

ACTION TV

SUMMER 2004 No. 10 £3.50

THE
AVENGERS



The
champions



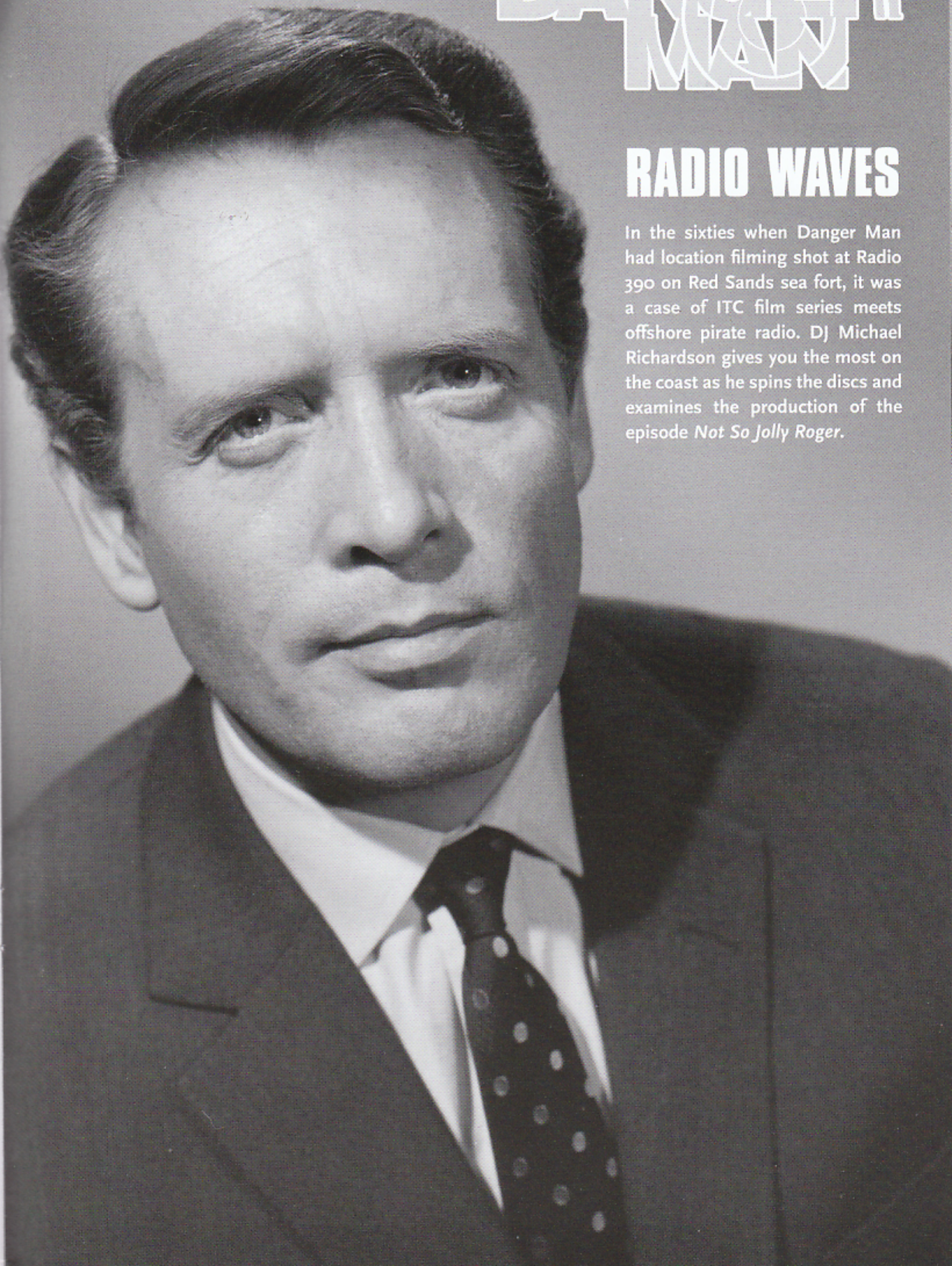
Minder

SURVIVORS

DANGER MAN

RADIO WAVES

In the sixties when Danger Man had location filming shot at Radio 390 on Red Sands sea fort, it was a case of ITC film series meets offshore pirate radio. DJ Michael Richardson gives you the most on the coast as he spins the discs and examines the production of the episode *Not So Jolly Roger*.



By the third week of February 1966, the production company Pimlico Films were in the process of making *Not So Jolly Roger*, which would be the final episode of *Danger Man* shot in black and white. Producer Sidney Cole and associate producer Barry Delmain, had given writer Tony Williamson the green light to do a screenplay set in the then topical and controversial world of pirate radio. Drake had encountered the world of pirate radio before, as the previous year had seen the publication of the Consul paperback book *Storm Over Rockall*. As it turned out the sea fort setting would become a script requirement and as such it seems that permission to film at Red Sands was already agreed upon before the script was written.

Patrick McGoochan's friend Don Chaffey assumed the position of director and quickly set about casting the episode, bringing Edwin Richfield in to play the station's manager, Marco Janson. Besides being a regular on *Interpol Calling*, Richfield had also done episodes of *Ghost Squad*, *Gideon's Way*, *White Hunter* and four appearances in *The Avengers*, the most recent being a couple of months previously in the Williamson penned *Too Many Christmas Trees*. The part of the alcoholic cook Corrigan, was given to the veteran performer Wilfred Lawson who started his acting career in 1931 doing mainly bit parts in films, sadly he died of a heart attack seven months after working on *Danger Man* aged sixty-six.

Andrew Faulds who was born in Tanjania (now Tanzania) played the part of Mullins. Although Faulds had done some TV and film work including *The Adventures Of Robin Hood* and the first season *Danger Man* episode *The*

Nurse, he was also known for his work on radio in the science-fiction serial *Journey Into Space*. However, he had become reasonably well known to TV viewers as the character of Ian Souter two years previously in ABC Television's *The Protectors* (not to be confused with the ITC series of the same name from the early seventies) where he became the first bearded hero of British TV. Later in the year, Faulds decided on a change and started a long career in politics (although he still appeared in the occasional film) when he became Labour MP for Smethwick for nine years, before assuming the Warley East constituency for a further twenty-four years.

Actress Lisa Daniely came on board as Janson's wife Linda, having previously been the regular character Dee Brady in H.G. Wells' *Invisible Man* and having guest-starred in a couple of episodes of *Interpol Calling* alongside Edwin Richfield. Having appeared in both *Crossroads* and as Dr. Martin King in three episodes of *The Avengers* Jon Rollason was cast as the engineer Summers. Rollason's career would continue with appearances in both *The Baron A Memory Of Evil* and the Doctor Who serial *The Web Of Fear*.

To give proceedings something of an authentic pop business feel, the role of DJ Susan (Suzie) Wade was taken by Australian singer Patsy Ann Noble who was embarking on a change of career to an actress. Having had a couple of hit records in Australia she was encouraged to come to the UK. However, things had not gone to plan as she had been unsuccessfully recording singles since 1961, firstly for the HMV label and then Columbia Patsy hoped a move to Polydor and the inclusion of her then new record *He Who Rides A*

Tiger in the episode would prove to be a turning point. The record was not a hit, but after moving to the USA and changing her name to Trisha Noble she continued her career as a successful actress, appearing in shows as diverse as *The Wild Wild West*, *The Rockford Files* and *Executive Suite*. Noble continued acting and progressed to work in various US mini-series until she returned to Australia in the early eighties.

Red Sands sea fort was the home of Radio 390 and the early decision to film on location here allowed both art director Lionel Crouch time to design the interior sets and the scenery staff at Shepperton Studios time to build them. The largest set was the reproduction of part of the exterior of one of the towers that made up the fort, complete with part of one of the covered-in walkways, which connected the various towers. The Jolly Roger studio was represented by the double set of the DJ section with the turntables and the engineer's area complete with banks of electrical equipment. The Jansons' quarters was a large decorated set with various props, but the remaining sets; Drake's room, the galley, the generating room, two lengths of corridor, the locked room and the top of one of the towers at night, were all fairly basic and as such would have been assembled quite quickly.

The sea forts had been a Second World War measure designed to protect the Thames Estuary area from German aircraft and V1 flying bombs. The three Army forts, Red Sands, Shivering Sands and Nore were all of the same design, seven two storey structures each supported by four concrete legs which held them at a hundred feet above sea level. A steel framework strengthened the concrete supports and narrow catwalks connected the towers, of which five had an anti-aircraft gun, the sixth a searchlight and the seventh was the control tower. Further out from land there were an additional four sea forts, though these were much smaller and were designed and manned by the Royal Navy. Holloway Brothers at Gravesend in Kent built all the forts and in the case of Red Sands, a sea-going barge transported two towers at a time to five miles north of Whitstable in Kent, before they were positioned on the seabed with all the towers being in place by September 23rd 1943.

The forts were quite successful in shooting down both enemy aircraft and flying bombs, but being posted to them was unpopular because of the isolation and the fact that the towers stored up static electricity, which would be earthed by someone touching a door handle. After the war, Nore was demolished as a shipping hazard and the Ministry of Defence attempted to sell off the remaining forts to other government departments, but no one showed interest and eventually the last maintenance teams left the structures in early 1959. The year before, European pirate radio had begun when Radio Mercur had begun transmitting pre-recorded programmes off the coast of Denmark from the small fishing boat called the *Cheetah*. In May 1960, the Dutch pirate station Radio Veronica changed her wavelength to 192 metres, which enabled their transmissions from the converted fishing boat *Ger Anna* to be heard in eastern England. Over the next five years various offshore pirate stations began broadcasting to Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and for a short period in 1961, the Dutch station CNBC experimented with broadcasts in the English language to the UK.

In 1964 the BBC had a monopoly across Britain with their three stations, the Third Programme which played classical music, the Home Service which covered news, discussion and drama in the





form of plays and the Light Programme, which played easy listening and some pop music. However, the corporation was out of touch with the times and although they played the two main groups of the day in The Beatles and The Rolling Stones, there was a lot of new music available in record shops that they simply ignored. The Light Programme preferred to give airtime to artists who had been successful in the early sixties, like The Shadows and Cliff Richard, plus old favourites like Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. Meanwhile, music industry entrepreneur Ronan O'Rahilly was finding it almost impossible to get his acts (including Georgie Fame) on the radio and decided that his only course of action was to start his own pirate radio station. Acquiring the Danish passenger ferry *Frederica*, Ronan renamed her the *Caroline* and had her fitted out with broadcasting equipment and a large radio mast. On Good Friday, March 28th 1964 the renamed vessel moored five miles off Harwich and the first real British pirate station Radio Caroline began test transmissions, to be followed the next day by a full schedule of broadcasts on 199 metres to the south-east of England, starting with The Beatles record *Can't Buy Me Love*.

Australian record label owner Allan Crawford had come to the same conclusion as O'Rahilly regarding airtime and within a month the coaster *Mi Amigo* was positioned three and a half miles out from Frinton-on-Sea in Essex. Due to rough seas, Radio Atlanta did not begin test transmissions until May 4th, using Radio Caroline's frequency when she went off the air for the evening and thus finding themselves an instant audience. Changing to 200.6 metres Atlanta began regular programming on May 12th. This month also saw the initial pirate transmissions from a sea fort, when recording artist Screaming Lord Sutch organised his supporters and installed radio equipment to get

Radio Sutch up and running on 299 metres from Shivering Sands.

Test transmissions from Red Sands began on June 3rd, with Radio Invicta electing to broadcast on 390 metres when they went on line in July. Tragically on December 16th the station's co-owner Tom Pepper, disc jockey Simon Ashley and engineer Martin Shaw were all drowned after the motor launch they were using to deliver supplies to the station capsized. The other owner, Charles Evans then headed a consortium of Kent businessmen to handle finance, fitted new equipment worth £7,000 and in March 1965 renamed the station KING Radio. However, the venture was not successful and by June it had run into financial difficulties, which resulted in a takeover by Estuary Radio Ltd who spared no expense refitting the station to a cost of £150,000, including a powerful state of the art transmitter and a 297 foot aerial which gave the station the clearest signal of any of the pirates. Renamed Radio 390, the station was back in business by late September hitting the airwaves on 388.1 metres and unlike the majority of the other pirate stations they did not just play pop music. 390 offered a diverse amount of programming including jazz, easy listening, talk programmes, a ten-minute children's show and a radio soap opera. With their new mast, 390 could be picked-up along the east coast as high as Scarborough, with the limit reaching inland to Sheffield and across the country taking in Bristol and going down as far as Bournemouth.

The pirate stations gained revenue from advertisers, including The News Of The World, Kraft Dairy Lea Cheese, William Hill's bookmakers, Harp lager, Beecham's Powders, Germolene, Settlers indigestion tablets, Players cigarettes, Top Deck soft drinks and Mother's Pride bread. The pirates paid no royalty payments on the records they played, in fact it was the other way round as

the record companies quickly realised that paying the pirates would get their product on the air. The BBC's nose was well and truly put out of joint by all this and they urged the Labour government under Prime Minister Harold Wilson to do something about it, but with their ships moored in international waters the pirates were safe from the authorities. However, the government decided that it would put an end to the pirates by whatever means were necessary.

The sea forts were also outside the three-mile limit and the pirates had simply moved in set up their equipment and begun broadcasting. For this, his first ITC script, Williamson had obviously researched his subject, having Janson inform Drake that Radio Jolly Roger had claimed the fort under maritime law, which was how the pirates saw it. Later in the episode, Janson also states that the station has no licence to broadcast and again Williamson had done his homework and was accurate in what the character was saying.

Radios Caroline and Atlanta merged their operations in early July 1964, with the *Mi Amigo* (Radio Caroline South) staying put to transmit to southern England, while the *Caroline* moved to a mooring off Ramsey in the Isle of Man, where as Radio Caroline North she began a regular service covering the north of England and also both Northern and Southern Ireland. It was no great surprise when the results of a survey released on September 28th that year found Radio Caroline to be the most popular of the pirates, with more listeners than the three BBC stations combined. Another big hitter arrived on November 19th, when Radio London arrived on board the 780-ton ex-US Navy minesweeper, the *Galaxy*, she took up position just outside the three-mile limit off the coast of Frinton-on-Sea and was easily visible from the *Mi Amigo*. At the beginning of 1965 the government made things more difficult for the

pirates, with several new laws that meant that it was now an offence to be involved with such enterprises and so the various radio stations had to arrange their supplies from other countries, mainly Holland and Ireland.

By the time Patrick McGoochan and the second unit arrived at Red Sands to do location shooting in the final week of February 1966, a recent poll had placed Radio 390 as the third most popular pirate after Radio Caroline and Radio London. The only other performer to go on location was actor John Tate, who as the fisherman had a solitary dialogue scene on the motor launch advising Drake against boarding Red Sands. The second unit had a skull and crossbones flag hoisted above the generating tower, as Radio Jolly Roger's emblem and cameraman Stephen Dade began shooting McGoochan and others walking across the narrow catwalks, with some of these being shot from the launch. Other material shot was a human-sized dummy falling from the fort to be used to indicate that Drake and later Mullins have fallen into the sea, the opening tag scene on the launch, JD being winched onto the fort and various establishing shots. The sequence where Drake (McGoochan's stunt double) falls backwards into the swell and later when he climbs back aboard were also shot on location at Red Sands, as was the following sequence of him ascending a flight of steps under one of the towers.

The pre-title sequence had Andrews the DJ playing Noble's *He Who Rides A Tiger* (released March 1966 on Polydor BM 56054), though in a continuity error the record coming to an end on the turntable carries a Decca label. He then announces the obscure sixties group The Master Minstrels, whose song *Think About Me Baby* starts playing and as his shift behind the turntables had now ended, he goes outside where it's dark and windy. Producing a small radio Andrews then calls someone indicating that 'they' are contacting a submarine. However, someone has heard and a hand with an automatic gun complete with silencer is pointed in Andrews' direction and before he can elaborate on his message a gunshot sends him falling off the tower into the rough seas below. This night-time fall was achieved by Dade filming from the launch, using a filter over the camera lens to do a day for night shot of the dummy falling from the tower to the waves.

Later, DJ Johnny Drake arrives and Linda Janson takes an instant liking to him, greeting him with, "Our new DJ". He replies with the witty line of dialogue, "Er JD, a matter of fact". Meanwhile, Susie is playing *Look Before You Leap* by Rey Anton and the Pro Form, as Drake meets both Mullins and Corrigan. Anton was another artist who had recorded quite a number of singles, firstly for the Oriole label and later for Parlophone with the addition of a backing group The Peppermint Men, who later became The Pro Formula (aka The Pro Form).

The next record is *It's Love I Shouldn't Trust* by Rick Mice, which plays before Drake visits the studio and meets both Susie and the engineer Jerry Summers. Susie announces the next record as a, "groovy little number" and this is an easy-listening instrumental called *The Scorpion* credited to Ted Astley, aka Edwin Astley, the show's director of music who was responsible for most of the incidental music in the series and the harpsichord sounding *Danger Man* theme (aka *High Wire*). Drake knows that the playing of the *Blue Danube Waltz* is significant and so to see what response he gets, he breaks the play list schedule replacing it with another Rick Mice track *Don't Try To*



Change Me. Later, to the accompaniment of *The Key To My Heart* by the New Generation, Drake is in his room constructing a radio receiver from his hairbrush and shaving kit, but when the record ends Susie fails to credit the group.

The following morning, Drake gets behind the turntables of the friendly pirate Radio Jolly Roger and plays *Mio Amore Sta Lontano* by Angelique, a track that had already featured as background music in a number of second and third season *Danger Man* episodes. The track was released as a single on Pye 7N 17066 in March 1966 and was also featured on the *Secret Agent* soundtrack LP, which initially was only available in the United States being released in 1966 on RCA Victor LPM/LSP 3630. The album was later reissued on a US import CD in 1997 on the Razor and Tie label (RE 2151-2). The musical direction on *Mio Amore Sta Lontano* was credited to Astley's close friend Ken Jones, who also used his orchestra to back Angelique on the track. Under the name of the Ken Jones Orchestra they had made a number of singles, backed other recording artists such as Michael Holliday and Jones had also provided the incidental music to a number of feature films during the fifties and early sixties.

The next record was the folk sounding *John Hardy* courtesy of The Copperfields, which allows time for Drake to annoy Summers with his curiosity regarding a locked door in the engineer's part of the studio. Later that night with the *Blue Danube Waltz* playing again, Drake picks up someone sending morse code messages and tracks down a short-wave aerial on the roof of one of the towers. The short pieces of night footage showing a submarine periscope and then conning tower surfacing out at sea, were all stock footage either drawn from the vaults at Shepperton or leased for the occasion from a film company.

Back at the turntables the following morning, Drake is giving *Don't Try To Change Me* by Rick Mice another spin, before playing *It's A Lie*, which he credits to The Stormsville Shakers. The actual credit on the record label was Philip Goodhand-Tait and The Stormsville Shakers, with *It's A Lie* being the B-side to their single *I'm Gonna Put Some Hurt On You*, which was issued in April 1966 on Parlophone R5448. In the seventies, Goodhand-Tait would go solo and have a limited career as a singer-songwriter and The Stormsville Shakers would reform as a live band in the late nineties. To give himself time to do more investigating, Drake then starts playing the first ten selections of the American Hot 100 starting with an uncredited track called *A Touch Of You*.

Sometime later after Drake is thought to have perished in the sea, Susie complains, "The police are sure to find out", to which Janson replies smugly, "We're not exactly on the local bus route!" As the only DJ left on the station, Susie is forced at gunpoint to continue spinning the discs with *No Words For You* by The Zephyrs, who were another sixties beat group who recorded for both Decca and Columbia and although popular in certain circles as a live act, their record sales were not impressive. Susie then announces *Though I Know* by The Intuitions followed by *The Key To My Heart* by the New Generation, though neither track is heard. As the last few scenes are played out the music continues with *You Walk Away* by The Surf Boys and *Keep Me Satisfied* by The Skylarks, before proceedings come to a close with another play for *He Who Rides A Tiger*.

Principle filming for the episode was completed on Friday March 4th 1966 and as this was the final episode of the season it would have entered editing and post production almost immediately,

in order to meet its scheduled transmission date of April 3rd on ATV London. Obviously both *Mio Amore Sta Lantano* and *He Who Rides A Tiger* were included because of their *Danger Man* and Noble connections, likewise the Ted Astley track, which was probably a piece of music the composer already had. Therefore, the remaining pop music tracks with their April release dates had to be promotional copies that had originally been supplied to Radio 390, in the hope that the disc jockeys there would play them on air.

ATV Midlands transmitted the episode on April 7th and the American CBS network showed it coast to coast on April 30th. Granada held it back with *The Paper Chase* and the two colour episodes *Koroshi* and *Shinda Shima* until September/October 1967, when they were screened on a Friday evening splitting the region's original run of *The Prisoner* into two blocks. *Not So Jolly Roger* did not become available on VHS video cassette until 1992, when ITC issued it together with the episode *I'm Afraid You Have The Wrong Number* on *Danger Man* Number 3. American company A&E released the episode on DVD (volume 13) in 2002 in Set 6 (AAE-70664).

In the second part of 1966 the government were still gunning for the pirates and on July 2nd they published The Marine Broadcasting (Offences) Bill, which would make it unlawful to transmit programming from ships or marine structures. At certain times of the year, a number of sand banks were visible at low tide in the Thames Estuary and if these were considered part of the UK mainland, then a number of the pirate forts were not in international waters. In September, Estuary Radio were summonsed to appear in court, which resulted in a five week shut down for Radio 390 and a fine of £100. There had been some disagreement regarding the sandbank situation, but on February 2nd 1967, 390 received a further twenty-eight summons

and the company directors had to attend Rochford court on the 22nd. All six directors were fined £40 each and the company a further £200. Estuary Radio appealed, but the decision was upheld and under the threat of further action this time in the high court, Radio 390 went off the air for the final time on July 28th to the sound of the *National Anthem*.

On August 14th the Marine Broadcasting (Offences) Bill became law and under the implied threat of being boarded by the Royal Navy and arrested, one by one the majority of the pirates threw in the towel. In order to take advantage of the situation, the BBC reorganised themselves into four new radio stations and on September 30th their new pop music channel Radio 1 hit the airwaves for the first time. The first voice heard on Radio 1 was ex-Radio Caroline and ex-Radio London DJ Tony Blackburn, who was only one of many ex-pirate disc jockeys including DLT (aka Dave Lee Travis), Ed Stewart, Kenny Everett, Emperor Rosko, John Peel and ex-Radio 390 presenter Mike Raven, who had been recruited by the BBC. Only the two Radio Caroline ships carried on regardless until March 3rd 1968, when both vessels were seized in lieu of unpaid debts by their Dutch supply company Wijsmuller and taken to Amsterdam. Though it took several years, Radio Caroline would return to the airwaves.

Undoubtedly, with their quick-fire delivery disc jockeys and the breaking of new artists, the pirates changed the face of popular music in this country. Quite a number of groups including The Who, The Kinks, Manfred Mann, The Hollies, The Beach Boys and The Small Faces, all made it big mainly due to their records being played by the pirates, who also introduced American soul music to a British audience.

Though Red Sands had been abandoned as a radio station, it would have another brief burst of

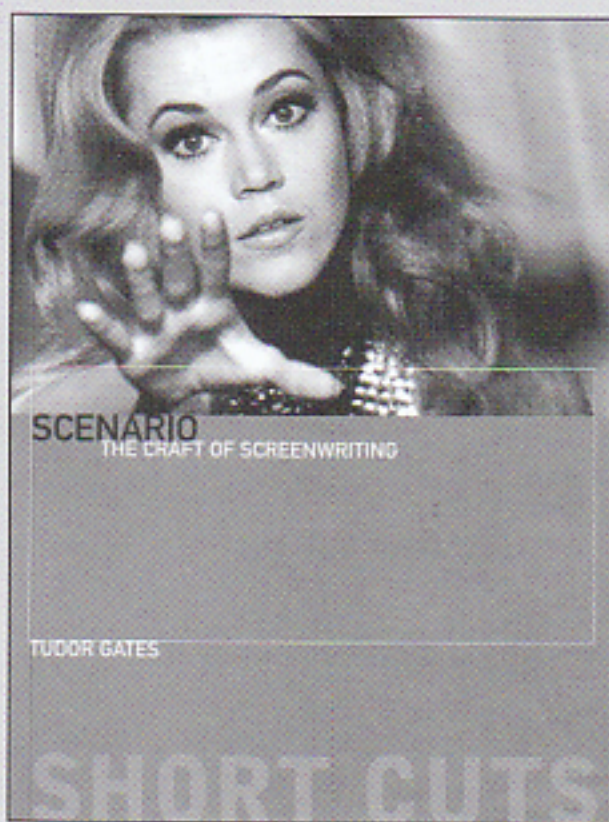
life as a TV series location in early February 1968, when it doubled as an offshore gas platform in the *Doctor Who* serial *Fury From The Deep*. A foam-making machine was installed in one of the towers, along with several hundred gallons of water to make a large amount of foam, which engulfed the platform when the seaweed invades the complex in episodes five and six. The master videotape of this adventure featuring Patrick Troughton as the second Doctor was recorded over years ago, as until the video cassette was invented the BBC saw no commercial value in old programmes. Having changed their opinions regarding nostalgic television, the corporation instigated a worldwide search for material lost during the sixties, but a replacement copy of *Fury From The Deep* has yet to be found.

Sometime in the late seventies all the ladders and catwalks at Red Sands were removed to discourage anyone exploring the fort or any wild notions about resurrecting pirate radio from the site. However, the fort was obviously well constructed and still stands today, though in exactly what condition amidst the howling gales and salt water of the Thames Estuary is anyone's guess. The isolated location of Red Sands does bring Drake's line of dialogue to mind as out there perhaps it is, "quiet enough for a drum solo".

Thanks to Neil Alsop, Andrew Pixley and Jaz Wiseman for their assistance with this article.

Over the past few years both Radio Caroline and Radio London have made limited comebacks, on temporary licences, transmitting for about a month at a time. Usually anchored much nearer to the coast than they used to be, they are now within the law and play nostalgic sixties sounds.

SCENARIO – THE CRAFT OF SCREENWRITING by TUDOR GATES



Scenario presents a system of logical analysis of the basic structures of successful screenplays, from initial plot-lines to realised scripts. All the essential building blocks are discussed in depth: the need for a strong premise; the roles of protagonist and antagonist; the orchestration of plot, characters and dialogue leading to clear resolution. Written by a highly-experienced and successful screenwriter, this is a book which not only instructs the first-time writers how to go about their work but also serves as a valuable check-list for established authors and for actors, directors and teachers, in their task of deconstructing and assessing the value of the material placed before them.

Published in paperback by Wallflower, £11.99
Scenario: The Art Of Screenwriting runs to 144 pages.
ISBN: 1903364-26-4

