



Sunday, 30 October 2011

Go West, Young Jack

On April 7, 1935, Jack Benny and his cast performed two half-hour radio shows (one live for each coast) in New York City. The following week, they were in California. And that became their home base, though they don't seem to have known it at the time.

Probably with good reason, too. For one thing, New York City was the seat of vaudeville, the pinnacle of which Jack had reached not too many years before. And that's where the radio networks were based. Some programming did come from Chicago but the bulk of it was originated from New York for technical reasons. Phone lines went east to west and to reverse them was extremely costly. But that eventually changed. And you can blame Hollywood.

It seems to be a case of "If you can't beat them..." for movie companies during the Depression. They had a new—and free—competitor in radio. So the studios simply started hiring the big names of radio and plunking them in films, hoping to attract the radio audience to theatres, and the radio shows moved west with them. These sojourns to the West Coast were viewed as temporary by the radio stars, including Jack.

But a story in the *Bismarck Tribune*, dated June 8, 1935, hinted what was ahead.

Full-Fledged Movies Star May Never Return to Gotham Permanently

Jack Benny is likely to become a permanent Hollywood resident if the handwriting on the wall speaks the truth.

While his Sunday night NBC shows now are originating on the west coast the jester airways has regarded Radio City as his home studio and the majority of his programs have come from New York.

An analysis of the present situation makes it appear highly probable however that from now on his microphoning will take place in Hollywood as a regular thing because of his motion picture work. Broadcasts from the East will be the exception.

Jack now is under contract to M-G-M. The film on which he is working tentatively titled 'Broadway Melody of 1935' is classed as one of the half-dozen specials the company is turning out this year. That means that the radio comedian is ranked as a full-fledged star and not just as a featured player. If options are taken up Jack will make one and possibly two more full-length films before the end of the year.

While the rather quiet and simple life that Jack and Many live in New York is infinitely more pleasing to the modest taste of the Bennys. Jack is not opposed to setting down in Hollywood.

If he decides to cast his lot with the films Benny will find little leisure time on his hands. With the exception of Fridays when he works on his radio scripts with Harry Conn and Sundays when he tries to squeeze in some relaxation between rehearsals and two broadcasts he puts thirteen-and-a-half hours every day on the movie lot.

And Lolly pretty well confirmed it less than two weeks later in her lead item.

Jack Benny Gets Hand in Movies

Will Do Another Picture After Musicale

By Louella O. Parsons

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LOS ANGELES, June 19.—(US)—Jack Benny seems pretty well set in the movies. He had expected to return to New York when he finished "Broadway Melody of 1935" but now he is to do another picture "In the Bag" immediately with Chuck Reisner directing.

"In the Bag" is based on an original by Byron Morgan and Lew Lipton and it's all about a Broadway chiseler. Benny, we hear, has the same personality on the screen that he has on the air and that is considerable.

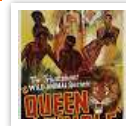
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10 hours ago

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care. - ©2019 fernandolleracartoons.com
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Movies with Michael



[Cowboy Church #19](#) - Hello my friends and welcome to another addition of

Cowboy Church. We start

"In the Bag" changed titles to "It's in the Air." And even though "Broadway Melody of 1935" was released in 1935, its title changed, too. Here's a marvellous ad for it.



Jack's move to the West Coast resulted in a couple of casualties. Orchestra leader Don Bestor elected to return east and was replaced by pianist and composer Johnny Green. And Benny lost his vocalist, Radio columnist Paul K. Damai of the *Hammond Times*, explained on July 3, 1935.

FIVE AND TENORS

After grabbing off top honors in a few polls as radio's top tenor Frank Parker went to the coast with Jack Benny and fully intended to play in Jack's picture. Mr. Metro, or Goldwyn, or Mayer, decided against it. "We got to change the tenor of our ways," said Metro, or etc. "Besides, Benny owes me a tenner since last year at Agua, and if he thinks he can pass a counterfeit like you on me. . . ."

But Frank wasn't discouraged. He was still on the gelatine program, lending a seventh delicious flavor, so he considered himself fortunate. As a matter of fact (if you like facts—we eat them shredded for breakfast), Parker doesn't know the half of it. If he hadn't had the Benny program as a vehicle, he certainly would not have triumphed in all those polls. For years he sang on the Gypsy grocery hour during which he was just another tenor. Now, singing one song a week (stooging more than singing), he is voted over such warblers as John MacCormack, James Melton, Benjamino Gigli, Frank Munn, and Martinelli—all five of which are as good, or better.

Now it has developed that Carl Laemmle of Universal has signed him for a picture to be made in New York. To do such a thing, Frank has to dessert the Jello hour (good joke, hah?). At first, when Laemmle approached him, Parker was skeptical. "Laemmle alone!" he exclaimed. "Shucks, all I do is run back and forth across a continent after mirage contracts."

But Laemmle let Frank taste the contract one day (shredded for breakfast) and it sounded real enough (it gave him indigestion).

What we're trying to tell you is that Frank Parker will be absent from the Jack Benny program for some time, because he is going to make a picture tentatively title "Romance Unlimited," in the Long Island studios of Universal Pictures, Inc.

Parker signed the contract with Universal on June 29, the day before his last Benny broadcast (there was no singer the following week and Mary Livingstone sung on the final week of the season). By July 25, it was being reported Parker wouldn't be back at all. Wood Soanes of the *Oakland Tribune* speculated Peter Higgins would become the singer. Instead, Michael Bartlett appeared on a total of five broadcasts before bolting for a movie career of his own. Parker bounced around for a bit, finally making a comeback on TV with Arthur Godfrey in the '50s. Bartlett never achieved fame. Jack simply hired a likeable fellow named Kenny Baker and carried on.



Posted by [Yowp](#) at [17:11](#)

Labels: [Jack Benny](#)

our music selection off with The Sons of the Pioneers' 1947 recording of the go...
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SATURDAY AFTERNOON - Nice view. I actually drew it into a panel



today.
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 Animation Websites in the Archive #1 - The newest series!

These are some of the best websites on animation that are either unsung or just have been wiped out from the internet. Some of these si...
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 The Classic Comedy Rorschach Test - * In 13 years and 1072 posts,

only...
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 **Yowp**
 Fewer Drawings, More Gimmicks - Adult humour today isn't

what it was 60 years ago. Today, "adult" humour brings to mind a lot of sexual references and crudity. In other words, the stuff...
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Mark Kausler's CatBlog
Racketty Ann's Mystery Flight! - Here are pages 5 through eight of "Racketty Ann and the Lost World". There's delightful fantasy here as Racketty Ann and Bla Bla take a ride on the back o...
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 New blog on my Art work...Original art...prints for sale petergrayart
ist@gmail.com for prices etc...
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 **Supervised By Fred Avery: Tex Avery's Warner Brothers Cartoons**





Coming Soon To This Blog...

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Chris Reccardi Interviewed
- I don't want to start a practice of publishing an interview every time someone from Ren & Stimpy dies, but Chris Reccardi (1964-2019) was too important a f...
2 months ago

 **Likely Looney, Mostly Merrie**
That's all, folks! - My posts have gotten thinner over the years. I'm aware of that. I've been hopeful for a long time, that I can remain active with blogging and sharing furth...
6 months ago

Kids, Eh?
#1288: [Bird Call](#) - #1288: Bird Call
10 months ago

 **Cartoons, Model Sheets, & Stuff**
 **Pete Hothead Model Sheets** - Here are a few model sheets from the first Pete Hothead short. Released in 1952 and directed former Tom & Jerry animator Pete Burness. Ted Parmelee was the...
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 **Dr. Grob's Animation Review**
[Zozor ruine la réputation de sa famille \(Zozor Ruins the Reputation of His Family\)](#) - After his move to the United States in 1912 Émile Cohl starting experimenting with putting the idiom of comic strips to the animated screen, being the firs...
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