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# ILLUSTRATED PRESS

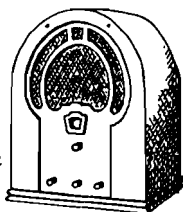
EST. 1975

#110 - DECEMBER, 1985



**KATE SMITH**

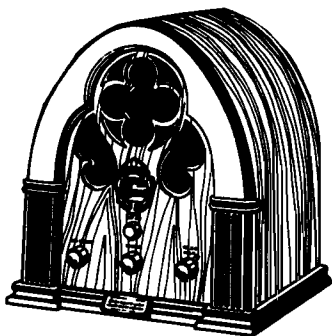
THE OLD TIME



RADIO CLUB

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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 lists, a 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 \$12.00 per year and includes all the benefits of a regular membership. Regular membership dues are as follows: If you join in January dues are \$17.50 for the year; February \$17.50; March \$15.00; April \$14.00; May \$13.00; June \$12.00; July \$10.00; August \$9.00; September \$8.00; October \$7.00; November \$6.00; and December \$5.00. The numbers after your name on the address label are the month and year your renewal is due. Reminder notes will be sent. 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 \$29.50. Publications will be air mailed.

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BACK ISSUES: All MEMORIES and I.P.s are \$1.00 each, postpaid. Out of print issues may be borrowed from the reference library.

Dominic Parisi  
38 Ardmore Pl.  
Buffalo, NY 14213

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The Old Time Radio Club meets the FIRST Monday of the month (September through June) at 393 George Urban Boulevard, Cheektowaga, New York. Anyone interested in the "Golden Age of Radio" is welcome to attend and observe or participate. Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.

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DEADLINE FOR IP #111 - December 2  
#112 - January 6  
#113 - February 3

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ADVERTISING RATES FOR MEMORIES

\$40.00 for a full page  
\$30.00 for a half page  
\$20.00 for a quarter page

SPECIAL: OTR Club members may take 50% off these rates.

Advertising deadline - September 1.

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## Wireless Wanderings



### JIM SNYDER

Several years ago an issue of the ILLUSTRATED PRESS was dedicated to me because I had completed five years of writing this column, a total of thirty columns. Well, another milestone, a much more important one, has been reached. With this month's issue Richard and Arlene Oldday are starting their sixth year of putting out the IP, a total of sixty issues. While Dick is listed as the editor, I suspect that Arlene does perhaps more actual work on each issue. Perhaps we should start calling them co-editors.

Five years as editor of a monthly OTR club publication is unheard of. I can think of no one else in the hobby who has put in that amount of time on such a big task as they face every single month. While I have the simple job of batting out three pages on the typewriter six times a year, the Olddays have the month in and month out task of putting everyone else's stuff together, retyping all of it, and then trying to fill in the left over empty space with something interesting. For all of this the Olddays get little praise and lots of criticism.

They have no control over what is sent to them by their columnists and letter writers. Some people feel that they should exercise such a control, but that would be censorship. Some of the other clubs in the hobby heavily censor what is published. These clubs print nothing critical of themselves, but much that says what a wonderful job they are doing. You will note that over the years the ILLUSTRATED PRESS has printed it all; both praise and condemnation. That is a real strength of this publication. While you may hate what a columnist or letter writer is saying, it is certainly interesting and thought provoking, and you always have the right to respond with a column or letter of your own without fear that it will be censored. Now there is a very fine line between editing and censoring, but some of the others unfortunately follow the latter method in a rather heavy handed approach. While controversy provides us with more interesting reading, it creates

additional problems for the Olddays in that many blame them for the points of view that are expressed. In fact, the editor of one of the other club publications wrote me condemning the IP for its bias. That is certainly a false charge in that the OTRC and its publications have NEVER taken an official position on how its members must act, or what they must think. The IP has no bias, and as far as I have been able to determine, neither do the Olddays. I have talked to Dick several times about some of the controversial issues, and he has never commented in any way on my opinions. I don't know if he agrees or disagrees with me, or if he simply doesn't care. His listens and expresses no opinion, a policy which he follows in the IP. He simply prints what he receives and opens his pages to anyone who care to argue. And further, while some publications won't print anything that disagrees with their "club policies," even from their own members, the Olddays open their pages to all points of view, even from those who are not members of the OTRC. Certainly a resoundingly fair and impartial policy. But, it is a "no win" situation for them. If I write something people like, I get all the credit. If I write something they don't like, the Olddays get blamed right along with me.

In the past five years, under their leadership, the IP has continued to be interesting and enjoyable. It is informative, educational, and thought provoking. That does not mean I like everything in it. I don't. But each issue is only what the rest of us send in. If we send in nothing it will be dull, and I am sure that all of us do indeed have something to say. After all, look how interesting those statements have been from the people who entered our contest last winter. Most of those people have never written anything in the IP before. Now that they are seeing their stuff in print, I hope they will continue to send in additional items.

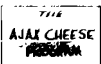
There is one editorial policy that I definitely would like to see changed. In his first issue (December 1980) Dick wrote, "I plan to keep my comments to a minimum in the future, as I would rather turn this space over to readers' comments." Unfortunately Dick has followed that policy. He writes well, and I would like to see more from our editor. I do not mean that he needs to start expressing opinion or should get involved in the controversy often raised in the IP, but I would like to see him fill us in on the passing OTR scene, from his standpoint."

Why do the Olddays continue to handle this publication? I haven't the faintest idea, but thank goodness they do. I can't imagine what reward they find in it. Certainly there is no monetary return for them (and that can't be said of all clubs); in fact it costs them a great deal personally in both terms of money and time. The letters to them are often personally nasty because of something Jim Snyder or someone else has written. Where can there be satisfaction in that? It is a rough job, and very few people would be willing to put in what the Olddays do.

Above that, I have found Dick to be a tireless promoter of the OTRC. After paying his own way to the New Jersey convention each year, I always find him spending very little time taking advantage of the convention for himself. Instead he spends hours passing out literature and talking to people about our club. He is constantly recruiting a new member, listening to complaints and suggestions, and trying to get people to write for the IP.

We have a priceless commodity in the Olddays. They have made the hobby immeasurably better over the past five years. I only hope that they can stick it out for another five. I know they are too modest to dedicate an issue of the IP to themselves, so I would at least like to dedicate this column to them. All of their labor, frustrations, and above all their success in greatly appreciated by those they serve so unselfishly. Thanks go to them, and congratulations are in order for the rest of us for our good fortune in having them work in our behalf.

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"... and now, a message from one who has tried and enjoyed our product..."

*Happy New Year*

\* 25 WORDS OR MORE \*

Radio -- that archfiend that killed burlesque and vaudeville, Radio -- that archfiend that tortured the American public by enticing them into listening to AMOS AND ANDY, TOWN HALL TONIGHT, PHIL HARRIS - ALICE FAYE, RED SKELTON, BOB HOPE, BING CROSBY, FRANK SINATRA, AND SINGING SAM. Radio -- that archfiend who brought anguish to the American public with Bill Stearn, Walter Winchell, Louella Parsons, Mary Margaret McBride, and Lowell Thomas. Radio --- that archfiend who subjected the American public to the WHISTLER, the SHADOW, ESCAPE, I LOVE A MYSTERY, X MINUS ONE, DRAGNET, and GANGBUSTERS. Radio -- that archfiend that tamed the old west with Tom Mix, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy, GUNSMOKE, and THE LONE RANGER. Radio -- that wonderful and glorious archfiend - what a good friend you were.

Rusty Wolfe  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

I've always enjoyed radio because I can be busy with housework, exercise or cooking and be entertained or informed at the same time. Also, when listening to comedy, mystery and drama, my imagination details the setting far beyond that which a TV or movie producer can duplicate. I appreciate the old time radio shows more now that I did as a child, and have discovered new favorites among those I had not heard before.

Roberta Reddin  
Buffalo, New York

Guy Lombardo and his orchestra playing the "sweetest music this side of heaven" was a prominent feature of the "big band" era of 1930 thru the 1960's. Originally from London, Ontario Canada, the band was known as the "Royal Canadians" with family members, Guy Carmel, Leibert, Victor and sister Rose Marie all in the band at one time or another. The bank, a favorite of the lovers of sweet, melodic, and smooth dance music, capitalized on its distinctive style in an era dominated by other jazz bands such as the Benny Goodman, Woody, Herman, Les Brown, Dorsey Brothers bands etc.

Chris Wong  
Honolulu, Hawaii

Old time radio has brought me untold number of hours of enjoyment, not only from the programs themselves, but also re-kindling boyhood memories. A bonus reward of OTR is the relationship that have developed through trading and attending the Friends of Old Time Radio annual convention.

HANK KROPHUSKI  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

My earliest memories of what we now call old time radio was probably between ages 4 and 6. The white (ivory) table model five tube Emerson, which my parents owned, was the beginning of a life long enchantment. Radio causes the use of imagination which of course was the real enchantment.

Thomas L. Burdick was the audio-visual director at East Aurora High School, which I attended between 1952 and 1958. This was also the period of time that radio changed dramatically. What made it great began to disappear. I was a member of the audio-visual club at school, during these years. As result of this involvement we could borrow equipment and record players that were not used much by the school. A small Wilcox-Gay 1/2 track reel-to-reel tape recorder began making its journey home with me on weekends, starting about 1957. This was the beginning of collecting radio programs which I liked, and in later years shared with others. For a number of years there was little to record, but some nice programs were found. There were few people that I knew that had similar interests.

Then about three years ago I joined the Old Time Radio Club, with my wife, Phyllis, who also has an interest in this hobby. These have been very enjoyable years meeting with a group of people who have similar interests.

Radio, when I look back, has been integral to my life.  
 Joe O'Donnell  
 Cheektowaga, New York

My first exposure to old-time radio came about twenty years ago. I'm now 37 so I didn't hear most of it first-hand. I was Chief Engineer of an area AM station at that time and also staff announcer. One night after a midnight sign-off, I went to the station to do some equipment maintenance and found the announcer in the production room dubbing off some Amos 'n' Andy shows after his shift. At that time I had never heard them or heard of them. Well, need I say more? I was hooked and started buying from dealers. How, many years later, I am a dealer and people buy from me and I have built up a most respectable collection of shows. The possibilities for trades are endless. I only wish I had time to hear all these great shows! I don't know where my older friend that got me interested in OTR is now but I owe him a special thanks for exposing me to this wonderful means of entertainment!

Ed Cole  
 Lakeland, Fl 33802

# Editor's DESK



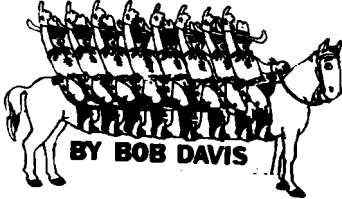
Thank you very much, Jim, for your kind words regarding our efforts over the past 5 years. Perhaps this is a good time to explain to our readers what is required to put together an issue of the I.P. First of all, we anxiously await the columns, letters and clippings to arrive from our members. This is the heart and soul of our issue. The numerous contributions from our members has made our publication the envy of other clubs. For instance, this month's Nick Carter was squeezed out by your many contributions. Next we begin typing (Arlene does all the typing). I lay out each issue and determine what is to be inserted and where it is to be inserted. I also do all the research for newspaper & magazine articles (Other than those sent to us) to be used as fillers. By the way, we use about 98% of all the material sent to us. Arlene does all the paste-up and margins. The cover is usually done last and may feature a recently deceased actor or relate to a column inside or maybe it just strikes my fancy. Finally, the issue is ready for the printer. The printer reduces the page size from our original 8 1/2 x 13, prints, collates and staples the issues. Approximately 10 days after I drop off an issue, it is ready for me to pick up. I bring the copies to our monthly meeting where they are passed out to members in attendance. Pete Bellanca takes the remainder home to mail out to you and finally the mailperson delivers the I.P. to your home. While each issue does require a lot of time and effort, it has been a labor of love for us these past 5 years. Arlene and I are very grateful for your column, Jim, and we would like to wish all of our members a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and A HAPPY 1986!

P.S. Jim, I always care about each opinion but since I am extremely opposed to consorship, I try to retain a neutral position in the I.P. I have only "censored" 1 sentence in 5 years of editing the I.P. and I was reluctant to do even that.

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# SAY!

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?



Two issues ago Jim Snyder, with teeth bared and claws sharpened, attacked my selection of Orson Welles as the "Best Ever Performance by a Radio Actor." Welles was selected on the basis of his "War of the Worlds" broadcast. Jim disagreed with my selection because Welles did not have a lengthy role in the broadcast, or at least the first 2/3rds of it. Since when did length of role have any bearing on something like this?

We are rapidly approaching the 50th anniversary of this broadcast and Welles is still strongly associated with it. I would venture a guess that most people couldn't name another actor that appeared on that broadcast! As an aside...Did you know that one of the actors on that show was Art Carney? He did a lot of radio back then and appeared as the Roosevelt-like character.

Anyway, Jim, I challenge you to come up with any other single performance on radio that even comes close to the one given by Welles, People like John Dehner, William Conrad, Paul Frees, and Olan Soule were all craftsmen when they performed but you would be hard pressed to point out any performance by them that has stood the test of time.

I picked Welles and I will stand behind that selection!

I believe I know what the problem is with Jim Snyder. In his youth (a 1-o-n-g time ago) Jim fancied himself as an innovator of radio programming. He came up with a couple of ideas for radio shows that somehow never caught the public's fancy. One was about a Shadow-like character that, while on vacation in Tijuana Mexico, learned the strange power to cloud men's minds. Sounds like the Shadow doesn't it? But Jim had a gimmick. Instead of making his here invisible to those around him, his hero turned everyone else invisible so he couldn't see THEM!!

Jim also had one about a cowboy with silver bullets who rode

around without a mast but everyone he met up with had one!!! When the producers rejected the show, Jim thought it was because the show was way ahead of it's time.

Snyder is a great fan of the LUX Radio Theater. One night, way back then, just as Jim was tuning it in, the station went off the air due to power outage. He sat there taping an entire hour of dead air...He thought they were doing the radio version of "Birth of a Nation"!!! It's still listed in his trading catalog! (Yes Virginia, that was a silent movie!)

You know, for a person with such a nasty reputation and such a picky-picky attitude, Jim is still a likeable guy and I'm glad to call him a friend.

This has been a bad year for old time radio. Some of the superstars of those good old days have passed away. There are three I'd like to talk about, Orson Welles, Edmond O'Brien, Lloyd Nolan.

Welles, often accused of over-acting, underplayed his role as Harry Lime on The Third Man Radio shows. (The Lives of Harry Lime if your prefer.) While not one of the classics of OTR, the show was nevertheless enjoyable and a real treat for the OTR collector.

O'Brien was a frequent guest star on many of the big time shows. It was Edmond O'Brien that played the Bogart roles when The Treasure of Sierra Madre and Key Large was presented on Lux Radio Theater. Naturally his own show, "Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar", was a hit and has become a staple in many OTR collections.

Nolan was a much sought-after guest star that was always a crowd pleaser. He was often cast as a gangster type due to the quality of his voice and a tough guy way of talking. Sadly, his radio series, "Results Inc." was not a big hit and there are only a few in circulation.

There were others but these three are the ones that spring to mind. They were, in their own ways, originals. Like all originals they can never be replaced. Fortunately, their work outlives them. For that we can be thankful.

Well, the 1985 OTR Convention in Newark is now history and, once again, I was unable to attend. From what I am told it was a rousing success and gets better every year. Congratulations to Dick Osgood for winning this year's "Rocky" award. As long as I didn't win it I'm glad to see it go to a good guy like you. Honest...I'm not bitter. Really'.Grrrr.

Big stuff coming up for the OTR club. The tape lending library is growing to mammoth proportions

and...well, that would be telling. Needless to say 1986 stands to be the club's biggest year ever. If you haven't renewed as of yet, don't put it off. You don't want to be left out.

A serious note that will probably get me in trouble with a lot of people. I believe the OTR Club is making a mistake, a very big mistake, by getting involved in Video. True, there is a tie-in with old time radio with movies like Gildersleeve's Big Day but I fear that we might be taking on something we cannot really handle or afford.

Video is expensive. Believe me, I know! Tapes are coming down in price but they are still costly. The cheap brands of video tape are inferior in quality and not worth the couple of dollars they cost. They can also damage the delicate heads in a video machine.

Programs recorded on one video recorder do not always play well on a different recorder. Quite often a program that plays VG on one recorder is totally unwatchable on another. These shows, more than likely, will be recorded right off the air - not professionally recorded. The professionally recorded ones are, without a doubt, cost prohibitive.

Finally, to do it right, we would have to carry both VHS and Beta versions of each show. The cost would be staggering and could only serve to do harm to the club.

It would be nice to be able to have a large video library to dip into but I believe it would be more trouble than it is worth. The handful of people that might avail themselves of this service can easily rent professional copies of many of these shows from the larger video stores. The OTR club should not even attempt to do battle with these commercial outlets, It is a nice dream,...but just that, a dream. One that in the long run will prove to be a dis-service to our members rather than a service.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

See ya next time...if they haven't lynched me by then!

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Fred Allen has trouble with Portland Hoffa as Minerva Flores (left) grins.



# Season's Greetings

To All Members And Their Families From

DICK and ARLENE OLDAY



# CIRCUIT WRITERS

This fourth article will deal with the various formats of open-reel tape decks. There are four basic types of machines:

1. **FULL-TRACK MONAURAL.** This type machine was used in broadcasting many years ago and was for professional and semi-pro use. In this format, a full reel of tape is placed on the left hand spindle and a take-up reel on the right. With an 1800 foot reel of tape at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  i.p.s., recording time was 45 minutes. The entire width of the tape is recorded on that single pass. The reels are not turned over. This was not at all on economical format but did offer two advantages: (1) a higher signal-to-noise ratio, usually about 3db or so; and (2) complete freedom from crosstalk, which is a leakage of material onto another track of the tape.

2. **HALF-TRACK MONAURAL.** Widely used ten to fifteen years ago in home recorders and some semi-professional applications. It is similar to full-track monaural as above, but offers twice the recording/playback time per given reel of tape. The tape is recorded as above. Then the reels are turned over and the recording can be continued. The completed reel will then be on the right hand spindle. Side one will be on the upper half of the tape, and side two will be on the lower half. A half-track monaural machine will playback a full-track monaural tape with no problems. If you took a full-track tape and played side two of it on a half-track machine, you would hear the program backwards because the playback head on the half-track machine is playing the tape in the opposite direction. Remember that in full-track the reels are not turned over.

3. **HALF-TRACK STEREO.** Using 2 channels of audio instead of just one. This is a professional commercially used format and the decks are usually very expensive. In this format, again as with full-

track monaural, the entire width of the tape is recorded on a single pass. The left channel will be on the upper half of the tape and the right channel will be on the lower half, both going the same direction. This format, because it is stereo, offers one-half the recording/playback time of the same tape recorded half-track monaural. These machines make provision for recording left and right channels together or separately. If you record just the left channel on this machine it will be fully compatible with half-track monaural. If you turn the reels over and repeat this procedure of recording just the left channel, you will have a half-track monaural tape. BUT if you record just the right channels each time and attempt to playback the tape on a half-track monaural machine, you will hear absolutely nothing because the half-track monaural head would always be playing the "unrecorded" track. Provided that you do not record two separate unrelated programs on the half-track stereo machine, one on the left channel and one on the right, it will be fully compatible with the full-track monaural machine. Remember, the full-track monaural machine cannot "separate" the tracks, so if you try to play a tape with unrelated programs on it, the same thing would happen as would with trying to play a half-track monaural tape fully recorded on a full-track machine -- two tracks at once -- one forward, one backward. If however, you record a stereo program on the half-track stereo machine, the full-track monaural playback heads will reproduce it faithfully--not in stereo but in monaural (both channels would be combined into one).

4. **QUARTER-TRACK.** These are more popularly the home units and the kind most widely used by consumers. It is also the type we use for OTR. Because you can put more tracks on a tape, it is much more economical than any of the above formats. Looking at a tape's oxide side from top to bottom, the track numbers are 1, 2, 3 and 4. On side 1 of the tape, the left channel is on track one and the right channel is on track 3. When the reel is turned over and recording is began in the opposite direction, the left channel is on track 4 and the right channel is on track 2. In making a quarter-track monaural recording, the correct recording order is 1, 4, 3 and 2. Side one **LEFT CHANNEL ONLY** is on track 1. When completed, turn the tape over and again record **LEFT CHANNEL ONLY**. You are now recording track 4. So by this it can be seen that the left channels are always on the outside



edges of the tape, and the right channels will be on the inside. It is because of this that tape wound unevenly or that has the edges bent will give poor performance on the left channels, while the right channels will be fine. Continuing with the recording. When you have completed side two left channel (track 4), turn the tape over again, back to the way it originally was with the full reel on the left hand side. Now we'll use the **RIGHT CHANNELS ONLY**. Record the program now using only the right channel. You'll then be recording track 3. Then turn the tape over again and still record just the right channel. You'll then be recording track 2. When you have completed this, you will have a fully recorded reel. You'll notice in most dealers catalogs a designation on their reels, such as 1L, 2L, 1R, and 2R. Rather than use the technical track numbers, it is much easier to understand in this manner. 1L is material on side 1, left channel (Track 1). 2L is material on side 2, left channel (track 4). 1R is material on side 1, right channel (track 3), and 2R is material on side two, right channel (track 2).

When recording in stereo, both the left and right channels are used together. On side 1 you are recording tracks 1 and 3, and when you turn the tape over, you are recording tracks 4 and 2. Therefore, it can be seen that in quarter-track monaural, the recording/ playback time is double that for quarter-track stereo, tape lengths and tape speeds being equal.

With any stereo format machine, it is possible to feed both channels at once with separate programs if you have two separate sources to feed your deck (such as 2 cassette machines, etc.). When you do this on both sides of the tape, the finished tape will come out quarter-track monaural. If you have the equipment to do this, you can cut your copying/ recording time in half. This is a time-save, since recording an 1800 foot reel quarter-track monaural one show at a time would take 6 hours to do. By feeding both channels with separate programming, it would only take 3 hours to dub a complete 6 hours worth of material. If you have another reel to reel machine and you want to copy a quarter-track monaural tape that is recorded at 3 3/4 inches per second, you can do it as above but by putting both machines on 7 1/2 inches per second. This is called "double-speeding" and in this case it would also be "double tracking". Therefore, in so doing, it would take only 1 1/2 hours to complete a 6 hour reel.

What a timesaver and I have found that it usually works well. This can be done because in all tape formats, each recording/playback is a multiple of the other. In the reel to reel format, the speeds that have been employed are 15/16 i.p.s., 1 7/8 i.p.s., 3 3/4 i.p.s., 7 1/2 i.p.s., 15 i.p.s. and 30 i.p.s. The last two are used only for professional applications, and the first two are used only for voice where quality is not important. Each number above is twice the previous one. If you should ever need to make a copy of one of your 3 3/4 i.p.s. reels at 1 7/8 i.p.s. and your decks have just the 3 3/4 and 7 1/2 ips speeds, set the deck to play the reel at 7 1/2 ips and set the record deck to 3 3/4 inches per second. The result is a tape at 1 7/8 i.p.s.

The important thing to remember is that if both the playback deck and the recording deck are running at the same speed, the result will be a true-time copy. There is a slight trick to double-speed recording and I will discuss that later.

H. Edgar Cole II  
 P. O. Box 3509  
 Lakeland, FL 33802

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**Arnold Stang**

## \*THE 1985 CONVENTION\*

This year I decided to leave on a Thursday night so I wouldn't have to get up early Friday morning. The plane was suppose to take off at 9:50 pm. However, it was delayed for a half hour while they packed it with stand-bys. The only seats that weren't filled were the ones in the Johns and they would have been if they had seat belts. After a forty-five minute flight, we arrived in Newark. It took the airline another forty minutes to unload the luggage. Next step was to call the hotel. There is a tie line between the airport and the hotel which offers a free shuttle service. I called and was told that there was no shuttle service available after midnight. A rather pleasant woman at the counter informed me that there was a service to the hotel. I should have realized I was to be taken when the driver arrived in a silk suit and said the fare was a flat rate \$15. The hotel is across the street from the airport, however the street is a twelve lane super highway. I informed Gino, the driver, that I wanted to to the the Holiday Inn North. When we arrived, I asked Gino what happened to the junkyard? He took me to the wrong Holiday Inn. After a cruise through scenic Newark at 1:00 am in the morning. I finally arrived at the right hotel, the Holiday Inn in the junkyard.

The next morning I was awakened at precisely 7:00 am not by the Hotel but by the 7:00am DC 10 that flies out of Newark each morning. When I went to have breakfast in the lounge, who was the first person I saw? Our favorite Michigosling\*\*\*\*Jim Snyder. Jim informed me the hotel had a 24 hour shuttle. When I informed the Manager, I was given a \$15 credit to my account. \*\*\*\*Per Jim Snyder a gander is a female, a Michigander is female from Michigan - he is a Michigosling - a male from Michigan. However it is easier to refer to him as just a wierdo.

Later on the moment had arrived, the dealer room opened. Let me point out that in that room I loose what is left of my sanity. I went completely bananas. I looked around and there were all the guys that I had waited so long to see again. On the far right was Thom Salome, of Shadow Sounds of the past, for \$5.00 a reel I bought the entire run of Suspense, 78 reels. On my way to Thom's stand, I bought 6 reels of the Whistler from Ed Carr. These had Signal Oil commercials in them. I also bought a book on Jimmy Durante from him. Ed write a regular column for The Old Time Radio Digest called Radio Book Collecting.

Opposite Thom, far off in the other corner was Tom Monroe, I bought some 20 reels from him. How could one go by BRC Productions without buying something; I couldn't. Near him was Nostalgia Central, he had ten cassettes that I couldn't resist. Leo Gawroniak sold me twenty cassettes for my collection. Tucked in the front corner was AM Treasures, from him I got a Shadow Poster and five cassettes. How could a true OTR collector such as myself go by Terry Salomonson's table (Audio Classics) without spending twenty dollars? I Couldn't. How can a collector go by the Vintage Broadcast booth without buying cassettes? I couldn't. I could go on and on about such guys as Ron Barnett, Echoes of the Past, or Aston's Adventures, Don Astin, or Stu Weiss, Mr. Quality Cassettes. I must admit that being a greedy person I was disappointed that Joe Webb of Nostalgia Warehouse did not have a table nor did I see my old friend John Furman this year. The only way to understand how I feel about the dealers room is to come and see it at next years convention. If any of the above names sound familiar, it is because they are all members of the OTRC.

The dealer's room is only part of the convention. There was a panel on Escape hosted by Terry Salmonson. Friday evening there was a cocktail hour. The highlight of the evening was an excellent re-creation of "Sorry, Wrong Number" and Jay Hickerson's Sing Along and Trivia Contest.

The low point of Friday evening was really two things. The first one was once again we let Jim Snyder pick out the table and once again we were the last ones to eat. The other low point was that the food was cold by the time we got there that even Etheopeans would not go back for seconds. Just a general comment about the food at this hotel, with the exception of the Breakfast Buffet and the Salad bar at lunch, the food was terrible and way overpriced. If one wants to loose weight simply spend a week or two at the Holiday Inn North in Newark. Examples \$1.50 for a Diet Coke and a 10% tip included in the bill at lunch time is robbery without a gun.

Saturday came and it was great to see Fran Striker Jr. again and to talk to Lee Allman. There was a tribute to Orson Welles. The real highlight of the evening was two recreations. The first one was Superman with Frank Nelson in the lead role and Jackson Beck. Unfortunately I sat by the wrong speaker. This was a stereo production and I look

forward to the convention tape when it becomes available. The next show was a recreation of the Lone Ranger. I thought we did a great job in Buffalo two years ago, however I must admit we were outdone this time. First there stood Fred Foy, a man whose voice I heard since I was a kid. Next, playing the Lone Ranger was Lee Alan, if you hear the tape of this you will be amazed at the similarity of his voice with that of Brace Bemmer's. Rube Weiss Played Tonto. When I looked up I was reminded of a picture that I saw in Dick Osgood's book, WIXIE WONDERLAND, Rube not only sounded like John Todd, he looked like him too. The entire production was just super.

Plan to be a part of next years convention, it will be held on October 24 and 25 at the Holiday Inn North at Newark, New Jersey. Thanks to Jay Hickerson and company for a super job.

In closing I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Frank C. Boncore

THANKS TO JAY HICKERSON - On behalf of the OTRC and myself I would personally like to Thank Jay Hickerson for the 10th Annual Friends of Old Time Radio Convention and the nine that preceded them. This year Jay was given a well deserved, long overdue award from Frank Nelson and Jackson Beck for his excellent contribution to keeping Old Time Radio alive and well to thousands of OTR fans all over the USA and Canada.

I found out about the OTR Convention 4 years ago and haven't missed one since. Thanks to Jay, I have had the privilege of witnessing the excellent recreations of OTR shows such as the Green Hornet, The Shadow, Suspense, Grand Central Station, Superman and the Lone Ranger. Thanks to Jay, I have met and talked to such OTR stars as Raymond Edward Johnson, Parley Baer, Walter Gibson, Ezra Stone, Jackson Beck, Lee Allman, Fred Foy, Ken Roberts and my favorite person Dick Osgood from WXYZ. Thanks to Jay I met Sim Snyder; oh well, nine out of ten is a good average. Thanks to Jay the OTR dealers made a small fortune off me. (Personal note to Jay - Did you ever think about getting a commission from those guys on what I spend?)

To find out about the 11th Annual Friends of OTR Convention, one should read Hello Again published by Jay for the past 16 years, to obtain a complimentary issue, send a SASE to Jay Hickerson, Box C, Orange CT. 06477 or better yet send him \$8.00 for a one year subscription (6 issues published every other month). Frank Boncore

COMMENTS FROM THE CROWD - The following observations were made by a person who attended the OTR Convention for the first time.

BEST IMPRESSIONS:

1. SORRY WRONG NUMBER, outstanding in characterizations.
2. LONE RANGER, Excellent! I had fun watching the sound effect man and I learned a new use for plungers.
3. SUPERMAN, Trouble with sound system - unfair to actors who worked hard

OVERALL COMMENTS - On Jim Snyder - "I work with the public so I am use to meeting kooks"

ON EVERYONE ELSE - "Nice people, I never knew a new world like this existed and I would like to do this again"

ON JIM SNYDER - "Does he do drugs?"

ON THE FOOD - "#%": "&! (expletive deleted.)

THE LIBRARY GROWS - It gives me great pleasure to announce that the new catalogue which the Club members have just received is now obsolete. It lists us as having 366 reels in our library, at my last count we now have 540 reels. Frank Bork was working on a supplement which showed 388 reels is no also obsolete.

The new catalog list 14 records.

Thank to the generosity of Garry Zelan we now have 91 records.

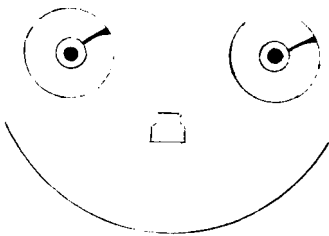
Most of our new material was acquired at the recent convention through the generosity of the many dealers who were there. I will say something about each and every one in subsequent issues, however, right now let me thank Thom Salome, fir donating 23 cassettes and 1 ree, BRC Productions for 25 cassettes and "The Technical Guide to Collecting OTR Programs", Stu Weiss for 10 cassettes, AM Treasures for 7 cassettes and 5 reels, Leo Gawroniak for 20 cassettes of Suspense, Nostalgia Central for 12 cassettes, Vintage Broadcasts for 15 cassettes, Astin Adventures for 4 reels and posters, Ed Carr for 25 cassettes, Tom Monroe for 20 reels, Ron Barnett, Echoes of the Past, for 5 cassettes and 3 reels.

We will make every effort to start listing our new acquisitions as soon as possible, just remember our librarian is a bit elderly and a little slow but he is steady.

Our club also received some cash donations at the convention. Let me thank Jim Albert and Edgar Cole for their cash contributions. Last but not least (I can't believe I have to say something nice about Jim Snyder) THANKS to Jim Snyder, a lifetime OTRC member, for a very generous donation to the club.

In closing, if I missed anyone, please let me know and I will acknowledge it as soon as possible.

Frank Boncore



### REEL-LY SPEAKING

Another year has almost gone by. Christmas is just a few weeks away and I hope it will be a white Christmas, like the ones we had when I was a kid back in East Buffalo. Seems to me we always had two or three feet of snow then. I can remember going to school one cold winter's morning with the snow up to my waist. I had to wade through the snow for 5 blocks to St. Mary Magdalene's school on Fillmore Avenue. The nuns did not accept any excuse for not attending school then. After school we'd walk home climbing the snow banks that people made in clearing the sidewalks of snow. Some of my school pals, Piggy Fuller and Buttsey Rutter would climb the banks pretending to be Renfrew of the Mounties. Remember that radio program? I haven't heard any Renfrew shows any where, so I guess they were never recorded. The guys would talk about the radio programs we would listen to. I was almost always soaking wet by the time I'd get home from school, had to change into dry clothes right away. Even my shoes would be wet even though we wore heavy four buckle rubber boots. I always liked Christmas best when it fell on Sunday, only had to go to church once that week. Saturday morning, the day before Christmas, a couple of my pals would come over and we'd listen to the Christmas programs for kids. That big Zenith we had gotten the previous Christmas was the window of the world for us for we would be transported to every place in the world by it and, even any time in history too. Later that night we went to Bethlehem with "The First Nighter, Campbell Soup show took us to England to hear the mean old miser Scrooge. We spent Christmas eve in a department store with Henry Aldrich spending his money on popcorn and other snacks instead of Christmas presents. We shivered with Fibber McGee shoveling snow looking for his key ring and sang along with Teenie when she and the gang sang "The Night Before Christmas." We laughed at Jack Benny and Mel Blanc when Jack shopped for Christmas

presents. Yes, all the stars had their Christmas specials for us and we were right there next to them in our minds eye, as Sister Charolette used to say. And on Christmas eve our whole family would have homemade strudle and kuchen with hot cocoa. My dad wouldn't allow anyone to make a sound when Bing Crosby would sing "White Christmas". We sat in our little living room in our home on Northampton Street, the lights all out except for the tree, and the Star over our manger scene. Our entire family listening to the radio singing along with the carols while outside the cold northern winds blew and the snow fell ever so gentle in the streets. While inside our home we were warm and happy together.

#### MERRY CHRISTMAS

Till next time-good listening.  
Francis Edward Bork

\*\*\*\*\*

**TAPESPENDENTS:** Send in your wants and we'll run them here for at least two months.  
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P.S. Also many 16" transcriptions. Most \$6.50 ea. Send SASE for list.

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Tapespondents is a free service to all members. Please send your ads to the Illustrated Press.

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\*\*MEMORIES\*\*

For the past two years, Frank Boncore, Joe O'Donnell and I have been writing and collating MEMORIES. We have been asked to do this for a third year. We are more than willing to do this. HOWEVER, insofar as The Old Time Radio Club belongs to all of us, we do not feel that we should take over MEMORIES for another year. Therefore, if someone else is interested in doing MEMORIES for 1986, please let me know by February 1, 1986. We can always be reached at 206 Lydia Lane, Cheektowaga, New York or at (716) 684-4983.

Moreover, we would be more than appreciative of any comments regarding the past two issues of MEMORIES (Vol. 1 and 2 of the Great Radio Comedians). Those that we did receive were appreciated, but a broader base of comments would give us a more accurate idea of what you would like, especially if no one is interested in doing MEMORIES in 1986, and we continue. Shall we go with Volume 3 of The Great Comedians, or some other topic? Would you prefer more original material or reprints of old columns? It is your magazine. Please let us know where you're at!

Phyllis Wazenska-O'Donnell

\*\*\*\*\*

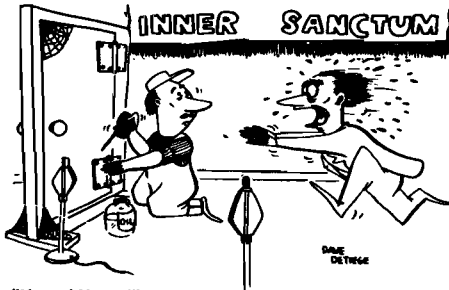
"O O P S"

When I thank Joe and Frank for doing MEMORIES, I forgot Phyllis. I'm sorry, I goofed. Phyllis did the lion(ess) share of the work on this past issue. I enjoyed the issue very much, especially the articles on Jack Benny and George Burns where they were caught for smuggling jewelry. I was not aware that this had ever happened. Anyqay Phyllis, thanks for this year's MEMORIES and I'm looking forward to next year's MEMORIES

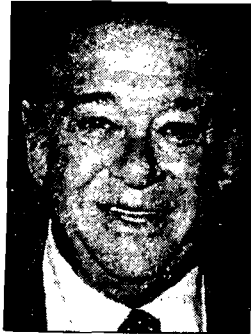
Dick Olday  
"Embarrassed Editor"

\*\*\*\*\*

RADIO BEST Cartoon Of The Month.



10/27/85



Morton Downey: Broadway singer.

# Morton Downey, 83, Dies; Known As Irish Tenor

United Press International

**PALM BEACH, Fla.** — Morton Downey, an Irish tenor and songwriter who became a household favorite with his radio broadcasts, died Friday night at his home. He was 83.

Downey had been ill since he suffered a stroke a year and a half ago, a relative said.

The former Broadway singer, a close friend of Rose Kennedy and Frank Sinatra, wrote more than 50 songs, including "Carolina Moon" and "Wabash Moon."

The matriarch of the Kennedy family particularly liked his version of "My Wild Irish Rose." Downey sang the song for her at a Palm Beach roundtable discussion two years ago, but he was perhaps best known for singing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling," more than 10,000 times.

Downey and Bing Crosby sang together in the Paul Whiteman Orchestra.

A radio soloist for CBS in the late 1920s, Downey was the singing star of the first movie musical, "Syncopation," produced by Joseph Kennedy. He also was involved in Broadway showman Florenz Ziegfeld's "Palm Beach Nights" as well as "Excess Baggage," both of which ran in 1927.

In 1930 Downey opened his own nightclub, the Delmonico, in New York.

Downey earned as much as \$250,000 a year during the height of his singing career and he later became an entrepreneur in the business world. Among his business interests was part ownership of the Stock Club's cosmetic market.

His popularity as a ballad singer lasted through the 1950s. Downey had lived in retirement in Florida, where he owned one of the nation's better known classic car collections.

AS I REMEMBER THEM—IV

# Humor, Drinking Shared Equal Billing With Fields

By EDDIE CANTOR

**DURING** the Ziegfeld Follies of 1917 and 1918, W. C. Fields, Will Rogers, and I were so close we'd even lay down our laughs for each other. When the Follies went on tour, I roomed with W. C.

A more curious combination never existed: Cantor, a skinny kid with a nervous stomach, whose strongest drink was cocoa; Fields of the hardy constitution, lusty appetite, and aversion to anything less than 100 proof.

One afternoon, just before we left for the theater, Bill came home and announced, "Son, I've just come from the Red Cross." "You actually donated blood?" I was surprised.

"Yes, son, I did. The doctors were pleased, too . . . told me there was so much alcohol in it, they'd use it to sterilize their instruments."

**I REMEMBER** one night after we had played a date just across the border in Canada. Coming back into the States, the customs officer opened Field's suitcase and asked, "What do you have here?"

Fields answered, "Nothing but clothes."

The customs man was about to shut the bag when he pulled out a bottle. "Nothing but clothes, eh? What do you call this?"

Fields answered, "That happens to be my nightcap."

ED'S WANAT CORNER

Well I'm back again with "As I Remember Them—IV"—remember back in 1969 when you could pick up the Buffalo Evening News and read about your favorite comedians? Let's return to yesteryear and read "As I Remember Them" by Eddie Cantor, This month W. C. Fields



W. C. FIELDS

Fields had a phobia about poverty. In his early career as a juggler, he had been stranded in so many places that when he became a success, he opened a bank account in every city he entered.

After his death several hundred bank accounts in various cities under different names were discovered. It seems appropriate that Fields should have had liquid assets.

During the last years of his life he was quite sick. He confessed to me that the doctor had warned him that if he continued to drink he'd lose his hearing. I asked him, "Are you going to quit?"

He answered, "I don't think I will, Eddie. You see the stuff I've been drinking is much better than the stuff I've been hearing!"

Toward the end, I visited him at a hospital.

The next day, Christmas, he breathed his last. The world lost a great funny man who, for 50 years, had kept people laughing.

**WHAT LITTLE** education I have I owe to this funny man. Very early in life he played in Australia. Before he left San Francisco for the land of the kangaroos, he went to a book store with an empty trunk and told the proprietor: "Fill this up."

The owner thought it was a gag and asked, "What colors and what sizes would you like the books?"

When he realized that Fields was serious, he filled the trunk with classics—Milton, Chaucer, Shakespeare.

For years thereafter Bill Fields read, studied, and even memorized the writings of these great writers. Some of it I'm certain rubbed off on me.

Excerpted from "As I Remember Them" Copyright 1961 by Eddie Cantor. Published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce.

**NEXT SATURDAY — Fanny Brice.**

NOTICE

All memberships expire at midnight 12/31/85. Please send your 1986 dues to Pete Bellanca, 1620 Ferry Rd., Grand Island, NY 14072. We are pleased to announce that our 1986 dues will remain at \$17.50 for U.S. and Canadian memberships.

\*If you renewed your membership at the Old Time Radio Convention in Newark or if you have joined as part of our Early Bird Special since 10/1/85, please disregard this notice.

ZIGGY



**REFERENCE LIBRARY:** A reference library exists for members. Members should have received a library list of materials with their membership. Only two items can be borrowed at one time, for a one month period. Please use the proper designations for materials to be borrowed. When ordering books include \$2.00 to cover rental, postage, and packaging. Please include \$1.00 for other items. If you wish to contribute to the library the OTRC will copy materials and return the originals to you. See address on page 2.

**TAPE LIBRARY RATES:** 2400' reel - \$1.50 per month; 1800' reel - \$1.25 per month; 1200' reel - \$1.00 per month; cassette and records - \$.50 per month; video cassette - \$1.25 per month. Postage must be included with all orders and here are the rates: For the USA and APO - \$.60 for one reel, 35¢ for each additional reel; 35¢ for each cassette and record; 75¢ for each video tape.

**CANADIAN BRANCH:** Rental rates are the same as above, but in Canadian funds. Postage: Reels 1 or 2 tapes \$1.50; 3 or 4 tapes \$1.75. Cassettes - 1 or 2 tapes \$.65; for each additional tape, add 25¢.

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## New and Old Voices Put The Snap Back Into Radio

**They're not Fibber McGee or the Shadow, but today's personalities command audiences just as loyal.**

Big names are bringing big bucks to the country's 8,600 radio stations, boosting an old form of entertainment that is as strong as ever, even in this video age.

Nationally known personalities such as Casey Kasem, Paul Harvey and Larry King are helping radio chalk up the best year in its history as sponsors, lured by the medium's ability to target audiences, are lining up to advertise.

Ad revenues for all of radio have more than doubled since 1979 and are expected to total 6.6 billion dollars this year.

The future is bright for the medium and the personalities who propel it. "If the '30s and '40s were the 'golden age of radio,' then today is the 'platinum age,'" says Norman Pattiz, president of Westwood One, a California radio production-and-distribution firm that is buying the Mutual Broadcasting System.

The glitter in radio, at least in part, is the handiwork of the people whose voices carry to every nook and cranny of the nation and now extend into television, newspapers and books.

**Top dog.** The most-listened-to voice of all belongs to Casey Kasem. His "American Top 40" show is heard by more than 45 million every week. Kasem began his career on two radio adventure programs, "The Lone Ranger" and "Sergeant Preston of the Yukon." He sees his current show as a marriage of the dramatic radio of the past and the musically oriented medium of today.

Kasem, who has parlayed his success on radio into two weekly syndicated TV shows, says the stories he tells about rock stars and the letters he reads from listeners are designed to fire the imagination of his audience. "They use radio in its richest form to allow the theater of the mind to be activated," he explains.

Other musical personalities with large national followings include disc jockeys Dick Clark and Rick Dees, who reach 3 and 9 million listeners, re-

spectively. Dr. Demento spins novelty records such as "Psycho Chicken" for a weekly audience of about 4 million.

While music is the staple of most stations on the FM dial, news and information are a cornerstone of programming on AM. No one dominates that genre like Paul Harvey, whose blend of news and commentary reaches more than 20 million a week.

A veteran of 53 years in radio, Harvey started his career on a Tulsa station at age 14. He says radio news has "matured very much since the old rip-and-read days. There's more information and better balance in our broadcasts."

Though Harvey's heart is in radio, he also finds time to do a five-times-a-week TV commentary and writes a thrice-weekly syndicated newspaper column. Harvey rises at 3:30 in the morning to prepare for his shows—1:30 a.m. when he is on the West Coast—and says he approaches each broadcast as if it were "the most important one of my life."

Talk-show host Larry King also has made the jump from radio to TV and print, but his bread and butter is his early-morning call-in show, which draws about 3 million people weekly. King says his program, often with celebrity guests, gives callers "their one chance to speak out and be heard."

In noncommercial ra-

dio, Garrison Keillor's blend of music and monologue on "A Prairie Home Companion" attracts about 3 million people a week. So strong is Keillor's appeal that his new book, *Lake Wobegon Days*, is now a best seller. Susan Stambler and Noah Adams, cohosts of National Public Radio's "All Things Considered," reach an estimated 8 million weekly with an eclectic mix of news, features and offbeat interviews.

It is a lot more difficult to become known nationally today than in radio's early years when a few networks dominated the airwaves. With the expansion of FM, big-city markets now have as many as 60 stations and the audience is fragmented into smaller and smaller segments. While this makes instant success harder to come by, opportunity still beckons for personalities with patience.

**Star formation.** Analysts say that in the next few years more national stars will be created in a medium that in recent decades has been mainly local in character. They note that as stations proliferate—1,400 have been added since 1975, with 700 more planned—the market for programming from networks and syndicators is expanding.

Many stations use national shows to augment local efforts; others are turning to networks for their basic fare. In 1975, just 36 percent of stations were network affiliates, but today that figure is up to 58 percent.

Edward McLaughlin, president of the ABC Radio Networks, says that as local personalities blossom they will be picked up by networks and their shows sent across the U.S. by satellite. This new technology lets a network transmit several shows at the same time, making national dissemination more practical and economical. Satellites also simplify transmission of shows internationally, and many analysts predict expansion on that front.

Randall Bongarten, president of NBC Radio, anticipates "a resurgence of personality radio." He sees a particular opportunity for people to make it big on shows that provide advice to listeners. His network is moving in that direction with programs such as Bruce Williams on personal finance, which now reaches about 2.5 million people weekly.

It all adds up to more growth for a form of entertainment and information that already reaches 80 percent of American adults each day. Says music king Kasem: "Radio is exciting again." □



Even after five decades, Paul Harvey, shown at top in 1938 photo, is the dominant personality in radio news.

By ALVIN P. SANOFF

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, Nov. 4, 1985



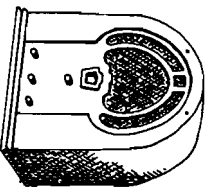
*Best Wishes  
for the Holiday Season!*



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