Voices of Yesteryear



June 11, 2020

Three vinyl records came into my studio the other day. These weren't the commercially made rock or pop albums most of us grew up with. These were homemade disks recorded at 78 rpm that were made over 75 years ago. I know this because it was written on the label.

In the 1940s, there were dozens of "Voice-O-Graph" machines sprinkled up and down the Coney Island boardwalk. They looked like telephone booths and by inserting 25 cents, you could actually record your voice and have it scratched into the grooves of your own personal record for all of posterity.

The three records I received and transferred to digital audio files for their preservation had my client's father crooning familiar standards and pop favorites in the style of Bing Crosby. What a wonderful treasure for the family to have. Sure, there are scratches and pops throughout the recording but that only adds to the charm of being able to hear voices from the past, recorded as they lived through what for them was their present. All three records were dated June, 1944... shortly after the D-Day invasion. The songs were upbeat, filled with hope and promise, with just a tinge of melancholy. I'd say it was a perfect capsulation of the mood of that time. I am honored to have been a part of preserving this personally impactful and historic moment.

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.