

Sunday, 29 September 2013

The Stub Story

Childhood must have been a pleasant time for Jack Benny. His home town of Waukegan, Illinois was mentioned frequently on his radio show and names of his boyhood chums found their way into scripts, too.

One of the most interesting examples is Stub Wilbur. He's featured in the second half of Jack's second-last radio show on May 15, 1955. It's based on a joke Jack had done before—someone he knew in childhood would show up as a feeble old senior citizen, hardly the contemporary of a 39-year-old. There actually was a Stub Wilbur (the part on radio was played by an actor) and he was interviewed many years later about Jack Benny.

This syndicated column appeared in the *Ogdensburg Journal* of March 3, 1980. The writer was with the *Waukegan News-Sun*.

He Took Jack Benny For A Ride

BY VIRGINIA MULLERY

WAUKEGAN, Ill. (NEA)—Jack Benny didn't always ride in a Maxwell chauffeured by Rochester. Everett Wilbur can remember when the car was a Metz Sports Roadster and he was the driver.

"It was an orange two-seater with a 25-gallon tank," Wilbur reminisces. "A speedy little devil. It would go about 70 miles an hour."

Those were the years immediately after World War I, when Benny began hitting the vaudeville circuit with partner Lyman Woods.

Wilbur was a salesman for a local calf-meal company—"the first to cover the state by car," he says.

To save the budding entertainer money, Wilbur let him and Woods ride along from town to town. There were only two bucket seats, though, so one man had to sit on the floor and hang his legs out of the car.

And the gas tank was in the back, so they had to pile the luggage—including Benny's violin—on the fender.

But it beat paying train fare out of the \$2.50 a week that was then the going rate for beginning vaudevillians.

After dropping the two men off at the theater, Wilbur made his sales calls, returning in the evening to wait for them backstage.

Did he ever watch a performance?

"No," he says in surprise. "Why pay money to see him?"

He first saw Jack Benny when the future comedian was still Benny Kubelsky. That was when Wilbur got a job clerking in the Kubelsky family store in Waukegan.

Benny was then a teen-ager, three years younger than Wilbur. (Wilbur was born in 1891, Benny in 1894.) But their friendship grew almost from the start.

"He was a swell guy," Wilbur says.

"He was always joking around. A lot of laughs.

"I don't know what he saw in me. I guess I was a good audience."

As young men, they used to hang around together and attend dances in the park. One year they shared a vacation cabin in Michigan.

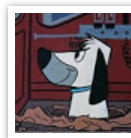
"I was cook and Benny was the chambermaid," says Wilbur.

So close were the two men that Benny had permission to go into the Wilbur home at any time to borrow his friend's suits.

Benny was best man at Wilbur's wedding, and they enlisted in the service together during World War I. Benny ended up in the Navy and Wilbur in the



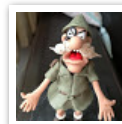
About Me



[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

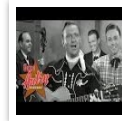
Fernando Liera Blog Cartoons



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

safety measures. - ©2020 fernandollercartoons.com
3 hours ago

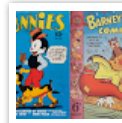
Movies with Michael



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...
6 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

Army.

It was Wilbur who introduced Benny to Lyman Woods, a pianist. The two worked up their vaudeville act in the Wilbur home.

"Our house was like a second home to him," Wilbur says. "He called my mother 'Ma Wilbur.' " She often played the piano while Benny fiddled and was his frequent guest of honor, sitting in box seats at Chicago vaudeville shows.

Wilbur recalls that one of Benny's dreams was to get a role in a musical comedy. He laughs now at how successfully those long-ago dreams were realized.

Wilbur never visited Benny in California, but the two kept in touch through the years. The comedian looked up his old friend almost every time he returned to Waukegan.

The last time was in 1968, six years before Benny's death.

The comedian was in town for a program at the Jack Benny Junior High School. At the end of the festivities, city dignitaries were waiting to transport the star to his next destination.

Benny turned away from the limousines and jumped into Wilbur's car.

"I'm going with Stub," he said, using an old boyhood nickname. The rest of the entourage was forced to follow or lose their guest of honor, Wilbur recalls, chuckling.

Fast cars and fast boats appealed to Stub. The *Antioch News* of June 25, 1908 relates how Stub raced in his car into Waukegan to get an oxygen tank to try to help save a young man who ultimately drowned at Gage's Lake. Stub placed third in the speed boat race at the 1927 Waukegan Summer Festival. And he worked as an auto mechanic for Johnson Motors in Waukegan after leaving the J.W. Barwell Company.

Everett Dixon Wilbur died in Waukegan in December 1980, not too many weeks before his 90th birthday.

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

Labels: [Jack Benny](#)




1 comment:

Anonymous 2 October 2013 at 14:20

Really Great Post.

[Reply](#)

Enter your comment...

 Comment as: Garth (Google) ▼

Sign out

Publish

Preview

☐ Notify me

[Newer Post](#) [Home](#) [Older Post](#)


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

additional covers you could share! ...
15 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

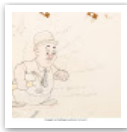
**Yowp**



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 -




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)
 - Legs of Spike

[The Stub Story](#)[Farewell, Hugh and Rudy
— Again](#)[The Other Skeleton
Dance](#)[Ghost Fist of a Fox](#)[This Could Make a Good
Book Some Day](#)[Necking By the TV](#)[Clobbering Elmer](#)[TV Without Mary](#)[To Make a Terrytoon](#)[Piggie Pick-Up](#)[Eyes and Noses of Tom](#)[Atsamatter With Luigi](#)[No Vacancy](#)[Escape From Grandma](#)[No Wire Hangers](#)[Phil's Not So Bad](#)[The Wonderful World of
Color of 1936](#)[The Hungry Eyes](#)[Where Pete Hothead
Shops](#)[Tell Him What He Wins](#)[I Think I Swallowed
Something](#)[The Hidden Friz](#)[Kenny Baker's Farewell
to Footlights](#)[How to Make a Crazy Kat](#)[Who Killed Who Death
Scene](#)[Multiplying Sylvesters](#)[Radio's Failure is
Television's Success](#)[Suicidal Flame](#)[Disappearing Paper](#)[The Jack Benny Story,
Short Version](#)[► August \(33\)](#)[► July \(33\)](#)[► June \(34\)](#)[► May \(33\)](#)[► 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) |

