



Sunday, 27 January 2019

Wonga and Wife

The Jack Benny show was dismantled piece-by-piece as the 1950s wore on. Mary Livingstone somehow had a cold or something and then eventually pre-recorded what shows she appeared on. Dennis Day was occupied with television and shows in Vegas so there were weeks when he was absent. But the biggest blow was the loss of Phil Harris, who left at the end of the 1951-52 season amidst conflicting explanations.

Harris was a one-of-a-kind character (though Dean Martin's TV persona borrowed parts of the Harris personality) and larger-than-life. He was impossible to replace. It'd be tough to pick who got the most laughs—Harris or Eddie Anderson.

The Benny show was a launching pad for Harris' own comedy programme with his wife, Alice Faye, first on "The Fitch Bandwagon" in 1946 and then on their own radio show from 1948 to 1954. They were married for 54 years.



Harris and Faye didn't move their show over to television, even though he had a long-term contract with NBC. They seem to have preferred enjoying their wealth by relaxing in Palm Springs.

It's been a while since we posted some clippings about Wonga Philip Harris and his lovely wife. Let's rectify that. Our first piece is from 1947, the second from 1963.

Phil, the Kids, Radio Concern To Alice Faye

The Movie Folks Wish She Hadn't Gone Away

By RALPH DIGHTON

Hollywood, April 12 (AP)—A gal who can walk away and leave you wishing she hadn't—that's Alice Faye. After all these years and two babies, the lovely Alice is as lovely as ever. Still possessor of the best figure in Hollywood—broad-shouldered, slim-hipped and full-bosomed—Alice lives on a hillside at nearby Encino with none to appreciate her beauty but her bandsman-cut-up husband, Phil Harris.

TCF Wishes She'd Return

Twentieth Century-Fox, to whom Alice owes two movies, thinks she ought to get back in pictures. Twentieth is so certain the public would like to see Alice again it is re-releasing Alexander's Ragtime Band. But Alice can't quite make up her mind.

The money no longer is important. She made quite a chunk in the movies, and kept it. Phil is one of Jack Benny's headliners (at about \$80,000 a year), and Phil and Alice have their own radio program.

The Faye-Harris show, less than a year old, enjoys a Hooperating around 20.4, compared with Jack Benny's 29 and Edgar Bergen's 24.6. Some critics wonder, however, if the rating would be so high if the Faye-Harris show were not sandwiched in between Benny and Bergen — one of radio's best Sunday spots.

Even so, Alice is not satisfied with the rating, but she isn't unduly concerned. Her greatest interest these days is her family—five-year-old Alice, Jr. and three-year-old Phyllis—and "just keeping Phil (an ex-man-about-town) happy."

Phil, apparently, is happy. His home life bears about as much resemblance to his hard-drinking, lame-brain radio roles as a quart of milk does to a fifth of bourbon.

During his spare time, Harris is a pretty fair amateur gardener. Every tree and shrub on his once-barren eight acres was planted by the maestro himself. The Harrises currently are having swimming pool trouble.

Somehow or other, one of the drain pipes clogged.

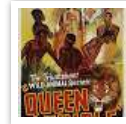
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Fernando Llera Blog Cartoons



Longest living animals in Chapultepec's Zoo in need of special

care. - ©2019 fernandollera.com 1 day ago

Movies with Michael



Cowboy Church #19 - Hello my friends and welcome to another addition of Cowboy Church. We start

"Now we gotta drill down through three feet of concrete," moans Harris, "and listen to them guys chutta-chutta-chutting with drills and swinging picks all day long."

Phil will do anything for a laugh. He's been that way ever since he was a drummer in Nashville, Tenn., in the early '20s. It was this love for a gag that first put him out in front of a band doing "variety" numbers. Over the years Phil has developed a terrifically rapid delivery. He's one of the fastest men with a gag in radio. Alice says that's the one thing she dislikes about their own show.

"I can't keep up with the guy," she says. "Nobody could."

"When we first started, he used to bawl me out good for flapping my lines. Now I'm beginning to get the hang of it. But every Sunday I wonder whether I'm going to get a pat or a push."

Second Marriage for Each

Alice, 32, and Phil, 41, have been married six years. Each has a divorce in the past. She once was married to Tony Martin; Phil to an Australian actress, Marcia Ralston. Their friends think this marriage has as good a chance as the next one. Two beautiful blonde children (Alice Jr. is as pretty as her mother and almost as good an actress) would seem to cinch the matter.

"I like a drink now and then as much as anybody," says Harris. "We have our moments, but never in front of the kids. That's the main thing. You got to be careful with kids."

You also have to be careful, Phil says, with the public. His booze-hound characterization on Benny's show is beginning to backfire. He refuses to have his picture taken with anything resembling liquor around.

"It's just a gag," says Phil, sounding puzzled and hurt, "but them people are really getting down on me."

Phil and Alice Won't Sing Duets

By VERNON SCOTT

UP-International

Hollywood, Jan. 18—Alice Faye and husband Phil Harris will appear together on television next week for the first time in seven years.

The gorgeous blonde and her Southern Fried husband, however, still refuse to sing a duet.

"Look," said Phil during a rehearsal break for the Red Skelton show, "everybody does duets, and they do 'em pretty good. Alice and I have never done a number together and when we do I think it should be something outstanding."

Alice nodded agreement. So the Harris family will be winging their own numbers individually on the Skelton Show Tuesday at 8:30 p. m.

The arrival of the couple in Hollywood always causes something of a stir. They were among the first movietown celebrities to move to Palm Springs permanently, and since then other stars have followed, including Skelton.

"It's an entirely different way of life down at the Springs," Alice said. "We do all our own cooking. And we go to bed early and get up early. Phil's a wonderful chef."

"I've been cooking most of my life," the comedian agreed. "I specialize in all them Southern dishes, especially cornbread. If I don't have cornbread at least twice a week I'm a miserable man."

Because Palm Springs temperatures rise to 115 degrees in the summer and rarely fall below 100 for months on end, the Harrises were asked how they stood the gaff.

"It's not as bad as it sounds," said Harris. "I play golf almost every day of my life out there. The humidity is real low."

"Almost every house is equipped with air conditioning and a swimming pool," Alice went on. "And you get accustomed to the heat."

"We do a lot of traveling during the summer anyhow," Phil put in. "I'm crazy about hunting so I head up to Colorado or northern California on hunting trips during the hot season." Among other stars with homes in the famed resort are Debbie Reynolds, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, the Marx Brothers and Lucille Ball. Even Ex-President Eisenhower makes a yearly pilgrimage there.

"We moved to the Springs 11 years ago," Harris said, "and were among the original members to build the Thunderbird golf course. It was the second golf club in Palm Springs. Now there are 19 courses in the area."

"And Phil's played all of them," Alice said.

Both members of the Harris family said they'd like to become more active in show biz, now that their two daughters have left the nest.

"Word got out that I didn't want to work," Phil said unhappily. "That's not true. I want to get back in action, but doing worthwhile things. There's no point in getting into a situation comedy where I lock myself in a closet and someone pours a bucket of water on my head."


"All that has been done before by funnier people than me."



our music selection off with The Sons of the Pioneers' 1947 recording of the go...
1 day ago

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SATURDAY
AFTERNOON - Nice view. I actually drew it into a panel


today.
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New blog on my Art work...Original art...prints for sale petergrayart
ist@gmail.com for prices etc... -
https://petergrayart.blogspot .com/ Will update it like I do on Facebook.
2 weeks ago

Alice, too, would like to try her hand at some guest shots in TV drama—even if it does mean leaving Palm Springs sunshine for Hollywood's smog.


Posted by [Yowp](#) at [07:04](#)
Labels: [Jack Benny](#), [Vernon Scott](#)

2 comments:

 **bgrauan** 27 January 2019 at 18:19

It was also a matter of economics. By the fall of 1952, network radio's ratings were in a steady decline. Even though Jack was still "#1" in the Nielsen radio ratings surveys at the time, there were fewer listeners, because they continued to gravitate towards television. And that meant most advertisers, including American Tobacco, were feeling the economic pinch as they expanded their budgets towards television. For example, they continued to sponsor separate TV and radio editions of "YOUR HIT PARADE" (the radio show featured Guy Lombardo and his "Royal Canadians"), as well as sponsoring Jack's monthly TV appearances right after his radio show. But something HAD to give- and they informed Jack that he was going to receive less money from them in staging his weekly radio program for the 1952-'53 season. That meant he was going to have let someone in his cast "go"- and that someone was Phil. He was under contract to NBC, and he was appearing less because of commitments to his own radio show. It was an amicable departure, and Jack hired Bob Crosby to "replace" him, mostly because he was paid less than Phil.


[Reply](#)

 **Pokey** 6 April 2019 at 23:02

Phil Harris was always hilarious..well on most records..yesterday, coming from the doc, I heard his sole Billboard #1, THE THING, 1950, on Sirius AM (US), 50s on 5 (do you hear Sirius 50s on 5 Canada, Yowp?). Of course he did most gently humorous, touching songs (his first 1940s, ONE-ZY, TWO-ZY, and I'm just going by Joel Whitburn's POP MEMORIES, though inconsistently inaccurate..) dead serious (not Sirius:)) RIVER STAY AWAY FROM MY DOOR (a song Kate Smith/Guy Lombardo and the Royal Canadians did a standard simul-covered.) He was great.SC

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**Supervised By Fred Avery: Tex Avery's Warner Brothers Cartoons**



Coming Soon To This Blog...

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[Chris Reccardi Interviewed](#)
- I don't want to start a practice of publishing an interview every time someone from Ren & Stimpy dies, but Chris Reccardi (1964-2019) was too important a f...
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**Likely Looney, Mostly Merrie**
[That's all, folks!](#) - My posts have gotten thinner over the years. I'm aware of that. I've been hopeful for a long time, that I can remain active with blogging and sharing furth...
6 months ago

Kids, Eh?
[#1288: Bird Call](#) - #1288: Bird Call
10 months ago

**Cartoons, Model Sheets, & Stuff**



Pete Hothead Model Sheets - Here are a few model sheets from the first Pete Hothead short. Released in 1952 and directed former Tom & Jerry animator Pete Burness. Ted Parmelee was the...
1 year ago

**Dr. Grob's Animation Review**
[Zozor ruine la réputation de sa famille \(Zozor Ruins the Reputation of His Family\)](#) - After his move to the United States in 1912 Émile Cohl starting experimenting with putting the idiom of comic strips to the animated screen, being the fir...
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