Historically Caroline is the longest running off-shore radio station of all time. Broadcasts first commenced on 199 metres medium wave from the vessel Frederica on the 28th March 1964, bringing for the first time an off-shore station to the U.K. and for the first time an all day music station for main land Britain. This was quickly followed by many other stations including Radio Atlantis which was soon to be taken over by the Caroline organisation to become Caroline South, the Frederica going to a new anchorage off the Isle of Man where programmes served the north of England. On March 3rd 1968 the two ships were towed into Amsterdam after disagreements over tendering services and remained there for a time until they were auctioned off, the Caroline organisation managing to regain ownership of the Mi-Amigo, the Frederica being sold for scrap. Caroline recommenced after a short period soon adding a second station for Dutch listeners, Radio Mi-Amigo; during this period the ship went through a number of crisis including losing antenna towers, anchor breaks, and two near sinkings. The vessel finally broke anchor in a severe storm and ran aground on a sand bank where it became stuck, the vessels back breaking as the tide fell and finally floundering on March 20th 1980. Of ironical interest is the fact that the antenna tower stood on the submerged ship for several years as a prominent marine mark, finally collapsing into the sea some time in July 1986. After the sinking of the Mi-Amigo, plans for purchasing a new vessel were put into operation and the Ross Revenge was finally decided upon; being fitted out in Santander Spain. Caroline resumed transmissions on the 21st August 1983 on 963KHz, later moving to 576KHz on the commencement of Radio Monique, now Radio 819. A further move in frequency to 558KHz was made after the only other recent off-shore project, Laser 558 ceased transmission. By then it had become apparent that 558 was a much better frequency. Now Caroline is almost at its 25th anniversary, and hopes to continue providing excellent music programmes and continued success from an expanding number of services. It is worth noting that many of our former presenters have moved on to prestigious positions in broadcasting on stations all over the world.

I hope this brief description has given you some idea of our operation and thank you once again for your interest and report.

Sorry to hear of your lack of success with the New York address this is why we have changed our mail address to Spain. My apologies

Yours sincerely, Mike Watts, station engineer.

P.S. If you require any further info please do write, I'll be pleased to help.

*Regards Mike Watts.*