Subject: Wire recorders
Posted by Augustus on Mon, 22 Apr 2019 15:37:11 GMT
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Does anyone here own a working wire recorder? They're pretty neat things that were originally used in big offices as dictation machines and in the military as a tool for spying. Later on they were mass produced and became a household staple. My grandfather's old wire recorder is completely kaput and heading for recycling soon. I was hoping to restore it, but it's beyond that. The microphone and power cord are gone and a few knobs are missing. I'm surprised at how heavy it is! Even though they were in circulation longer than other mediums, it's rather hard to find a wire recorder with all of its original parts in working order. Count yourself lucky if you do have one.

Subject: Re: Wire recorders
Posted by Rusty on Mon, 22 Apr 2019 16:58:38 GMT
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Just out of curiosity. If the power cord was replaced would there be a chance it might operate? You could probably find appropriate looking new vintage knobs. Just that it's such an odd old artifact. They built things so rugged back when. I'd just be curious to know if the thing would come to life. And replacing a power cord is not such a technical challenge. It features prominently in the movie, The Two Jakes. A follow up to Jack Nicholson's famous Chinatown. Both great movies.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGvoUuyqRWM

Subject: Re: Wire recorders
Posted by Augustus on Wed, 24 Apr 2019 23:48:56 GMT
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I thought about repairing it, but it looked kind of burnt and my grandfather said it used to get hot, so he put it in the basement for parts. I didn't want to risk starting a fire or something so I didn't bother to look further into repairing it. I appreciate the help though! The recycling center wouldn't take the thing so I set it out at the dump. Maybe someone else will pick it up and fix it.

My grandfather remembers the Great Depression and wartime well when it was important to repair and use up everything you had. So, he has always saved lots of things for parts, whether they are actually needed and usable or not. I clean things out every few months because if I don't, I'm afraid his house will start to look like those featured on that Hoarders reality show. This is the first time he's let me tackle the basement. I'm hoping I'll eventually run into another wire recorder. They're just incredibly cool in my opinion.

Subject: Re: Wire recorders
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 25 Apr 2019 13:18:20 GMT

I'd love to have that old wire recorder!

Subject: Re: Wire recorders
Posted by Augustus on Sat, 27 Apr 2019 03:52:28 GMT

Wayne Parham wrote on Thu, 25 April 2019 08:18
I'd love to have that old wire recorder!

The dump will be open tomorrow. I'll go see if it's still there and you can have it if it is. I thought these things were supposed to be well-made, but it's hard as heck to find one that works. My grandfather has some of the wire tapes that I'm sending off to have digitized so we can listen to them. His mother is supposed to be singing on one and I know he'd like to hear her voice again.

Update:
Sorry Wayne, when I checked the dump today the wire recorder was gone. I had set it out to the side to see if someone else wanted it after recycling wouldn't take it. I don't know if someone picked it up or if it was added to the landfill.