Sunday, 15 April 2018

# The 39th Birthday Surprise

How many top stars or celebrities do you think would call you with a special greeting?

Let us tell you about one who did.

Jack Benny spent years insisting he was 39 years of age. It was so embedded in his comedy routine that when a high school in his home town was named in his honour, its sports teams were (and still are) called the "39'ers." So it was that a husband cooked up a 39th birthday surprise for his wife. Here's the story from the Indianapolis Star of March 2, 1958. We wonder if Jack played a "reverse the charges" gag.



## Jack Benny Phones

### By JANE MOORE HOWE

A birthday gift--one of those special imaginative ones--will make Mrs. William S. Deckelbaum's 39th birthday a long-remembered event.

Rosalind has been a Jack Benny fan for years and years. On Sunday night she would from the radio to the television to hear his show, ... her family's dinner would wait.

"What could be a better gift," thought her husband, Bill Deckelbaum, "Than a birthday telephone call to his favorite 39'er from her favorite 39'er."

Bill wrote an air mail letter asking Jack Benny if he would telephone a birthday greeting between 7 and 9 p.m. on the special day.

HE WROTE, "In the 17 years we have been married she probably has not missed a single one of your shows. She was your fan before I knew her." He added, "you'll have to do a selling job for she won't believe who it is. She will know nothing about it."

To celebrate the birthday the Deckelbaums invited a group of friends to their home before taking them out for dinner. Bill let the guests in on his secret.

THAT AFTERNOON Rosalind said to Ann, her teen-age daughter, "I thought of borrowing a violin and meeting the guests at the door but I'm afraid they won't know how crazy I am about Jack Benny and wouldn't get the point."

Ann never cracked a smile. Neither did her younger brother, Bill. But Rosalind did think it strange when she heard her daughter tell her date, "I have to be here until 9 o'clock tonight." Ann normally did not think it necessary to hang around when her parents were entertaining. Around 8 o'clock the phone rang. No one moved. Rosalind answered it ... It was a child calling his mother. The phone rang again. Still no one offered to answer it. Rosalind went again. Another child calling.

Rosalind began to suspect there was a surprise coming over the telephone. "Is it an old boy friend calling?" she asked. No one bothered to say a word.

At 8:55 p.m. the phone rang again. A voice sang "Happy Birthday." She said, "Your voice sounds familiar. Who is it?" There was a grand rush to the telephone extensions. It was only an old friend in town who had remembered the date!

AT 9:50 P.M. the phone rang again. "Long distance" and then, "Rosalind, I want to wish you a happy birthday. This is Jack Benny."

"Oh, come on now!" said the birthday girl. "Rosalind, it IS Jack Benny," said one of the listening guests, not wanting her to waste time on identifications.

BENNY SAID: "Your voice sounds very young for 39." They visited a few minutes and he asked

### About Me



View my complete profile

## Blogs to See

#### Cartoon Research

Silent Era Aesop's Fables -This week, animator Mark Kausler posts a selection of silent Paul Terry Aesop Fables cartoons, from his collection of Commonwealth Home Movie prints. 5 hours ago

#### Rip Jagger's Dojo



Sanjulian's Demon Queen! -She's one of those ladies vou cannot

forget. Manuel Sanjulian's "Demon Queen" from the cover \*Eerie\* magazine is at once an attractive and repulsive figu.. 7 hours ago

#### Way Too Damn Lazy To Write A Blog



And This **Blog Loves** George Burns & Gracie Allen - \* On

a Sunday in which temps hit 90 degrees Fahrenheit - rough on this weather wuss ...

12 hours ago

#### News From ME

Today's Video Link - Oh, you'll like this. Boy, will you like this. For a number of years at Comic-Con, I had the honor/privilege/thrill (it was many other things, as well) of ..

16 hours ago

#### Fernando Llera Blog **Cartoons**



**Heat Wave** expected to ease up as rain and

Furopean

to speak to her husband.

"I just came in and saw your letter," he told Bill. "I looked at my watch and saw I still had a couple of minutes to make the call. I wanted you to know that I am sending back your check." "No," said Bill, "it was marvelous of you to call. Anyway I would like the check with your signature." "When I send the check I'll send a letter," Jack said.

LATER ROSALIND sent Jack Benny a wire thanking him for his call and saying, "I'll never be 39 so successfully again."

"I got a big kick out of the phone call myself," wrote Benny later. And as for her birthday, Rosalind said, "I never felt so pampered in my life."

It was a kind and thoughtful thing to do. No wonder Jack Benny had so many fans.

Mrs. Deckelbaum was a life-long resident of Indianapolis. Benny outlived her by three years. She died in

Posted by Yowp at 07:14

Labels: Jack Benny

## 2 comments:

#### Mike T. 15 April 2018 at 16:30

It's interesting that both Bill and Jack are quoted in regard to a check Bill had included with his letter, but it isn't explained elsewhere in the article. Do you suppose Bill really thought he had to pay the long-distance charges to get Jack to call? Or did he just want to get the check back with Jack's endorsement?

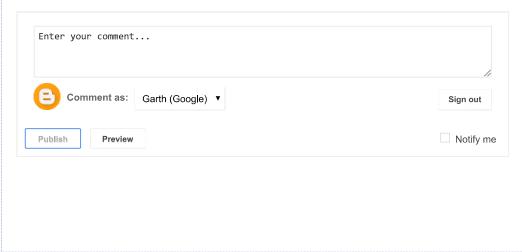
I wonder what Jack wrote in his letter, too.

Reply

#### Joan Gershwin 20 May 2018 at 13:33

How amazing to read this story about my relatives! What a great story to share with my family. Thanks for

Reply



**Newer Post** Home **Older Post** 

Subscribe to: Post Comments (Atom)

thunderstor ms move in. - @2019

fernandolleracartoons.com 21 hours ago

#### Movies with Michael



Cowboy Church #20 - Hello my friends and welcome back for another

Cowboy Church service. We begin our musical selection off with Roy Rogers and Dale Evans performing the Sout... 22 hours ago

## Yowp



Explaining Cats -Hanna-Barbera made good copy in

1961. The proof is in a search through newspapers as Arnie Carr's PR department successfully pushed the studio's newest

1 day ago

#### **Termite Terrace** headlines



Popeye Cans the Spinach (Commerci al Corner) -Due to the Tom and

Jerry hiatus, the monthly commercials are returning. This month we'll look at Popeye canning the spinach and advertising with other a... 6 days ago

#### The World of Knight SATURDAY



**AFTERNO** ON - Nice view. I actually drew it into a panel

today. 1 week ago

#### Mark Kausler's CatBlog 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...

1 week ago

#### Peter Gray's Comics and Art



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

petergravart

ist@gmail.com for prices https://petergrayart.blogspot

.com/ Will update it like I do on facebook.

3 weeks ago

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



Coming Soon To This Blog...

1 month 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

FernGully: The Last Rain Forest - Up until the rise of computer animation in the late 1990s, with powerful players entering the field (first Pixar, then Dreamworks, followed by BlueSky, Son... 2 days ago

## **Blog Archive**

- **2019** (217)
- **▼ 2018** (379)
  - ▶ December (32)
  - November (32)
  - ► October (31)

- ► September (34)
- ► August (35)
- ▶ July (32)
- ▶ June (30)
- ► May (31)
- **▼** April (30)

Baseball Bugs Scores a Run

To the Front of the Line

Pat Sullivan Reveals How to Make Cartoons

My Mouth's Bigger Than Your Mouth

Martian Schlepperman

Whatever Happened To ... That Announcer Guy

Spinster of the Circus

Tex Avery's Cat Reacts

When Viewers Stop Viewing

Oswald Talks

The UPA Horse

The Bad Note

Henry Morgan and the Start of ABC-TV

**Word Association** 

Wacky Wabbit Backgwound

The 39th Birthday Surprise

The Mintz Staff, 1933

The Kornered Kitties

Manhattan

Magician on the High Seas

Rascally Rabbit, 1920sstyle

Dad Gum Television

Fiddling With Farewell

Max Fleischer in Vaudeville and Receivership

Seeing the Hick Chick

Juggler Of Our Lady

Mama Bea

Pleased to Meet Cha Backgrounds

Deduce, You Say Background

Grandfather at 39

- ► March (31)
- ► February (28)
- ► January (33)

- **2017** (380)
- **2016** (396)
- **▶ 2015** (389)
- **2014** (390)
- **2013** (388)
- **2012** (397)
- **2011** (106)

## Labels

| Aline Mosby (16)   |
|--|
| Allile Wosby (10)  |
| Art Davis (30)   |
| Bad Luck Blackie (9)   |
| Bob Clampett (72)  |
| Bob McKimson (51)  |
| Bob Thomas (53)  |
| Chuck Jones (133)  |
| 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 (136)  |
| Frank Tashlin (21)   |
| Fred Allen (37)  |
| Fred Brunish (9)   |
| Friz Freleng (126)   |
| Gene Deitch (16)   |
| George Pal (9)   |
|  |
| Grant Simmons (3)  |
| Hanna and Barbera unit (91) Hanna-Barbera (2)  |
|  |
|  |
| Harman-Ising (54)  |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13)  |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8)   |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401)  |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29)  |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15)   |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78)  |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23)   |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23) Johnny Johnsen (25)   |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23) Johnny Johnsen (25) Kenny Baker (6)   |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23) Johnny Johnsen (25)   |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23) Johnny Johnsen (25) Kenny Baker (6)   |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23) Johnny Johnsen (25) Kenny Baker (6) King-Size Canary (6) Laugh-In (10)  |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23) Johnny Johnsen (25) Kenny Baker (6) King-Size Canary (6) Laugh-In (10) Maurice Noble (12)                           |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) John Crosby (78) John Sutherland (23) Johnny Johnsen (25) Kenny Baker (6) King-Size Canary (6) Laugh-In (10) Maurice Noble (12)                           |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) 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)           |
| Harman-Ising (54) Henry Morgan (13) Irv Spence (8) Jack Benny (401) Jay Ward (29) Jimmy Durante (15) 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 (498) |

Paul Julian (13) Sara Berner (5) Screwy Squirrel (32) Spider-Man (1) Terrytoons (67) Tex Avery (412) 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. (520) Who Killed Who (10)

Watermark theme. Powered by Blogger.