



Sunday, 19 May 2013

Benny and Baldy

Jack Benny had a reputation of being a tough editor of his radio scripts, and a gossip magazine gave a good indication of it in 1939.

Radio Mirror was directed at women. Its June 1939 edition featured articles about Edgar Bergen's love life, Martha Raye on marriage mistakes and Ida Cantor talking about life with Eddie. But there are also invaluable programme guides, profiles of announcers and other people on the air and snippets of news. The edition also has a brief article on how the Benny radio show is put together, accompanied by a picture (probably by NBC) of Jack and Mary. The writer is anonymous.

The article mentions Benny's preoccupation with sound effects. Later news columns described how fussy he was with sound effects men when it came to footsteps. The other neat thing about the story is the mentions of Harry Baldwin and Blanche Stewart. Baldwin had been with Benny since the early '30s when he was sworn in to the U.S. Naval Reserve on August 27, 1942. Yeoman Baldwin of the U.S.S. Los Angeles starred—likely his only starring radio role—with Ginny Simms on "Johnny Presents" on December 15th that year (Jack was involved in the plot) but when the war ended, he never returned. Census and naturalisation records show that Harry Maurice Baldwin was born Hirsch Cohen in Perth, Australia on June 24, 1901. He arrived in New York City on January 31, 1906 and was made an American on Boxing Day 1941. He died in Los Angeles on February 26, 1972.

Stewart was a real unsung talent. She could do voices and animal imitations. She was a good screamer, too. She had been appearing on Benny's shows on a fairly regular basis starting in 1932 but faded out after the 1939-40 radio season. Stewart spent the '40s working with Bob Hope but returned to the Benny show on an occasional basis toward the end of decade. Stewart was not in good health the last few years of her life and died July 24, 1952.

ON THE AIR TONIGHT: The Jell-O Show, on NBC's Red network from 7:00 to 7:30 Eastern Daylight Saving Time, with a rebroadcast for the West Coast at 7:30, Pacific Standard Time. If you were Jack Benny, star of the Jell-O Show, you'd have to figure on rehearsing a full week for every thirty-minute program—that's what Jack does. He starts on Monday morning to prepare for next Sunday's show—a full-time job from October until early in July. That's how important radio is to Mr. Benny.

The week's procedure goes something like this. Jack collaborates with his two gag-writers, Bill

Morrow and Ed Beloin, and the three are virtually inseparable until the script is in shape. In fact, Jack relies so much on the boys' comedy sense that his screen studio hires them to write additional dialogue for his Paramount pictures.

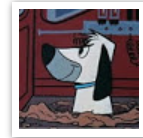
When the script is ready, the regular cast—Mary Livingstone, Kenny Baker, Phil Harris and Don Wilson—get together with Jack to read it. A reading rehearsal means hours of work, because showman Jack insists that every word must be paced, timed and given just the right inflection. The microphone rehearsal doesn't take place until Sunday morning, at the studio, when producers Ted Hediger of NBC and Murray Boland of Young and Rubicam, Jell-O's advertising agency, time the program and make the necessary cuts.

Jack personally supervises every detail of the show, but he's particularly fussy over sound effects. They mean so much to his scripts that he always instructs the soundmen himself, and sometimes during a broadcast even



■ Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone watch a Jell-O Show rehearsal.

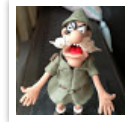
About Me



[View my complete profile](#)

Blogs to See

Peter Gray's Comics and Art



Spencer Jordan's amazing work... we are hoping artists like Ian

[Knox...and families of these comic artists can see these gems...](#) - made with fimo clay I had ago and its not very easy to do...

2 hours ago

Fernando Liera Blog Cartoons



Vehicle Verification Centers of Mexico City will reopen in August with COVID

[safety measures.](#) - ©2020 fernandolleracartoons.com

4 hours ago

Movies with Michael

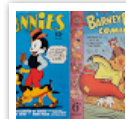


Cowboy Church #67 - Hello my friends and welcome back for another

service of cowboy church. Today's musical selection begins with Gene Autry singing "Dear Hearts and Gentle Pe..."

7 hours ago

Termite Terrace headlines



Question for All You Cartoon Collectors! - OK so I've been doing some

looking around. Bosko apparently had a comic book and I'm wondering if any of you know of

waves his arm to cue the sounds in.

Sunday night, after the broadcast, is "date night" for Jack and Mrs. Jack, who is of course Mary Livingstone. Mary wears a neat tailored suit to rehearsals, but shows up at the actual broadcast in a more sophisticated costume, suitable for the gayety afterwards.

Before the program gets under way in NBC's Studio B in Hollywood Radio City, Jack comes out, cigar in mouth and fiddle in hand, and gives a curtain talk—joking, playing the violin, kidding celebrities in the audience, and introducing Mary's mother, who sits in the front row.

The voice that always says "Telegram for Mr. Benny" is that of Harry Baldwin, who also acts as Jack's secretary. Harry's the only secretary in Hollywood who has a contract—he's been with Jack 11 years. Blanche Stewart, the girl who does all the feminine parts except Mary's, is an old-time vaudeville troupier, and a great friend of Mary's.

One last story about Harry Baldwin. On Fred Allen's show of March 19, 1944, there's this little dialogue in Allen's Alley:

Fred: Mrs. Corn, how do you feel about Victory Gardens?

Corn: For the last two years, I've had Victory Gardens.

Fred: Good for you.

Corn: But something always happens.

Fred: How do you mean?

Corn: Last year, my husband threw some old Vitalis bottles out in the garden.

Fred: Yes?

Corn: When the lettuce came up...

Fred: Yes?

Corn: Every head had hair on it.

Fred: Well, that couldn't happen with the apples. The apples are Baldwins, aren't they that you have?

Originally, I thought the Allen audience, which busted a collective gut over the gag, was so tuned in to the Benny show they knew Harry Baldwin and knew he was bald (he even played a character called Dr. Baldy on one show). But it was probably just Fred punning on "bald" and "Baldwin." Too bad. I'd like to think it referred to Harry.

Posted by [Yowp](#) at [07:41](#)



Labels: [Jack Benny](#)

2 comments:

Anonymous 26 June 2014 at 12:32

I was just watching Buck Benny Rides Again, and Harry Baldwin pops up about 39 minutes in. He's the bald messenger who brings back the unwanted flowers. No gag, but it was nice to see the face behind the voice. I didn't know he was Jack's secretary, I always assumed he was one of the writers. Thanks for posting this piece.

[Reply](#)

▼ [Replies](#)

Townsend 10 March 2019 at 17:49

Thanks for the info. Now I have to go back and look at BBRA to see Harry Baldwin. I also thought he was one of the writers.

[Reply](#)

Enter your comment...



Comment as:

Garth (Google) ▼

[Sign out](#)

[Publish](#)

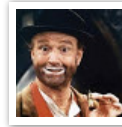
[Preview](#)

☐ Notify me

additional covers you could share! ...

16 hours ago

Way Too Damn Lazy To Write A Blog



Born on July 18, 1913 - Red Skelton - *Today's post commences

with the Guzzler's Gin routine ...

1 day ago

News From ME

Sorry... - As far as I know, I do not have any diseases. I just have too much to deal with right now so I won't be blogging much if at all. I'm postponing all the web...

1 day ago

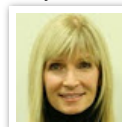
Cartoon Research

In His Own Words: H.T. Kalmus on Disney in Technicolor - Suspended Animation #276 Many references may be found regarding two-strip Technicolor. I have been guilty of discussing Walter Lantz's King of Jazz (1930)...

2 days ago

AFRTS Archive

Mary Turner 1985 - Mary Turner today Mary Turner really rocked the house.



Normally when any of the jocks got a reaction, it'd be split.

The ones

that were really liked wou...

4 days ago

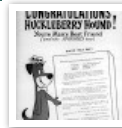
The World of Knight



TONIGHT, 11:54 PM. - COPYRIGHT 2020 BY MILTON KNIGHT

4 days ago

Yowp



Hanna-Barbera Birthday Did-You-Knows - 63 years ago today, some

forms were signed by George Sidney, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera creating what eventually became the biggest TV cartoon operation i...

1 week ago

Supervised By Fred Avery: Tex Avery's Warner Brothers Cartoons

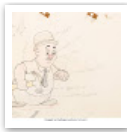
Wabbit Twouble: A Small Addendum to An Outstanding Podcast -

Newer Post

Home

Older Post

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)




Original animation drawing from Wabbit Twouble with color notations

for the ink and paint department. Release date: 12/20/41 Availability: Looney Tunes Gol...
3 weeks ago

Mark Kausler's CatBlog
The Lady and the Tiger - From the Cathy Hill Archive of Unpublished Comics comes "The Lady and the Tiger". This story was drawn before Cathy started the "Mad Raccoons" series. U...
4 weeks ago

What About Thad?
Cartoon Logic Podcast - And yet another distraction from this brick and mortar blog... I've entered the world of podcasting with renowned animation director and historian Bob Jaques...
10 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...
1 year ago

 **Dr. Grob's Animation Review**
The Flying Man - 'The Flying Man' is a very short absurdist film in which a man drops his coat to take a swim in mid air. Another man with a dog drops by, tries the same th...
2 days ago

Blog Archive

- ▶ 2020 (216)
- ▶ 2019 (376)
- ▶ 2018 (379)
- ▶ 2017 (380)
- ▶ 2016 (396)
- ▶ 2015 (389)
- ▶ 2014 (390)
- ▼ 2013 (388)
 - ▶ December (31)
 - ▶ November (31)
 - ▶ October (34)
 - ▶ September (31)
 - ▶ August (33)

- ▶ [July \(33\)](#)
- ▶ [June \(34\)](#)
- ▼ [May \(33\)](#)
 - [The Twirling Pants of Fear](#)
 - [Cock-a-Doodle In-Between](#)
 - [Tarring Bob Hope With the Red Brush](#)
 - [Buccaneer Woodpecker](#)
 - [MGM's Other Tom Cat](#)
 - [Screw-ups and Sportsmen](#)
 - [Cartoons of 1931: What Depression?](#)
 - [Not That Screwy Squirrel](#)
 - [What's Clobberin'](#)
 - [The Good of the Act](#)
 - [Have a Cigar](#)
 - [She's a Dog...Or Is She?](#)
 - [Benny and Baldy](#)
 - [Gene Rodemich](#)
 - [Disney Drunken Dwarves](#)
 - [Molly Flips](#)
 - [Ignorant Comedy](#)
 - [Shear Terror](#)
 - [Not the Flintstones](#)
 - [Before She Was Dennis Day's Mother](#)
 - [1929: Disney Rises](#)
 - [Rumpelstiltskin and a Car Dealer](#)
 - [Popeye and the Peacock](#)
 - [Bob's Book Revue](#)
 - [Run For the Hills](#)
 - [Before He Tripped on the Ottoman](#)
 - [Land of the Coyote](#)
 - [Carnegie Benny](#)
 - [How to Meow in Cartoons](#)
 - [Johnny Jet's Parentage](#)
 - [Hot Dog](#)
 - [More Great Old Cartoons Can Be Yours](#)
 - [Hans, Hitler and Ham](#)
- ▶ [April \(30\)](#)
- ▶ [March \(36\)](#)
- ▶ [February \(29\)](#)
- ▶ [January \(33\)](#)
- ▶ [2012 \(397\)](#)
- ▶ [2011 \(106\)](#)

Labels

[Aline Mosby](#) (17)
[Art Davis](#) (33)
[Bad Luck Blackie](#) (9)
[Bob and Ray](#) (10)
[Bob Clampett](#) (82)
[Bob McKimson](#) (59)
[Bob Thomas](#) (53)
[Chuck Jones](#) (142)
[Columbia](#) (33)
[Counterfeit Cat](#) (8)
[Cynthia Lowry](#) (26)
[Dick Thomas](#) (14)
[Don Patterson](#) (17)
[Earl Wilson](#) (6)
[Erskine Johnson](#) (37)
[Felix the Cat](#) (27)
[Film Daily](#) (50)
[Fleischer](#) (154)
[Frank Tashlin](#) (24)
[Fred Allen](#) (43)
[Fred Brunish](#) (11)
[Friz Freleng](#) (137)
[Gene Deitch](#) (18)
[George Pal](#) (10)
[Grant Simmons](#) (4)
[Hanna and Barbera unit](#) (99)
[Hanna-Barbera](#) (2)
[Harman-Ising](#) (61)
[Henry Morgan](#) (13)
[Irv Spence](#) (8)
[Jack Benny](#) (454)
[Jay Ward](#) (30)
[Jimmy Durante](#) (17)
[John Crosby](#) (84)
[John Sutherland](#) (28)
[Johnny Johnson](#) (27)
[Kenny Baker](#) (6)
[King-Size Canary](#) (8)
[Laugh-In](#) (11)
[Legend of Rockabye Point](#) (6)
[Little Rural Riding Hood](#) (7)
[Magical Maestro](#) (9)
[Maurice Noble](#) (12)
[Mel-O-Toons](#) (4)
[MGM](#) (553)
[Norm McCabe](#) (5)
[Pat Matthews](#) (10)
[Paul Julian](#) (13)
[Paul Terry](#) (2)
[Sara Berner](#) (5)
[Screwy Squirrel](#) (34)

Spider-Man	(1)
Terrytoons	(84)
Tex Avery	(468)
Tom and Jerry Human	(29)
Tralfaz Sunday Theatre	(17)
Ub Iwerks	(80)
UPA	(57)
Van Beuren	(94)
Vernon Scott	(42)
Virginia MacPherson	(14)
Walt Disney	(145)
Walter Lantz	(241)
Warner Bros.	(586)
Who Killed Who	(10)

