



# RETURN WITH US NOW...

RADIO HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
COLORADO

Volume 27, Number 12

December, 2002

## Tracking the Cinnamon Bear

By Dennis W. Crow

(Reprinted with permission from Radio Recall)

*Editor's Note: In the history of Old-Time Radio, there has never been a more beloved or successful children's' series than "The Cinnamon Bear". Produced in 1937 as a syndicated show, The Cinnamon Bear consisted of 26 15-minute chapters that were usually aired daily from Thanksgiving to Christmas. After its initial airing, The Cinnamon Bear has been on the radio somewhere in the country annually for over 60 years. The entire series is also available on CD or cassette from most OTR dealers.*

*Author Dennis Crow, a charter member of The Cinnamon Bear Brigade, describes here the latest discoveries in an ongoing search by CB fans for the actors who brought these memorable characters to life.*

As an OTR expert and author of the only published book on the history of "The Cinnamon Bear" [THE CINNAMON BEAR BOOK: Hall Closet Publications, 1987], Chuck Schaden is absolutely right when he remarks, "Just when you think there's no new OTR to be discovered, that's when some goodie shows up. It's all out there, just waiting to be uncovered."

Chuck is referring to "The Cinnamon Bear" **audition disc** that showed up this year at the "Cincy" Convention. Richard Fisher, in the OTR Digest, was first to announce to the readership that this disc existed. I offered to send a cassette copy to Chuck through our mutual friend, Jan Bach, but he

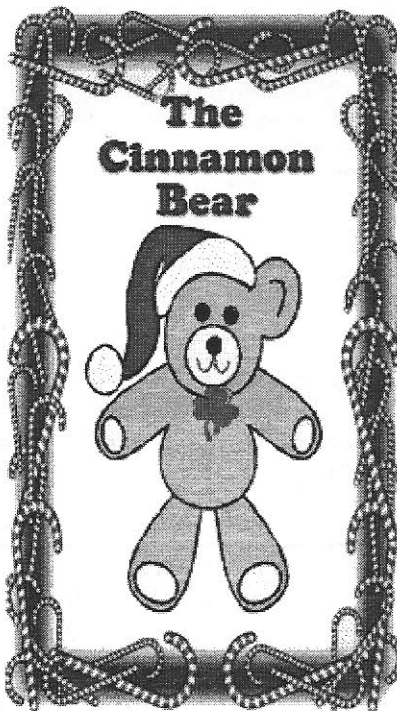
had already heard it. Shawn Wells of The Old Time Radio Shop made me my own audiocassette version and, boy, is it a blockbuster!

This is the first new information on "The Cinnamon Bear" since the Gassman brothers of SPERDVAC identified Rosa Barcelo (of "Magic Island") as the actress who played Queen Melissa. Also, the sheet music to the title song finally showed up. That's about it in terms of fresh data.

The "audition" disc is really a "promotion" disc. Much is made of it being eight minutes on each side as Paddy O'Cinnamon moans that his side, side 2, doesn't give him sufficient time. The Barton twins are worried that the record will be over before they can complete highlighting their story. Side one begins with announcer John Heistand announcing a new Christmas program produced in the Hollywood Studios of the Radio Transcription Company of America, Limited, under the direction of Lindsay MacHarrie, production manager of TRANSCO. MacHarrie talks about how Charles C. Pile [I do not know if this is the correct spelling of his last name], President

of the Radio Transcription Company of America, had received numerous requests over a number of years, from field managers, and by direct mail from radio stations, advertising agencies, and sponsors "for a program series designed especially for

(Continued on Page 3)



# RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

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and to making those programs available to our members

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KEZW 1430 AM	"When Radio Was", with Stan Frieberg	Weekdays, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
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KUVO 89.3 FM	"Destination Freedom"	9:00 PM

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### LIBRARIES

Reference Material:	Bill McCracken	7101 W. Yale Ave. #503	Denver, CO 80227	(303) 986-9863
Logs & Scripts:	Fred Hinz	c/o RHAC PO Box 1908	Englewood, CO 80150	
Open Reel Tape:	Maletha King	900 W. Quincy Ave.	Englewood, CO 80110	
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#1 (1-499)	Ron Gallagher	888 S. Dexter #607	Denver, CO 80246	(303) 692-0531
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#3 (1000-2000)	Dave Logan	5557 S. Sherman Cir.	Littleton, CO 80121	(303) 730-1430
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### Convention Schedules

**17th Annual OTR and Nostalgia Convention** April 11 - 12, 2003; Contact Bob Burchett, 10280 Gunpowder Rd., Florence, KY 41042 (859) 282-0333 [haradio@hotmail.com](mailto:haradio@hotmail.com)

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pre-Christmas running".

MacHarrie says he bumped into Glan Heisch one day on Hollywood Boulevard and invited him to lunch. He told Glan that he wanted a Christmas series "with all the charm and whimsy of the OZ books and 'Alice in Wonderland.'" MacHarrie told Heisch he wanted a series of twenty-six 15-minute programs designed to run from Thanksgiving to Christmas. This would be TRANSCO's premier Christmas series. He pointed out that he wanted the series to intrigue children, keep them listening from day to day, and at the same time, be highly entertaining for adult listening audiences.

Heisch agreed, allowed ideas "to percolate" until 2:30 the next morning, and called MacHarrie with a synopsis a few hours later. He said it just rolled out of his typewriter. MacHarrie and the TRANSCO staff agreed that this was the show they had wanted for so long and that they "would give it the best dressing up they could."

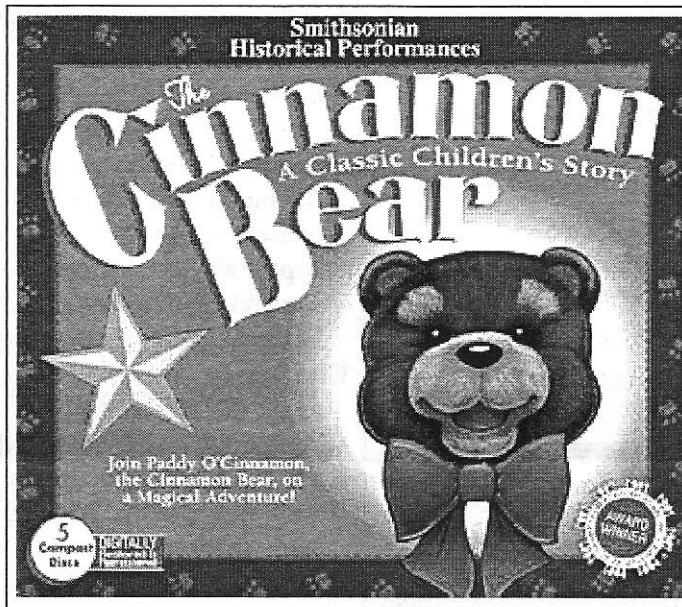
Immediately they decided it had to have original music, ---- at least ten original numbers sung by the characters in the story. Glan eventually included eleven songs with reprises of two. Everyone agreed that Santa Claus must play an important role. The show should have "a growing Christmas feeling" as it approached its climax on Christmas Day.

As Heisch had outlined the story, the Barton twins would search for their missing Silver Star ornament that always adorned their family Christmas tree which had been stolen from their attic by the Crazyquilt Dragon. Many of you are familiar with this famous theft and the adventures that followed. The Cinnamon Bear and Judy and Jimmy Barton review high points of their escapades on side 2 of the disc.

MacHarrie discusses briefly the plot without revealing the surprises and twists of the story. He also explains how Glan hooked up with a former associate of his, Don Honrath, to compose the songs and incidental music. Felix Mills was hired to handle the musical direction. Heistand interrupts MacHarrie

to tell him how Mills had been head arranger for Raymond Paige on "Hollywood Hotel," for Jacques Renard on "The Eddie Cantor Show," and who currently had his own musical organization.

MacHarrie says it was Mills' imagination "that provided us the musical arrangements, the scintillating instrumentation, and the clever singers who sing the songs." MacHarrie goes on to say that TRANSCO decided not to publicize the actors who played the three principals because the company wanted them to remain in the public's mind as Judy and Jimmy Barton and the Cinnamon Bear. But MacHarrie did say that they chose an actor to play Paddy O'Cinnamon who was well known from cartoon comedies and who was a showman from the early days of vaudeville. He was also among the first featured comedians in the early silent picture days. This confirms that vaudevillian Bud Duncan IS the Buddy Duncan who plays CB. [John Mayer, bless his whimsical heart, has previously provided me with a relatively complete filmography of Bud Duncan. I can now go to any of those films that are



still available with the certainty I'll see the Cinnamon Bear in person!] MacHarrie found the actor on a little ranch in Van Nuys, and he jumped at the chance to play "The Cinnamon Bear".

Several auditions were held at the TRANSCO Studios for actors to play Jimmy and Judy Barton. Each auditioner had a number, and they were listened to "blindly." They narrowed the choice to two actors "who had played brother and sister parts together many times before."

WOW! No name for Jimmy Barton yet, but we do know the actor who played him and Barbara Jean Wong (Judy Barton) were featured in other media as brother and sister several times. That would be pre-summer, 1937....so RWUN readers, help me track Jimmy Barton down. This is a great clue and we have never had it before. Previous appearances as brother and sister, perhaps on the stage, in radio or films, is a new field of inquiry. And we know one of the actors---Barbara Jean Wong. Who played Jimmy

Barton is one of OTR's enduring mysteries --- we need to solve it. And I believe with all my heart that we can solve it. We are now so much closer.

MacHarrie says this disc will be sent to station executives and their clients, with the presumed hope that the show will receive a broad airing based on his description of its excellent production values. At the end of Side 2, Hiestand announces, "we know you'll want to learn more about the Cinnamon Bear and all his strange friends. Just drop a note of inquiry to the Radio Transcription Company of America at the address on the envelope in which this record came to you. We'll be glad to send you full particulars."

Most of side 2 is a wonderful synopsis of the story provided by Judy and Jimmy and a cranky Cinnamon Bear. It is delightful.

This disc, surfacing as it did 65 years after it was made, is amazing. I hope we can use its information to track down Jimmy Barton.

*Author Dennis Crow is a retired English teacher and Oregon public school administrator who devotes his time to two hobbies, OTR and collecting books on entertainment of the '30s and '40s. He can be reached via e-mail at [DCrow3@compuserve.com](mailto:DCrow3@compuserve.com)*

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## The Cinnamon Bear in 26 Chapters

*For all of us who first heard the Cinnamon Bear over the air, and for the younger OTR fans who heard it on tape, here is a brief journey into Maybeland... the fantasy of a more innocent time.*

**Chapter 1:** Jimmy and Judy Barton write letters to Santa. They go to the attic to get the Christmas decorations, but the Silver Star is missing. They meet Paddy O' Cinnamon who tells them the Crazy Quilt Dragon took the Star to Maybeland.

**Chapter 2:** Paddy shows the kids how to de-grow so they can follow the Crazy Quilt Dragon to the Lollipop Mountains. They climb into Paddy's Soda Pop Airplane and fly through the tunnel.

**Chapter 3:** Feeling remorseful for drinking their soda pop and stranding them in Looking Glass valley without fuel, Weary Willie the Stork fly's them out on his back. They catch Crazy Quilt but he drops the Silver Star in Root Beer Ocean.

**Chapter 4:** The party is captured by the Inkaboos; King Blotto is insulted and sentences them to die in the Immense Inkwell.

**Chapter 5:** Crazy Quilt comes to the rescue. They escape to Root Beer Ocean and see the Silver Star floating in Root Beer Ocean.

**Chapter 6:** Wesley the Whale swallows the Silver Star. Samuel Seal recovers the Star from Wesley the Wailing Whale only to have Penelope the Pelican carry it off.

**Chapter 7:** Presto the Magician pulls Penelope the Pelican from his hat. The children learn that she dropped the Silver Star on the Island of Obie.

**Chapter 8:** The Candy Pirates, Captain Taffy and his men capture the kids.

**Chapter 9:** The children meet the Rolly Poly Policeman. Crazy Quilt runs off with the star.

**Chapter 10:** The Cinnamon Bear disappears! Professor Whiz tells them about the Wintergreen Witch. The kids follow Crazy Quilt into the Picture Forest where they meet Fraidy Cat.

**Chapter 11:** Fee Foe, the gentle giant invites the children to lunch.

**Chapter 12:** Jimmy & Judy encounter the Rhyming Rabbit on their way back to the Wintergreen Witch's house.

**Chapter 13:** The Wintergreen Witch tries to steal the star and change the kids into mice. They get away. Crazy Quilt sits on the Silver Star and breaks it.

**Chapter 14:** They visit Queen Melissa of Maybeland to repair the Silver Star

**Chapter 15:** The kids learn that they can only read Melissa's magic instructions in total darkness which only occurs in the Wishing Woods. On the way they meet Snapper Snick, the Crooning Crocodile, who swallows the instructions.

**Chapter 16:** Snapper Snick explains that he reads by eating and that's how he is able to read in the dark. The instructions send them to the Wishing Well. On the way they meet Oliver Ostrich who eats alarm clocks. Oliver directs them to the Wishing Well where Paddy falls in.

**Chapter 17:** They use their one wish to get Paddy out of the well. The star is still broken and they encounter the Muddlers and the River of mud.

**Chapter 18:** Slim Pickens and Cocklerburr Cowboys of the Purple Plain come to the rescue.

**Chapter 19:** The Kids are being chased by Chief Cook and Bottle Washer, a wooden Indian who wants Crazy Quilt's pelt for his girlfriend, Manny Happy Returns. Judy trades her looking glass to him instead. After he leaves, they encounter the Wintergreen Witch again in the Golden Grove.

**Chapter 20:** The Grand Wonky arrives in the nick of time to banish the Wintergreen Witch to Looking Glass Valley. The children find the Flying Hat with a mysterious note attached to it, while searching for the Singing Trees.

**Chapter 21:** The Flying Hat carries the gang to the Land of Ice and Snow to get the star fixed. They meet Nicki Froodle, an elf who takes them to Santa.

**Chapter 22:** Santa welcomes the kids and introduces them to Jack Frost who repairs the Silver Star only to have it vanish again.

**Chapter 23:** Santa orders the Tin Soldiers to chase after the Bad Dolls, who stole the Silver Star, and to see that it is returned.

**Chapter 24:** The Wintergreen Witch aids the Bad Dolls and defeats the Tin Soldiers. Santa orders out reinforcements.

**Chapter 25:** Captain Tintop tells how they defeated the Wintergreen Witch. The group goes to a grand banquet hosted by Santa. Crazy Quilt once again runs off with the Silver Star.

**Chapter 26:** Crazy Quilt heads for the North Pole. Santa, Jimmy, Judy, Paddy and Nicki Froodle give chase. They catch Crazy Quilt and tickle him to force him to give up the Silver Star. They wake up in the attic in time to decorate the Christmas Tree.

*This brief synopsis brought back vivid memory pictures for me when I found it on an internet website. - CLT*



## ***New in the Tape Library***

by Dick and Maletha King

As we near the holidays we should think of the friends that we would like to remember with a small gift that can't be purchased in any of the stores. A gift of some of the shows from our library that will bring back memories of years ago and always be a reminder of your friendship.

This month we're entering quite a cross section of shows into the libraries. First we finish up the Wild Bill Hickok shows and complete the run with some of the Cisco Kid shows. From there we move on to Duffy's Tavern and a couple of shows of Honest Harold, one of Hal Perry series. Then it's on laughing at the antics of William Bendix in the "Life of Riley". You can play along with the contestants on "You Bet Your Life" with Groucho Marx as he plays around with them as they try to earn a chance at the jack pot question. You should all enjoy this month's entries as there is something for everyone.

We also want to take this opportunity to welcome **John H. Lloyd** back into the fold of our club. John was a charter RHAC member.

## ***Christmas Gifts for OTR Characters***

*Have you ever wondered what your favorite OTR character would want to receive for Christmas? Here are some ideas for Christmas presents to delight the hearts of some of our OTR friends:*

*For:*

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Lancelot Higgins</b> -        | One Snooks-free day!  |
| <b>Mollie McGee</b> -            | A neat, well-organized hall closet                            |
| <b>Luigi Bascombe</b> -          | A surprise visit from Mama                                    |
| <b>Jack Packard</b> -            | A case to solve without "hysterical women needing protection" |
| <b>Effie Perrine</b> -           | A dinner date with Sam  |
| <b>Stella Dallas</b> -           | An invitation for Christmas dinner at daughter Laurel's home  |
| <b>Connie Brooks</b> -           | A date with Phillip Boynton without MacDougall the frog.      |
| <b>Clifford Barbour</b> -        | A steady job  |
| <b>Jimmy &amp; Judy Barton</b> - | The Silver Star!  |
| <b>The Ronald Colmans</b> -      | A "For Sale" sign on the lawn of the house next door          |
| <b>Matt Dillon</b> -             | A quiet evening with Kitty                                    |
| <b>Leroy Forrester</b> -         | A set of drums and an electric guitar with amplifier          |
| <b>The Great Gildersleeve</b> -  | A soundproof room   |
| <b>Lorenzo Jones</b> -           | A patentable idea   |
| <b>Jack Benny</b> -              | 52 FREE violin lessons and a new alarm system for the vault   |
| <b>Clark Kent</b> -              | A new girlfriend who doesn't care about Superman              |
| <b>Sergeant Otis</b> -           | A snappy comeback which leaves Richard Diamond speechless     |
| <b>Larry &amp; Mary Noble</b> -  | A hit play  |
| <b>Margo Lane</b> -              | An engagement ring from Lamont                                |
| <b>Sergeant Preston</b> -        | A four-wheel drive SUV  |

*Just a reminder .....*



The RHAC holiday dinner will be on **Saturday, December 14** at 6:30pm. See flyer for details.

## What Old Time Radio Means to Me Denver 1947

By RHAC member John Lilly

A cold winter bedroom makes a boy burrow under the covers. In 1947, steam heat doesn't heat the room too quickly, and through my window I can see new snow on the garage roof. A bright sun on the curved roof tiles causes interesting black shadows against the cold white snow, and I know winter came during the night.

My normal Sunday morning tradition would be to dash down the hall in my PJs to the front door. I'd open it just enough so that nobody would see me, but I could reach around and grab the Post and the News. I would cast all the news 'stuff' aside and pull out the funnies - one section for the News, and two sections for the Post. Lying on the living room rug was an excellent place to catch up on my favorite characters - Nancy, Blondie, Dick Tracy, Moon Mullins, Lil Abner - and many others that I've long since forgotten.

About 8, I'd turn on our Philco radio (AM of course). A small red light at the base told me it was on, and the first button was always KLZ. It was time for the Denver Post Funny Paper Show, and Uncle Bill's voice (I think that was his name) would rise above the music to tell us to open the funnies to this or that strip. The actors would read the lines backed by complete sound effects, and we would follow each frame in the paper. The half-hour was heaven as I was transported onto the bright pages and into the lives of the comic strip characters.

I can still hum some of the music - one was March of the Marionettes - which would play while we searched for the next strip. Different strips were read from week to week, but it usually included Blondie, and always ended with Dick Tracy. It would end all too soon, but the house would finally be warm and time for me to dress and get ready for Sunday school.

This morning was different. I shot out of bed early, got dressed, and urged my Dad to hurry. We were headed for the radio studio.

We made our own path in the snow to the garage, and edged Dad's 35 Ford coupe into the alley to make the first new tracks in the snow. There was just enough room for Dad, my brother and I on the coupe front seat. Onto 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue Parkway, we drove under arching trees covered with snow. It was a sight that didn't make an impression on as boy of 7, but makes for found memories years later. After passing Colorado Blvd, there were a few more car tracks in the new snow, but the street car tracks were still hidden. The small car would lurch from side to side as the tires slid on the metal tracks. At York street we passed the now dark Standard Oil 'Flame' sign and went around the traffic light that stood in the middle of the intersection. At Lincoln Street we turned left and parked the car. Tracks of a few more people showed, but mostly the area was cold and silent.

Over the basement door at the back of the Shirley

Savoy hotel were the words CBS KLZ 56. It didn't look impressive, but it was magic land. Inside, to the right it was dark, but I could make out the rows of desks in the open office (office partitions didn't exist in the 40s). A few feet further was the glass enclosed control room, and to the left were the doors that lead to the studio. The walls were covered with white acoustic board and other children with parents were already taking seats in the audience. A large clock was ticking away the seconds on the way to air time.

To the right was a desk where "Uncle Bill" sat, and in the center were microphones for the actors. To the left was the sound effects desk with buttons, gadgets, and a small door and frame. Actors began arriving (several men and one women), and behind the glass several 'technicians' were doing all their 'technical stuff'. The audience was coached when to clap and when to be quiet, and soon the familiar music began. It was a thrill to see where all those voices came from - Gravel Gurtey, BO Plenty, Blondie, and all the rest. When it was over, the actors handed out the scripts to the kids that scrambled fast enough. I took my copy home and searched the words, the names, and all the markings the actors made so they wouldn't miss queues. It got more reading at my home that it ever did in the studio.

Weeks and months later in front of our Philco, I could now see in my mind's eye not only the characters, but also the actors bringing them to life. And I longed to be the man at the sound effects desk making it all sound so real. Thanks to KLZ, the actors, and the technicians for transporting a young boy for 30 minutes into the pages of the Denver Post funnies each week. And thanks for giving a somewhat older boy memories of the magic and fun of radio on a cold winter Sunday morning.

*And thanks too to the people who put the newsletter and library together so we can all enjoy a life that has past.* John Lilly

*From the Desk of  
the Editor*

*by Carol Tiffany*



I want to wish all of you a most joyous Holiday Season. Your editor has already lined up her favorite Christmas and New Year's OTR tapes for listening while wrapping presents, decorating the tree, addressing cards, and just plain relaxing. I find that many of them are those that were mentioned in our Christmas Favorites contest last year.

It is hard to believe that this is our last issue for 2002. I hope that you have enjoyed the newsletter this year as much as we have enjoyed putting it together. As always, your comments, suggestions, and contributions are very welcome, so if you have any ideas for our 2003 newsletters, please send them.

Meanwhile, happy listening to all, and to all a good night!

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