

Sunday, 4 November 2018

## What? No Ad-libs?

Radio grabbed the big vaudeville stars and then the movie industry grabbed the big radio stars and transported a fair percentage of them from New York City to Hollywood.

Among them was Jack Benny. For all intents and purposes, his New York radio career ended in 1935. He returned east for about 31/2 months in 1936 but, realistically, the only time he went back to New York was for personal appearances, a film premiere or, later, to do his first television shows (there was no cable from Hollywood to send them to the network at the time).

Benny's film mix-it-up with Fred Allen, Love Thy Neighbor, premiered in New York in 1940, so Benny and his cast went back for a week. He had spent three weeks in the city earlier in the year when Buck Benny Rides Again debuted in Harlem.

One New York columnist complained Benny didn't say anything amusing after getting off the train at Grand Central Station. His

comments are on an earlier post on the blog. The reporter for PM said basically the same in his story of December 14, 1940, but explains why he's not bothered about it. And he gives you an indication how incredibly popular Jack was then.

## Benny Can't Ad Lib ... Not Even a Burp

Jack Benny et cie. (Mary Livingstone, Phil Harris, Dennis Day, Don Wilson and Rochester) arrived here the other day from Hollywood for tomorrow night's premiere of the Benny-Fred Allen picture, Love Thy Neighbor, at the Paramount. Last night, an hour before Benny was scheduled to broadcast for Jello from NBC's Ritz Theater (WEAF 7), West 18th St., outside, was jammed with humanity.

For this lone New York broadcast some 10,000 persons had asked to sit in a theater which seats only 700. For this one broadcast an estimated 34,000,000 persons throughout the U. S. A. were sitting at their radio sets. There is no doubt about it. The nation's choice as the funniest man in the land is Jack Benny, a silver-gray, fattening, 46-year-old ex-vaudeville violinist and patter man from Waukegan, Ill., who now collects about \$12,500 a week from the radio.

The funniest thing about all this is that Jack Benny (born Benny Kubelsky), a big, fingernail-biting fellow who also chews two-for-a-quarter cigars (Santa Fe's), is not a funny man at all.

One night, when Fred Allen was ribbing him unmercifully in a joint broadcast, Benny came through with perhaps the only good ad lib he ever got off. And that was born of despair. "If I had my writers here," Jack moaned, you wouldn't talk that way to me."

"Benny," concluded one Harry Conn, who used to write gags for Jack, "couldn't ad lib a belch after a Hungarian dinner."

But despite Benny's lack of humorous spontaneity, one fact should be noted here. There is nobody in the whole, wide variety world who can time a gag or two-time a double take the way Jack Benny can. The formula for the Benny show has seldom varied in the six years it has been on the air for Jello. Phil Harris poaches on Jack's romantic preserves, Rochester loses the house money in a crap game, the quaking old Maxwell collapses whenever the drive it into the script, and when Jack's ego reaches a zenith, Mary Livingstone, Jack's wife (nee Sadye Marks) punctures it.

That's the way Harry Conn devised it nine years ago, when Jack first took to the air for Canada Dry. And that's the way Bill Morrow and Ed Beloin, present senior and junior writers of the Benny entourage, have kept it. In real life, Benny, who probably retains about \$7000 a week after paying the cast, is the same sort of fretful,



### About Me



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## Blogs to See

#### Fernando Llera Blog Cartoons



Public Function Secretary creates new online platform to fight

corruption. - ©2019 fernandolleracartoons.com 13 minutes ago

## Lartoon Research

Pondering "Pocahontas" - I think Disney's Pocahontas will seem better as time passes. While it is flawed, there is still much to recommend in it. Here's my opinion.

6 hours ago

#### News From ME

Today's Video Link - Part of the Tony Awards ceremony vou never see at home is what goes on during the commercials. On the most recent telecast, host James Corden got Billy Por... 7 hours ago

### Rip Jagger's Dojo



Panther Girl Of The Kongo! - I have one word for vou in regards the

serial\* Panther Girl of the Kongo \*-- \*Crawdads\*! This movie purports to have monsters, but it turns out those cla..

8 hours ago

### **Movies with Michael**



Movie Review Once Upon A Time ... In Hollywood -Michael's Movie

unsatisfied guy he is on the air.

He plays no sports, but when he is home in Beverly Hills he goes for walks with his trainer. His major delight is his six-year-old adopted daughter, Naomi Joan.

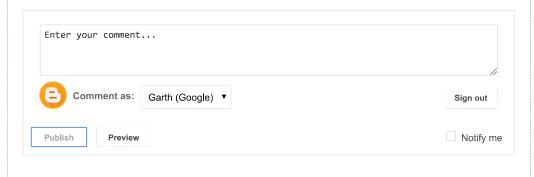
Naomi Joan calls him Old Daddy Jack.

Posted by Yowp at <u>07:07</u>

Labels: Jack Benny

# No comments:

## Post a Comment



Newer Post Home Older Post

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Grade: A- Review: An affectionate (though not exactly uncritical) love letter to 60's cinema that is irresistible. If I were to give you ...

9 hours ago

## Yowp



Scooter Looter Cycle -\*Scooter Looter\* is one of the Hanna-

Barbera cartoons that's chock-full of short cuts and the kind of cartoon that never would have been made the following...

1 day ago

# E 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...

3 days ago

# E The World of Knight SATURDAY



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

5 days ago

# Way Too Damn Lazy To Write A Blog



The Classic Comedy Rorschach Test - \* In 1...

5 days 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...

6 days 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

etc.. https://petergrayart.blogspot 7/26/2019 Tralfaz: What? No Ad-libs?

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

2 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

He Poses for his Portrait -

'He Poses for his Portrait' is the second of only two surviving Newlyweds cartoons Émile Cohl made in the United States. 1 day ago

## **Blog Archive**

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- **▼ 2018** (379)
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**Nevermiss Misses** 

7/26/2019 Tralfaz: What? No Ad-libs?

Paar-Backus Feud

Radio Eats Mice

London Bridge is Falling Down

Playing With a President

O'Gulliver

Shooting the Symphonic Slider

Naval De-Feet

Garry Moore's Revelation

Sheep!?

Headlines

Mickey, Bernie and Benny

Benny at the Crossroads

What Noise Does a Pinto Make?

Flying Failure

Sailing to America, Thanks to Maurice Noble

The Satirist Who Was a Good Paintbrush

See the Flea

Stan Lee, This Generation's Homer

Waffles at the Piano

Trouper for the Troops

Why Woody Wouldn't Warble

Try the Eel For a Meal

An Anvil Gag From Walt Disney

Fibber, Johnny O and the Best of Intentions

Ring Her In

Longnecker

What? No Ad-libs?

Booting a Puss and an Animation Career Into High G...

Pipe Dream Bull

Scaredy Ghost

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