

MERSEYSIDE FREE RADIO SCENE

Week ending Sunday 29th December 1985

Christmas week listening has been disappointing due partly to stations operating much changed schedules and partly due to the portable not being able to pick up much at a time when I haven't spent much time at home.

CENTRAL RADIO INT 1404kHz : 18, Glynne Street, Orrell, Bootle, Merseyside L20 6DF.

This station was on the air from 8am Monday, with Charles Browne in the chair till 10am, when Jim Lowe took over. They said they would be going off the air at noon for transmitter adjustments and would be back about 2pm. They were not heard during the afternoon till 4pm when the last few words of an announcement by Phil Davies was noted. Between 4pm and 6pm the carrier was intermittantly on the air with very brief bursts of modulation. The carrier was switched off at about 6pm and the station hasn't been heard since.

RADIO MERSEY WAVES 1242kHz: 9, Meadfoot Road, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside L46 7UW.

A very strong carrier was noted on 1242kHz at 10pm on Monday. It was still there at 12:20 am, but had remained unmodulated. The carrier was next noted on Christmas Day from early morning to early morning on Thursday. Concept Radio say that Merseywaves were testing with old tapes for part of the day but that the signal was very intermittent. It was not noted here. On Boxing Day, the station was first noted at 11:15am with the Paul Jay Show in progress. The programme was taped and intended to have gone out on Sunday 15th. He confirmed that the RMW studio had been raided by the DTI shortly before 2pm on 12th Dec and that the station had lost everything except the MW transmitter once again. Paul Jay said that they were operating with temporary equipment loaned by the DJs. Unfortunately this equipment continued to give trouble and at 2:09pm Mark Newman asked Burt Williams to call at the studio as one of the decks wasn't working and the back-up link was intermittent. They closed down early after Tara's show which finished at 10pm. On Friday the carrier was noted at 9am, but it wasn't modulated till noon, with Mark Newman till 1pm. He said that the station had come back on the air to advertise their Under-18s night-out at Ma Bakers on 1st January. After that they plan to close down for one or two weeks till they can get things properly sorted out. Burt Williams has since announced that they plan to be on the air 7 days per week but evenings (5pm-Midnight or 1am) only from Monday to Friday and all day on Saturday and Sunday. Their equipment problems continued on Friday, and when checked at 10pm, Mark Newman said they had just returned to the air after a break of 1½ hours. Problems continued on Saturday when they were noted with continuous music from 9am. Later announcements say that Dave Collins has been ill, which explains the lack of early programming. Mark Wright was noted from 10am-noon, but Paul James didn't turn up and just a carrier was heard at 1:07pm. They were next noted at 2:58pm, with Mark Newman filling in. Continuous music was noted from 6pm-6:45pm as Tara didn't turn up for her 6pm-8pm show. She was late, but made up for it by doing 6:45pm-9:50pm after which, Mark Newman did 9:50pm to Midnight and Keith the Chief Midnight-1:30am close-down. The Sunday schedule was as normal except for one slight hiccup. Dave Collins was noted 9am-11am, but was still on the air at 11:15am. At 11:30am a carrier-only was noted, then Dave Collins came on and said he didn't know how long they had been off the air, but they would be closing down and coming back at noon. At noon, Wayne Scott was heard with a shortened show, after which, normal programming was noted to beyond midnight.

CONCEPT RADIO 104.4MHz FM; 18, Glynne Street, Orrell, Bootle, Merseyside L20 6DF.

This station was on the air on Monday, but wasn't noted till 7:16pm. Heard were Jim Lowe till 8:30pm then Tom Webb till 11pm. Jim Lowe was back on the air at 11pm, but the station had gone when checked at 12:20am. They were also on the air Tuesday, but weren't noted until 4:15pm. They were only heard briefly and when next checked at 6:20pm they had gone. They say they were on the air on Christmas Day, but they weren't noted. Nothing was heard up to 1pm but next check wasn't till 4:15pm. On Boxing Day they opened at noon with Tom Webb to 2pm then Jim Lowe till 4pm. The remainder of the schedule was announced as Jim Browne 4pm-5pm and Phil Davies 5pm-6pm. The Jim Browne show turned out to be an old tape from a few weeks before, complete with wrong date and time checks and announcements of the telephone number for a phone-in which probably never took place. After this, the station played some old "test transmission" tapes featuring Tom Webb, and Jim Lowe closed the station down at 6pm. On Friday they operated noon-6pm with Jim Lowe and Tom Webb doing 3 hours apiece. The same format was adhered to on Saturday. On Sunday they opened at 10am. Heard were:- 10am-11am Jim Lowe; 11am-noon Tom Webb; Noon-2pm Jim Browne; 2pm-6pm Phil Davies; 6pm-9pm Jim Lowe; 9pm-Midnight Tom Webb; Midnight-?? Tom Webb & Jim Lowe. The operators say that they will be increasing power in the near future, which will enable them to be relayed by Central Radio International



This station was heard briefly from 11:20am on Boxing Day, after apparently signing-on at 11am. Andy Davies announced that this would be the last broadcast from C-104 until John Dwyer returns from Ireland (hopefully around 5th Jan 1986) but that he himself would be appearing on WABC, 97.6MHz on Sundays. The closed the station down at 11:30am. Paul Kay wasn't heard. The station was also noted in the early hours of Monday 30th from 12:25am and relaying the "highlights" of the WABC/WFM/C-104 joint programme, which was surprising as neither Andy Davies nor Paul Kay turned up to do their shows on WABC.

These stations got together for a special broadcast on Sunday evening, when they were noted from 7:15pm. Things apparently didn't go as planned and overall the broadcast was disappointing. Early announcements suggested that Tony Hayes/Phil James/Andy Davies/Kevin Palmer/Colin Sayer and "Mike" would be doing one hour each between 7pm and 1am, after which, listeners were promised "guests galore" including the other presenters from these stations together with some past presenters on various Merseyside stations, whose voices haven't been heard for some time. When the Andy Davies show failed to materialise at 8pm, the following presenters were all brought forward by one hour. At this stage it was apparent that many of the shows were taped and top-quality shows were somewhat spoilt by presenters giving out incorrect time checks and schedules together with incorrect details of previous and following personnel. At midnight, an announcement said that Andy Davies and Paul Kay had failed to turn up and that in a few minutes they would continue with some "highlights" from the previous shows. These "highlights" were still on the air at 12:50am and it isn't known whether there were any later guest appearances, or what time they closed-down. On-air announcements said that the broadcast was to have been relayed by both WFM on 90.3MHz and C-104 on 104MHz. In the event, WFM weren't heard at all and C-104 appear to only have relayed the "highlights" from about 12:15am. The signal on 97.6MHz was very weak and could only be heard by connecting a length of wire to the telescopic rod on the stereo receiver. Stereo reception was all but impossible because of the level of background "hiss", but things were much improved in mono mode. In the early evening the signal was getting a lot of interference from Red Rose Radio on one side and the main police transmitter in Liverpool on the other. Later, the interference was mainly from the police, with much "breakthrough" of messages and "tones". The signal on 104MHz was much better, but it didn't carry the main broadcast. The strongest signal of all is usually WFM on 90.3MHz, but this wasn't on the air. During the broadcast, Kevin Palmer said that WFM would be back on 90.3MHz early in the New Year with their preferred Tues/Wed schedule. On-air announcements also suggest that WABC will be operating every Sunday on 97.6MHz soon.

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