

Sunday, 5 January 2025

More Benny

We got more Jack Benny in our homes at the start of the 1954 season. And Jack wanted us to have more.

Radio was still hanging in there with a big-time line-up. On WCBS New York, Jack maintained his familiar 7 p.m. time-slot, while the rest of CBS' programming that evening was the *Hallmark Hall of Fame* (6:30), *Amos 'n' Andy* (7:30), *Our Miss Brooks* (8:00), *My Little Margie* (8:30, co-starring Charlie Farrell, star of *Seventh Heaven*), *Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy* (9:00).

As for television, Jack expanded his air-time. And judging by this interview with United Press, published starting Sept. 29, 1954, he wanted even more.



Benny Back on TV Sunday; Hopes For Full Hour in '55

By VERNON SCOTT

HOLLYWOOD, Sept. 29 (UP)—Jack Benny is the funniest of men—even when he's sick in bed and feeling sorry for himself.

The king of comedians, felled by a vicious cold, was gracious enough to keep his appointment for our interview. Propped up in bed by half-a-dozen pillows, he sniffled disconsolately, hoping some notice would be taken of the fact that his baby-blue pajamas were a perfect match for his eyes.

He proffered his hand weakly. "I'm really not in pain," he wheezed in a voice which indicated these might well be his last words on earth.

Jack was surrounded by books, magazines, and television scripts. He riffled the pages of a script as he talked.

"I'LL BE DOING a TV show every other week," he announced, "beginning Sunday, October third. CBS, of course." He craned his neck to make certain the facts were clearly written down. Seeing this, he smiled winningly.

"I hadn't planned to do so many shows," he said. "But you know how it is with fans—well, you know." He cleared his throat. "And then there's the money," he added testily.

"My first year I did four programs, the second year I did six. Then I moved it up to nine shows in 1952. Last year I did 12." He took pains to insure the data was carefully noted.

...

HE COMPLAINED that the bi-weekly half-hour show would be taxing.

"I wish we had an hour. It would give us time to build up the other characters in the sketches. Next year I'll try to get an hour show." This would be in addition to his radio half hour.

Benny stared off into space letting this pronouncement sink in. It was one of his tricky silences that gets more laughs than a truckload of gags. He twitched his nose and went on.

"We're gambling with my opening show," he confided. "We're not having any big-name guest stars or wild goings-on. You'll remember we did that last year on the first show."

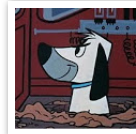
...

WE CONFESSED we did not recall last year's opener. Jack looked stricken.

"We had Marilyn Monroe as guest star," he said reproachfully. "But Sunday there'll just be Don Wilson and Rochester. And me, of course," he added quickly before lapsing into another silence.

Jack looked as if he wouldn't say another word. He even picked up a magazine and flipped the pages.

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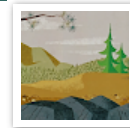


June 1929 - 26 television licenses had been handed out

in the U.S. by mid-1929. That doesn't mean 26 stations were on the air. In fact, there was one station broadcast...

1 day ago

Yowp



Bear For Punishment Backgrounds - One way of getting into a Yogi

Bear cartoon was a pan over a long background while Don Messick, as narrator, sets up the plot. One of those cartoons was *

3 weeks ago

Blogs to See

Then he spoke.

"And I'll have very little time for jokes." He explained this by saying he seldom cracks jokes on his show. He doesn't have to. People laugh at the character he's built up over the years. "Sometimes there's not one funny line for me in the script," he said with a hurt look. The injured expression was evidence enough why Jack Benny doesn't have to open his mouth to keep 'em rolling in the aisles.

Jack's series never did go to an hour length, and you have to wonder if he was thinking out loud. The idea wasn't practical. The 7:30 p.m. TV airtime was not his. It was purchased by American Tobacco. As it was, American Tobacco cut its investment in Benny. It dropped his radio show at the end of the season, despite a plan to cut costs in 1955 by increasing re-runs. No one else would pick it up (Bergen was moved into Benny's slot that fall).

It would have been a strain on the writers as well. Unlike radio, Jack just couldn't fill time with a band number. Since singer Dennis Day wasn't around as much, the writers would have to sit there and come up with comedy. It would have been a heavy load.

Jack did get in some extra time on TV in the 1954-55 season. Reports say his appearance on the *G.E. Electric Theatre* put \$70,000 in his vault. And he was beginning to appear on *Shower of Stars* as well; his tour of duty there lasted all four seasons and included the famous "40th Birthday" special.

Not going to an hour didn't hurt him. Starting in 1956, Jack won four consecutive Emmy awards. And his series carried on until 1965.

Posted by [Yowp](#) at [07:06](#)

Labels: [Jack Benny](#), [Vernon Scott](#)

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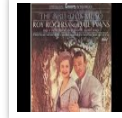
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Movies with Michael



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back to another service of Cowboy Church. Today's musical selection begins with Roy Rogers and Dale Evans with a wonderful...
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Fernando Liera Cartoons



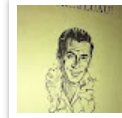
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News From ME

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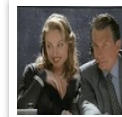
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[Ira Cook 1965 - KMPC's Ira Cook REALLY enjoyed his](#)

Hawaiian music, dropping one in wherever he could. He was a big piece of its 1960s popularity. Here's a 1965 visit...
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The Exposure Sheet



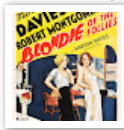
[Video of the Week: Scooby and Magilla Get Primestar](#) - Here's a

pretty interesting commercial that aired back in 1993. This is an advertisement for Primestar, a shortlived satellite TV provider, featuring appe...
2 days ago

Cartoon Research

[In the Beginning Part IV: Classic Animated Characters' First Appearances](#) - As another New Year kicks off, it's the perfect time to look back at where some of the most popular characters in cartoons got their start.
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[Way Too Damn Lazy To Write A Blog](#)



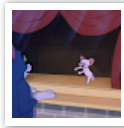
Remembering Silver Screen Comedy Great (and Hostess

[With The Mostest\) Marion Davies](#) -

*The new year begins and with that we celebrate the ...

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[Tom and Jerry: Toon by Toon](#)



[Mouse for Sale \(1955\)](#) - *Mouse for Sale *marks the 92nd Tom

and Jerry short film. Though many of the Tom and Jerry cartoons had gone into CinemaScope by this time, this film...

5 days ago

[Mark Kausler's CatBlog](#)

[Felix Can Dooit](#) - Howdy Readers and Merry Christmas! Here's Felix from 10-23-32 to 11-5-32. Danny Dooit is introduced and becomes one of Felix's best friends. Danny becomes ...

2 weeks ago

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[The Animator, January 1938](#) - The second issue of

The Animator is missing as of this writing, so here is the third edition from the start of January 1938.

*Snow White *had its Ca...

2 months ago

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