

Bear ***Facts***

No. 3 THE CINNAMON BEAR BRIGADE December 1989
10419 N.E. Knott. Portland OR 97220

Where we've been...

The BEAR FACTS is back for its third season. The CINNAMON BEAR BRIGADE, our 'sort-of' fan club for Paddy O'Cinnamon and all his friends, was formed in 1987 to mark the 50th anniversary of the first broadcast of this old time holiday radio serial many of us grew up with. The purpose also was to honour its creator and writer, Glanville T. (Glan) Heisch, who passed away in the same year, 1987. We have had no aim other than to try to perpetuate the spirit of this classic radio program which began more than five decades ago and which continues to be heard by new generations of youngsters on the radio today in several parts of our nation or on cassette tapes.

My name is Don Jensen and, two years ago. I simply assumed the role of editor of this once-a-year newsletter. As I hope everyone realizes, this is a labour of love with no commercial angle involved for anyone connected with this fan organization. In fact, so far I've simply underwritten the small costs of producing the BEAR FACTS. We have now grown to something over 150 members in states from New Hampshire to California and Florida to Washington, with most of our Bear Brigadiers living in the southern Wisconsin/northern Illinois and the Oregon/Washington areas, where the CB broadcasts continue even today. So next year, it will be necessary for you to make a very nominal contribution toward the costs of producing and mailing this newsletter if you wish to remain on the mailing list. But more about that later.

First, a very important announcement! I am particularly pleased that CAROLYN KOLIBABA, a wonderful lady and one of the most avid CB fans I know, has agreed to play the key role in the administration and operation of the BEAR BRIGADE from here on. You will note her Portland OR address above and most mail should be directed to her at that address. The exception will be any writings destined for publication in next year's BEAR FACTS, since I will continue as editor of this newsletter. Again, more about that later.

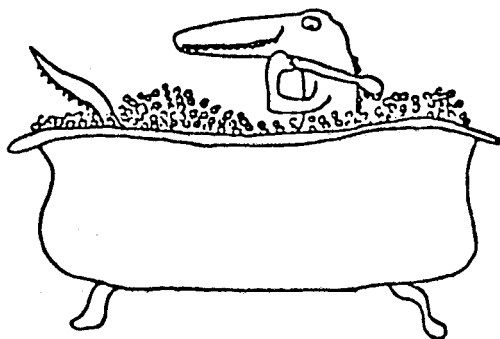
First, though, it's time for you all to meet the lady I like to think of as the CB BRIGADE's "Chief Cook-And-Bottle-Washer," or perhaps, our "Grand Wonkey." She, however, seems to prefer the title, 'Muddler.'

Now here's Carolyn...

For many years there has been a small fan club here in Portland, OR, bound together by our childhood memories of listening to the Cinnamon Bear on radio during Christmas-time. Some of you heard about the CINNAMON BEAR BRIGADE in 1987, when Paddy O'Cinnamon turned 50 years old. But we Oregonian fans only learned about the BRIGADE last December when information appeared in the local newspaper, The Oregonian. Friends called friends to spread the news. And, after corresponding with Don, we teamed up. I have read all your wonderfully enthusiastic letters and, as I read them, it was apparent that we Cinnamon Bear fans are in accord. Over and over, the same thoughts appear in the letters, as people recall their years of enjoyment of the story and how they never have forgotten it and have passed along the experience to their children and grandchildren.

I always felt the Cinnamon Bear story was an undiscovered treasure which could be an American classic. I wanted it in book form, not just on tape, a beautiful book with wonderful coloured illustrations. So in the late '60s, when my children were growing up. I embarked on a project to make my own book. Over several Christmas seasons, I took shorthand notes while listening to the story. I transcribed the notes and 'wrote' the story in my own words, following the story line precisely. One daughter drew charming pictures for each episode, as a Christmas present for me. Each song was typed and added to the book. Our family created a detailed map of Maybeland. Copies were made for each family member. When friends saw it, they wanted copies, so I made a 'sample' book which could be loaned out for photocopying. The pages are bound in a three-ring binder. It is home-made and looks home-made, but it is a delight!

In the 1970s, I decided I wanted to find out who had written the Cinnamon Bear. The local department store sponsor assured me that their legal department had been unable to locate the author. Since there is a drop or two of detective blood in my veins, I decided to find out myself. After several years of research and letter-writing and lots of dead-ends. I received a reply from Frank Nelson, the long-time radio actor who appeared on the Jack Benny radio program and, incidentally, played the part of Capt. Tin Top in the Cinnamon Bear. He told me he had passed my letter on to the authors. Glanville and Elisabeth Heisch. I wrote them immediately, but even before I could mail my letter, one arrived from Glan Heisch. We corresponded for about 10 years. He sent me an autographed copy of 'I'm the Cinnamon Bear with the Shoe Button Eyes,' and several colour photos. These souvenirs hang on our Christmas tree each holiday season, next to Paddy O'Cinnamon and our official silver Star.



My reason for writing to the Heisch's was to let them know how much their story meant to me and my family, which by then included grandchildren. I told about my book and suggested they surely would want to have their story made into a book. And, I said, what a beautiful movie could be made of it, a television special or a Walt Disney production. If this ever happens, how we all will all will rejoice.

We all know that the story is from another gentler era, old fashioned, simple, and we sincerely wish that the Heisch family will be able to bring these things into being and receive full credit for what is, in my opinion, a modern day fairy tale written with talent, humour, sensitivity and imagination. Until this happens, we Paddy O'Cinnamon fans can preserve the story for ourselves and our families.

Finding out that there are hundreds, no doubt thousands, of persons all our country who have held the story in their minds and hearts for up to 52 years is a big surprise and thrill. I hope the Heisch family is happy to know we never forget the Cinnamon Bear!

For the future, let us maintain eternal vigilance over our silver stars and stand united against Wintergreen the Witch, those black-hearted Inkaboos and the dirty old Muddlers!

-- Carolyn Breen Kolibaba

Excerpts from your letters...

One, of the really nice things about CINNAMON BEAR BRIGADE Project is the mail we receive. This in really your publication And we would love to include your comments and memories. Feel free to take up to page to tell us about you and the Cinnamon Bear. Here are some brief excerpts from letters you have written:

'Hi! my name is Danny Sterkeson. A girl in my class brought in the article about Cinnamon Bear and our teacher read it and asked if we wanted to join and I wanted to so I would like to join your club. P.S. Say hi to Cinnamon Bear for me. P.P.S. Our teacher has been playing Cinnamon Bear on a tape.

-- Danny Sterkeson, Rockford IL

'Thank you for doing this. As child I loved the Cinnamon Bear and the wonderful story. As an adult, I still do!'

-- Betty L. Bruner, Klamath Falls OR

'I've grown up with the Cinnamon Bear and look forward to Christmas when he comes out again. I even bought the tapes of his adventure with Judy and Jimmy. Unfortunately, all but one of our stores in Portland which were associated with the Cinnamon Pear closed. I am really upset because I want to buy some Cinnamon Bear ornaments and especially Cinnamon Bear stuffed animal. I would very much like to join your fan club. And next Christmas, may I ask you if any Cinnamon Bear memorabilia is sold where you live. I would do anything for some of these.'

-- Julie E. Yeager, Gresham OR

Editor's note: please see our list of sources elsewhere in this issue.

“Enjoyed the latest BEAR FACTS very much. It would be interesting to know if any radio stations still broadcast this series.”

-- Barbara Moore, Belvidere IL

Editor's note: Stations in Portland OR broadcast the Cinnamon Bear series and FM stations in Chicago/Zion IL do as well, but I do not believe you could receive the latter in Belvidere. Perhaps you could interest a local station in reviving the broadcasts in your area. We hope readers will tell us of other stations which may be re-broadcasting these holiday programs.

" I saw a news item regarding the Cinnamon Bear. Would you kindly send me your available information, etc. I've been fortunate to be a CB fan since he began on radio back in the 1930s. I've missed the radio program. Is it available on tape with the original theme music? Thanks for keeping alive!"

-- Bill Wall, Union City CA

“I listened to the Cinnamon Bear first in the late '30s. Portland has always been A big Cinnamon Bear town. My children listened and my grandchildren will take time away from TV to listen. Thanks.

-- Patricia Kaufman, Portland OR

Although I don't have any childhood memories (I'm a recent college graduate and in the middle of my first year of teaching kindergarten, the local public radio station was broadcasting the series during the children's rest time, so we had an opportunity to hear of the adventures of Paddy O'Cinnamon for the first time. Unfortunately for most of these little folks it was their first experience with radio entertainment, and their attention can was a hit short to really listen to each episode. However there are all sorts of activities we can do in conjunction with the story. And by having your wonderful synopsis of each episode, I can try to bring to life this adventurous tale!

-- Kathleen Welland, Lake Oswego OR

More letter excerpts...

And here are more selected excerpts from your letters

'Thanks for sharing with readers the information about 'The Bear.' I collect and love my Teddy Bears. Each is named and they're my friends. My teenage children sometimes look at their Mom kind of funny, but my bears and I share many secrets!

--- Maureen Robinson. Orangeville IL

'I'd like to join the CINNAMON BEAR BRIGADE fan club. As a young child, in the late '40s and early '50s, I would listen to the Cinnamon Bear. Then in the early '70s, my children and I would listen. I still look forward 'every Christmas season, to the Cinnamon Bear broadcasts here in the Portland area. Thank you for organizing the fan club.'

-- Greg Lang, Portland OR

'I used to look forward to hearing the adventures of the Cinnamon Bear when I was a little girl and then, about 13 years or so, my sons heard it after many years of my telling them of the story. It was a special Christmas treat. For the last five years, though, I've been trying to find someone else who had heard the story and to find tapes or cassettes I could buy. I hope you are my help.'

-- Carol Tucker, Stockton IL

'Just finished reading BEAR FACTS. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Brought back lots of pleasant memories. Last year, my daughters, Mary Beth and Katie remembered how I used to speak of Paddy at Christmas time. An interesting side note is that Catherine Borchmann lived down the street from us in Rockford and also taught Mary Beth in junior high school several years ago. Keep up the labour of love. Happy holidays!

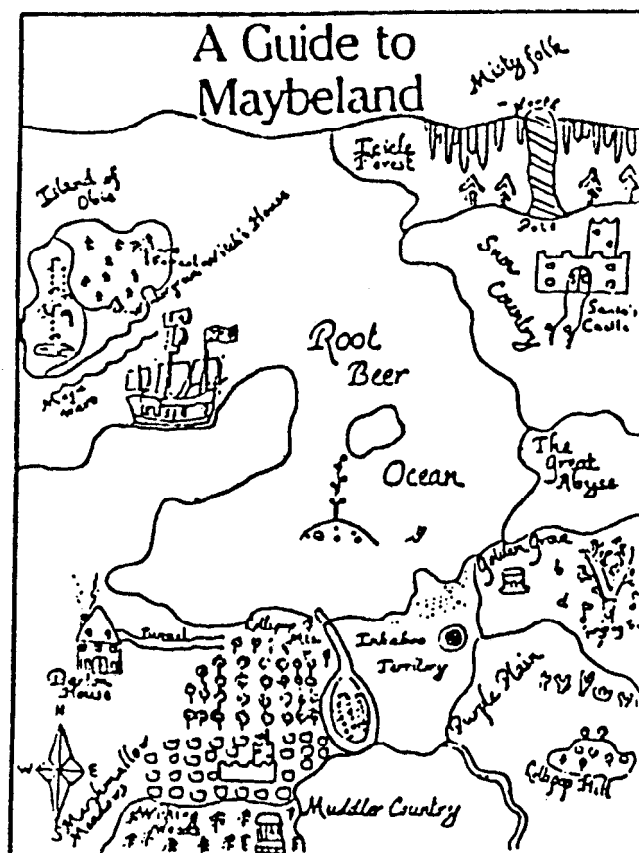
-- Tom Emmett, Rockford t L

Editor's note: Catherine Borchmann is the daughter of CB creators Glan and Elisabeth Heisch.

'Hoorah for you to have the Cinnamon Bear as your labour of love. I received BEAR FACTS for the first time during the holiday season, sent. to me by my oldest friend. We started kindergarten together in Tigard OR in September 1940. Her mother was our Campfire Girls leader a few years later. We would he picked me at school in her Jeep and went to their lovely home on a hill. That is where I first heard the Cinnamon Bear.

She served us our treat and we sat around and listened to Paddy O'Cinnamon on their LARGE console radio. It seems like only yesterday but we are both a few months from age 53. We are lucky. both to have had happy marriages and grown successful children,

-- Johne S. Ritter. West Linn OR



Cinnamon Bear sources...

Many of you have asked where you can buy CINNAMON BEAR program tapes and other items related to the program series. We have collected some sources which you may find useful.

We should point out that there are some copyright disputes involved between the Heisch estate and some of the Suppliers listed below. We hope that eventually these disputes will be resolved in such a way as to fairly compensate the Heisch family for use of Glan's creation. We have not received any response to our attempts to find out if any sources are approved and licensed by the Heisch estate. However, in the meantime, we feel that we would be doing a disservice to BEAR FACTS readers if we did not tell you where you might, if you wish,, obtain tapes and other related products. For the reason stated above, we offer no endorsement of any dealer.

ADVENTURES WITH THE CINNAMON BEAR - This is a teaching kit for pre-primary and primary grade school children. It includes 6 cassette tapes featuring the entire series of original programs, a workbook, projects and activities for children. It is available from: Resources for the Gifted, KolbeConcepts, 3421 N. 44th St., Phoenix AZ 85010. The catalogue number is CO-638. \$48.00

CINNAMON BEAR TAPES - The complete original radio serial, 26 episodes on six cassette tapes is available from The Hall Closet, Box 421, Morton Grove, IL 60058-0421. \$34.95 plus \$3 S&H. The Hall Closet also has available The Cinnamon Bear Book, compiled and edited by Chuck Schaden, which includes a synopsis of the original story, colouring book reprint, cast list, trivia quiz and other features. In past years, the same source has had a limited stock of 1940s-vintage foil silver stars given as premiums by the Wieboldt Department Store, Chicago, long time radio sponsor of the series. We suggest you send an SASE with your inquiry as to whether these items are still available, and the price, to the above address.

SING-A-LONG WITH THE CINNAMON BEAR, Lyrics to all the favourite songs from the Cinnamon Bear program series were included in a small booklet, which possibly was intended to accompany the cassettes. The brochure was published by Sunset Audio, Northfield, IL. However we have checked recently and cannot find this firm listed in the Northfield directory and it may no longer be in business. Possibly copies of this song booklet, which seems to be at least ?? years old or more, may be located in flea markets or antique shops.

RADIO PREMIUM CATALOG AND PRICE GUIDE - This book, compiled by Tom Tomb??? lists more than 3,000 radio premiums offered to children during the golden age of radio, the 1930s to the 1950s, usually for a box-top and a dime. These items are illustrated in 2,400 photos, including 16 pages in colour. And among them is a single page featuring Cinnamon Bear items, including the Wieboldt's silver star mentioned above. Do not be confused by the title. This is a reference book with a current price guide indicating the approximate values of these collectibles from the past. It is not a catalogue from which you can order these rather rare old items. For that you will have to contact dealers specializing in radio memorabilia, or comb flea markets on your own. If your only interest in the book is the Cinnamon Bear items, you may find

the cost rather steep. If you also have an interest in other premiums, the Loan Ranger Atom Bomb ring, Radio Orphan Annie decoders, etc., etc., you may find it fascinating. The hardbound book: is Available from the publisher, Tomart Publications. P.O. Box 292102, Dayton OH 43429. \$34 + \$2 S&H.

A matter of spelling...

One of the problems we have in writing about a radio program series that exists today only in aural form is the fact that we have no idea how some of the unusual names are spelled. Take for example Queen Melissa's chief aide -- should we spell his title, Grand Wonkey, Grand Wunkey, Grand Wunkee? We're afraid, dear readers, that it is the editor's prerogative to chose a spelling we prefer.

Note from www.cinnamonbear.co.uk

Having done a spell-check (UK), some words may appear to be incorrect to USA readers!!

Cinnamon Bear performers have long careers...

Some of the finest and most versatile radio actors and actresses of the day made up the cast of the Cinnamon Bear programs, recorded during the summer of 1937 at the Radio Recorders Studios in Hollywood.

Gale Gordon...

Gale Gordon was born Charles T. Aldrich Jr., Feb. 2, 1906, in New York City. He made his stage debut in the Dancers and, as Gale Gordon Appeared in his first motion picture, 'The Pilgrimage Play,' in 1929.

He appeared, later in many other movies, including character roles in 'Rally Round the Flag,' (with Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward And Joan Collins), 'All in a Night's Work,' 'Don't Give Up the Ship,' (with Glen Ford), 'Visit to a Small Planet,' 'All Hands on Deck,' and 'Speedway.'

On television, Gordon appeared regularly on 'My Favourite Husband,' 'Our Miss Brooks,' 'The Brothers'. and 'Dennis the Menace.'

His best remembered comedy TV roles were on 'The Lucy Show,' (156 episodes, 1962-1968 and the sequel, 'Here's Lucy.' (144 episodes, 1968 1974). where he played the masculine foil for Lucille Ball.

He was, of Course, not well known back in '37, when he appeared in the Cinnamon Bear radio production. Gordon was 'Weary Willy the Stork' who caused Judy, Jimmy And the Cinnamon tear to crash into Looking Glass Valley when he punctured their. airplane's fuel tank and sipped all the soda pop 'gas.'

Gordon's other role in the C.B. series was that of '(H)Oliver' the Ostrich whose favourite meal was 'Scrambled Alarm Clocks and Bacon,' you will recall.

When years later, Gale Gordon appeared on the 'Dennis the Menace' TV show, with little Jay North in the title role, he was reunited with another member of the Cinnamon Bear cast, Joseph Kearns, the irascible Mr. Wilson.

Kearns was none other than the Crazy Quilt Dragon.

Today, Gale Gordon is 83 and, reportedly not in the best of health, but living in retirement in Barregu Springs, California.

Elvia Allman...

Another long time radio comedienne/actress is Elvia Allman.

Over the years, she was heard on a good many radio comedy shows. Her credits included appearances on the Fibber McGee and Molly program, with Abbot and Costello and with Ann Sothern on the Mazie show.

Allman played the role of the aunt on 'Joan Davis' radio show.

But she probably is best remembered for dual roles on the Blondie radio show with Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake. She was Mrs. Dithers and the obviously rich Mrs. Bufforpington ('My husband invented the chicken,')

On the Cinnamon Bear series, Elvia Allman played the role of Penelope Pelican, who, you'll recall, was so rudely summoned by the magician, Mr. Presto while she was flying over the Island of Obi, that she dropped the Silver Star.

She now makes her home in Brentwood, California in semi-retirement .

Memorabilia...

There are old Cinnamon Bear collectables out there, if you're lucky enough to find them. The items we're familiar with were given away year' ago in Chicago's Wieboldt's department store, a long-time sponsor of the radio series. However, sponsoring department stores in the Pacific Northwest may likewise have offered premium items. If you know of any, please let us know.

Radio premiums expert Tom Tombusch sets these values on this memorabilia, depending on condition:

- Cinnamon Pear Colouring book, printed on newsprint paper -- \$15 to \$50
- Foil Silver Star with Paddy's picture embossed -- \$20 to \$60
- Stuffed Pear -- \$30 to \$100
- Wieboldt's C.B. TV Club Pin with paper bear attached -- \$20 to \$80

We owe it all to Glan...



GLANVILLE (GLAN) HEISCH

"When I was a boy, I had a little stuffed bear with shoebutton eyes. He was my pet and I called him Cinnamon Pear," recalled Glanville (Glan) Heisch, in a 1992 interview.

In 1937, while production manager for a major Los Angeles radio station, Heisch was approached by a transcription company looking for a story for a children's Christmas series which could be sold to department store sponsors to run on during the holiday season. Shortly before, Glan had begun writing a book of light verse about his boyhood bear for his infant daughter. It seemed to him the perfect story line.

With the help of his wife, Elisabeth, Heisch wrote the script for the 26-part serial, including the lyrics to the 12 songs in the show. The series was recorded that summer in just a week at the studios of the now defunct Radio Recorders Co. in Los Angeles. The rest of course is history.

Randomness...

In Portland OR, as it has for years, the Frederick & Nelson department store continues to be a sponsor of the Cinnamon Bear, hosting breakfast and dinner shows for adults and children. Our Portland members can obtain more information by calling 620-3020.

And yes, the old CB programs still can be heard on radio. In northern Illinois/southern Wisconsin, the programs can be heard during the holiday season on dual stations WNIB/Chicago/WNIZ/Zion, IL. 97 FM, Saturdays during the "Those Were the Days" broadcast, 1-5 p.m. Central Time. In the Pacific Northwest, the series is heard on KBPS, Public Radio, Portland OR, M 1450. weekdays from Nov. 29 - Dec. 15, at 1 p.m., with two consecutive episodes each day. Also broadcasting the programs is KUIK, Hillsboro OR. AM 1360, Mondays through Saturdays, 5:45 p.m. Pacific Time, one episode daily until Dec. 23.

If any of you know of other stations carrying the programs, please let us know. Or if you know of other sources of CB tapes and memorabilia, likewise. Please write.

A look at next year...

That brings us to the last word... or rather two words. The first word is MONEY. Unfortunately, our numbers have grown to the point where we need a bit of tangible support. All we are asking is that if you wish to receive next year's BEAR FACTS, scheduled for mailing about Thanksgiving 1990, send a DOLLAR to the BEAR BRIGADE headquarters (address at the top of page 1). You can do this anytime during the coming year, but since it is so easy to procrastinate or forget, why not do it now?

The second word is CONTRIBUTE and, by that we mean, non-monetary contributions. This is your publication. So I hope that some of you, at least, will take a few minutes to jot down your fondest memory of listening to the program, be it in recent years or long ago, in, let us say, 250 words or less. I hope to use some of these recollections next year. Send them to me, Don Jensen, BEAR FACTS editor, 5204 70th Street, Kenosha WI 53142.

Hope you've enjoyed this year's BEAR FACTS and that you'll opt to be back with us next year. See you then'

-- Don and Carolyn

Return to randomness...

Some last minute information after this year's BEAR FACTS was printed....

Here are several more sources for Cinnamon Bear program cassette tapes:

The Present Peddler, 9532 S.W. Washington Square Road, Portland OR 97223 (639-2325 in Portland, or 1-800-288-2325. Price is \$32.95, plus \$2.50 for UPS delivery; no sales tax. Of this, \$1 goes to Portland's Doernbecker Children's Hospital Foundation for sick and crippled children.

Cassette Radio Network, P.O. Pox 23276, Portland OR 97223
(Price is \$32.95, including first class shipping)

Also, Portland radio station KBPS has added a second daily broadcast of the Cinnamon Bear series at 6:30 p.m. Each broadcast consists of two 15 minute episodes. See elsewhere in this BEAR FACTS for where to tune.

A word from Carolyn...

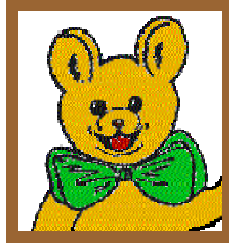
This year, I will be a Cinnamon Bear for the local department store in Portland, wearing the heavy and hot costume!

Family activities? Why not do as we did and make your own Cinnamon Bear book! We also made a Christmas tree skirt depicting the characters from the story, embroidered and appliquéd on felt. And families may also like to have their own 'official' Cinnamon Bear and a silver star for their tree, just as Jimmy and Judy did.

-- Carolyn --

Due to the poor quality of my photocopy of the above article. Inadvertently, errors may have been made in the text. Please advise me accordingly so that I can correct any mistakes.

Many thanks for your help and co-operation.



NOTE: from www.cinnamonber.co.uk

The complete series of 26 episodes [Plus the promotion recording, a preview of the series which is extremely rare and difficult to find] is available for you to download "FREE OF CHARGE" from our website.

Other "FREE GOODIES" a copy of the original colouring book given away by Wieboldt's Department Stores who sponsored the series in the 1940's. Why not Download it NOW!

All of the actual songs from the series with the full text for each one.

Coming soon to this site:

1. Many other "Bear" Stories for kids aged 1 to 199 to enjoy worldwide
2. A letters page, where I am happy to publish letters received from YOU
3. A "New Cinnamon Bear Brigade" Forum for your pleasure
4. All suggestions "Gratefully" received.

Many Thanks --- Tony ---