

Sunday, 12 November 2017

61. But Who Cares?

Yet another "Jack Benny: fact or fiction" feature story surfaced in the Albany Times-Union of April 17, 1955. There were some nice stock photos of young Jack you may have seen before but the copies we have are pretty much unviewable. However, we can view the text, which is transcribed below:

Brace yourself — just a little.

Jack Benny was not born in Waukegan, is not stingy, has as much hair as the next man-and is not 39. In point of fact, Mr. Benny turned a thriving 61 on St. Valentine's day, 1955, and does not especially care who knows it.

All this, of, course, is in reference to the well-known star of stage, screen, radio and CBS television, who as it turns out is not so well known at that. Naturally, nobody ever really thought all these things about Jack. Not really.

Eh? They didn't?

You should read his mail sometime.

For example, even among the residents of Waukegan, you can get yourself a fat bet on that birthplace business, and the town, a suburb of Chicago, has actually posted the information that Benny is its native son. But no. On that February 14, 1894, his mother was in a Chicago hospital. And the name of her infant was not Jack Benny, but Benny Kubelsky, and it still is.

Now and then radio and television audiences turn splenetic over how close Jack is with a nickel. So who you think paid for his daughter's wedding, one of the most expensive in the expensive history of Beverly Hills, California? It certainly wasn't Bob Hope.

It is true that Benny is generally considered a millionaire, but he made it. It wasn't a stashing-way process. The toupee bit is something else again. It is one of Benny's professional conceits that he must wear them. He bears down on the subject in public appearances. But it ain't so. His hair's his own. He has a good deal of forehead, yes, but not a scalp dolly to his name.

In other respects, the real-life Benny, whose 39-plus-22 years of existence will be briefly explored in a moment, might well surprise you.

The extraordinary musical voice he employs on TV to range from bafflement to cowardice is, away from the microphone, a tiny pitch deeper than the one you hear —and perhaps 40 times firmer and more authoritative. Indeed, the change startles one not looking for it. This matter is not easy to explain, but very easy to recognize. And there's one more thing.

He plays the violin pretty well.

In fact, to get on with the deal, he ought to. It was one of the first accomplishments he essayed after having been born, this maestro who is not truly 39.

Benny was the son of a man who had a so-so clothing store—in Waukegan, uh-huh—and supported his family in moderate style. Jack, that is, Mrs. Kubelsky, and a younger sister of Jack's, Florence, whom he mentions not at all on the air, with the result that her existence is not often suspected.

Well, Jack began ushering in a local theatre while still in grammar school, and wasn't out of knickerbockers when he began playing the fiddle in the pit. That went on through high school as well; along with membership in the high school orchestra and our hero was 15 when he became part of a vaudeville duo with a Miss Cora Salisbury. These two got around quite a lot, with Miss Salisbury succeeded in time by a Chicago pianist name of Lyman Woods.

Understand, Benny was still fiddling. There was no inkling yet that he could make his audiences laugh. Still and all, Benny and Woods were booked into London's famed Palladium, a spot to which Benny was later to return with infinitely more fanfare.

Now comes World War I and enlistment in the Navy. Benny, through no particular desire of his own, served his hitch at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station. He was a sailor, a fund-raiser and, at last, a funnyman. He played the violin less and he talked more, which seemed to be a very smart switch.

After a while, he fiddled not a stroke and talked incessantly. The violin became a prop. That was the best

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Fernando Llera Blog Cartoons



Mexican Senators manage to save 70% expenditure

s budget. -

@2019 fernandolleracartoons.com 3 hours ago

Yowp



Jazzstones - Hoyt Curtin seemed quite comfortable with jazzy,

brassy arrangements, so perhaps it's appropriate one of his famous theme songs got a guitar jazz workout. ... 3 hours ago

III News From ME

Today's Video Links - I'm having a great deal of trouble not thinking about the recent shootings. Here are James Corden and Trevor Noah on the topic. In the days of Steve Allen,... 7 hours ago

🖺 Cartoon Research Bugz' Livez: Antz (Pt. 1) -

No. this article's not all about Dreamworks or Pixar. It's summer - so I figured we need something appropriate for the season. Summer means picnics. And p... 10 hours ago

Rip Jagger's Dojo



At The Earth's Core! - *At The Earth's Core* is a delightful romp of

Tralfaz: 61. But Who Cares?

combination of the lot.

At war's end, Benny became a single—show business for Just what it sounds like No partner. He was first Ben K. Benny and then simply Ben Benny. But there was a chap around named Ben Bernie, which was too close for comfort. Jack Benny was the end result.

Benny became very big in vaudeville and in revue circles. Even got out to Los Angeles, as luck would have it, where he met a girl named Mary who was working in the big May Company department store. You know, of course, about Jack and Mary by this time.

Then something rather big happened. Radio spurted out of its crystal set incubus into loud speakers and networks. It occurred to Benny that might be for him. He debuted with Ed Sullivan in 1932, and if posterity cares to make a note, his first words on the air were: "Hello, folks. This is Jack Benny. There will be a slight pause for everyone to say, 'Who cares'".

Somebody must have cared.

Benny became not only hot but the very hottest comic giving out over the airways. And one of most durable. He shifted his radio activities to Hollywood in time, and made a pot full of pictures while he was at it. Some were good, some not so good, and one was The Horn Blows at Midnight, an effort said to be in truth so painful to Benny that he has to make jokes about it.

And finally, television.

Not that radio was dropped or that picture making is out of the question.

But-television.

It appears to be his happiest medium.

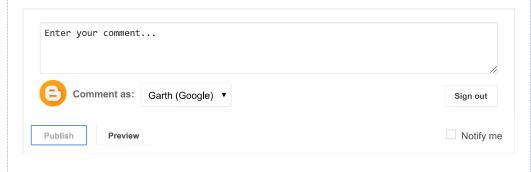
So Jack Benny isn't 39 after all-and do you care?

And this was the fast run-through on his 61 distinguished years to date.

Posted by Yowp at <u>07:16</u>
Labels: Jack Benny

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pure science fantasy. The classic tale by Edgar Rice Burroughs is well told in this John Dark produced and ... 12 hours ago

The World of Knight



LAST NIGHT -The sky was a beautiful color last night.

2 days ago

Way Too Damn Lazy To Write A Blog



Happy
Birthday to
20th
Century
jazz great
Lenny
Breau! -

"Lenny Breau was the best guitarist to ever shit between two boots." Jerry Reed *"Lenny was a comet passing through" Chet Atkins* *"If you had dropped...

2 days ago

Termite Terrace headlines



Commercial Corner August--Mel Blanc (In Person) -Mel Blanc

had been in

several commercials as an actor. All of which he mentions that he is the voice of the Looney Tunes characters. In the American Expre...

2 days ago

Movies with Michael



Seeing The Gold Rush (1925) at the Old Town Music Hall - Last night I had

the incredible pleasure of watching Charlie Chaplin's* The Gold Rush* (1925) at the Old Town Music Hall in

movi... 3 days ago

Mark Kausler's CatBlog

El Segundo, CA. This is a

Racketty Ann's Mystery Flight! - Here are pages 5 through eight of "Racketty Ann and the Lost World". There's delightful fantasy here as Racketty Ann and Bla Bla take a ride on the back o...

2 weeks ago

Peter Gray's Comics and Art



New blog on my Art work...Origi nal art...prints for sale

petergrayart

ist@gmail.com for prices

https://petergrayart.blogspot .com/ Will update it like I do on facebook.

4 weeks ago

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



Coming Soon To This Blog...

2 months ago

What About Thad? Chris Reccardi Interviewed

- I don't want to start a practice of publishing an interview every time someone from Ren & Stimpy dies, but Chris Reccardi (1964-2019) was too important a f...

2 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... 6 months ago

Kids, Eh?

#1288: Bird Call - #1288: Bird Call

10 months ago

Cartoons, Model Sheets, & Stuff



Pete Hothead Model Sheets -Here are a few model sheets from

the first Pete Hothead short. Released in 1952 and directed former Tom & Jerry animator Pete Burness. Ted Parmelee was the...

1 year ago

Dr. Grob's Animation Review

Leptiri (Butterflies) -

'Butterflies' is a film from the Zagreb Film studio, when the once famous studio was already in its decline.

1 hour ago

Blog Archive

- **2019** (226)
- **2018** (379)
- **▼ 2017** (380)
 - ► December (33)

8/7/2019 Tralfaz: 61. But Who Cares?

▼ November (32)

Blackout Borscht

The Irate Bald Guy on TV

The Missing Bone

Tongue of the Duck

Tralfaz Sunday Theatre: Killjoy Was Here

The Goose Grease Violinist

Lost Cartoon: Family Jubilee

Ragtime Bear Jump

Not Quite a Turkey Trot

Early Kovacs

Goodbye to the 67-Year-Old Teen Idol

Skelet-me-close-the-door

Skunk Takes a Dunk

Listening to Benny

She Missed Glory

Ollie Hogs the Ending

Hacking For a Birdie

More Than The Riddler

The Devil You Say

Abou Ben Bouncing Ball

61. But Who Cares?

Oh, Those Horrible TV Shows

Plane Minnie

Agony of the Feet

TV Taboos

No People!

Porky's Clim-axe

Tips on Tipping

Making Tom, Jerry and Droopy

Phantom Rocket

Hair Today...

Jonathan Harris and Doctor Smith

- October (32)
- ► September (32)
- ► August (33)
- ► July (33)
- ▶ June (31)
- ► May (31)
- ► April (30)
- ► March (31)
- ► February (29)
- ► January (33)
- **2016** (396)

- **2015** (389)
- **2014** (390)
- **2013** (388)
- **▶** 2012 (397)
- **2011** (106)

Labels

Aline Mosby (16)
Art Davis (30)
Bad Luck Blackie (9)
Bob and Ray (9)
Bob Clampett (72)
Bob McKimson (51)
Bob Thomas (53)
Chuck Jones (134)
Columbia (25)
Cynthia Lowry (24)
Dick Thomas (12)
Don Patterson (16)
Earl Wilson (6)
Erskine Johnson (36)
Felix the Cat (24)
Film Daily (50)
Fleischer (137)
Frank Tashlin (21)
Fred Allen (37)
Fred Brunish (9)
Friz Freleng (127)
Gene Deitch (16)
George Pal (9)
Grant Simmons (3)
Hanna and Barbera unit (91)
Hanna-Barbera (2)
Harman-Ising (54)
Henry Morgan (13)
Irv Spence (8)
Jack Benny (402)
Jay Ward (30)
Jimmy Durante (16)
John Crosby (78)
John Sutherland (23)
Johnny Johnsen (25)
Kenny Baker (6)
King-Size Canary (6)
Laugh-In (10)
Maurice Noble (12)
Mel-O-Toons (4)
MGM (501)
Norm McCabe (4)
Pat Matthews (10)
Paul Julian (13)

Sara Berner (5) Screwy Squirrel (32) Spider-Man (1) Terrytoons (68) Tex Avery (414) Tom and Jerry Human (24) Tralfaz Sunday Theatre (14) Ub Iwerks (65) **UPA** (51) Van Beuren (80) Vernon Scott (40) Virginia MacPherson (14) Walt Disney (125) Walter Lantz (212) Warner Bros. (521) Who Killed Who (10)

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