



Sunday, 19 January 2020

Double Benny

Celebrities aren't always the way they're portrayed in movies, on TV and in the papers. We'll skip giving you some examples, other than one.

Jack Benny played Jack Benny on the radio. But he didn't really play Jack Benny. He played a fictionalised person named Jack Benny who shared a few things with the real Jack Benny. Is it a wonder some people really thought Rochester worked for him?

Columnist Jack O'Brian of the Hearst syndicate kind of touched on the idea of two Bennys in his weekend feature story of May 18, 1952. It was accompanied by the Sam Berman drawing of Benny; a little amusing as it was done as publicity art for NBC in 1947, but Benny was working on CBS in 1952. I wish I had a better copy of it. Not all of the funny lines are by O'Brian. The one about "an older sister named Florence" came from at least two Benny radio shows, one guest starring Al Jolson. And, no, the Orpheum circuit didn't go as far north as Nome.

Scrooge—With String Attached

BY JACK O'BRIAN

ARE there two Jack Bennys?

If there are, Jack prefers that we only know one of them wan enough to recognize publicly.

One of them was born in the little Illinois metropolis of Waukegan. The one we don't know was patted on the bottom and squealed, "Hello, folks," in the year 1894. The other flunked his arithmetic daily by asserting that now makes him 10 years of age.

The one we know best may not be exactly cheap, but, as his friend George Burns says, Jack has it figured out this way: "If you can't take it with you, why get in the habit of carrying it around?"

Jack wasn't actually an only child. He had a younger sister named Florence. Today, he has an older sister named Florence.

As a young Waukegan blade, Jack wasn't always destined for the footlights. He once had visions of becoming a banker. His doctor told him to quit when he still was last a teller. Seems Jack got ulcers counting other people's money. The snooty small town life was fractured for Jack by World War I. He felt he was really too young to go into service in 1917 but his father didn't. His father also was head of Jack's draft board.

During Jack's first months in the Navy he was given no opportunity to practice or perform on his beloved fiddle. But he did gain experience at a specialized craft that has proved financially handy to him ever since: He was made a laundryman, third class.

He was given instructions how to perform under fire, which later came in handy at the Academy Theatre on 14th St., credited with having the toughest audience of any vaudeville house in the world in those days, including the Orpheum in Nome.

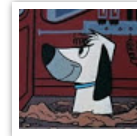
Striding with outward confidence to the center of the stage of this temple of mayhem, Jack uttered his classic ad lib, "Hello, folks," and promptly was struck with a barrage of catcalls and boos and a small bonanza in perishable vegetables.

The crescendo rose to deafening proportions whereupon Jack took the first of his long pauses that now are part of his trademark. As the boos and rubble began to subside, Jack looked at his watch, saw his scheduled time had elapsed and in flight delivered the second and last ad lib of his life. "Goodbye, folks," he said.

In 1926 romance struck Jack in the expected Benny fashion. A pretty salesgirl at the silk stocking counter in the May Co. department store waited on him and let drop the bulletin that employees and their relatives received 20



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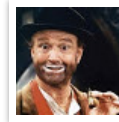


Some Cartoons For Saturday Morning #80 - Hello my friends

and welcome back for another selection of classic cartoons. Today's selection begins with one of the great Mickey, Donald and Goofy car...

14 minutes 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 (from Ziegfeld Follies) by R...

1 hour ago

Fernando Liera Blog Cartoons



'Cozy Bear' Group Tied to Hacks on Covid Vaccine Research. - ©2020

fernandollera.com 14 hours 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...

19 hours ago

Cartoon Research

In His Own Words: H.T. Kalmus on Disney in Technicolor - Suspended Animation #276 Many

percent off on anything in the store. Jack immediately proposed marriage.

The wedding took place in 1927. Jack presented a strange picture of extreme ecstasy, walking down the aisle with fiddle under chin playing the Wedding March.

In his broadening career as a vaudeville and musical comedy star, Jack naturally became a topic of Broadway chatter. Fred Allen got to know him well and decided Jack was misunderstood.

"Jack isn't cheap," Fred said. "He just has short arms and carried his money low in his pockets."

The Allen-Benny friendship soured into a mutually profitable feud.

When talk came to movies, Jack chattered off to Hollywood, where he discovered ultimately that to win an Oscar for acting you must appear in very serious pictures. Thereupon he appeared in "The Horn Blows at Midnight." It was made as a comedy but on completion was a very serious picture indeed.

To this day Jack can't figure out why he didn't win an Oscar, for no grimmer film ever befell a performer.

When Jack invaded the Columbia Broadcasting System with the biggest financial coup in radio, a multimillion dollar capital gains deal, reporters naturally demanded comment, "Do they really have free parking at CBS?" was all he said.

Now up to his gagwriters' ulcers in TV. Jack can't wait for color. It will, he said, at last give the public a first gander at his baby blue eyes. They once were described as being "bluer than the thumb of an Eskimo hitch hiker."

Now about this problem of age—Jack's own stubborn age of 39:

The records of the Barrison Theatre in Waukegan list a violinist in the pit orchestra with the same name on its 1909 payroll. This would mean that Jack scraped along in, the house band four full years before he was born. Jack thinks this is evidence that he always was ahead of kids his age in Waukegan.

"Salisbury & Benny" was the first public billing of a vaudeville team containing the person of our man. This was in 1911, or, according to Jack's claims based on that 39-year-old birthday this past Feb. 14, one year BEFORE birth.

"Big, apparently for his age—Five-feet-ten—Jack appeared at the Palace Theatre on Broadway in 1914—at the age of four! HIS reckoning.

Still using Jack's timetable: He was catapulted from his mother's arms into the U.S. Navy at the age of five,

appeared at the Palace for the first time "in one," meaning a solo comedy spot, at the age of ten, and was married at 14, and went to Hollywood when he was 16. This was in 1929, though Jack disclaims any connection between his arrival in Beverly Hills and the 1929 depression.

That's the Jack Benny we know from stage, radio, TV and films.

The other Jack Benny is another gent entirely, of course, a fellow of 58 who is proud of his years and the fun and satisfaction of entertaining so long and so well.

When he speaks of Rochester at Christmas and flips: "I don't know what to get him. He has nothing," he is the other cheerful phony Jack Benny. Actually, Rochester has just about everything—a beautiful home, race horses, a \$10,000 racing car.

The attractive qualities of Jack Benny were appreciated by the soldiers in World War II and the Korean fracas. He has kept on the move for and with them all over the U. S. and Canada, Africa, Italy, the Middle East, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia and the South Pacific.

Last Summer, he turned down \$250,000 worth of bookings, including one at his beloved Palace, to entertain our troops in Korea.

Modest as he is, he probably will blush and disclaim these last few paragraphs. That's one time when Jack really is tight as heck—when we try to pry from him anecdotes about his nicer, careful hidden side.

But we know you, Jack Benny. Take off the Scrooge's mask. You may be funnier that way, but you're nicer this way—the real way.

Posted by Yowp at 06:51



Labels: Jack Benny

2 comments:



J Lee 19 January 2020 at 08:13

Looking at the NBC drawing, you can see why Jack would have preferred the Rene Bouche one CBS commissioned in 1954, and which became the signature Benny image from thereon.

(The Academy of Music on 14th Street was still around, and still was an enormous theater, when I was going there in the 1960s, though by then there was no vaudeville, just Universal 'B' pictures like the Don Knotts efforts of the time period. But a crowd full of angry hecklers in a building that size would have been pretty intimidating to an up-and-coming comedian.)

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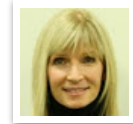


Yowp 19 January 2020 at 08:53

references may be found regarding two-strip Technicolor. I have been guilty of discussing Walter Lantz's King of Jazz (1930)...

1 day 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...

3 days ago

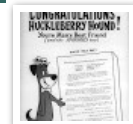
The World of Knight



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

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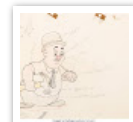


Hanna-Barbera Birthday Did-You-Knows - 63 years ago today, some

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

Termite Terrace headlines

Porky's Hot Dog Intake - Western Publishing definitely isn't free of cannibalism when it comes

I'm sure you're familiar with the Berman series, J.L. They're all comedy caricatures, suitable for ads plugging radio shows and not much else.

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to comics featuring Porky Pig. These are just some of the covers in which

Porky is ei...
4 weeks ago



Peter Gray's Comics and Art



An early Tom Thug page for sale and other comic art by Lew Stringer go

to link and ebay.. -
<http://lewstringercomics.blogspot.com/2020/02/original-art-for-sale.html>
https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/graphite47/m.html?_nkw=&_arms=1&_ipg=&_from=
5 months 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...
1 day ago

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