



Sunday, 28 July 2013

Take Five, Jack

Entertainment reporters of the '60s and '70s always seem to have found a way to work in "39" and "cheap" into a Jack Benny story, usually telling readers that Benny was neither. We've run into one column that didn't. It was from the typewriter of Hank Grant and published in papers beginning January 26, 1962. Grant started in radio. He was on WGN beginning about 1946 and then made the leap to television by 1951. He then headed to California where he wrote for the *Hollywood Reporter* for a number of years and broadcast show biz news on KNX when it became an all-news station. Grant wrote for a syndication service called TV Times as well. He died in 1990.

Grant captured how Jack never slowed down, even when he was supposed to be taking a breather between takes of his TV show.



Jack Benny: Pleasant Rehearsal

By HANK GRANT

TV Time Staff Writer

Hollywood—A running gag on the old Jack Benny radio shows was Jack's tongue-in-cheek insistence that he be announced emphatically as "Jack Benny, star of stage, screen and radio!" For several years now, it's been "Jack Benny, star of concerts, night clubs and television—tape, film and live!"

Jack was filming one of his weekly shows, when we arrived for our interview. A rehearsal was in progress, broken frequently by whispered conferences and "Take five (minutes)" rest breaks.

We gathered that the plot of this particular show is Jack's anxiety to rent out a room in his home, so much so that he rents it to a man who claims a cat as a pet. Payoff is that the cat turns out to be a lion. One of the whispered conferences eliminates in agreement that all scenes with the lion be separately filmed without a studio audience. They walk through a scene where an actress, presumably Jack's secretary, ducks under the desk on spying the lion.

Next in the script Jack tiptoes over and places a gentle kick on her derriere. The actress feigns indignation and the stage echoes with laughter. Good humor abounds on a Benny rehearsal and when Benny indulges a rare prank, humor bounces high indeed. We couldn't hear what the actress said, but Benny literally doubled over with laughter.

DURING SHORT BREAKS, Benny doesn't sit down, preferring to converse with the crew and pry information on their technical problems. In one instance, it seemed the cameraman was instructing him on the finer details of handling a camera. We had a vision of Benny as a young lad being chased out of the kitchen by an exasperated mother.

Came a longer rest break and we went to the privacy of Benny's dressing room-office. It was as unpretentious as Benny himself, who was garbed as always on rehearsals in slacks and wrinkled sports shirt.

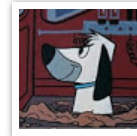
It was our turn to pry and Jack said he would continue next season with his weekly half-hour format. He'll continue with his yearly schedule of four or five concerts, 22 of which to date have grossed over two million dollars for music charities. He is keenly involved in expansion of his J&M Productions, which aside from his which aside from his already launched the "Checkmate" and "Ichabod and Me" series.

HE IS AWARE and troubled by current events, yet doesn't care to air his opinions for publication. Ostensibly, he feels a comedian should maintain a public "image" as a laughmaker, not a lecturer.

We were interrupted by a long-distance call from New York. On the other end of the line was Hugh Downs.

From Jack's one-sided conversation, we gathered Downs was a forthcoming guest on a Benny show ("--read the script, Hugh, and tell me if you want any changes made") and that the show possibly would be themed on Benny's attempt to take over the Jack Paar Show ("---if you see something that Paar would see something that

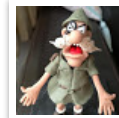
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Blogs to See

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

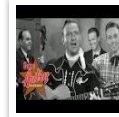


Vehicle Verification Centers of Mexico City will reopen in August with COVID

safety measures. - ©2020 fernandolieracartoons.com

4 hours ago

Movies with Michael

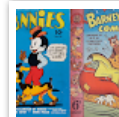


Cowboy Church #67 - Hello my friends and welcome back for another

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

Paar would say, we'll have a dog as the mystery guest — the son of Lassie, or something like that. And you'll be sharing guesting honors with Rock Hudson"). End of conversation.

Came a call for Benny to return to his rehearsal. We shook hands as Benny arose from his chair with a smile, walked to the door, then turned with a quizzical look that faded his smile to a frown, and said: "Say, I wonder if this darn lion is as tame as they claim? Why should they worry about what he might do with an audience present? I'll be closer to him than the audience will!"

Posted by [Yowp](#) at [07:25](#)



Labels: [Jack Benny](#)

3 comments:



bgrauman 28 July 2013 at 17:31

The episode in question was taped and telecast as the last episode of the season on April 22, 1962 [yes, Benny taped that far ahead]; the one with Hugh Downs and Rock Hudson (also taped) appeared on February 18, 1962.

[Reply](#)



bgrauman 28 July 2013 at 17:50

The woman appearing as Jack's secretary probably would be Maudie Prickett (as "Miss Gordon"), who appeared in various taped and filmed episodes from 1960 through '64.

[Reply](#)



J Lee 28 July 2013 at 21:37

The 1960-65 period can arguably be considered one of the busiest of Jack's career, with the weekly TV show replacing the every-other-week schedule of the 1950s, to go along with his other appearances and travel (the 1955-60 period in contrast, may have been too light a workload by Jack, with only the alternate week shows and a few Chrysler specials but no weekly radio broadcast)

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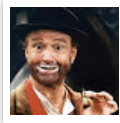
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additional covers you could share! ...

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

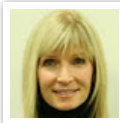
In His Own Words: H.T. Kalmus on Disney in Technicolor - Suspended Animation #276 Many references may be found regarding two-strip Technicolor. I have been guilty of discussing Walter Lantz's King of Jazz (1930)...

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

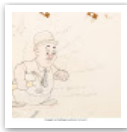
Wabbit Twouble: A Small Addendum to An Outstanding Podcast -

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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

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