



Sunday, 18 August 2013

Retirement for Benny

Unlike his wife, Mary Livingstone, Jack Benny never retired. Death claimed him before he got the chance. And that's probably the only way it could have happened. Mary, on the other hand, apparently never felt comfortable in front of an audience and quit in the 1950s, preferring to spend her time spending money.

Jack was constantly on the go throughout his life. Even at the age of 80, he had plenty of plans ahead. So it's with a bit of alarm that a newspaper feature story from 1944 talks about Jack retiring—although the columnist doesn't take it seriously.

This is from the North American Newspaper Alliance and appeared in papers of January 19th that year.

IN HOLLYWOOD

By HAROLD HEFFERNAN

Jack Benny is going to retire and have himself some fun. He said so yesterday. He said so a year ago, five and 10 years ago. Not right away, of course. He's too busy at the moment. He's been too busy for the past 30 years. But someday, and mark it well, he's going to get clear away from gag writers, radio programs, movies and such and really relax.

At least that's what he says. Personally, we think Benny is just talking through his cigar again. Benny is the sort of fellow who'll pass out of the picture with a gag on his lips and his feet on the chalk marks before a camera. He can no more relax than you can lay your hands on a 50-gallon drum of gasoline tonight. It isn't in the cards, and, secretly, no knows it better than Benny.

We had a talk with Jack in his make-up for one of the most fantastic characters of his career. It's that of an angel, complete with wings, for "The Horn Blows at Midnight," which he's doing for Warner Brothers. As the Angel Least Likely to be Missed." Jack is sent down from heaven by Chief Guy Kibbee to destroy the earth by the simple act of blowing his trumpet at midnight.

BENNY FINDS WORK INTERESTING AND FUN

Actually, he never gets around to the act, as the world is deemed worth saving after all. But, before getting to the fadeout enough screwball things happen to give us a clue as to why Benny won't be retiring this year, or next, or even next. The reason is this: Jack Benny gets too much fun out of his work to give it up.

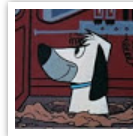
He admits he must be busy or he gets irritable. That's why, he crowds his days with writers' conferences and work, and his nights with benefits and shows for soldiers. It beats sitting around with the boys at Chasen's or the Brown Derby.

Jack isn't interested in the past, doesn't care to talk about it at all. The superb work he did entertaining troops in North Africa and Italy is never mentioned. We did, and he quickly shifted the subject. All that happened yesterday. Jack has his sights on tomorrow.

Because he's been a reigning radio favorite for more than a decade, many people overlook the fact, that Waukegan-born Benny Kubelsky (his real name) has been a screen star for even longer—16 years to be exact. He has, then, been "in the money" for a long time, and money, as such, has long ceased to interest him. But Jack knows if he stops work tomorrow he would toss some 100 people, his official family, out of work. Like most everybody who reaches the top of his line, Jack entertains a secret ambition. He wants to be a movie director. With certain qualifications, he is quick to add.



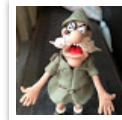
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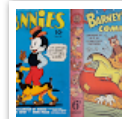
Movies with Michael



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

"If I thought I'd be a good director," he told us, "I'd try it tomorrow. But I don't want to be just another director. I'd want to know I'm bringing something to the business that wasn't there before."

CLOSEST FRIENDS ARE DIRECTORS

Many of his closest friends are directors. He studies their actions on the set. If he has an idol among directors it is Mervyn Le Roy. When Le Roy was making "Random Harvest" Benny was a visitor two or three times a week, always observing and always asking questions of Le Roy as to why he did this or that. Benny thinks the most enviable fellow in the entertainment field today is Elliot Nugent. This for the reason that, Nugent is equally adept at acting, writing or directing. "If Elliot, sees a good part in a New York play, he takes it," said Jack "When the run is over and he has an urge to direct, he hops a train for Hollywood and picks up a megaphone. He never will be in a rut—and, of course, you can say the same thing for Orson Wells [sic]. All of which may be by way of warning you that, you needn't be surprised when, some day in the not too far distance, you see on the screen of your favorite theatre: "Produced by Jack Benny. Directed by Jack Benny. Starring Jack Benny. Written by Jack Benny." He thinks that would be just about tops.

It's a little unusual to see any positive talk about "The Horn Blows at Midnight." Of course, the movie hadn't come out at the time the column was written, so it couldn't very well be the butt of jokes that went on for years.

Interestingly, the second-last line is very familiar, though Jack never really produced, directed, wrote and starred in his own movie. But he tried to on his radio show, in an episode with Danny Kaye that aired about four months after this interview. Could be it Jack thought the line in the column might make a good plot for his radio show? Could be. Jack's mind was working on his career up to the day he died.

Posted by Yowp at 11:32



Labels: Jack Benny

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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...
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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

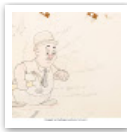
Supervised By Fred Avery: Tex Avery's Warner Brothers Cartoons
Wabbit Twouble: A Small Addendum to An Outstanding Podcast -

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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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