

Sunday, 10 August 2014

Benny in Italy

Anyone who has read the autobiographical portion of "Sunday Nights at Seven," the Jack Benny story, will have seen his diary of a gruelling trip through Africa and the Middle East to entertain soldiers during World War Two.

If you haven't, here's a good contemporary report from *PM's Heard and Overheard* column of October 4, 1945.

The work of the stars to bring emotional relief to the soldiers fighting overseas is admirable, to put it mildly.

They Loved Benny in Africa

By JUDY DEPUT

"Nothing spectacular ever happens to me," Jack Benny complained in his suite at the Sherry-Netherland when PM interviewed him the day after he returned from a ten-week USO tour of North Africa. "The plane didn't get bombed, we had smooth weather except for a sand storm over the Gulf of Persia and we always got the shows on for the boys," Jack, who is some 12 pound heavier and slightly grayer explained. But Benny did get into Italy.

This is how it happened. His USO party, including Larry Adler, harmonica player, and singer Wini Shaw, was scheduled to play in Sicily a week ago last Saturday but found upon arrival that the men had crossed over into Italy. Benny's party was given the "go ahead" and new on to catch up with the troops. They did, about 75 miles from the fighting at Salerno. When Benny landed he was greeted by a Major with, "What the hell are you doing here?" But the surprised troops demanded the show and then went to battle.

Benny reports that U. S. soldiers are crazy about the shows. They like to anticipate a star's arrival, talking about him for days, planting gags like the boys in Egypt who erected the signs, "Waukegan Airport" and "Welcome Fred Allen." They repeatedly demanded *St. Louis Blues* and the *Bolero* from Larry Adler, two of the harmonica player's specialties, and from fiddler Jack, *The Bee* and *Love in Bloom*.

Once Benny & USO Co. played for about 10,000 men right after a review during which 12 of them were awarded medals for bravery. It was 10:30 a.m., temperature 140, at a camp on the Persian

Gulf. The men sat right in the blazing tun for an hour and a half. Wini Shaw and actress Anna Lee, who always dressed up for the show, climbed into evening clothes and went to work. Benny, Adler and piano player Jack Snyder of The Yacht Club Boys, wore civics for the shows, otherwise khaki.

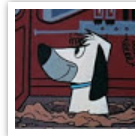
Benny, playing the pinch-penny jerk, always went over big. If you heard his only shortwave broadcast back to the U. S. A., from Cairo, credit this gag to Goodman Ace of Easy Aces who sent it to Benny as a bon voyage token.

"Say, fellows, I just got a cable from Mary Livingstone. Forgive me while I read it. 'Dear Jack, I'm sending you that five you cabled for but it's your own fault you're running short. I told you you couldn't do Africa on \$20.'" At hospitals and advance medical stations, Benny gagged with the boys and autographed casts on legs and arms. The doctors, whom Benny couldn't praise loudly enough for the job they're doing, told him that a belly laugh was the best tonic for the wounded men. He came back loaded down with home addresses and messages from the boys, mostly "Tell mom I'm swell."



Between North African camp dates, the Jack Benny USO troupe took time out to pose for this picture: l. to r. Wini Shaw, Larry Adler, Anna Lee, film actress, and Jack Benny.

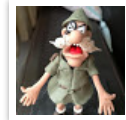
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Knox...and families of these comic artists can see these gems... - made with fimo clay I had ago and its not very easy to do...
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Fernando Liera Blog Cartoons



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safety measures. - ©2020 fernandollera.com
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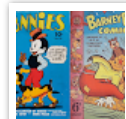
Movies with Michael



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..."
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


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



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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

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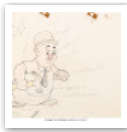
 **Yowp**



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

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