Sunday, 8 March 2020

Manager Mary

By all accounts, Mary Livingstone didn't want to be on the air and never considered herself a performer.

But she was a performer. And Mary Livingstone was a darn good performer. She got more than a good share of laughs on the Jack Benny radio show. She was a key part of the programme.

But Mary, far more times than anyone else I can think of on radio, didn't show up because of "the flu" or "laryngitis" or some similar excuse. And when television rolled around, she pretty much refused to go on the tube, and then was coerced to continue on radio only because she recorded her lines at home.

Finally, she officially retired in 1958, though she did show up on television on rare occasion. It was a shame because she was so enjoyable for many years.

Here's a feature story in the *Binghamton Press* of August 12, 1958 where she talks about her career. This story appeared earlier in other papers.

Mary Livingstone's Career Helped 'Role' of Mrs. Benny By MARY ELIAS

Women's News Service

 ${
m HOLLYWOOD-Most}$ successful show business marriages function on a one-career system. Poppa entertains and momma stays out of the limelight, giving up her career to keep house and hubby.

One of the entertainment world's happiest marriages, however, owes its longevity to the little woman's getting into the act

When Jack Benny married Mary Livingstone he put her to work as a comedienne. It was all his idea—Mary confesses she never really enjoyed performing. Yet by taking to the boards, at a time and in a situation when most wives think of retiring, Mary saved her marriage.

• • •

"THERE WERE TIMES in the beginning when our marriage could have gone wrong if it weren't for Jack's marvelous insight," she recalled in a recent interview. "The smartest thing he ever did was to insist that I go into show business with him."

"I felt left out of his world in those days, and I was a little bit jealous of all the beautiful girls who surrounded him. But Jack worked it out by making me a part of his world so that I could understand what his life was like."

Sitting comfortably tucked into a deep armchair in the living-room of her 15-room mansion in Beverly Hills, the petite and pretty distaff side of the Jack Benny household talked about her second, and least publicized, occupation for the first time.

"I always hated the acting part of the business," Mary confessed, her normal speaking voice a far cry from the glass-on-tin-grate sound familiar to radio and TV audiences for over 20 years.

"I'm really the business head in this family." she appropried.

"I'm really the business head in this family," she announced proudly. "Jack has never been interested in business and he shouldn't be, because he's an actor."

"I'm different," she explained. "I like the world behind the scenes in show business. I like sitting in on contract negotiations, working on ideas for new shows and figuring, out production problems."



CAREER SAVED MARRIAGE — Mary Livingstone Benny didn't give up a career to get married. Instead she worked at her career to save her marriage to comedian Jack Benny.

• • •

 $DRESSED\ in\ black\ velvet\ to reador\ pants\ and\ filmy\ white\ blouse,\ the\ lithe\ and\ graceful\ Mrs.\ Benny\ chuckled\ at$

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Born on July 18, 1913 - Red Skelton -*Today's post commences

with the Guzzler's Gin routine (from Ziegfeld Follies) by R... 48 minutes ago

E Fernando Llera Blog Cartoons



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

fernandolleracartoons.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...

18 hours ago

Movies with Michael



Summer Concert Series: Bob Dylan: No Direction Home (2005) -

Anyone who thinks because this film was directed by Martin Scorsese, it will be anything like *The Last Waltz *(1978) is dead wrong. This is much less of

1 day ago

Cartoon Research In His Own Words: H.T. Kalmus on Disney in

Technicolor - Suspended

7/18/2020 Tralfaz: Manager Mary

the mental picture of herself slaving over hot business problems in the Benny office in Beverly Hills. Actually she doesn't report to the office, but very little goes on at the Benny organization, J and M Productions, that she doesn't know about. The company produces the regular Jack Benny TV shows and packages programs for other stars.

"I wield a kind of quiet influence," Mary explains. "I suggest script revisions when problems arise and Jack consults me on casting and getting guest stars for the show."

Mary modestly omitted mentioning one department that is her special bailiwick. According to the company president, Irving Fein, everyone defers to Mary's judgment in matters concerning wardrobe.

"Jack has always said that if Mary hadn't become a comedienne, her impeccable taste in clothes would have made her one of the leading business executives in women's fashions," Fein said. "She's a brilliant businesswoman."

Despite the fact that Mary insists she would be happy if she never saw the working end of a TV camera again, and now appears only in the filmed Benny shows—live TV makes her too nervous—she still insists that show business saved her marriage to the great comedian.

In a sense, Mary has defied the oracles on the subject of successful show business marriages. She's had her career, she's had her share of the limelight, and most important, she's loved every minute of her very happy life as Mrs. Jack Benny.

Posted by Yowp at <u>07:01</u>

Labels: Jack Benny

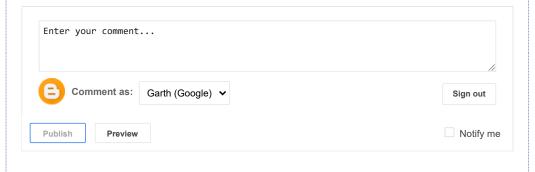
1 comment:



J Lee 8 March 2020 at 16:09

Jack barely did any new filmed shows in the 1959-60 season after Mary retired -- it was mostly either live shows or a number of filmed re-runs of 1954-57 episodes, including many of the ones featuring Mary. But the ones he did do were now filmed before live audiences, instead of the single-camera efforts designed to hide Mary's mike fright.

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Animation #276 Many 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. -COPYRIGH T 2020 BY MILTON KNIGHT

3 days ago





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

E Termite Terrace headlines

Porky's Hot Dog Intake -Western Publishing definitely isn't free of 7/18/2020 Tralfaz: Manager Mary



cannibalism when it comes 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.blo gspot.com/2020/02/originalart-for-sale.html https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/ graphite47/m.html? _nkw=&_armrs=1&_ipg=&_f rom=

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... 23 hours ago

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The Squares' Master

Jack Benny on TV, 1939

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Fred is Falling For You

Can You Come Over and Insult People?

Felix Dogs It

Yes, He's Crooked

Moving to the Stars Address

Making Looney Tunes

The Patient Chair

My Masterpiece

More Tex

Totie

Carol's Centrefold Man

Maestro, Not Magical

Drawing Water

Remembering the Jack Benny Show

Coming Cartoon Attractions for 1956-57

Celebrity Pirates (1936 version)

Face the Flea

The First Network Radio Broadcast

Cat's Nightmare Out

The Pointing Pooch

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I'll be Skiin' You

Now I've Seen Everything

It's Not Easy Being Funny

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