

Andy Devine

The rotund comic character actor of American films, Andrew Vabre Devine was born in Flagstaff, Arizona on October 7, 1905. However, Andy Devine grew up in Kingman, AZ, where his family moved when he was 1 year old. Andy's grandfather, Thomas Devine Sr., emigrated from Ireland to the United States in 1852. Eventually ending up in Kalamazoo County, Michigan where Andy's father, Thomas Jr. was born.

Devine attended St. Mary and St. Benedict's College, and Northern Arizona State Teacher's College (now Northern Arizona University), eventually being a star football player at Santa Clara University. He also played semi-professional football under the pseudonym "Jeremiah Schwartz". His football experience led to his first sizable film role, in the 1931 movie The Spirit of Notre Dame. On October 28, 1933, he would marry Dorothy House, with whom he would remain married the rest of his life.

Soon Devine began to work in radio. His raspy voice, said to be the result of a childhood injury, was unique and gave him a memorable quality and trademark. He is well-remembered for his role as "Jingles", Guy Madison's sidekick in The Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok. Devine and Madison would also perform their roles on television simultaneously. He also appeared over 75 times on Jack Benny's radio show between 1936 and 1942, often appearing in Benny's semi-regular western series of sketches "Buck Benny Rides Again". Benny frequently referred to Devine as "the mayor of Van Nuys." In fact Devine served as honorary mayor of that city, where he lived, from May 18, 1938. He stated that he preferred to be away from the bustle of Hollywood. In 1957 he would move to Newport Beach.

Devine's work in television included hosting a children's TV show, Andy's Gang on NBC from 1955 to 1960. He also made multiple appearances on NBC's The Ford Show, Starring Tennessee Ernie Ford. He played "Hap" on the TV series Flipper, also on NBC, in the 1960s. He starred in a Twilight Zone episode called "Hocus-Pocus and Frisby" as "Frisby", a teller of tall tales who impressed a group of gullible alien kidnappers.

He was also a frequent guest star on many television shows throughout the 1950s and 1960s, including the role of Jake Sloan in the 1961 episode "Big Jake" of the acclaimed NBC anthology series The Barbara Stanwyck Show. He also played Honest John Denton in the episode "A Horse of a Different Cutter" of the short-lived ABC series The Rounders.

Devine would pass away from Leukemia on February 18, 1977 in Orange California. He was 71 years old.

For The Old Time Radio Researchers, I'm your announcer, Patrick André.