

# Happy Belated Birthday



Do you remember your very first birthday party?

Odds are that you don't. Who among us has a memory that good? This past week one of my customers was able to relive that momentous occasion, thanks to an old reel to reel audio tape she had discovered in a long forgotten storage place.

And, to be honest, it wasn't even the original recording. At the time of her first birthday, which occurred over seventy years ago, her parents were using an old wire recorder which captured sounds by imprinting them on a stainless steel wire about the width of a human hair.

The technology was invented in 1898 by a Danish engineer named Vlademar Poulsen, although it did not enter into its popularity until WWII, around 1946. It quickly fell out of fashion some eight years later when, using the same basic technology, 1/4 inch magnetic tape became the recording standard. My client's parents, at some point along the way, had transferred the original wire recording to the more accessible magnetic tape.

Regardless of the format, the point is that my client had

never heard the recording before and even though she was present at the event, at one year old clearly had no recollection of it. To hear her mother and father, aunts and uncles, now long since gone, all singing happy birthday to her as she sat in her high chair... that is certainly a memory she can now always cherish.

*Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio Mount Dora specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digitalization of film, videotapes, audio recordings, photos, negatives, and slides. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#).*