

Bermuda!

Svenn Martinsen

Many Scandinavians have heard radio stations from this British Overseas Territory in the North Atlantic Ocean through the years. You might take a look in the new edition of North American verifications collated by Tore Vik and found at the link below.

1235 kHz This split frequency carrying ZBM1 "Your family station"- was by far the easiest one being an almost nightly guest. In 1971 the attached card arrived in my mailbox from the PD Mrs. Shirley Dill ¹ who was kind enough to verify my 1970 Christmas reception of ZBM1. Frequency later was 1230 and call shifted to ZFB as result of the merger mentioned later.

1340 ZBM2 known in the early 70s as "The Pacesetter"² was also a possible catch, first heard 1962 by the late Ellmann Ellingsen. As to myself, after the end of Radio 355 and most of the other offshore stations in August 67, I had a station on 1340 nighttimes after Lisnagarvey closed which I later understood was ZBM2 as there were frequent mentions of Hamilton. This station was often heard in September and October 67 such as October 21st together with PJD2 VO St Maarten on 1295. Many mentions of "Hamilton" and inexperienced as I was first led to believe this was a Canadian station such as CFGB-1340 in Labrador(Goose Bay, Hamilton Inlet)CKOB Woodstock, ON, or or CKLB-1350 in Oshawa, ON, also with the inferior dial reading of an otherwise very good domestic radio, the Vega Clipper Super Airmaster.

There was a dj on with "The Hey Joe radio show", plugging Peter, Paul&Mary's "I dig Rock n' Roll Music".

Tony Monson of ZBM2, and on Radio 355, 845 khz from summer 1967 verifies this: "Joe, I think, was the guy who took over my show on ZBM after I left - *Joe Carvalho* sadly no longer with us. Good show too."

ZBM2 was heard again 1969, 1971, and 1972.

960 ZFB-1 Capital Bc Co was first heard in 1964 by Rolf Mong (also heard a couple of times by me at sunrise relaying VOA in Washington with its "Breakfast Club").

1450, 1280 and 1160. From the mid-80s, it was the newer Defontes stations that became most common.



Front page of QSL card issued by ZBM1 1235 kHz ca. 1963.

¹ <http://bernews.com/2010/03/58th-wedding-anniversary-radio-host-shirley-dill>

² <https://kimsloans.wordpress.com/?s=Zbm>

Stations:

AFRS

ZAF3 carried AFRS programming 1943, followed 1944 by AFRS Station WXLQ(Kindley AFB, Long Bird Island.)

Bermuda Broadcasting Company

started ZBM on 1240 kHz May 12, 1946, later on 1235 and 1230 kHz. ZBM2 on 1340 kHz from 1953.

Transmitters

AM Spar Lane, Ireland Island South, Sandys.

FM Fort Hill, Devonshire.

With the AM antenna in need of repair, Bermuda Broadcasting moved 1340 ZBM(ex ZBM2)to 89.1 FM, and 1230 ZFB Bermuda Spirit (ex ZBM1, 1235 and 1240) to 105.1 FM, circa 2010. Reported inactive by WRTH in 2012.

Capital Broadcasting, Pembroke:

960 ZFB-1, (1964) merged with Bermuda Broadcasting 1982 and closed, call letters moved to 1230.

Defontes Broadcasting

started in the Summer of 1980 and shortly afterwards a strong signal was heard on 1450 kHz at sunrise often blocking NA and CA/SA Stations carrying Transtar Country out of Colorado but with no local IDs, just silence in local gates. A lot of "detective" work with Transtar told me they had an affiliate in Hamilton, Bermuda on that channel. This resulted in a QSL letter and sticker from the man himself, Kenny DeFontes!

Kenny DeFontes retired in 2014 and his radio stations ceased broadcasting at the end of September 2015³.

Transmitting tower on Lodge Point Lane, Ireland Island South, Sandys.

1160 VSB3 BBC World Service - Closed May 2015 due to transmitter maintenance issues and loss of sponsorship. Heard again 2016.

1280 VSB2, relay of BBN Bible Broadcasting Network in Nashville, TN continued after Defontes closed down, sponsored, by a local church group. Verified 2017 by Hans Østnell and 2018 by Jari Lethinen.

1450 VSB1 brief restart end of 2015, then went dark.

1610 Government Emergency Radio is listed by some from Sandys. Not active?



³ <http://bernews.com/2015/08/defontes-cease-operations-19-staff-affected/>
<http://bernews.com/2015/10/defontes-broadcasting-ceases-operations/>

From: BBN English <english@bbnmedia.org>
Date: Wed, 24 Jan 2018 15:45:29 -0500
Message-ID: <CADDvpbPEuChXeVRb6Hq931BqcbsejEjDhDudAMzW01w5=T9uoEg@mail.gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Sounds of BBN Bermuda carry far away
To: telefunken8@gmail.com



Dear Jari

Thank you for contacting BBN Radio and sharing the news of our reception in Finland. I have no doubt that you were listening to BBN on our station in Bermuda.

Thanks for listening to BBN, and God bless you.

George W. Quick
BBN Director of Biblical Counseling & Communications
"Giving the Winds the Bible Voice" in 8 Languages

On air names:

"Cousin" Bruce Morrow 1957⁴, later WABC, WALL, WNLC, WCBS-FM NYC.
Bob Bittner, later WLAM etc.stations owner⁵
Bunkers Bean
David Curtis
David Lopes⁶ mornings
Gerald Clements(Duncan Johnson, later Radio London, BBC, Capital, Invicta)⁷
Everest Daccosta 10-3 Mon-Fri
Fred Riley(Jerry King, later Caroline North)
Geoff Smith
Gordon Robinson
Jerry Wilmot
Jim Richards
Jim Woolridge
Joe Carvalho
K.B.Ennis 1967
Kenny Harris
Michael Graham(Mike Lennox, later Radio London, BBC)⁸
Pat Dunch
Quinton Edness
Rick Richardson
Shirley Dill
Tony Monson⁹
Trevor Critchley
Wendy Davis
Willy Walker(1968-1971, before this Radio London)¹⁰

⁴ <http://mediaconfidential.blogspot.com/2014/08/august-28-in-radio-history.html>

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/bob.bittner.730/about>

⁶ <http://mobile.royalgazette.com/article/20120516/ISLAND02/705169999>

⁷ <http://www.offshoreradio.co.uk/djsj2k.htm#johnson>

⁸ <http://www.offshoreradio.co.uk/djsl2m.htm#lennox>

⁹ <http://www.offshoreradio.co.uk/djsmo.htm#monson>

¹⁰ <http://www.offshoreradio.co.uk/djsw2z.htm#walker>



Shirley Dill with husband Hank 2010. Photo: BER News.

From personal contact with station and personell:

"Hello Bermuda from one of your overseas listeners as ZBM1 1235 Khz would often make it over here. Mrs.Dill the PD was kind enough to verify my reception in 1971. Over here, we were able to hear some of your former broadcasters on offshore radio. For instance some of Radio London's broadcasters came via Bermuda, and Willy Walker says in a short interview: "In 1968 I returned to Bermuda and resumed broadcasting with the Bermuda Broadcasting Co.....first on ZBM-FM.....then onto ZBM 1, 1235 kHz with the afternoon show.....and finally the morning show (10-2pm) on ZBM 2 1340KHzleaving in 1971. I also did some sailing reporting for ZBM TV. At nights I would MC at the top hotels... Bermuda is where I met both Duncan Johnson (Gerald Clements on ZBM) and Mike Lennox (Michael Graham on ZBM) in the early sixties. It was from there that they went to Britain and later Radio London. When I went to UK in 1965 I looked up Duncan and Mike...Jerry King (Fred Riley) was a former ZBM announcer..This was before he went to Britain Radio/Radio England(and Caroline North, sm). He later went onto TV on ABC News. Another name...was Tony Monson:(later Radio 355):

"In Bermuda I used to do a live hour on a Saturday morning at the local record & hi-fi shop 'Bandstand', playing music and talking to the owner about new equipment in the shop (a sponsored show, obviously); one day he had brought in a brand new hammond organ, and, knowing that I played piano and organ, asked me to play something live on air; I chose 'Satisfaction' - and later someone actually asked if they could actually physically buy it in the shop! Duncan Johnson used to do folk music shows on ZBM under, presumably, his real name Jerry Clements, and Jerry King's real name was Fred Reilly(Riley? sm) - lovely guy - also a great folk music fan; probably introduced us all to Gordon Lightfoot's music.

Bruce Morrow an absolute legend, but only met him later in New York...

David Lopes did breakfasts for decades, and I think only recently retired. He used to to early morning country show 'Milkman's serenade'. Everest Da Costa (EDC) was top personality DJ on the island for years - and as far as I know is still doing shows now. Jim Richards was a jazz man, and also head of production - and thanks to him, I landed my job there in 1963; Jim Woolridge I think was head of advertising, and I believe a director of the station at some point. Kenny Harris was originally in a UK band called the British Jazz trio, and taught me a little about jazz at the time; later married the wonderful Nell Bassett, who did a children's show on a Saturday, and was also head librarian - I worked under her; later she has great success, on, I think, NBC. Quinton Edness was station manager for a while, later, I believe an MP, but back in the day he did a jazz/easy listening afternoon show, championing people like Nancy Wilson, Count Basie, and Marion Montgomery for starters.

Svenn:" I found another name(that of Peter Beard noticed on 1340 kHz) from the ZBM2 logs frequently heard autumn 1967... Of course may be just a name in a commercial break or a listener dedication."

ZBMthe Bermuda Broadcasting Co was managed in the 60's by Walt Staskow and followed later by Quinton Edness a local Dj who later took up politics. A later Manager Rick Richardson a former DJ and a local.

Sources:

<http://www.stellamaris.no/norwegianradiodays.htm>
<http://www.stellamaris.no/norwegianradiodays2.htm>
<https://dxlc.wordpress.com/2018/07/08/oppdatert-na-qs1-liste-2018/>
<https://www.bamlog.com/darkcountries.htm>
https://mediumwave.info/newsarchive_b.html#BERMUDA
<http://www.ontheshortwaves.com/Wavescan/wavescan091025.html>
<http://jproc.ca/rrp/bermuda.html>
<https://militarybruce.com/abandoned-canadian-military-bases/abandoned-bases/outside-canada/>
<http://worldradiomap.com/bm/hamilton>

Sven Martinussen

Addenda 1: Bermuda Broadcasting History

In September 1943, the government radio station ZAF¹¹ began the broadcast of AFRS programming for the benefit of American service personnel. About a year later, the government broadcasting station was closed in anticipation of the opening of an American broadcasting station.

This new American radio station was launched in 1944 on July 24 with locally made equipment under the callsign WXLQ. This callsign, WXLQ, was a regular overseas callsign issued by AFRS, the American Forces Radio Service.

The new AFRS facility was installed on the summit of Coral Nob Hill at Camp Bell on the Kindley Air Force Base, on Long Bird Island at the extreme eastern end of Bermuda two or three years earlier. Station WXLQ operated with a power of just 50 watts on the frequency 1240 kHz and it took much of its programming as an off-air relay from the CBS shortwave station at Wayne, New Jersey. This program relay was usually received from the 50 kW transmitter WOOW on 11870 kHz. WXLQ was finally closed in June 1946 at the end of two years of broadcast service.

However, the local population of Bermuda was not left long without a local radio station. During the same year another station was under construction, launched on May 12, 1946 under the callsign ZBM (Bermuda Broadcasting Company Limited). Interestingly, this new station operated on 1235 kHz, almost the same channel as the previous American station, though the power output was higher, at 250 watts.

In 1953, ZBM-2 was introduced, on 1340 kHz AM. In 1962, a second organization, Capital Broadcasting Company Limited, using the call letters ZFB, began operating at 910 kHz AM. Also in 1962, FM broadcasting was introduced, with ZBM-FM on 89.1 MHz and in 1971, ZFB-FM at 94.9 MHz. In 1981, a third broadcasting organization, St. George's Broadcasting Company Limited (renamed deFontes Broadcasting Company Limited) began operating with an AM facility on 1450 kHz using the call sign VSB-1. Later, the same company introduced further AM facilities at 1160 and 1280 - and FM facilities. In 1982, there was a merger of the first two broadcasting companies. They continue today under the name of the Bermuda Broadcasting Company Limited.

Status early 2000:

The Bermuda Broadcasting Company: ZFB 1230 kHz; ZBM 1340 kHz; ZBM FM 89.1 MHz; and ZFB FM at 94.9 MHz. DeFontes Broadcasting Company VSB 1 1450 kHz; VSB 2 1280 kHz; VSB 3 1160 kHz; and VSB FM 106.1 MHz.

In the opinion of this author, by far and away the best radio in Bermuda is the daytime and evening broadcasts of the non-commercial BBC World Service from the United Kingdom. It is broadcast locally from one of the commercial VSB radio stations.

Government Emergency Broadcasting Facility: This goes on the air at 1610 kHz on the AM band only when all the commercial stations are unable to broadcast. The station provides music, emergency information and announcements. They are handled jointly by public relations officers within the Police Community Relations office and Government Information Services. In recent years, the station has fulfilled a useful role as an information source during island-wide power failures,

¹¹ One could wonder as to whether listing of the callsign as ZAF was perhaps a misprint, and instead it should read ZFA as a subsequent radio station in Bermuda appeared on the radio dial under the callsign ZFB,

especially during hurricanes. It is operated around the clock until any one of the commercial radio stations can resume service. [ARC Information Desk]

Bermuda Broadcasting Co Ltd.

1230 ZFB AM and 1340 ZBM AM
(affiliated with CBS and ABS, both 1 kW, also FM and TV.
CEO Ulric P. Richardson, CE
Operations Mg E Delano Ingham
Ass CE Earston Chapman
TELEPHONE
441-295-2828 voice
441-295-4282 fax(Info from Business card).

ADDRESS

PO Box HM452

Hamilton, HM

BX Bermuda

LOCATION

4 Fort Hill Rd.,

Prospect,

Devonshire Parish,

Bermuda, DV 02,

Web address:

www.bermudabroadcasting.com

<http://bermudabroadcasting.com/contacts/>

Addenda II:

HM, ARC visit:

"There was not a programme schedule available, but on my monitoring from my hotel room I noted Portuguese programmes on 1340 ZBM2 Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights 7:30- 9:00 pm local time (2330-0100 UTC). Both AM transmitters are 1 kW. In order to cover the islands they are beamed about North-South, which may explain the rare receptions in Sweden."

Local Bermuda AM band scanning:

1450 VSB1 - canned music, american style, little old, some country, male "automatic" host, never heard an ID!

1340 ZBM - locally produced programme most of the time, local news, many ID's, e.g., "ZBM FM 89.1 24 hours a day."

1280 VSB2 - religious programme.

1230 - also local.

1160 VSB3 - BBC World Service, did not manage to hear any local ID, BBC all time.

[Excerpt from longer story Hasse Mattison, JAN 2001 mv-eko, visit Early December 2000]

LOCAL TELEVISION (ALL COMMERCIAL)@2000.

Currently, there are three local channels. Bermuda uses the North American NTSC television broadcasting standard.

The first Bermudian television station, ZBM-TV, was introduced by the Bermuda Broadcasting Company Limited in 1958 on VHF Channel 10. (Now it uses Channel 9). Prior to that, there was a USA military television station at what was then Kindley Air Force Base at St. David's Island which could be accessed illegally by many families in the Eastern Parishes with television sets. Capital Broadcasting Company Limited operated ZFB-TV on Channel 8 from 1965 until 1984 with the amalgamation into the Bermuda Broadcasting Company Limited. Now it uses Channel 7. Since then, a license was also issued to the DeFontes Broadcasting Company which operated on Channel 13. Now it uses Channel 11.

The three local commercial television stations in Bermuda shown below are all commercial - there are no public broadcasting stations of either the American or British licensed types. Reception is island wide.

ZFB TV, now Channel 7 (Channel 2 on cable) is owned and operated by the Bermuda Broadcasting Company Limited, the Bermuda affiliate of the ABC network in the USA.

ZBM TV, Channel 9 (Channel 3 on cable), also owned and operated by the Bermuda Broadcasting Company Limited, is the Bermuda affiliate of the CBS network in the USA. For further information contact the Bermuda Broadcasting Company Limited at ZBM and ZFB Radio and Television Stations, Fort Hill Road, Devonshire, Bermuda. P. O. Box HM 452, Hamilton HM BX, Bermuda. Telephone (441) 295-2828. Fax (441) 295-4282.
Or email zbm-@ibl.bm

VSB TV, Channel 11 (Channel 4 on cable), is operated by DeFontes Broadcasting Television Limited, a subsidiary of DeFontes Broadcasting Company Ltd. It is the Bermuda affiliate of the NBC network in the USA. For further information, contact Defontes Broadcasting Company Limited, 94 Reid Street, Hamilton, Bermuda. Telephone (441) 295-1450. Fax (441) 295-1658. Or email vsbn-@ibl.bm

There may a fourth channel in 2002, from freelance audiovisual company Fresh Creations. (via Bill Hepburn, WTFDA via DXLD)

Since Bermuda built at famous fe were bou- British sh:

ZBM Family of Stations
Reaches More Homes

HAMILTON
13171
BERMUDA

BERMUDA
POSTAGE
30
FB.1005

ZBM 1
1235 Kcs. 89.1 Mcs. 1540 fcs.

VERIFICATION OF
RECEPTION REPORT

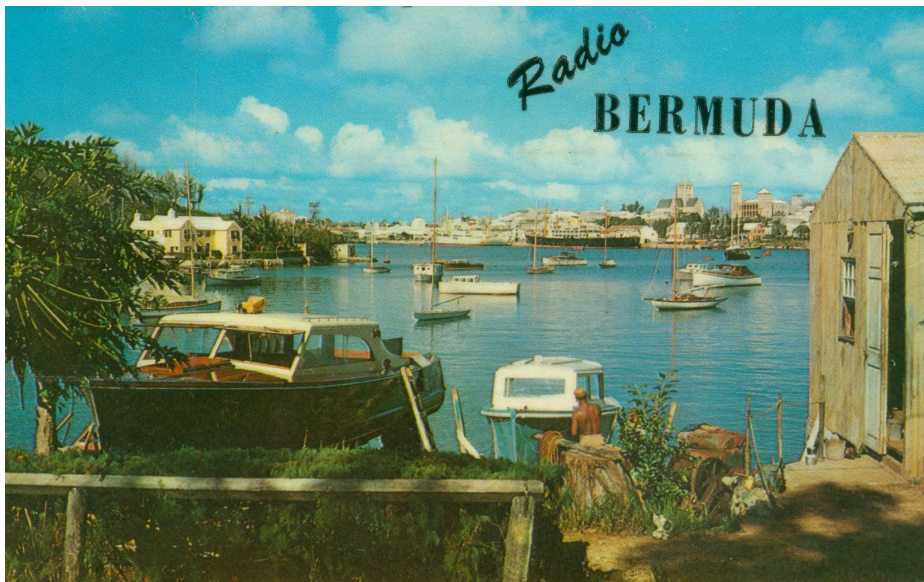
Confirming your reception of Station
Z B M 1 at 1235 Kcs. ~~GM~~
on December 25th 1970.
Mrs. A. Dill
Programme Director.

INTERNATIONAL IMPORTS LTD., HAMILTON, BER.

BERMUDA POST CARD
Address
ANTTI SEPPÄLÄ
KOSKI HL, TÖYKKLÄ
FINLAND

Printed in U.S.A. #21 47952

Back page of QSL card issued by ZBM1 1235 kHz 1970



Front page of QSL card issued by ZBM1 1235 kHz 1970.

Since Bermuda built at famous fe were bou- British sh:

ZBM Family of Stations
Reaches More Homes

HAMILTON
13171
BERMUDA

BERMUDA
POSTAGE
30
FB.1005

ZBM 1
1235 Kcs. 89.1 Mcs. 1540 fcs.

VERIFICATION OF
RECEPTION REPORT

Confirming your reception of Station
Z B M 1 at 1235 Kcs. ~~GM~~
on Dec 26, 28, 31 1970.
Mrs. A. Dill
Programme Director.

INTERNATIONAL IMPORTS LTD., HAMILTON, BER.

BERMUDA POST CARD
Address
SVENN MARTINSEN
SMEDSVIKNESET
N -5047 STEND
pr. BERGEN
NORWAY

Printed in U.S.A. #21 47952

Back page of QSL card issued by ZBM1 1235 kHz 1970