

October 28, 2019

Date With The Angels - This series aired from May 10, 1957, to January 29, 1958. Episode Title: **Francis Goes To School**. Aired Friday evening January 22, 1958 at 9:30PM on ABC.

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Betty White - Always a favorite on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *The Golden Girls* and most recently *Hot in Cleveland*, Betty White's television career dates back to 1939, three months after her high school graduation, when she and a classmate sang songs from *The Merry Widow* on an experimental Los Angeles channel. In 1949, she began appearing as co-host with Al Jarvis on his daily live television variety show *Hollywood on Television*, originally called *Al Jarvis' Make-Believe Ballroom* on KFWB radio and on KLAC-TV in Los Angeles. Her first starring role in a television series was *Life with Elizabeth* from 1952 to 1955. Next was *A Date With The Angels* from 1957 to 1958 which did not do well in the ratings. To quote her, "I can honestly say that was the only time I have ever wanted to get out of a show". In order to fulfill her contract with ABC, White switched formats to *The Betty White Show* until her contract expired.

Quotes from Betty White:

"I didn't know what Facebook was, and now that I do know what it is, I have to say, it sounds like a huge waste of time."

"I may be a senior, but so what? I'm still hot".

"I have a two-story house and a bad memory, so I'm up and down those stairs all the time. That's my exercise."

Bill Williams - Born Hermann August Wilhelm Katt. Starred as Kit Carson from 1951 to 1955. He turned down the lead in the adventure series *Sea Hunt* (1958), which eventually went to Lloyd Bridges, because he didn't think an underwater show would work well on TV. He was the husband of Barbara Hale (*Della Street* of *Perry Mason*) and father of William Katt (*The Greatest American Hero*).

Burt Mustin - appeared in his first film when he was 67 years old. Appeared fourteen times on *Leave It To Beaver* as Gus the fireman.

Richard Deacon - his role as Mel Cooley on *The Dick Van Dyke Show* has given him immortality in television. He was also Fred Rutherford, the father of Clarence Lumpy Rutherford on *Leave It To Beaver*. Plus, he was an expert cook and wrote a book on microwave cooking that sold 1.7 million copies and had a syndicated Canadian TV cooking show.

Richard Reeves - had over 200 credits in films and television usually as the heavy or gangster.

Announcer: **Tom Kennedy** - born James Edward Narz, brother game show host Jack Narz. Longtime host of the popular game show, *You Don't Say!*

The Life Of Riley - Episode Title: **The Boarder** - Aired on Tuesday evening December 27, 1949 at 9:30PM on NBC.

Producer Irving Brecher pitched this radio series for his friend Groucho Marx under the title *The Flotsam Family*, but the sponsor balked at this idea. Brecher then saw William Bendix as taxicab company owner in Hal Roach's feature film *The McGuerins From Brooklyn* (1942). Feeling Bendix could play this role, he took *The Flotsam Family* script, revised it, made it a Brooklyn Family and thought of a new title, *The Life of Riley*.

In 1948, NBC broadcast "two live television test programs based on the radio series. The April 13th episode starred Herb Vigran as Riley, and the April 20th episode had Buddy Gray in the title role.

The NBC adaptation was a single-season series from October 4, 1949 to March 28, 1950. Originally, William Bendix was to have appeared on both radio and TV, but Bendix's RKO Radio Pictures movie contract prevented him from appearing on the TV version. Instead, Jackie Gleason starred in this series. According to Gleason, "They couldn't find anybody who could learn a show in a week". Since Bendix had established the Riley character, Gleason could not stray too far from the Bendix interpretation. As a result, this role was not satisfying for Jackie.

It was during this period that Gleason played Riley on one episode of the radio series. At the beginning of the November 11, 1949 radio episode the announcer explained that William Bendix had strained his voice while performing the role of an umpire for an upcoming movie (*Kill the Umpire*) and Gleason substituted for him that one night.

William Bendix also starred in the 1949 film version of *The Life of Riley* directed by Irving Brecher. The Bendix version of *The Life of Riley* aired on Fridays at 8:30PM on NBC from 1953 to 1958.

Jackie Gleason - Born Herbert Walton Gleason Jr. In addition to his unforgettable portrayal of Ralph Kramden on *The Honeymooners*, he had turned to writing original music and recording a series of popular and best-selling albums with his orchestra for Capitol Records by the mid-1950s. He never won an Emmy Award, but was inducted into the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame in 1986. He was once quoted as saying, "I'm no alcoholic. I'm a drunkard. There's a difference. A drunkard doesn't like to go to meetings."

Rosemary DeCamp (Peg) - After *The Life of Riley*, she played the sister of photographer Bob Collins on *The Bob Cummings Show* (*Love That Bob*) from 1955 to 1959. She had recurring appearances on *Petticoat Junction*, *That Girl* and *The Partridge Family*.

Gloria Winters (Babs) - is best remembered as Penny on *Sky King* from 1951 to 1954. She retired from show business after this series ended.

Lanny Rees (Junior) - In addition to this series, he also played Junior in the 1949 feature *The Life of Riley* starring William Bendix. He joined the U.S. Army in 1954 and worked for North American Rocketdyne, a manufacturer of rocket engines, and General Dynamics Astronautics Division, which installed Atlas missiles. He was also a mechanic and shop foreman in later years.

Sid Tomack (Gillis) - made several guest appearances on the *Adventures of Superman* and *The Joe Palooka Story*.

Alan Reed - played the part of Finnegan on the *Duffy's Tavern*, and many other guest parts on other programs. He is best remembered as the voice of Fred Flintstone where he created the phrase "Yabba Dabba Doo".

Eddie Dunn (Policeman) - had nearly 400 film credits beginning with the silent era in 1915. During his years at the Hal Roach Studios, he worked with Charley Chase, Edgar Kennedy, Thelma Todd and Laurel & Hardy.

Paul Bryar (Policeman) - played Sheriff Harve Anders on *The Long, Hot Summer* (1965-66), plus numerous appearances on *The Untouchables*, *Perry Mason*, *Gomer Pyle U.S.M.C.*, *The F.B.I.*, *Barnaby Jones* and more.

(Life Of Riley Cast with Bendix - Chester A. Riley (William Bendix) Peg (Marjorie Reynolds) Wesley Morgan (Junior) Lugene Sanders (Babs) Tom D'Andrea (Jim Gillis)

Blondie - Episode Title: **Get That Gun** - Aired Friday evening on February 8, 1957 at 8:00PM on NBC. Series aired from January 1957 to May 1957.

Arthur Lake - (Dagwood) Born Arthur William Silverlake, the founder of Universal Pictures, Carl Laemmle changed his last name to Lake. He will always be remembered as the character of Dagwood Bumstead in 28 Blondie films with Penny Singleton and produced by Columbia Pictures from 1938 to 1950. Plus, he was the voice of Dagwood on the radio series, which ran from 1938 to 1950. He also played the part of Dagwood in 26 episodes of the Blondie television series in 1957.

There has been much discussion about Arthur Lake's wife, Patricia Van Cleeve. In public, Patricia was always introduced as the "niece" of Marion Davies. Arthur and Patricia were married in 1937 at the San Simeon mansion of William Randolph Hearst. Both Hearst and Marion Davies together gave Patricia away at the wedding ceremony. The marriage lasted for 50 years until Arthur's death in 1987. While Arthur Lake never made any public comments in regard to his wife's background, Patricia's physical features were very similar to those of Hearst. Ten hours before Patricia died in 1993 from complications of lung cancer in a desert hospital on Oct. 3rd, Patricia Van Cleve Lake told her son she wanted the world to know who she really was. Additionally, information in her will and beliefs of her biological parents were shared with her family.

Pamela Britton - (Blondie) Best remembered as Mrs. Lorelei Brown in 62 episodes of *My Favorite Martian* from 1963 to 1966. In her final television appearance, she was reunited with Bill Bixby in an episode of his series, *The Magician* in 1973.

Ann Barnes - (Cookie) in addition to Blondie, she could be seen in episodes of *The Danny Thomas Show* and *Leave It To Beaver*.

Stuffy Singer - (Alexander) - had a recurring role in *Beulah* starring Louise Beavers in 1952. Ethel Waters played the role of Beulah from 1950 to 1951. He also can be seen in episodes of *Annie Oakley*, *The Adventures Of Ozzie and Harriett* and *The Patty Duke Show*. During the period from 1947 to 1957, he performed in over 5,000 shows, adding together movie, television and radio appearances with almost every star of that era. He has also had great achievements in handball and table tennis and has been inducted to Halls of Fame in both sports.

Florenz Ames - (Mr. Julius C. Dithers) played Inspector Richard Queen on the series *Mystery Is My Business* in 1954. He was also Silas Applegate in *The Hardy Boys: The Mystery of the Applegate Treasure* in 1956.

Hollis Irving - (Harriet Woodley) played Aunt Phoebe on *Margie* from 1961-62. She also played parts on *The Real McCoys*, *Room 222* and *All In the Family*.

Frank Nelson - Best remembered as the everyman who made life miserable for Jack Benny. During his 50 year career, he also made appearances on *Our Miss Brooks*, *I Love Lucy*, *The Flintstones*, *I Married Joan* and many other programs.

Walter Woolf King (O. A. Bates - insurance man) - worked with such comedy greats such as Laurel & Hardy, Burns & Allen and The Marx Brothers. Among his television appearances were shows such as *The Munsters*, *Wagon Train*, *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour*, *The Virginian*, *The Beverly Hillbillies* and several others. (Pictures with Della Lind and Laurel & Hardy in *Swiss Miss*, The Marx Brothers in *A Night At The Opera* and in 1982 at a Sons Of The Desert banquet.)

Director **Hal Yates** - working primarily with Edgar Kennedy. Directed the Laurel and Hardy comedy short "Hats Off" (1927), precursor to their Academy Award winning comedy "*The Music Box*" five years later, based on the same premise of lugging a bulky object (in the former case, a washing machine; for the latter, a piano) up a lengthy flight of stairs. He repeated a similar plot on the Kennedy short "*It's Your Move*" (1945).

From Laurel & Hardy's The Devil's Brother (Stan's finger wiggle game)
- Secret oath of The Loyal Order Of Caribou.

A revival of this series was attempted in the 1968-69 season with Will Hutchins, Patricia Harty, Peter Robbins and Pamelyn Ferdin as the Bumsteeds and Jim Backus as Mr. Dithers. The series lasted for only 13 episodes which aired on Thursday nights at 7:30PM on CBS.

REFERENCES

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