



# Jitterbugs Tent Newsletter

Stories and views from the Irish chapter of The International Laurel & Hardy Appreciation Society

## Welcome to our new look

### Grand Sheik Speaks :

Hello, hello and welcome to the all new method of correspondence for the Jitterbugs Tent Ireland. As you will know, the old digest had a few publishing difficulties and a new format for members had to be found. This is it and we do really hope you all agree that it is a great new look. The good news is that we are now going to bring you the newsletter every two months instead of the 3/4 monthly digest. A whole new way to keep in touch. We are keeping our familiar topics and articles and you will still get the up to date news on Laurel and Hardy happenings throughout

the world. This newsletter will be mailed to all members and those who were due to renew their subs last issue, will receive a reminder with this. I hope our new format will not deter any of you from renewing. It is an exciting time, for the tent. A new newsletter and a promise of more stories and articles and also the odd extra every once in a while. If you are not renewing and have chosen to depart from the tent, then shame on you. Get into the corner quick and recite the Sons of the Desert theme tune at once. As a punishment, Mr. Laurel and Mr. Hardy will be sent to your home to clean your chimney.

If this doesn't suit, we will tie you to a chair and make you watch Marx Brother's movies all week.

"Come Stanley"

Best wishes

Liam



## Dublin Meeting report

A good night was had by all who attended our second 16mm film show in Dublin, including Corey and his wife, from Minnesota. On holiday in Ireland was Corey and decided to drive from Kerry to Dublin that day, just to be with us. What an effort. Dublin members take note!! We had decided to stray a little from our

usual short, short and feature format. We introduced a night of shorts and even included a Chaplin film amongst the night's programme, (oh the shame of it). "Not so". It turned out to be the most laughed at film of the night. A fantastic night was had by all. What an array of films.

Highlight of the night was the showing of the Boy's scenes from Hollywood Revue of 1929. This film is rarely seen on TV and is not available on video. It was a treat to see. Usual raffles and some good prizes. Well done to all who travelled. You will have your reward.

OASIS#220

Sons of the Desert

Volume 1, Issue 1

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### Special points of interest:

Remember the scene in "Their First Mistake", when Stan strikes a match at the light switch?

Ollie asks why and is told by Stan "I just wanted to make sure the light was switched off"

CLASSIC L&H

### Inside this issue:

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# Silents Are Golden Gerry Dunne, Official Cocktail Taster

Thanks to Liam for screening Chaplin's "A Night in the Show" and wasn't it well received by the audience at our recent meeting in Dublin. All the same, "Findlater" was a good name for the street in which the hotel was — it took me the best part of half an hour to find it.

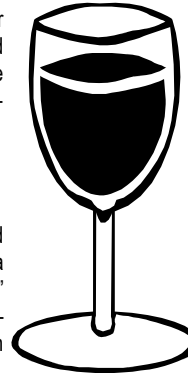
While I'm on the subject of the Little Tramp, a new movie featuring Eddie Izzard, of all people, playing Chaplin will be released later this year. It deals with the alleged shooting of filmmaker Thomas Ince on the yacht of William Randolph Hearst in November 1924. Ince, who was celebrating his forty-third birthday on the yacht was supposedly mistaken for Chaplin, who it was rumoured was having a secret affair with the actress Marion Davies. Officially, Ince died of natural causes but stories persisted that Hearst had engineered a situation where Marion was alone with Chaplin in one of the cabins and that he burst in, mistook Ince for Chaplin and shot him. Puzzlingly, Chaplin in his autobiography says that he visited Ince in

hospital with Marion several weeks after the event although in reality Ince died within a day or two of the shooting. Like my wife's best Bisto gravy — the plot thickens.

And now for our feature presentation

### Duck Soup

If Dr McCoy from Star Trek had watched this film he would have said "It's a partnership, Jim, but not as we know it." The boys are here but I isn't quite them — if you get my drift. The story was based on Stan's father's sketch "Home for the Honeymoon" and the boys used it again for their sound short "Another Fine Mess" so you will all know the plot. Stan and Babe are tramps trying not to be conscripted into the fire service and they end up hiding out in a mansion. The owner is off hunting so they will have the run of the place for the



weekend. Their situation deteriorates fast when a honeymoon couple turn up to rent the house. Stan plays Agnes, the maid, complete with bloomers and feather duster. Ollie pretends to be the owner of the house. It is fascinating to see the boys exhibiting characters different to those we are used to seeing from them. The film was thought to have been lost, however, a copy surfaced in 1974 and is now widely available on video.

**"Every point of business is to be accompanied by cocktails"**

So TTFN and keep watching those silents.

## U.K. Convention 2003 Birmingham

Following this years highly successful UK convention held by the Saps at Sea Tent of Southend, things are now underway for next years convention. Laughing Gravy in Birmingham have acquired the honours. It is their tenth birthday celebration and what a way to party.

Many fun activities are planned for what promises to be a great event. I am assured by Grand Sheik John Ullah

that a warm welcome awaits each and every son who attends. One of the events is a night at the dogs. An entire suite of function rooms has been booked for the sons and feasting and merry-making is the order of the day. One of the races is even dedicated to the Sons of the Desert. Another special event is a trip to the Bridgnorth Railway Station. A steam train ride through the Severn Valley will follow.

Loads of Stan and Ollie style events are going to make this an amazing weekend. Bank Holiday weekend in May next year. You have loads of time. Contact me for a booking form. Lets get a good Jitterbugs group going.

**"Oh Fatty, hand me my memorandum"**

## Tell Me That Again. (or worldwide Son's news) (and a bit of Jitterbugs Ireland news)

VVL have just confirmed that there will be no new DVD releases in 2002. But don't despair. Just wait until 2003. They are currently sorting out their format for releasing the Laurel and Hardy range on DVD. They have a plan to fill the video shops with the entire back catalogue of Stan and Ollie tapes at knock down prices though. Keep your eyes



**"Mary who ?"  
"Mary.... Christmas"**

peeled for that. It is supposed to happen quite soon. You can complete your collection for very little.

No new Laurel and Hardy books, but of interest to some of you will be the recent publication of two new books. "Harold Lloyd, Master Comedian". Written in conjunction with his grand daughter, is an excellent read.

"Buster Keaton Remembered" is also a good book and was co written with his widow Eleanor. Both are costly though and will set you back over €40 each. Good coffee table books and available now from your local bookshop. If you are having trouble getting them, give me a shout and I will get the ISBN number for you.

If anybody knows the whereabouts of a copy of the film "Hats Off", could they please contact me. It's been missing now since 1928 and I'd like to see it. Stan & Ollie moving a washing machine up some stairs.....!!!!

## New Subscription rates

We have a new look and a new currency south of the border. We are therefore rearranging all our rates and they will be as follows.

Members in the Republic will now have a rate of Euro 10.00.

Members north of the border will now have a rate of Stg£6.00.

Payment can be made by the usual ways. Any cheques or postal orders can be made payable to Jitterbugs. You can put a Euro 10 note into an envelope if you wish also. A lot of members have done this in the past and we have not had any problems. Of course now I've said it, we will proba-

bly have tempted fate.

I realise that our northern members can't put £6 into an envelope and I am afraid that I cannot do anything about that. If you send me a £10 note, I will of course mark you paid as £4 from your next sub.

All this money goes towards the printing and postal costs for the newsletter. It is a reduction in money and this is because the newsletter will be a little cheaper to produce. Once again, we don't make any profit and all the

work is done in our spare time. If any money remains at the end of the year, it will go towards a couple of extra pages in the newsletter or raffle prizes for a meeting or something similar. If any member cannot pay the

sub, let us know and we will come to some arrangement. We don't want to lose anybody



**"The profits, would go to the fish"**

## Jacquie Lyn Dies.

It is with sorrow that I have to report the news that Jacquie Lyn, known to many many Laurel and Hardy fans as Eddie's baby, has passed away.

Jacquie of course played the three year old blonde little girl in their feature "Pack Up Your Troubles". The story went as follows. Stan and Ollie were old army mates with her father Eddie, who never came home from the war. The boys were given the task of finding Eddie's father and obviously the little girls

grandfather. Her name was Smith, and this was the only information that they had. One thing led to another and inevitably our heroes end up on the wrong side of the law. But it all comes good in the end and the little girl is reunited with her grandparents.

She was born in 1928 and after her appearance in the film, she seemed to disappear. The American video release of the film was coupled with an appeal by Lois Laurel as to Jacquie's whereabouts. Jacquie's son knew of her appearance in the movie and bought her

the tape as a present. When she saw the appeal, she contacted the Sons and was reunited with her old studio friend Lois. She became a regular at Sons of the Desert US conventions and was signed up to go to Nashville in July this year.

**"Who's been eating my porridge, I should like to know?"**

## Web Watch by Stephen O'Crowley

This time around, Web Watch is going to break from the norm and review a non Laurel and Hardy site (shock horror), though one which will be of great interest to fan's of the Boy's never the less. We are going to have a look in the highly popular and hugely addictive (believe me!!) world of eBay.

eBay is the world's largest online marketplace. It was founded in 1995 and it's success has been extraordinary. On average it boasts a staggering 10 million items for sale at any one time and has over 42 million registered users (with over 1 million in the U.K. and Ireland alone!!) Simply put, if you want to buy something that you can't locate anywhere else, or want to sell something you no longer need, eBay should be your first port of call. First you go to their site and register both your trading name, and your email address (it is free to register with eBay). Now you are ready to shop!!! Using the powerful search engine, you can quickly zone in on items that you have an interest in.

Once you see something in the list that catches your eye, you click on it to get a full description and it's current price. You can then join in the auction and put in a bid of the amount you are willing to pay. You will be emailed daily on the status of the auction, whether you have been outbid etc. At the end of the auction (usually about 6-7 days) the highest bidder wins and is sent payment details from the seller. Once the seller receives payment, your chosen lot should arrive to your front door – it's as simple as that!!!

The beauty of eBay is the wide scope of items available to buy, and usually at great prices. You can also act as a seller and post items up for auction – this process is also very easy to follow. The next time you are clearing out your attic, don't throw out your old 'junk', as someone somewhere in the world will be willing to buy it and add it to their collection (and people will collect

absolutely anything!!). So for a quick test run. How many items listed show if I do a search on 'Laurel Hardy' – well, try over 900 at last count! Every item imaginable appears – check the small sample below (current winning bids at time of search shown in brackets). These were real lots on sale at time of writing this article – something for everyone:

Laurel and Hardy fridge magnet (£1), Sons of The Desert Video (£2.50), Laurel and Hardy 1<sup>st</sup> edition book (£15), L&H 1954 Tour program (£35), L&H signed photo (£350)

eBay – go on – you know you want to .....

[www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com)  
[www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk)

## OASIS#220

### Sons of the Desert

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We are the Sons of the Desert,  
having the time of our lives.



The characters Laurel and Hardy portrayed, had as many layers as an artichoke. First they were bumbling, accident prone incompetents, upon whom havoc settled at the simplest act. Beneath this were layers of dauntless dignity, hopeless heroism and wistful sadness with, deepest of all, a dash of the devil. Now the fiddle plays no more. Time has ended the concert. And the world is beginning to realise just how much it loved fat Oliver and skinny Stan.

When Comedy Was King, 1960.

Peter Sellers visited Stan for tea during Stan's retirement years. Because of his admiration for Stan, Peter based the character Chance, in the film "Being There" (1979) on a mixture of his own real life gardener and Stan.

A Mensa publication in 1994 had Laurel and Hardy on the cover!!

## From Soup To Nuts "Thoughts of a Vice-Sheikh" Steve O'Connor

My Mum came across the following from 'Baby, I Don't Care', a biography of Robert Mitchum: ...He got a role as a hoodlum in a Laurel and Hardy picture shooting at Fox. *The Dancing Masters* was one of the team's last features. The picture was not very funny, and shooting it was not much fun. Mitchum recalled, "Off camera Oliver Hardy...had phebilitis, or something like that, and he was not at all happy. And Stan was sort of dazed and just sat in the corner...It was not my place or privilege to engage in conversations with Mr. Laurel or Mr. Hardy, but they were not antic performers off-stage."

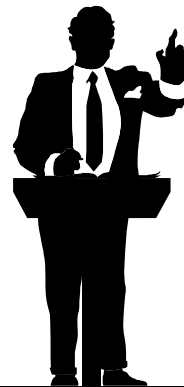
Clearly, to the up and coming Mitchum, Laurel and Hardy were just a couple of has beens well past their prime. The anti-climax of the final phase of their careers is well documented and the above quote shows how far things had deteriorated from the drive and genius associated with Roach's 'Lot of Fun'. Still, all the more reason to cherish those happier times.

*The Dancing Masters* was released in 1943. Robert Mitchum's appearance was a small role

in between playing villains in Hopalong Cassidy westerns. Also notable is the appearance of the Marx Brothers' foil, Margaret Dumont.

'A Little Fox-Pas'.

Stan Laurel was a fan of John F Kennedy so it is perhaps appropriate that one of Kennedy's most famous quotes was actually a boo-boo of Laurelesque proportions. Standing beside the Berlin Wall he staged a propaganda coup with his defiant shout of, "Ich bin ein Berliner". Unfortunately, a *Berliner* is in that city, a type of pastry. He should have said, "Ich bin Berliner". What he did say was, "I am a doughnut." Just further proof that Stan and Ollie were right all along.



"Oh now you're taking me illiterally"

Airedales."

Till next time...

A Laurel and Hardy Moment...

From the Daily Telegraph:

My favourite story of Thor Heyerdahl (who died last month) features the explorer waiting for a cab at the BBC television centre. After a while, a cab drew up. The driver walked in, looked around, ignored Heyerdahl and sat down on a bench. "Excuse me," the explorer said. "I think I am the one you are looking for." "Not me, mate," the taxi driver replied. "I was told to come and pick up four