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## The KRAB Audio Archive Smitty's Old Records and The Old Wax Works With Earl "Smitty" Smith



**Earl Smith, host of Smitty's Old Records, heard every other Monday night at 8:00 pm [KRAB program guide Mar 1971]**

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Six years before Earl Smith brought his record collection to KRAB he already had a resume that included several other Seattle area stations. On **Feb 16, 1964 Marty Loken wrote in the Seattle Times** about Smitty's latest radio gig on KBVU-AM: "In case you haven't heard, Smitty is Mr Earl Smith, who offers samples from his vast record collection each Monday evening at 8:15 o'clock. Before his debut on KBVU, Smitty had a jazz and blues show offering on Renton's now defunct KLAN-AM, and another old-time record show on Bellevue's KFKF-AM. A late starter in broadcasting, his first program was aired in 1956."

How exactly he ended up on KRAB is something of a mystery, but we suspect one of the other record collectors who had programs on KRAB, Dave Jones perhaps, told him about the station. Greg Palmer, KRAB Manager at the time, had an appreciation for the music (theatre, and silver screen) of the era Smitty collected, and that probably helped get him on the air.

Smitty was rumored to possess 40,000 78 rpm records. Among them were a number of Edison Diamond Discs. Phil Bannon, who engineered many of Smitty's shows, describes the Edison discs like this: "Smitty brought heavy boxes of Edison discs which are 1/4 inch thick and the center holes are about 0.001 inch too small and had to be enlarged with a rat-tail file, otherwise the discs would get stuck to the turntable spindle and have to be pried loose using 3-in-1 oil and a pair of 'church key' can openers. We also had customized a tone arm head which had the stereo cartridge wired out of phase to play the vertically cut groove Edison discs all have." Phil adds

"Earl was from the Midwest somewhere and had teeth so perfect they looked false. He was a nice guy and we enjoyed each other's company."

Occasionally Smitty would end up with an engineer less adept than Phil, and they would attempt to play a record without changing the cartridge with unfortunate consequences.

Initially the show was called "Smitty's Old Records", with a theme of "Get Out Those Old Records" (He played several versions, one was by Al Morgan, The Key-Tones, and Jack Pleis)

Back in 1947 a fellow named Fred Pelger had a show on KOL, Seattle, which had been named "The Old Wax Works". In 1949 Pelger moved to California, where he continued to do the show. Smitty seems to have liked the name too, and we assume with Pelger's permission, adopted it for his KRAB program in April 1971, though it did not get changed in the program guide until June.

Smitty's sign off theme was "Arm in Arm (Just you and me)" by Prima Scala and His Banjo and Accordion Orch. with The Keynotes; and written by Bradbury Church.

Earl Smith was born Aug 19, 1905, and died Sep 19, 1978.

Some of the tape boxes have more than one date on them, some no date at all. In these cases, when possible, we used the content of the preceeding or following program to identify the date of the broadcast.

Title	Air date	Episode - Collection Id
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Program guide listing: *SMITTY'S OLD RECORDS - songs of the good old days .. ragtime .. vaudeville.*

- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Mar 20, 1970 - 1 - jsn0006](#)
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - May 23, 1970 - 5 - jsn0024](#) - Marathon
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - May 23, 1970 - ? - jsn0001](#)
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Jun 8, 1970 - 6 - jsn0012](#)
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Jun 8, 1970 - ? - jsn0017](#)
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Jun 22, 1970 - 7 - jsn0023](#)
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Jul 6, 1970 - 8 - jsn0007](#)
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Sep 14, 1970 - 13 - jsn0014](#)
- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Feb 1, 1971 - 23 - jsn0026](#)

In episode 28 Smitty talks about Fred Pelger, and starts referring on the air to the program as "The Old Wax Works".

- 🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Apr 12, 1971 - 28 - jsn0021](#)

🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - May 24, 1971 - 31 - jsn0009](#)

In June the program guide started reflecting the new name of Smitty's show with the listing for Jun 7th being **SMITTY'S WAX WORKS Earl Smith, and a new title for the old tunes**; Episode 33 begins with a Radio Canada announcer announcing the previous program.

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jun 21, 1971 - 33 - jsn0031](#)

Episode 34 begins with the end of the previous program, "Sonic fish sounds and underwater sounds of biological origin."

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jul 5, 1971 - 34 - jsn0082](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jul 19, 1971 - 35 - jsn0081](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Aug 16, 1971 - 37 - jsn0028](#)

Episode 38 begins with a bit of fill music: "The Tale of Maggie May" by Ian Whitcomb

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Aug 30, 1971 - 38 - jsn0032](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Sep 27, 1971 - 40 - jsn0027](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Oct 11, 1971 - 41 - jsn0029](#) - Marathon

Episode 47 begins with the final minutes of Michael Scarborough's Letters from England (the previous program).

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jan 3, 1972 - 47 - jsn0013](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jan 17, 1972 - 48 - jsn0037](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Mar 13, 1972 - 52 - jsn0015](#)

Episode 57 begins with some lute music. Although the tape box is labeled May 26, 1972, it was actually aired May 22, 1972.

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - May 22, 1972 - 57 - jsn0018](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jul 3, 1972 - 60 - jsn0033](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jul 17, 1972 - 61 - jsn0022](#) - Marathon

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jul 31, 1972 - 62 - jsn0004](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Aug 14, 1972 - 63 - jsn0011](#) - This is Jazz

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Aug 14, 1972 - ? - jsn0005](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Nov 6, 1972 - 69 - jsn0025](#)

Episode 72 was on a couple of 5 inch reels. The tape was labeled Dec 15, 1972, but there was no program that date. The actual air date was Dec 15, 1972.

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Dec 18, 1972 - 72 - jsn0026-and-jsn0035](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jan 29, 1973 - 75 - js0010](#)

Episode 84 starts with a brief clip from the previous program. (Attorney William Kunstler speaking at the University of Washington.)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jun 4, 1973 - 84 - js0019](#)

🔊) [Listen now - The Old Wax Works - Jun 4, 1973 - ? - js0016](#)

🔊) [Listen now - When things go awry - May 23, 1970 - ? - js0024](#)

The following recordings are undated

🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Date Unknown - 01](#)

🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Date Unknown - 02](#)

🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Date Unknown - 05](#)

🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Date Unknown - 06](#)

🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Date Unknown - 07](#)

🔊) [Listen now - Smitty's Old Records - Date Unknown - 08](#)

The recordings (jsn0001 to jsn0037) and After Beat Magazine scan courtesy Jeff Snyder, who also did some of the research on this collection.

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If you possess any souvenirs (program guides, tapes, or photos) or have a story about your experience with KRAB you are willing to share, please email [archive@krabarchive.com](mailto:archive@krabarchive.com)

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Last modified 01/11/2023