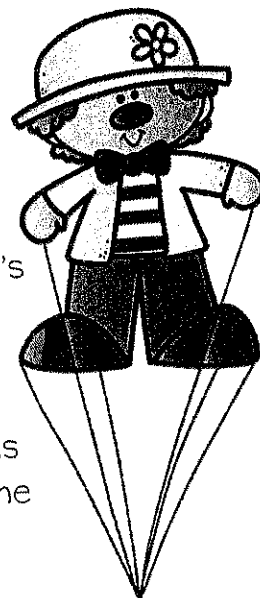


TONY SARG

The Puppeteer Who Brought Balloons to the Thanksgiving Day Parade



MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

The first Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade (then known as the Macy's Christmas Parade) took place in 1924. It ended in front of the Macy's department store in New York City. A large holiday window was unveiled to the thousands of onlookers. Anthony Sarg, a puppeteer and theatrical designer had planned the displays. He was also the artistic designer and mastermind of the parade. During the fourth annual Macy's Christmas Parade in 1927, he presented the enormous balloons for which the parade is known.

SARG

Creativity was in Sarg's genes, as his father was an artist and his grandfather a wood carver. His grandmother was a painter who gave him a collection of mechanical toys that likely inspired him. A performance by famed puppeteer, Thomas Holden, inspired Sarg to experiment with puppet designs. Sarg became well known for his puppet shows. He moved to New York City after World War I with his wife and daughter. He was known as a practical joker, life of the party, and hard worker. In addition to his puppet shows, he also worked on cartoons, children's books, mechanical toys, advertising, window displays, and balloons.

PARADE BALLOONS

Sarg's first parade balloons were filled with oxygen instead of helium. They had to be propped up by teams of puppeteers. This included the 1920s cartoon star, Felix the Cat. Some other early balloons included a 20-foot-long elephant, a 60-foot-long tiger, and an enormous hummingbird. The parade started using helium-filled balloon in 1928. There have been many balloons featured over the years. They remain a highlight of the parade each year.



DEATH

Tony Sarg died in 1942 at the age of 61 from complications of a surgery. His legacy continues today as millions watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade balloons each year.

Name _____

TONY SARG

MULTIPLE CHOICE: Choose the best answer.

1. Where is the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade located each year?
 - A. Washington, D.C.
 - B. Orlando, Florida
 - C. New York City, New York
2. Why did the first parade balloons have to be propped up with stilts?
 - A. They were filled with helium
 - B. They were filled with oxygen
 - C. They were difficult to control
3. What cartoon character was first featured as a balloon in the parade?
 - A. Felix the Cat
 - B. Snoopy
 - C. Mickey Mouse
4. What is the author's purpose main in writing this passage?
 - A. To persuade the reader to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.
 - B. To entertain the reader with an interesting story about a puppeteer.
 - C. To inform the reader of the life of Tony Sarg and his role in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.
5. How did Thomas Holden impact Sarg's life?
 - A. He taught him how to draw
 - B. He inspired him to become a puppeteer
 - C. He gave him a job at the parade
6. What was Tony Sarg's occupation?
 - A. Film director
 - B. Department store owner
 - C. Puppeteer

