



RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO

Volume 23, Number 3

October, 1997



The Hermit's Cave

See tape numbers 1291 and 1292

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

Dedicated to the preservation of old time radio programs and to making those programs available to our members.

RHAC BOARD MEETING Oct. 2 1997

At the John Adams residence 7:30 PM SEE ADDRESS BELOW

Old time radio is alive in Denver

John Dunning's OTR Program (ON STAND BY)

John Rayburn's "Reminiscing with Rayburn" Saturday evenings 6:00 till 11:00 PM KEZW 1430

KEZW has syndicated OTR weekdays from 7:00 till 8:00 PM 1430 on the dial.

KEZW "Sunday Night Movie", Sundays 5:00 till 6:00 PM

E MAIL ADDRESSES CHECK HERE FOR NEW E MAIL ADDRESSES

RHAC web page and catalog is on the world wide web. <http://www.old-time.com/rhac.html>
take a look there is a lot of information at that sight.

RETURN WITH US NOW... is the official publication of the *Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc.*, a nonprofit organization. Cost of membership is \$25.00 for the first year with \$15.00 for renewal. Each member has full use of the club resources. For further information contact anyone listed below.

Phone numbers are in the (303) area code except where indicated.

PRESIDENT	Fred Bantin 1290 Dayton Street Aurora, CO 80010	343-7508
VICE-PRESIDENT	Guy Albright,	934-0184
SECRETARY	John Stevens PO Box 1908 Englewood, CO 80110	573-7558
TREASURER	Maletha King, address below	761-4139
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Open	
R.H.A.C. HISTORIAN	John Adams, 2811 S Valentia St., Denver CO 80231	755-9185
TALKING NEWSLETTER	Mike Fields, 243 S. 1100 E. Greentown, IN 46936	
MEMBERSHIP	Dick King, PO BOX 1908 Englewood, CO 80150	61-4139

TAPE DONATIONS

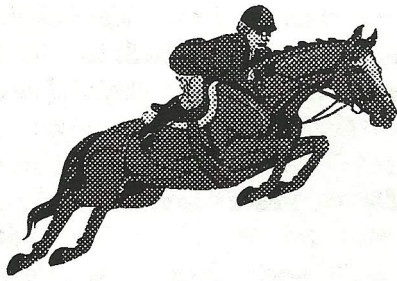
Bill McCracken, 7101 W Yale Ave #503, Denver CO 80227

Herb Duniven, 4184 S. Syracuse St., Denver CO 80237

DIRECTOR AT LARGE: David L Michael, 1999 Broadway, Lowery Suite, Denver CO 80202

LIBRARIES

REFERENCE MATERIAL	Bill McCracken, address above	986-9863
LOGS & SCRIPTS	Fred Hinz, c/o RHAC, P O Box 1908, Englewood CO 80150	
OPEN REEL TAPE LIBRARIAN:	Maletha King, 900W Quincy Ave, Englewood CO 80110	
CASSETTE TAPE LIBRARIANS:		
#1 (1-499)	Terry Hamilton, 9393 E Colorado Ave, Denver CO 80231	696-8196
#2 (500-999)	David Gatch, PO Box 70 Glen Haven, CO 80532	970-577-0805
#3(1000-2000)	Dave Logan, 5557 S Sherman Cir, Littleton CO 80121	730-1430
#4 (5001 up)	Mika Rhoden, 3950W Dartmouth Ave, Denver CO 80236	937-9476



THE KINGS ROOST

Summer has finally bid us a good-bye and the pleasant days of fall are here. We had the pleasure of having Dick Beals ride with us for a few days in August, just before the RHAC picnic. We just didn't have enough time to get on the trails up Waterton Canyon and others in Chatfield Park. Maybe next time. We thank all of you that comments that you missed this column in the September newsletter, but there just wasn't room and the article on the history of CBS was too good to cut into two parts.

We hear that Parley Baer is home, recuperating slowly, but will miss the Friends of Old Time Radio Convention in Newark, October 23-25th. Those of you that want more information of that convention should contact Jay Hickerson at 203-248-2887.

Our September club meeting was well attended, thanks

primarily to our guest speaker, John Dunning. John described the torture that he has gone through for several years on his new book, and is still doing a few changes. It should be ready for printing by Oxford University Press by the end of the year. John is still proofing and researching each page and doing his very best to make this a reference book that will be the final word on the history and life of old time radio. Both John and his wife have done hours of research on each subject and expect this book to be the most accurate book available. It will be big, over 900 pages, but Oxford Press expect to market it to retail at \$49.95 and to be in the book stores next April. We can only advise you to contact your favorite dealer and let them know of your interest so they can order plenty of books to fill the demands of OTR enthusiasts. The book will be called: "On The Air: The Ultimate Encyclopedia Of Old Time Radio".

Our hobby has grown like a growing boy and is now a very popular hobby throughout the country, not just with the "grey heads" but with people of all ages. There are OTR clubs scattered all over, and most of them are growing. The biggest problem we see is that the age of most of the OTR actors is also growing. We want them to understand

that we appreciate the work they did and that they were a part of America that will live forever, thanks to tapes of their shows. Although there are a few individuals that want us to all pay them for their claims of ownership of many shows, the only thing they are accomplishing is to get the stations to avoid their shows and many younger listeners will never hear them unless they get them thru clubs like ours. We regret seeing these greedy individuals trying so hard to kill OTR. They may be legally right, but they are doing a great deal of damage to the hobby.

The other thing that happened at the September meeting was the election of your new president, Fred Bantin. Fred has retired from his position at Ames College where he taught electronics, and accepted the position with our club. For those of you that have expressed your concerns about the Kings, we will both continue at some of our other jobs with the club. It just got to be too many jobs to get done well, but we will be working with Fred to help the club continue to serve it's members. Fred was our secretary and now that he has every thing in good order, that job will be handled by John Stevenson. The days of a secretary having to write and transcribe notes at meetings is outmoded with recorders.

He Gets Memories 'By Wire'

Restored wire recorder helps bring back precious voices from the '40s and '50s.

By Steven Gwost , Lansing, Michigan

Copied with permission of the Author and Reminisce magazine. Printed in the September October 1977 issue.

Everyone is familiar with a cassette tape recorder, and most folks remember its predecessor, the reel-to-reel tape machine. But how many people recall the old wire recorder?

A home recording device available in the late 40's and early '50s, the wire recorder used a spool of hair-thin steel wire instead of magnetic tape.

When I was a boy, Dad and a friend we called "Uncle Bill" got together every Sunday to make wire recordings of their ukulele and mandolin music.

Eventually Uncle Bill's wire recorder quit working and was discarded. Years later, he and Dad searched for another but couldn't find one. . . in fact, hardly anyone even knew what they were talking about!

FOUR HOURS TO SAVOR

When Uncle Bill passed away in 1978, his wife gave me four heavy wire spools. The containers said each spool held 7,500 feet of stainless steel wire, good for 1 hour of playback time.

Realizing these were "the wires" that Dad and Uncle Bill talked about so much while I was growing up. I wished I could hear them played. Then Mom said she thought *my* voice might also be on them. I just had to find a machine!

I finally located one in 1981 while browsing the classifieds in our local paper. It was an old Sears table model wire recorder with a record player and radio built in. It needed work but I was able to fix it myself since electronics is my hobby.

When I was ready to try it out, Dad, Mom and my sister gathered around while I put on one of Uncle Bill's old spools and pushed the play button.

The first thing we heard was Teresa Brewer singing *Till I Waltz Again with You*. I was amazed at the crystal-clear sound quality. Then we heard singers Patti Page, Kay Starr and Pat Boone.

Then, right after Jo Stafford sang *Keep It a Secret*. Dad could be heard singing *Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue* as he

strummed on his ukulele. Uncle Bill joined in on the mandolin, and played *Let the Rest of the World Go By*.

Years Melted Away

I'll never forget the look on Dad's face when those old recordings came to life. These were emotional moments that brought smiles and a few tears. It was great to hear the recordings that had been talked about for so many years.

And Mom was right--on another spool, we heard me as a crying baby and later talking at age 3. What a thrill!

Shortly after, I was rummaging through a secondhand store in Lansing when I spotted another wire recorder. It was in bad shape, but what caught my attention were the four spools tucked inside.

Curious, I bought the recorder and played the spools on my working machine. They turned out to be home recordings of a family named Gerhardt that had lived in Detroit until at least 1955. Listening carefully, I pieced together some names and tried to track down family members but had no luck. Later I told my story on a Detroit radio talk show. A cousin of the Gearhardts called in and put me in touch with John Gearhardt. After making cassette copies of the wire

recordings, I personally delivered them to his home. As we sat and played them in his living room, John was thrilled. Highlights included his wedding day in 1954, when he sang *All of Me* to his new bride, and a recording of their first child's cries.

John's wife had died in 1976, so he was eager to play the recording for his kids. "To hear their mother sing and play the piano and talk--they'll be thrilled!" he said.

Word got around about my wire recorder after two more radio stations interviewed me and articles appeared in three newspapers. Since then, people from all over the United States have sent me old wire recordings to transfer onto tape.

Relived Christmas Past

The most recent was from a lady who'd thought she had a recording of a church choir. It turned out to be her family opening Christmas presents when she was young.

I called her up to play some over the phone and she started to cry as she heard her father announce, "It's Christmas morning 1947..."

Another woman sent a spool that contained her mother "interviewing" her father.

"John she said, "tell the listeners about the night Melinda was born." "Well," he answered "we'd just watched Arthur Godfrey's show on TV, and *Captain Video* was about to start when you yelled, 'John... it's time!'"

Then there was a spool recorded when the owner was just 3 years old, singing songs with her father, who'd since then passed away. After receiving her tape, she wrote to me saying, "Thank You. Every time I listen to it, I cry."

I'm always curious when I get new wires to copy--I never know what I'm going to find. And the thank-you calls and letters I receive after folks hear their tapes gives me a great feeling!

Reminiscd Editor's Note:

If you have a wire spool you'd like to hear, contact *Steven Gwost at 832 N. Creyts Road, Lansing MI 48917; 1-517-323-3702. He'll assess the cost for transcribing it onto a cassette and tell you how to mail it.*

**A message from
your new
President Fred
Bantin**

First, I like to thank all present at the September meeting of "The Radio Historical Association of Colorado" (RHAC) for putting their confidence in me and electing me your new president. I feel sure that with some help from other members, I can guide the club through the next year with the same success that the club has experienced in past years.

As your newly elected president of RHAC, I find myself in a very unique situation. Often when a new president takes over, especially a club, he finds himself in a situation where finances are a major problem and membership has been declining for years. Thanks especially to Dick King (Resigning President) and your board, these two conditions are in extremely good shape. Membership has been increasing to now over 550 members and income over the years has developed to a healthy reserve for the club.

I then contemplate as to what I need to do as your new president. My main ambition as your new president is to keep things status quo, but also develop more comradery among the members. I know that there are many members that join just for the privilege of renting tapes. There is nothing wrong with that and that benefit should never be denied

a member. If renting tapes is the only reason a member joins, that is the member's right, but in addition to that, I'm sure some members want more. My goal for the next year is to address the needs of the members who want the club to do more than rent tapes.

During the past year there was an election of officers meeting, a Christmas party, a special meeting with guests, and a summer picnic. These were well planned events by your past president and the board. A lot of work was done to promote these events but they were not well attended by the membership, or in my words, there was not enough comradery.

As your newly elected president, I do not plan on changing three of these meetings. Naturally, next September there will be another election of officers (your chance to have a new president). There will be a Christmas party and a Summer Picnic. But as for the Special meeting with a guest, until the club demonstrates more comradery and a trend to be an active club rather than just a tape rental club, there is too much money and work spent on bringing in special guests for it to be the goal for this year. If the club becomes active and I'm reelected a second year, I'll put efforts into planning a

convention perhaps in the year 2000. This would not be a great departure from the past since conventions were historically held about every five years.

As for immediate changes, I will work for two goals: to get more members active in the club and have membership meetings every other month. I would like to set a meeting for November 20th, at the Church of The Master, E. 17th Ave & Filbert Ct. @ 7:30 PM. At this meeting, the agenda for further meetings will be set along with the desires of club members heard. I would like to have each meeting high-light a radio show. The first meeting will high-light "The Great Gildersleeve". More about this in next month's "Return with Us Now". For now mark your calendar for November 20th and plan to come and help the club have more comradery.

Last, I would like to thank all who have worked so hard in the past years and ask for their continued support and work. I especially want to thank the club Librarians and those associated with the tape libraries. These libraries have been the bread and butter of the club and must continue status quo to have a successful club. Looking forward to an active year in old time radio.

Fred Bantin

Your past president Dick King wishes to thank the board and the membership for their support over the years.

Eleventh quarterly survey conducted by Fortune Mag, embracing a representative cross-section of public opinion; results announced December 24, 1937

Favorite Program	
Jell-o (Jack Benny)	8.7%
Major Bowes	6.9
News Broadcast	6.6
Chase & Sandborn	5.8
Ford Sunday Evening	4.3
One Mans Family	4.2
Lux Theater	3.5
Kraft Music Hall	3.3
Amos 'n' Andy	3.0
Gang Busters	2.5
Fibber McGee and Molly	2.4
Lum and Abner	2.3
Texaco (Eddie Cantor)	1.9
Lucky Strike Hit Parade	1.8

Favorite Personality	
Jack Benny	10.7%
Boake Carter	7.1
Lowell Thomas	5.9
Eddie Cantor	5.5
Bing Crosby	5.4
Major Bowes	4.6
Bob Burns	4.3
Nelson Eddy	4.0
Edwin C. Hill	3.5
Charlie McCarthy	3.0
President Roosevelt	2.7
Gracie Allen	1.9
Fred Allen	1.4
Edgar Bergen	1.3
Lum and Abner	1.0
Rudy Vallee	.9

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION of COLORADO

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10 _____

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**THERE WILL BE A REGULAR
RHAC MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 1997 AT 7:30 PM**

**THE SUBJECT WILL BE THE GREAT
GILDERSLEEVE**

**AT THE CHURCH OF THE MASTER
E. 17th AVE AT FILBERT COURT
BETWEEN COLO. BLVD. AND MONACO PKWY**