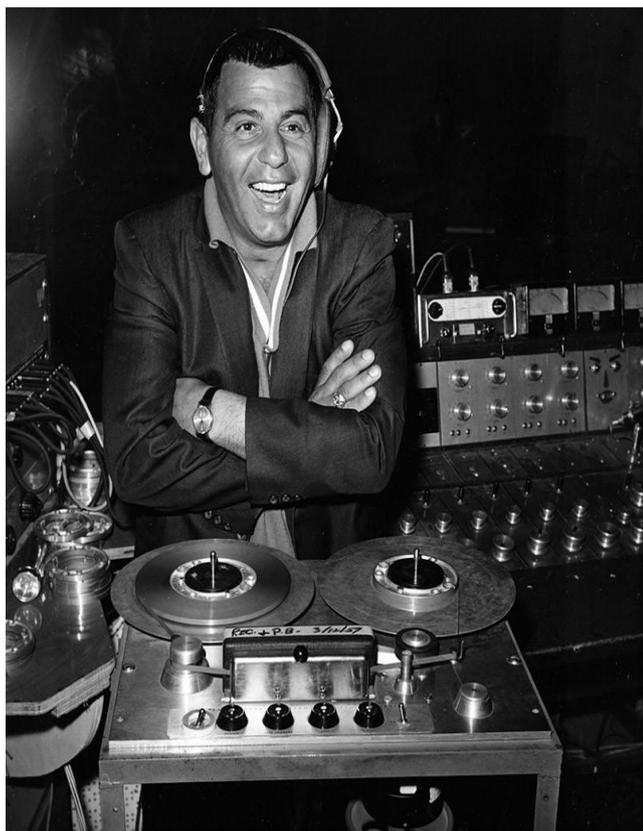


Alvinnnnn!



I was transferring a reel to reel audiotape yesterday. One of the elements to be aware of is that reel to reel machines allowed users to record at different speeds and unless you match the original speed during playback, the result will not be what was intended...unless you were Ross Bagdasarian Sr.

Known better by his stage name, Dave Seville, Ross was an Armenian actor working in Hollywood in the 1950s. He landed a few bit parts in films like "Rear Window" and "Stalag 17" but finding regular work was a struggle. He had written a hit song a few years earlier with his cousin, playwright William Saroyan, called "Come On A My House." With his last \$200, he decided to buy a tape recorder with a speed control and practice recording his voice at different speeds. He used this technique for the novelty song "Witch Doctor" which became a number 1 hit in 1958.

When Liberty Records asked him to create a new novelty song

for the upcoming Christmas season, he decided to create characters to match his sped-up voices. After a random encounter with a chipmunk on a California road, his concept became reality and Alvin and the Chipmunks were born.

Following Ross Sr.'s death in 1972, his son Ross Jr. picked up the chipmunk reins and began releasing new Chipmunk material eventually leading to their re-emergence into popular culture with a string of Universal feature-length films.

To understand more about the recording technique used to create the Chipmunk sound, it is eerily compelling to slow a Chipmunk song down to listen to the normal human voice singing to a slowed down musical track. This is how it would have sounded in the recording studio. Click on the link below to hear an example.

<https://memories-matter.blog/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/callmechipmunks.mp3>

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