In 1966, Batman™ exploded across America when the dynamic duo appeared twice a week on television and every day in newspapers. These "lost" classic comic strips are collected here for the very first time! Holy nostalgia, Batman!!!
OTHER BOOKS IN
THE LIBRARY OF AMERICAN COMICS

ARCHIE by Bob Montana
BLONDIE by Chic Young
BLOOM COUNTY
by Berkeley Breathed
BRINGING UP FATHER
by George McManus
CANIFF: A VISUAL BIOGRAPHY
CARTOON MONARCH: OTTO SOGLOW AND THE LITTLE KING
CHUCK JONES: THE DREAM THAT NEVER WAS
THE FAMILY CIRCUS by Bil Keane
FLASH GORDON AND JUNGLE JIM by Alex Raymond
GASOLINE ALLEY by King and Moores
GENIUS, ISOLATED AND GENIUS, ILLUSTRATED
THE LIFE AND ART OF ALEX TOOTH
by Dean Mullaney & Bruce Canwell
KING AROO by Jack Kent
LI’L ABNER by Al Capp
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE by Harold Gray
LOAC ESSENTIALS:
BARON BEAN 1916 by George Herriman
THE GUMPS 1929 by Sidney Smith
POLLY AND HER PALS 1933 by Cliff Sterrett
ALLEY OOP 1939 by V.T. Hamlin
MISS FURY by Tarpe Mills
POLLY AND HER PALS by Cliff Sterrett
RIP KIRBY by Alex Raymond and John Prentice
SCORCHY SMITH AND THE ART OF NOEL SICKLES
SECRET AGENT CORRIGAN by Al Williamson & Archie Goodwin
SKIPPY by Percy Crosby
STAR TREK by Thomas Warkentin, Sharman DiVono, Ron Harris, et al.
STEVE CANYON by Milton Caniff
SUPERMAN by Jerry Siegel, Wayne Boring, Curt Swan, et al.
TARZAN by Russ Manning
TERRY AND THE PIRATES by Milton Caniff
STORIES BY WHITNEY ELLSWORTH • ART BY SHELDON MOLDOFF, CARMINE INFANTINO, AND JOE GIELLA
LETTERING BY BEN ODA AND MILT SNAPINN

THE LIBRARY OF AMERICAN COMICS
EDITED AND DESIGNED BY DEAN MULLANEY
ASSOCIATE EDITOR BRUCE CANWELL
COLOR RESTORATION BY LORRAINE TURNER ART DIRECTOR
HISTORICAL ESSAY BY JOE DESRIS CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
MARKETING DIRECTOR BEAU SMITH

Special thanks to Dale Crain for dailies restoration, and to Dan Davis, Jackson Glasey, Joseph Kettels, Dave Anderson, the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum at the Ohio State University, Art Cloos, Saul Ferris, Mike Karberg, Martin O’Hearn, Ivan Tabac, Matt Tauber, Roy Thomas, and Mike Tiefenbacher.

ISBN: 978-1-61377-845-6
First Printing, February 2014

Published by:
IDW Publishing
a Division of Idea and Design Works, LLC
5080 Santa Fe Street, San Diego, CA 92109
www.idwpublishing.com

Special thanks to Dale Crain for dailies restoration, and to Dan Davis, Jackson Glasey, Joseph Kettels, Dave Anderson, the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum at the Ohio State University, Art Cloos, Saul Ferris, Mike Karberg, Martin O’Hearn, Ivan Tabac, Matt Tauber, Roy Thomas, and Mike Tiefenbacher.

Signs reproduced on this page and opposite top were used in newspaper vending machines and display racks.
A History of the Batman and Robin Newspaper Strip

by Joe Desris

Although Batman first appeared in a newspaper comic strip from 1943-1946, and again for a very short stint in 1953, it is the 1966 incarnation which proved to be the most successful, outlasting any previous or subsequent version.

This syndicated series occurred during an unprecedented and eventful period for the character, due to the massive success of the Batman TV series. Batman comic books, which had been in a sales decline, reversed course and increased; an insatiable market for Batman merchandise single-handedly ushered in a new era of comic book and superhero licensing and promotion; Batman settled into the upper echelons of popular culture; the creative staff behind the character completely changed; the Caped Crusader went from detective to campy costumed adventurer to creature of the night; and even publisher DC Comics (then known as National Periodical Publications) itself evolved as a business entity.

• • • • •

Not long after the TV show’s January 12, 1966 premiere, plans were underway to begin the newspaper strip.

“Ledger Syndicate wanted to make Batman,” recalled artist Sheldon Moldoff, who drew the character for Bob Kane at the time, “so DC Comics called up Bob, and said, ‘Do you want to do it?’ and he says, ‘Yes, I’ll do it!’ Bob got the script; he gave it to me. I penciled and inked it.”

Notes from Moldoff’s files indicate he was already working on daily and Sunday strips in March 1966. He ultimately produced fourteen Sundays and twelve weeks of dailies.

Whitney Ellsworth was the writer from its inception and into 1970. He had been involved with DC from its earliest days back in 1934, eventually serving as editorial director for all DC titles. He moved to California in 1954 to work more closely on the Superman TV show, thereby making him a less obvious choice to write the Batman strip since everything else related to it was based in New York. However, Ellsworth had worked in many capacities at DC, was familiar with all characters, and had written several Superman newspaper continuities during the 1940s. He also worked as an advisor to the Batman TV show while it was in preparation—all of which overshadowed any logistical problems of being on the “wrong” coast. The strip’s early storylines emulated the TV show more than the comic books.

Zowie! BATMAN starts next Sunday in the Chicago Tribune comics.
Neither Ellsworth nor Moldoff were credited on the strip at the time, which, like the *Batman* comic books, carried Bob Kane’s signature.

“Bob was always interested,” Moldoff explained. “He didn’t walk away from *Batman*. He wasn’t hands on but he’d oversee. He liked to be there. He would come in and he might say to me, maybe that should be closer, or something like that. He would make suggestions. He didn’t divorce himself from the comic.”

Ben Oda, who was a regular letterer for DC, lettered the strip. “He lived in my neighborhood, in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, and he did jobs for me. When I did a commercial job, for an advertising company, or I did *The Little Woman*, and stuff like that, he did my lettering.”

The eighth week of completed dailies were submitted on May 31st, just two days after the strip premiered.

Less than a month later, however, change was in the air. The eleventh week of dailies, submitted June 22nd, was only penciled and lettered, and was completed by the DC staff. The twelfth week, along with Sundays for weeks thirteen and fourteen, had only been penciled and were submitted to DC around the end of the month.

“Ledger wasn’t happy,” recalled Moldoff. “[The strip] wasn’t selling the way it was supposed to sell. Bob said, ‘They’re going to change the artist on it.’ I said, ‘Why don’t they change the writer?’ You know, they always pull that; they always change the artist. Change the writer!”
Above: Front and back of the 14.5" x 22" Ledger Syndicate brochure, which opens to a massive 29" x 22" and reproduces the original, uncorrected, first three weeks of dailies.

Opposite: Ad in the Minneapolis Tribune, May 15, 1966, two weeks before the premiere.
Below: Ad in the Minneapolis Tribune, May 29, 1966, the day of the strip’s premiere.


Opposite top: Front and back of a membership card from the Batman Club established in conjunction with the strip by the Oklahoman newspaper.

What Ledger actually wanted was for the strip to look the same as the comic books. What brought about that “look” has its genesis nearly three years earlier.

**Batman’s New Look**

In the fall of 1963, a change of creative staff ushered in a new approach to the character. That October, Julius Schwartz replaced Jack Schiff as editor of *Batman* and *Detective Comics*.

“Because of my success in reviving The Flash and Green Lantern” recalled Schwartz, “when I took over Batman, they allowed me to do anything I wanted. When I was asked to assume control, which I was reluctant to do because I hadn’t read Batman stories, I said I’ll do it if I can use Carmine Infantino on the art.” However, Executive Vice President Irwin Donenfeld indicated that Bob Kane would continue to provide pages to DC, so Schwartz “compromised by having Carmine do every other story in *Detective Comics* [and] he did the covers.”

Schwartz’s new staff was responsible for shaping the “New Look,” which was heralded on the cover of *Detective Comics* #327 (May 1964). Penciler Infantino introduced a more angular and graphic style to the series. Inker Joe Giella provided consistency, since some stories were penciled by Infantino while others continued to be drawn by Sheldon Moldoff. Covers were inked by Giella, and sometimes by Murphy Anderson.

Schwartz was responsible for numerous innovations. “When [the assignment] was given to me,” he recalled, “I said, okay, but I’m going to change things around; I’m going to update him. I’m going to give him a new Batmobile, a new way to get down to the Batcave. That Batsignal he has on his uniform can hardly be seen; I’m going to surround it with a yellow ellipse. That was my idea. It happened to be in conjunction with the twenty-fifth anniversary of Batman.”

Clearly, Schwartz was overseeing a vastly different Batman, although the Rogues Gallery of villains continued in full force as he and his staff mined the classic archenemies. “That I decided to do right off the bat,” he joked. “I simply returned to the ones Schiff had been neglecting to use in the past: Joker, Catwoman, Penguin.”

Schwartz also developed new villains, introduced new logos, heightened Batman’s detective skills, and established the Hot-Line to Police Commissioner Gordon. Schwartz placed an “automatic elevator” in the Batcave and modified the exterior Batcave exit that had existed since the early 1950s to now have a camouflaged doorway which resembled the surrounding hillside. “I [also] kill[ed] off Alfred in my second story because I wanted to get a woman in, and that turned out to be Aunt Harriet,” Schwartz added. Faithful butler Alfred gave his life to protect Batman in *Detective Comics* #328 (June 1964), the same issue which introduced overprotective, middle-aged Aunt Harriet. She did not appear in this newspaper strip.

**Hollywood Needs Alfred**

Alfred’s death soon proved problematic. During a meeting in early 1965 between Donenfeld, editor Mort Weisinger, and representatives of the TV series (probably producer William Dozier and possibly others), a need for Alfred surfaced. “Mort and I helped create the family in the *Batman* show,”
recalled Donenfeld. “For instance, we needed his house, Wayne Manor. In the comic books it just existed and they left it. In the Batman show, we created the idea of an Aunt and a butler. We needed somebody in the house to create the situation for them to leave, and for them to talk to somebody other than themselves.”

It wasn’t the first time Hollywood affected Alfred’s role in comic books. The 1940s heavyset butler was changed to match the slim servant seen in the 1943 movie serial and 1943 newspaper strip.

“They came to me,” recalled Schwartz, “and said, ‘You’ve got to bring Alfred back to life,’” and so editor Schwartz figured out a way to bring him back from the dead. In a storyline spread over several issues and with hints dropped along the way in letter columns, Alfred eventually reappeared in Detective Comics #356 (October 1966).

By this time, the “New Look” had been in place for slightly more than two years. Moldoff and Infantino were penciling Batman stories published in Detective Comics and Batman, and almost every story was inked by Joe Giella, with occasional assignments given to inker Sid Greene. Giella also inked covers until he began working on the strip. It would have been Giella’s finishes that executives at the Ledger Syndicate saw and most likely expected when looking at the comic books.

Carmine’s Close Encounter

Carmine Infantino’s part in Schwartz’s successful reincarnation of Flash and then Batman did not go unnoticed by the competition, specifically Stan Lee at Marvel Comics. “Stan wanted me to come over,” recalled Infantino. “Stan was courting me, so DC put me on salary right away.”

With Infantino in the office and already working on Batman stories, he would have been a logical choice for the newspaper strip. “Donenfeld thought the strip was slipping,” recalled Infantino. “So he called me in. He says, ‘I want you on the strip.’…So that’s when they stuck me on it. Then they were very happy.

“I didn’t do that many of them, actually. They offered me the whole thing. I was on salary at that point. I was doing the Flash, Flash covers, I was doing that one Detective a month, all the Batman covers. That’s a lot of stuff, then this was on, so I couldn’t handle it because I didn’t have the time. I was very fast. But the licensing really broke my back, because Murphy and I were doing all the [art for the] licensing. All kinds of stuff. They didn’t want anybody else to touch it, so I had to drop [the strip].

“I got a call from the syndicate, I remember that. They were irritated. I said, ‘Listen, I’m out of it. I don’t care what you do.’ He says, ‘Well, you’re freelance.’ I says, ‘I’m not freelance, I’m a salaried employee.’”

What Ledger Really Wanted

“Ledger wanted the artist they were accustomed to seeing on Batman [comic books],” recalled Joe Giella,
“…and that was me…. The final finish, the inking, is what’s reproduced and that’s what they were interested in.

“Mort Weisinger asked me if I wanted to try out for the strip,” Giella continued. “I did some pencil samples at the beginning, and then I did some penciling and inking samples.”

Giella’s first published work on this newspaper comic was the August 8, 1966 daily. During most of his nineteen-month involvement with the strip, he continued to ink Batman comic book stories, and kept busy with several other assignments. However, records kept by editor Schwartz indicate a lull in comic book work given Giella in late-1967.
perhaps due to the strip’s workload. On October 16th, Giella was given a
twenty-two-page story to ink, and returned it November 22nd. On November
27th, he only picked up a ten-page story to ink, returning it December 21st. His
next story assignment did not come until February 5, 1968, a point when Giella
likely had already left the strip (his last daily was published March 16, 1968).

“My letterer was Milt Snapinn,” recalled Giella. “Milty. He lived about ten,
fifteen minutes from here. He would come over and pick up [penciled pages]. It
was a mutual thing; sometimes I’d drop it off.” Snapinn worked at the DC offices
and this arrangement freed Giella from having to make frequent drives from his
home on Long Island into Manhattan. Giella also sent work to DC by messenger.

Giella also enjoyed working with writer Whit Ellsworth. “He was the
gentleman, a terrific guy,” Giella said, fondly recalling Whit. “Once in awhile
he’d call me up and say, you know, in that third panel, I want to make a
change. Or I’d call him because I wasn’t clear on the verbiage or something.
Whit was a good writer and I enjoyed working on [his scripts]. Everything was
a lot of action, a lot of color, and it really moved. He really was into it.”

“I sent the strip up to DC,” said Giella, “and from there, they did what
they had to. Put the labels on. They took care of the mechanics of it. …I think
it was colored at DC by Sol Harrison or Eddie Eisenberg…one of those two.”

Daily strips did not need a color guide for the engraver, but to provide
some illusion of color and depth, gray shading was applied. The early dailies
by Moldoff used Zip-a-tone, an adhesive-backed sheet with black dots printed
on front. After the artwork was inked, Zip-a-tone was applied whenever
needed (such as Batman’s costume), with any excess areas carefully trimmed
with a knife and removed.

When Giella took over penciling, he used Craftint Singletone drawing
board, which had a nearly invisible dot pattern pre-printed on one side. After
the artwork was inked, a liquid developer was applied to the surface with a
brush, darkening the dots. “They supplied me with Craftint paper,” Giella
pointed out. “It’s a good way to work; a very good quality paper. The only
problem [is] it’s not a kid finish. It’s more of a slick finish. When you erase or
when you pencil, it has a tendency to smudge. And when you’re inking, the
paper doesn’t absorb the ink. It sits on top because it’s like a plate. But the ink
flowed beautifully on there with a pen, and penciling on it was no problem.

“I used an H pencil,” Giella continued, “sometimes an F. On the brush,
a Winsor Newton Series 7. We use a lot of pens. 659 Gillotts, 291s, the
cartoon pen…”

“You have to be ahead [on deadlines],” explained Giella, for both comic
books and syndicated strips. “Julie Schwartz never gave you a phony deadline.
He used to kid the other artists: you could set your clock on when Joe will
come in. I never missed a deadline, except when my dad died. And so we had
a good rapport. DC was fine and I had no problems with Irwin Donenfeld.
He also was a friend of mine. In fact, me and Carmine used to go on his boat
on weekends. He was a nice guy.”

About six months after Giella started on the
Batman
strip, Ledger editor
John Higgins offered him additional work. “I was a little skeptical because I
thought, I don’t have time to do much anything else other than what I’m
doing now.

“He said, ‘How about [drawing] a one-panel cartoon,’” Giella recalled.
“It’s called Character Clues.’ [Things like,] ‘What does it mean if a guy’s got
protruding ears or a long nose, or he’s bald.’ A humorous daily. So I did this
gag cartoon for the Ledger Syndicate while I had Batman. It was written by
this woman that worked up at the syndicate.”
Assistance, Not Assistants

“When I was in the comics, I was [also] doing work for advertising agencies. Many times they gave me a project which required additional help. Notoriously, their deadlines [were] unbelievable. And a lot of times you’re going to have to get help, otherwise you’re not going to get the job. So [if] it would pertain to a comic deal, I would hire guys who were in comics…Mike Sekowsky would give me a hand, or Gil Kane.  

“[Sometimes] I’d get involved with a comic book job and I’d find myself getting behind with the strip. Or if I had to go somewhere. Usually it arose when Julie gave me a job. When I needed the help, I got it. They may have taken my layouts and maybe tightened them up. I don’t want to give the impression that these guys were assistants on the strip, because they weren’t. The finish had to be mine. Nobody but me.”

Giella continued, “I had Bob Powell help me out. Maybe three or four weeks. He never did any of the dailies, just a few Sunday pages. The way it worked with Bob, when I got behind a little bit, I’d call him up. I’d say ‘Bob, can you do me a favor?’ He says, ‘Well I don’t know, Joe, let me see what I can do.’ You know, he never turned me down. He always worked with me. I had to go to a wedding one time. I was in the wedding party, I think I was Best Man, and I was getting behind, because you got to go to the church, the rehearsal, the whole bit.  

“Powell had a cartoony style. The way he helped me out wasn’t really that much help. He did some layouts on a tissue overlay, and then I would either rub it down or just redraw it on the original. He never worked on the original, always on the tissue.”

“Werner Roth helped me out a few times, too,” noted Giella. “It may have been tightening my layouts.”

At one point Giella asked DC to suggest someone to assist with penciling, and they linked him up with Superman artist Curt Swan. “They gave me the right guy,” said Giella. “I went to see him at his home in Connecticut. When Swan gave me back the art, let me tell you, it was just like Superman in the comic books; the drawing was all there. But he only helped me a few weeks. I wish he would have done more.”

Stay tuned for more of this fascinating history in our next Bat-Volume!
Originally, the Sunday strips contained storylines separate from the daily continuity. The Sundays-only stories from May 29 - December 18, 1966 begin on the following page.
MAY 29, 1966

**Batman**

**Midnight in Gotham City:**

Outside Spiffany's Stylish Stone Store, the Penguin perpetrates a prank...

---

**Commissioner Gordon on the Batphone, Sir:** Something about a caper at Spiffany's!

**Holy Fireman, Bruce! You bet!**

**Down they plummet, to emerge in the mysterious batcave as --- Batman and Robin!!**

**And moments later an incredible vehicle roars from a hidden tunnel!**

Unless I miss my guess, Robin, we're on the trail of that bombastic bird of prey --- the Penguin!!

---

**Never open a can of hash with a hatchet --- it might turn out to be red paint!**

**Hello, out there!**

I'm the Penguin, the basest bird in the boodle business and I've got a secret!

---

**In stately Wayne Manor, Alfred (the impeccable British butler) answers the insistent ring...**

I shall tell him at once, sir.

---

What a ghastly responsibility! --- being the one person in the world to know the secret of the true identities of millionaire socialite Bruce Wayne and his young ward, Dick Grayson!
HARK! THE BAT-DETECTOR IN THE HANDLE OF MY BROLLY SIGNALS THE APPROACH OF MY SWORN ENEMIES!

BATMAN AND ROBIN?! YIKES! LET'S TAKE OUR TEN MILLION IN JOOLS AND RUN!

STEADY, BEULAH, MY GIRL! IT'S NO FUN UNLESS IT'S CLOSE!

THERE THEY GO!

LET'S GET THEM!

IN RESPONSE TO THE WHISTLE, SIX OF THE PENGUIN'S FOWL FINKS LEAP IN FRONT OF THE DYNAMIC DUO!

ZAP!

LUNK!!

POW!

GLOMP!

DOWN THE ESCAPE-HATCH, BEULAH, WHILST I PAINT THE RIM OF THIS Lid!
There are hundreds of miles of storm drains! We’ll never find that blasted bird!

Wait a minute, Chum! There’s a map in the Batmobile’s portable crime-lab.

Look, Batman! This tunnel leads straight to the waterfront.

Good thinking, Robin! Let’s go!

With a little luck we can beat Penguin to the egress --- and make things hot for him!

Meanwhile, down in the nice cool sewer...

With a little luck, the Dynamic Duo will get to the exit before us, my dear Belaiah.

And will they get a surprise? Hm, Pengy!

Fearlessly the caped crusader and the Boy Wonder plunge into the inky water!

Holy fish-bait!

Hark! Have they popped into my private pen-pen?

Glick! Those icky lothioids haven’t eaten in a week!


Continued (we hope!)
Deep Danger! Batman and Robin have been lured to Penguin's personal piscatorial pet-pen!

Spud! Glush!

It's no use! We can't fight them off forever, unless...

Hah! I've still got a trick or two up my wing, Batman!

Have the threshing and splashing ceased? Are my arch-foes only an unpleasant memory?

Oh, Pency, you're so indescribably malicious!

You're a dirty bird, Penguin!

They're all-l-l-live!

And we're going to take you to the cleaner!

Down the hatch! Now---will it work??

Eureka! The end of the dynamic duo!!

But Pency, dear, isn't it kind of anicky exit even for them?
Lucky they’re still wet from their little swim! As we say in the railroad business, they make wonderful conductors!

Now—up the ladder! And don’t drop that ten million in jewels!

You finks make sure we’re not followed whilst Beulah and I escape on our trusty ostriches!

Ostriches?!

Exactly! If anyone saw us, would they believe it? You’re so clever, Pengy dear!

Lucky we were wearing the high-voltage batsorbers in our belts, Batman!

True, Chum! And now—up that ladder!

Penguin’s rear-guard, aeh?

Maybe he left some clue behind, too!

An ostrich plume! Some clue!

Perhaps better than you think, Robin!

Continued
THE LOGICAL PLACE TO FIND AN OSTRICH PLUME IS ON AN OSTRICH!

---AND THE LOGICAL PLACE TO FIND AN OSTRICH 15---

---THE ONLY PLACE IN THE AREA WHERE THEY KEEP OSTRICHES! THE I.M. WADDLEIGH ANIMAL COMPOUND!

AND WHAT DOES I.M. WADDLEIGH SUGGEST?

OF COURSE, BATMAN! "I AM WADDLEY!" AND WHO WADDLES? THE PENGUIN!

SO WE KNOW WE'RE ON THE RIGHT COURSE!

MEANWHILE.... WE'LL BE HOME SAFE SOON, BEULAH!

WITH ALL OUR LOVELY LOOT!

PENGY!! GREAT GRACLE! DON'T THEY EVER QUIT???

WATCH OUT FOR THAT TRICK UMBRELLA, ROBIN!

EXCELLENT ADVICE, BATMAN!

AH, BOY WONDER! ARE YOU GETTING ALL WOUND UP IN YOUR WORK?

CONTINUED
NEVER STEP OUT FOR POPCORN IN THE MIDDLE OF A MOVIE!－ESPECIALLY IF THE MOVIE IS BEING SHOWN ON AN AIRPLANE!

HANG ON, ROBIN! I'VE GOT ONE THING TO DO!

THIS STICKY STUFF SHOULD STILL YOUR STRUGGLES, BOY WONDER---AND I'VE GOT PLENTY LEFT FOR BATMAN!

Really? BATMAN! PLEASE! DON'T TOUCH THE REVERSE-BUTTON!!

AT A TOUCH OF THE TRICK UMBRELLA'S HANDLE THE BONDS SPIN OFF ROBIN AND WIND THE WILY BIRD IN HIS OWN WICKED WEB!

CAPTURED I MAY BE--- BUT YOU'LL NEVER CONVICT ME OF STEALING THE JEWELS!

BEULAH HAS FED THE EVIDENCE TO THE OSTRICHES!!

I ANTICIPATED THAT PLAY, PENGUIN---

---AND PUT A LOOP OF BAT ROPE ON EACH!--- NOT ENOUGH TO BOTHER THE BIRDS, BUT ENOUGH TO KEEP THEM FROM SWALLOWING!

CHIEF? BETTER SEND THE BIRD-CAGE! THE PENGUIN CASE IS CLOSED!

NEXT WEEK... A NEW AND TERRIFYING ANTAGONIST! THE NASTY NAPOLEON!