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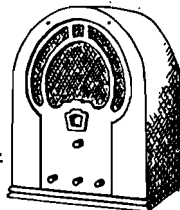
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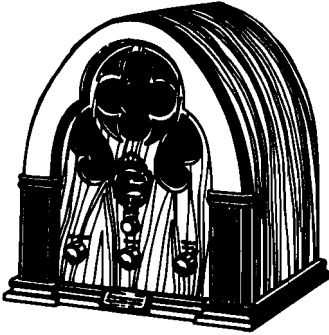


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THE OLD TIME



RADIO CLUB



**THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Club dues are \$17.50 per year from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31. Members receive a tape listing, library list, monthly newsletter (**THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS**) an annual magazine (**MEMORIES**), and various special items. Additional family members living in the same household as a regular member may join the club for \$5.00 per year. These members have all the privileges of regular members but do not receive the publications. A junior membership is available to persons 15 years of age or younger who do not live in the household of a regular member. This membership is \$13.00 per year and includes all the benefits of a regular membership. Regular membership dues are as follows: If you join in January-March dues are \$17.50 for the year; April-June, \$14.00; July-September, \$10.00; October-December, \$7. **ALL** renewals are due by January 2! Your renewal should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing issues. Please be certain to notify us if you change your address.

OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIPS are now available. Annual dues are \$29.75. Publications will be airmailed.

 The Old Time Radio Club meets the **FIRST** Monday of the month (August through June) at 393 George Urban Blvd., Cheektowaga, NY. Anyone interested in the "Golden Age of Radio" is welcome. Meetings start 7:30 pm.

THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS is a monthly newsletter of **THE OLD TIME RADIO CLUB** headquartered in Buffalo, NY. Contents except where noted, are copyright 1988 by the OTRC. All rights are hereby assigned to the contributors. Editor: Richard Olday; Production: Arlene Olday. Published since 1975. Printed in U.S.A. Cover designed by Eileen Curtin.

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NEW MEMBERSHIP DUES:
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 Lancaster, NY 14086
 (716) 683-6199

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TAPE LIBRARIES: REELS 1-600
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 Williamsville, NY 14221
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REELS 600 and up
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 Clarence, NY 14031
 (716) 759-8401

CANADIAN BRANCH:
 Richard Simpson
 960 - 16 Rd., R.R.3
 Fenwick, Ontario LOS 1C0

CASSETTES-VIDEO & AUDIO, RECORDS
 Dominic Parisi
 38 Ardmore Place
 Buffalo, NY 14213
 (716) 884-2004

BACK ISSUES: All **MEMORIES** and **I.P.s** are \$1.50 each, postpaid. Out of print issues may be borrowed from the reference library.

Dominic Parisi
 38 Ardmore Pl.
 Buffalo, NY 14213

ADVERTISING RATES FOR MEMORIES:
 \$60.00 for a full page (**ALL ADS MUST BE CAMERA READY**)
 \$40.00 for a half page
SPECIAL: OTR Club members may take **50%** off these rates.
 Advertising Deadline - September 1

A NOTE ABOUT THIS ISSUE OF THE I.P.

This particular issue of the I.P. will be a departure from what you have come to expect from The Old Time Radio Club.

There will be no columns, Nick Carter/Shadow pulp reprints, or any letters, articles, and very few, if any, pictures.

We are doing this because we felt there was a need for a guide of sorts to those of you who are just starting out in the field of old time radio show collecting and trading.

Without trying to sound like know-it-alls we will attempt to answer the basic questions that might arise concerning the hobby and things related to it.

The normal I.P. will be back next issue so, until then, The Old Time Radio Club presents.....

THE ABC'S OF OTR
A BASIC PRIMER

IS OTR COLLECTING EXPENSIVE ?

Initially there will be some expense as you must have a tape recorder to listen to your tapes. This only stands to reason. If you want to get into the trading part of the hobby you will need two units, one to play the show you want to dubb and a second to record the dubb.

Open reel recorders tend to be on the expensive side and, obviously, two of them will be doubly expensive.

Cassette recorders, on the other hand, can be inexpensive and are more available in the marketplace.

If your funds are limited you might want to keep this in mind when deciding which mode of recording you wish to be involved with. Open reel is the standard of the hobby but cassettes also have their place and

are gaining in popularity as time passes.

Tapes can be bought from any number of dealers at reasonable prices or can be taken out on loan from various club libraries.

Blank tape can be expensive but can also be picked up at bargain prices by doing a little shopping around. This point will be covered later on.

The bottom line is this. After the initial expense is out of the way you can, by trading or borrowing, get a six-hour reel of OTR shows for approximately two dollars and that includes the cost of the blank tape, postage, and the shows themselves (from a club library).

Two dollars for six hours of material. Compare that with a phonograph record that costs about ten dollars and gives roughly 40 minutes of material!

Is OTR collecting expensive? Most definitely NOT !

One more word about this. The hobby can be costly if you choose to buy a lot of fancy equipment but this is your choice and is strictly up to you. For this hobby "fancy stuff" is not a necessity, it's just icing on the cake.

JUST WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE OTR ?

OTR, strictly speaking, is any radio show broadcast from radio's inception until it's so-called demise in the early sixties. A more realistic definition would be.... Any radio show broadcast anytime, anywhere. This includes material from the BEC, CBC, South African Radio, and Australian Radio. Much of the material springing up lately has been coming from foreign sources and, although of recent vintage, still fall into the OTR

category.

This is not to imply that there is a lack or shortage of the shows that fit into the "strictly defined" category of OTR shows. There are literally tens of thousands of them available with more popping up at an amazing rate.

Enough to satisfy any OTR fan.

IS JOINING A RADIO CLUB NECESSARY ?

Actually no, although it is not a necessity it is recommended.

Picture yourself driving across the country from Maine to California without having a road map. You can make it but not without being lost, detoured, and delayed along the way.

The clubs, along with the information gleaned from them, can act as a map to help you along the way. The club newsletters can help open doors, provide names, entertain, and give you the "inside info" that will make it a lot easier for you to get along in the OTR collecting/trading hobby.

Naturally we suggest joining The Old Time Radio Club but there are others available throughout the U.S. such as NARA or SPERDVAC to mention only two.

They might have their differences but they all promote and preserve OTR and as such, are worth joining.

Before joining any club you should first find out their reputation and the services that they offer their members. Some offer much more than others and rely on their "reps" to prove that they can, and do, come through with their promises.

Others, sadly, offer much but do not deliver. Again, reputation will tell you which ones these are.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET A SPECIFIC SHOW FROM A SERIES ?

The number of shows available is

truly astounding and the chances of getting one specific show is pretty good especially if that show is from one of the more popular series.

With many series the entire run of shows are available, while on quite a few others most of the runs are around.

Unfortunately this is not true with all the series. Some of them are poorly represented. Others have only one or two shows.

Individual, one-shot shows or specials are "iffy" but there are many of them floating around.

Hey, anything is possible.

IS OTR COLLECTING JUST FOR THOSE WHO ACTUALLY REMEMBER WHEN IT WAS BROADCAST ?

OTR collecting is for everyone whether they are young, old, or anywhere in between.

The old-timers are drawn back through the years to the time when they first heard some of these shows being broadcast and their memories are often triggered, bringing back thoughts about the people, places, and events that have made up their lives.

To them the OTR shows are, in effect, a time machine that can be turned on and off at will. These people are not, as some may claim, stuck in the past with no eye to the future. They are modern, up-to-date individuals who appreciate this bit of Americana that has supposedly passed into history.

They've lived through it and liked it and are able (fortunately) to call it back by means of magnetic recording tape.

By no means rule out the young people. OTR is a strange new world to them. It introduces them to things

old yet excitingly new in their lives.

OTR, by it's very nature, forces the listener to create in his own mind all the subtle shadings and nuances that go into a story. The actors, music, and sound effects create the bare necessities or skeletons to the story and it is up to the listener to flesh out the picture in his mind. This makes the whole thing a very personal and special event because the listener gets deeply involved.

If, in your mind, the hero of the drama just happens to look like you, doesn't that add a measure of pleasure to it all?

A disliked teacher, boss, or next door neighbor can serve as the villain of the piece that finally gets his/her comeuppance at the end of the story. Doesn't that add a bit of spice and flavoring that a TV show or movie cannot provide?

Young people pick up on this very easily and it, added to the attraction of hearing some of the most famous actors and actresses from the past, total up to one enjoyable experience. This does not even mention the sometimes superb writing on many of these shows.

Some may complain that OTR shows are dated and old-fashioned but that is not the case. A show with a scene of a man and woman driving down the street would, when first heard in the early 40's, evoke the scene as it was back then.

That same scene, when heard today, tends to update the picture so the man and woman are dressed in modern clothing and the car is one of a recent model.

Sometimes there are slight give-aways as to the actual age of a story. There might be a reference

to the running board of a car or the war raging in Europe but these can usually be overlooked with no effort.

The fact that the stories can so easily be updated in your mind is also not lost on the young that listen to them. In many cases the OTR stories are as modern as today.

At a recent OTR convention held in Newark there was an OTR trivia contest that was won by a 15 year old boy!

I think this in itself shows that OTR is not just for old folks.

ARE THERE SHORTCUTS TO BUILDING A SIZEABLE COLLECTION QUICKLY ?

Yes, and many are doing just that.

In the old days it was a pretty slow process building up a decent sized collection but since the advent of OTR clubs and their libraries you can borrow dozens of shows at a time, dubb them, return them, and get dozens more within a very short time.

Remember, this is a great hobby in that you don't have to give up part of your collection to get "new" material. In a trade you send out copies of your material and retain the originals or "masters". The shows you receive from the trade also become masters.

You cannot lose and the shows add up at an astounding rate. In this case you can have your cake and eat it too.

WHAT ABOUT COLLECTING OTR SHOWS ON PHONOGRAPH RECORDS? WOULDN'T THIS BE EASIER THAN DUBBING AND TRADING?

Easier? Yes. Smarter? No. More expensive? Very much so.

OTR records are sold in most big record stores but they are on the

expensive side. Also, they can get broken or become scratchy and, due to it's very nature, is usually limited to only two stories per record. There are a good number of shows available but no where near the amounts that are on tape.

The cost factor between records and tape is so vast that it does become a major element in how you will conduct your collection.

The cost of one show on record can roughly equal the cost of 15 - 20 shows on tape! This estimate tends to be an understatement but is used to make the point.

The records are excellent and make wonderful gifts to give to your friends but as a medium of collecting...there is no contest.

So, unless you hit the lottery stick with tape dubbing and trading. It's not bad at all. By staying with the mainstream of trading and collecting you can rest assured that the paths are all laid out, the guides are in place, and the barriers have been removed to make it all very simple for you.

Esoteric or exotic methods of collecting OTR may be fun but they are not very realistic.

HOW PERMANENT ARE OTR SHOWS ON TAPE...DO THEY LAST ?

The life expectancy of an OTR show recorded on magnetic tape has yet to be determined. All I can say is that I've got tapes, recorded in the mid-50's, that are as good as the day they were first recorded.

The only real problem that has sprung up is that certain black or dark-backed tapes seem to age badly and screech after a number of years.

One other problem lies with acetate tape. The backing on it has a tendency to dry out with age and

the backing on it starts to flake off! This can be disastrous.

By avoiding these two kinds of tape and, barring any unforeseen developments, your collection will last as long as you want it to. It should be as good 20 - 30 years from now as it is today.

WHAT ARE THE INITIAL STEPS IN STARTING A TRADE WITH SOMEONE ?

After getting together a decent number of shows that you think might be of interest to others you must make up a listing or catalog of the shows in your collection. This is so the person you wish to trade with knows what you have.

Each show you have should be listed as to series title, show title, running time, date of broadcast (if possible), and sound quality.

This last item is not always done by some traders because it is an arbitrary thing, based on one's own determination. What might sound Very Good to one collector might only sound Good Plus to another. There is no standard of sound rating in the hobby.

Even so, it is not a bad idea to do sound ratings as it does give an indication of how good the shows sound is.

Once your catalog is done send a copy along to the person you want to trade with and, hopefully, you will receive a copy of his/her catalog in return. Then it's just a matter of picking and choosing the shows you want from each other. A Note of Warning.....Generally speaking it will be a waste of time, if your catalog has only a hundred or so shows, to attempt a trade with a collector that has thousands upon thousands of shows in his coll-

ection. More than likely he already has every show you can offer.

There are exceptions to this, collectors that will send you shows just to help you get started but these guys can only be expected to do so much.

As your collection grows, your catalog will grow, and your range of collectors will expand to cover almost everybody.

It takes a little time so don't try to rush it. You must crawl before you walk, you must walk before you run.

Try sticking with traders in the same league as you. Sooner or later you'll be right up there with "The Big Guys".

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT MODES OF RECORDING OTR SHOWS ?

The two main modes of recording OTR shows are OPEN REEL and CASSETTE. Each has it's own advantages and disadvantages.

OPEN REEL is still the standard of the hobby. It offers great sound reproduction and the ability to hold six hours of material on an 1800 ft. reel of tape

The standard recording speed for open reel is 3 & 3/4 i.p.s. The other speeds either eat up too much tape or offer inferior sound reproduction and are not recommended. Few traders use any other speed than 3 & 3/4 and variations of this are more than likely to be met with resistance.

Each track of the four you can put on an open reel of tape is, or should be, used independently from the others. For this you must have a stereo tape unit capable of recording each track separately, otherwise you will end up with two shows blending into one unintelligible mess. Remember, this is an important point, Each channel

must be able to play back or record all by itself!

Starting with the left channel on side one of a tape, you would record 90 minutes of material. When this is done you would switch over to the right track and record 90 minutes there.

This completed, you would then flip the tape over to side two and repeat the process.

When this is done you will have done six hours of recording utilizing all of the tracks or channels.

Playing back a reel recorded in this manner only requires you to shut off or "kill" the channel you don't want to hear. When this side is heard you "kill" that side and punch up the other channel. It's a simple but very effective process.

CASSETTES are coming on strongly in the hobby because of their great price and convenience. Recording them is an easy task.

In this mode you do not utilize each channel. If your tape machine is stereo just record the same signal on both tracks or channels at the same time. If the machine is mono then just record it and don't worry.

This way any cassette player will be able to play back your recording as you have now made it stereo/mono compatible.

There was a time when cassettes were looked upon in disdain because of the poor sound reproduction they offered but things have changed.

The advent of improved, sophisticated circuitry and fantastic new tape formulation have made it a whole new ballgame.

Cassettes can now equal open reel in sound reproduction and, with high-speed dubbing techniques, are catching up to the open reel advantage.

Other modes of recording OTR shows are available but should be avoided because they are outdated or too "far out" for the average collector or trader.

Some of these are 4 track and 8 track cartridges, wire recordings, and disc recordings (the home-made kind).

These do work but are so out of use that you'll have a tough time finding anyone to trade with.

ARE THERE CERTAIN SHOWS THAT WILL GET MY COLLECTION OFF TO A GOOD START ?

What you collect is your own business. Start with the shows you really want because, let's face it, you are the one that will be listening to them.

Don't start out trying to second guess everyone and getting shows that you don't particularly like, but think might be good trading items. By doing this you are apt to drop out of the hobby after a very short time because you aren't enjoying what you hear.

Once you get a backlog of shows you enjoy then experiment with others that you think might be good trading items. Many of us with established collections often order shows we've never even heard of on the off-chance we might strike "gold". Sometimes it happens, Sometimes it doesn't.

After a short time of trading you will be able to spot the shows that everyone has and the ones that are not too common. These un-common shows are the ones that usually turn out to be your "hot" trading items.

Experience is your best teacher in regards to what to collect so, until you gain that experience, you should just satisfy your own wants

and collect the shows that interest you.

An example of a show you might want but probably will never get a request for is the Orson Welles version of "The War of the Worlds". This famous broadcast is real radio history and probably every trader has a copy of it.

That's the problem... Every trader has a copy of it so it makes a poor trading item, but order it anyway for your own enjoyment. You can't go wrong if it pleases you.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SHORTCUTS THAT CAN BE USED WHEN COPYING A REEL OF OTR SHOWS ?

There are certain methods of copying one reel of shows to another in a much reduced time. Some swear by these methods while others swear at them.

One method is Double Tracking. This means dubbing both channels at the same time, cutting the actual recording time in half.

Another method is Double Speeding, in which the program is played at twice the normal speed and dubbed at this same speed. After it is recorded the dubb can be played at normal speed and it will sound correct.

Using both methods at the same time will allow you to record a 6 hour reel of shows in just 90 min.

You should experiment with both these methods to make sure you end up with an acceptable sound.

Some claim that Double Speeding causes a loss of sound quality. Others claim that Double Tracking causes cross-talk (one track bleeding over to the other). By testing you can determine if you want to try either method. Let your ear be the judge.

WHAT IS THE RIGHT WAY TO STORE THE TAPES THAT I COLLECT ?

The ideal way to store tapes is in a climate controlled environment that is neither too warm or too cool, too humid or too dry.

Unfortunately we live in an imperfect world with wide ranges of temperature and humidity, so we have to make do with what we've got.

All I can suggest is that you not store them in dungeon-type basements, or in your garage, or up in the attic. These areas promote the widest range of environment changes.

Do not store them near heat vents or radiators or where the full force of the sun can shine on them. It is also best to keep them away from magnetic sources such as TV's or large speakers.

Store them on end. A tape stored flat can, after a while, become warped and be damaged to the point that the sound will suffer.

Some collectors put their tapes in plastic storage bags before putting them in the tape boxes. This, supposedly, seals out any dust and moisture.

Others like to store their tapes in metal, film-type containers. They claim the metal of the container will help deter any stray magnetic field in the area.

The key to it all is based on what your fears are. Dust? Moisture? Stray magnetic fields?

Your best bet is just to let common sense be your guide.

HOW DO I GO ABOUT MAILING TAPES TO ANOTHER TRADER ?

There are a couple of ways. In the case of open reel tapes they, of course, should be in tape boxes. It is not a good idea to send out material unboxed because of potential

breakage while going through the mail. If necessary, designate a few boxes just for mailing and mark them with instructions to the person you're trading with to use these same boxes when sending your wants back to you.

Wrap the boxed tapes in heavy wrapping paper (paper shopping bags are excellent for this purpose) and secure the whole thing with tape. Do not use cellophane type tape for this as the Post Office frowns upon it AND masking tape for packages. The tapes might be returned to you for re-packaging.

Use instead, packaging or strapping tape. It is Post Office approved and you'll have no hassle.

Then it's just a matter of putting the correct amount of postage on the package and mailing it. A trip to the Post Office might be called for to determine how much postage it will take.

Keep track of the postage rates for the number of tapes you send out and you won't have to keep going back. Once you know the rates you can wrap them, stamp them, and simply drop them in a mailbox.

Some people like to insure the tapes they send out but I have hears that the insurance will cover the cost of the blank tape only. Check on it as this might have been changed recently. I'm not sure.

A better way of mailing the tapes is to make mailing boxes out of heavy cardboard (it's easy) and use them to send out your tapes. This way the tapes are doubly protected and so are the tape boxes which do manage to get pretty beat up while in transit.

Wrap the mailing boxes just as mentioned above and you're all set for mailing. (A redundant sentence, but you know what I mean.)

As for cassettes... A package the size of a single cassette will not be accepted by the Post Office so you must make the package approximately twice the size of the cassette. This means length and width. Thickness is not a factor.

The Post Office and many stores sell padded mailing envelopes that are excellent for mailing cassettes and they tend to be inexpensive. They are also good for mailing a few open real tapes.

If you are going to send out a large amount of tapes to a trader your best bet is to put them securely into a large box, pad them with old newspaper so they won't bounce around inside, and mail them that way.

Naturally you will secure the box with strapping tape before mailing.

NOTE....Check out the rates for United Parcel Service (UPS). On large packages they might be cheaper than the Post Office rates.

There is a "special" mailing rate for tapes that many collectors use. It's a little slower delivery (but not much) and the rates are much, much lower.

Mark on the outside of your package, the following.....

"Special 4th Class Rate - Sound Recordings"

You'll be amazed how much postage this will save you.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT THE BROADCAST DATE OF A CERTAIN SHOW ?

Many collectors have spent long, tedious hours pouring over old newspapers and network radio files and have come up with the original broadcast dates for a tremendous amount of old radio shows.

In some cases every show broadcast on a certain series is listed along with the cast, sponsor(s) and brief

plot outlines.

These bits of information are then put together into what we call "logs" which are nothing more than a history of a series. The logs, at times, can be very comprehensive, almost to the point of overkill.

More often than not though, the logs are nothing more than the episode title, and the date of airing.

The info in the logs depends on how deeply the researcher dug and the amount of facts that were available, but even the most threadbare of logs is better than no info at all when trying to date a show.

A good number of the more popular series have been logged and these logs are available from a couple of sources, one being.....

Jay Hickerson
Box 4321
Hamden, CT. 06514

Write to him for a listing of available logs and their prices which are v-e-r-y reasonable. None are expensive and some run under a dollar.

If you're after a date for a specific show...Logs are the way to go!



The Shadow

WILL OTR SHOWS ON TAPE BECOME OBSOLETE ?

There are an awful lot of us that hope not! Being without a crystal ball it is impossible to tell what lies ahead. Maybe tape will become out of date and we will have to transfer our shows onto something

like a computer chip or laser disc. There's no way to tell but I'm sure that OTR will survive, in some form or other, for a long time to come.

WHAT'S THE STORY ON THOSE "USED" GOVERNMENT REELS OF TAPE THAT SEEM LIKE SUCH BARGAINS ?

For years you had to go to a store and buy packaged reels of tape to use for dubbing. These reels came boxed and sold at a normal retail price. OTR traders usually "burned through" these reels at a rapid pace and a lot of money was spent.

Along came these used Government reels at a price that was hard to believe and the traders started to grab them up hundreds or thousands at a time.

It is not bad tape but it is also not the best and some caution has to be used when recording it.

Much of it has something wrong with it like uneven coating (which causes dropouts in the sound), bad slitting (which causes bad tracking in your tape unit), and wrinkled tape (usually near the hub of the reel). Another bad feature is that the reels come unboxed so you must supply your own and the box costs more than the reel of tape does!

On the plus side is the fact that the tape (Ampex ⁶⁴¹/₆₇₁), when not defective, is pretty darn good and the price is such that a trader can lay in a couple of years supply with very little damage to his wallet.

These tapes must be checked out thoroughly before using them to dub shows. A fairly high percentage of them will prove to be defective due to one thing or the other and will have to be discarded.

If you buy this tape with that in mind, knowing that some of them are real "duds", you are still making a very good deal.

These tapes are not top-of-the-line quality nor are they advertized as such but they are of a quality that is fine enough for the needs of the OTR collector.

This might sound like heresy to some "purists" but in the real world it is a fact of life. The cost factor is very important in OTR collecting and trading and the cost of these tapes make them awfully attractive.

Many of the tape dealers also offer "hand inspected" reels that come in boxes but the prices are significantly higher. Be warned, these tapes should also be checked out before using.

The bottom line is this. Try some of them. If you have little or no problems with them, stick with them. If it's more trouble than it's worth then move on to a better grade of tape.

The choice is yours. All I can say is that a huge number of OTR traders use this stuff.

For information on this tape you can write to....

AUDIO TAPES INC.
BOX 9584
ALEXANDRIA, VA.
zip...22304

There are other tape dealers around but this is the one we've dealt with and know.

ARE THERE ANY DO'S AND DON'T'S IN MAKING AND TRADING OTR SHOWS ?

Yes, here are a few.....
Don't edit the shows by cutting out the commercials, openings, or closings. Dubb the shows exactly as they are. Edits are not appreciated by those that get them. Don't start a tape at the very beginning of a tape. Allow at least 5 to 10 seconds of tape to run before recording on it. The same applies for cassettes.

Do follow the golden rule and give 'em as good as you'd like to get 'em. Don't record with a microphone. Use patch cords and the sound will be better, clearer, and have more "presence". If your recording unit doesn't have a Line Input or an Auxiliary Input and only a mike input then use an attenuated patch cord which allows the mike input to handle the higher powered line signals. If possible, don't start a show on one side of a tape and finish it on the other side. Sometimes, with longer shows this is necessary but most of the time it is avoidable. Do try to take pains when making up a reel for someone else. Then spot check it before mailing it out. Remember, the darndest things can happen to a "perfectly recorded tape" and it's better for you to find out about it yourself than to have someone else complain about it. Do be patient when awaiting shows ordered from another trader. Things happen and sometimes the trader will have difficulty in filling your order right away. Because of the nature of the hobby and it's tightly woven "grapevine" it is a rare occasion when one trader will cheat another.

If you are the one that is doing the delaying then it is a nice gesture to send a note to the other guy explaining the delay. Some do this, others don't. It's up to the individual.

Do make arrangements ahead of time as to the kind of tape to use in the trade. If one uses an inexpensive tape and the other a top-of-the-line brand it could result in hard feelings and doom a trading relationship. If you order a story sound rated as Good don't expect it to be Very Good. The purpose of sound ratings are to indicate to you how good or bad a show sounds. By ignoring these ratings

and expecting everything you order to be broadcast quality you are bound to be disappointed.



THERE ARE A LOT OF DEALER ADS IN MAGAZINES AND NEWSLETTERS. HOW CAN I TELL THE GOOD ONES FROM THE BAD?

OTR dealers seem to be springing up all over the place and it is a problem figuring out which ones are on the level and which ones are rip off artists.

A general rule-of-thumb is that if a deal seems too good to be true then it probably is too good to be true. Another rule is that you get what you pay for...but this is not always the case.

There are some dealers that are both inexpensive and deliver an excellent product. They care. There are others that are costly and put out garbage. These are the ones you want to avoid like the plague.

After you are into the hobby for a while you will know which is good and which is not.

Most dealers are reasonable and give out a good, listenable tape that you will be more than satisfied with and glad to have in your collection.

On the following page we have made up a chart listing some of the best dealers around. You cannot go wrong with these guys.

DEALER	REELS?	CASSETTES?	CATALOG	COMMENTS
Cassettes Now/ Reels Also Edward J. Carr 216 Shanor Street Boyertown, Pa. 19512 (215) 367-9114	Yes	Yes	\$3.00	Best quality anywhere. Great BBC shows
Nostalgia Recordings Ken Mills 907 Maple Ave. Ridgefield, N.J. 06757	Yes	No	\$3.00	OTR & Big Bands
Great American Radio P.O. Box 528 Mt. Morris, Michigan 48458 (313) 686-5983 Gary & LaDonna Kramer	Yes	Yes	Free	Over 2000 cass. as low as \$2.50
Vintage Broadcasts 42 Bowling Green Staten Island, N.Y. 10034 Andy Blatt	Yes	Yes	\$2.00	Over 7000 shows
Aston's Adventures 1301 North Park Ave. Inglewood, Calif. 90322 (213) 673-4455 "Cowboy" Don Aston	Yes	Yes	\$7.00	Best Catalog Anywhere! Best Selections
BRC Productions P.O. Box 2645 Livonia, Mich. 48151 Bob & Debbie Burnham (313) 721-6070	Yes	Yes	Reel-\$2. Case-\$2.	Great Selection & OTR Books & Publications
Echoes of the Past Ron Barnett Box 9593 Alexandria, Va. 22304	Yes	Yes	\$5.00	Over 9000 shows available.
James Albert 2732 Queensboro Ave. Pittsburgh, Pa. 15226 (412) 343-5235	No	Yes	Free	A small dealer but a "Quality Dealer"
Audio Classics P.O. Box 1135 St. Charles, Missouri Terry Salmonson	Yes	Yes	\$5.00	The Lone Ranger & Sgt. Preston

Dealers get a lot of bad-mouthing from OTR "purists" but they serve a definite and vital role in keeping the hobby alive and prospering. A dealer is often the very first contact a collector makes when getting involved with OTR collecting.

Thankfully, most dealers are honest and friendly and make initial contacts a pleasant experience that keeps the novice collector both interested and involved.

The dealers on the previous page are only a few of the many reputable ones in our hobby.

WHEN I MAKE A RECORDING SOME OF THE SOUND CAN BE HEARD ON THE OTHER TRACK. WHAT CAUSES THIS?

This problem is a common one to those that dubb OTR shows. It is called crosstalk and can be caused by a number of things. One is when the signal being recorded is at a very loud or high volume. It can actually "spill" over to the next track. Moderating the recording level will eliminate this problem.

Another source of crosstalk, and probably the most common one, is head misalignment. Unless the heads are directly in alignment you will have crosstalk. This means all the heads...Erase, Record, and Playback.

A simple check for this is to get a blank tape and record only one track of it in a normal manner. Then rewind it to the start and play it back but this time turn the volume completely off on that track and fully up on the blank track. If you can hear the recording on the blank track your heads need alignment.

This test also works on cassette recordings when the unit has individual controls.

Don't attempt to align the heads yourself as they are critical and

should only be done by qualified servicemen.

ARE THERE OTHER THINGS I CAN DO TO ENHANCE MY ENJOYMENT OF OTR?

Yes, there are ways to make OTR collecting an even more fun thing. There are many books out on OTR and the people that did it. These books fit into the OTR collector's realm perfectly and are a welcome sidelight to anyone's collection. They give insights into the shows themselves and can often tip you off on shows you might never have heard of. Many are illustrated with photographs of the actors. It's amazing the difference between what your mind conjures up as to what a particular actor looks like and the way he actually looks!

Another thing you might want to try is watching OTR on video. In the 30's, 40's, and 50's many movies were made featuring radio characters that, up till then, had only been heard...not seen. Blondie, The Shadow, Gildersleeve, Fibber & Molly, I Love a Mystery are but a few of the shows that were filmed and show up on TV (mostly late at night). Many of these are available on videocassette. Check your dealer.

If you are so inclined you might want to write an article about your memories of OTR. Sharing your recollections with others can be a joy in itself and the OTR clubs always welcome new articles to print in their newsletters/magazines.



WHY ARE THE SHOWS FROM THE 30's & 40's SO MUCH CLEARER THAN THE ONES FROM THE 50's & EARLY 60's?

This might seem the case but it is not so. As the decades go by the technical aspects of recording only get better and better. Shows that were unlistenable only a few years ago because of poor sound quality are now, because of modern filters, equalizers, compressors, etc., in good, enjoyable condition.

The problem that you are having is possibly that you are getting copies of copies of copies. Each copy of a program is called a generation and each generation, no matter how carefully recorded, loses something from the previous one.

What might start out as an excellent sound might, generations later, be pure garbage and much less than satisfying to the ear.

Collectors are frequently looking for "better copies" of favorite shows. What they are actually looking for is younger generations of copies.

Many of the very early shows were on transcription discs and the shows circulating are recorded directly from them. Tape came into favor in the late 40's (Crosby's show was one of, if not, the first to use it) and transcriptions fell out of use.

The tapes seemed indestructable and so might not have received the tender, loving care that they might have. Unfortunately this had an effect on a lot of it and it shows today. It's too bad, but it could be a lot worse.

CAN I TRY TO SELL MY OTR SHOWS TO A RADIO STATION FOR REBROADCAST?

Don't even think about it! The majority of the shows circulating

are protected by copyright laws that can come down on you hard if you break them.

It's an academic question anyway because the radio stations will not be interested unless you own the rights to the shows.

Some copyright owners really work at protecting their interests so don't try anything foolish. The chances are that you will be caught.

Some copyright owners also think that dealers and collectors or traders should be regulated by the same copyright laws...but that's a whole different story

Old time radio collecting is a hobby that can stay enjoyable and fresh for the rest of your life. The gathering of OTR shows is a relatively young hobby that has the potential to go on and on 'til who can tell?

It's a hobby for all. Young or old, active or infirm, male or female, rich or poor...there are no restrictions at all. BUT there is one prerequisite that you must have...a love of old time radio.

ENJOY !!!!!

This issue.. "The ABC's of OTR" was put together by Bob Davis with an able assist from Frank Boncore.

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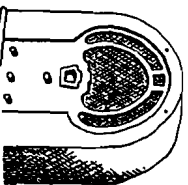
Any complaints/compliments/corrections should be mailed to.....

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