



Sunday, 15 September 2019

Two Remleys, Part Two

Dennis Day had two shows. Phil Harris had two shows. That was a running gag on Jack Benny's radio show. It was used as another put-down of Jack, who only had one show.

Someone else had two shows. Frank Remley.

This gets a little tricky, so bear with me. Remley was in Harris' orchestra when it was hired to work on the Benny show in 1936. Over a number of years, Remley's name was used whenever Benny's writers needed a gag about someone more dissipated than Harris. When Harris was hired by F.W. Fitch to do a second show, hosting the *Bandwagon* in 1946, he needed a foil. Who better than Frank Remley? After all, there was instant name recognition from the Benny show. So now Remley was on the Benny show playing the guitar and on Harris' show...well, kind of.

Movie fan magazines are not exactly noted for their veracity, but there's no reason to disbelieve this story that Harris told *Modern Screen* in its June 1948 issue.

We had an awful time casting Frankie. Frank Remley is my oldest friend. We began in this business together, me a drummer and Frankie playin' guitar. When I got my own band, he came with me. We've played in every big and little place on the globe, lived together until we got married. I'm always kiddin' him about his age and all that.

Well now we were castin' for this part. Actors were readin' for us and we were turnin' 'em down right and left. Suddenly I say how wonderful if this guy were able to do it himself, after all he's a pretty amusing guy. So I call him up — he's got his own little combination by now and is playing around town. I don't tell what I want him for, just say, "Come over."

He brings his guitar of course. I hand him a script and tell him to read with me so the director and the rest can hear that he's an actor too. "Now Curly," he says, (he's the only one who calls me Curly) "I'm no professor." I tell him to shut up and start readin'. He keeps tryin' to tell me something but of course I won't let him. I got one thing on my mind. So we start and he goes like a wagon with a broken wheel. He's slow, his timing is impossible. I say, "Are you afraid, Frankie?"

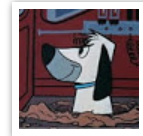
"Look Curly, I've been trying to tell you something," he says, "it's something I've been meaning to tell you for several months. I got myself a pair of reading glasses, can't read without 'em now. I left 'em home today. I can't hardly see this paper I'm holding let alone the printing on it."

He'd been hiding this about the glasses because he knew I'd rib the brains out of him for growing old and all that. Well, before we got around to giving him another chance to read, a very good professional actor blew in, just out of the army and we gave him the job. And Remley works in the band, playin' the old guitar. He practically falls off his chair every week when he hears himself being impersonated.

Elliott Lewis was hired to portray Remley, so you now had the fake Remley on the air on the Harris show, and the real, guitarist-not-speaking-on-the-air version on the Benny show.



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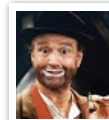


[Some Cartoons For Saturday Morning #80](#) - Hello my friends

and welcome back for another selection of classic cartoons. Today's selection begins with one of the great Mickey, Donald and Goofy car...

32 minutes ago

Way Too Damn Lazy To Write A Blog



[Born on July 18, 1913 - Red Skelton](#) - *Today's post commences

with the Guzzler's Gin routine (from Ziegfeld Follies) by R...

1 hour ago

Fernando Liera Blog Cartoons



['Cozy Bear' Group Tied to Hacks on Covid Vaccine Research.](#) - ©2020

[fernandollera.com](#)

15 hours ago

News From ME

[Sorry...](#) - As far as I know, I do not have any diseases. I just have too much to deal with right now so I won't be blogging much if at all. I'm postponing all the web...

19 hours ago

Cartoon Research

[In His Own Words: H.T. Kalmus on Disney in Technicolor](#) - Suspended Animation #276 Many

Through circumstances I've never understood, when Harris left the Benny show in 1952, his orchestra stayed with Benny; Walter Scharf continued to front a different band on the Harris show. That meant the real Remley was still plucking away with Benny. When that happened, the fake version played by Elliott Lewis on the Harris series unexpectedly changed his name to "Elliott Lewis" with an explanation that was more contrived than funny.

I'm glad you followed all that.

Remley (the real one) was lucky enough to get that far. Here's a 1924 wire service story.

YOUTH IS KILLED AT MODESTO

By the Associated Press

MODESTO; Sept. 13.—Allen Young, 20, of Eagle Rock, Los Angeles county, was killed early this morning when as a member of a party of six musicians he was driving south towards Los Angeles. Their car tipped over directly across the Southern Pacific tracks at Hatch crossing, known as "death curve." A Southern Pacific northbound train came along a few moments later and hit the wreck.

Young was taken aboard the train and died there in a few minutes. When the engine hit the car the gas tank exploded and the automobile was burned up. Other members of the party were Sloan Campbell, Berkeley; Frank Remley, Los Angeles; Rene Duplessis of Van Nuys; Gordon Glenn of Los Angeles, and Mark Murray of Long Beach. All are believed to be students at the University of Southern California.

Remley was a great travelling companion. Wire service stories reveal how Remley and Harris or Remley and Benny would hop in a car and go somewhere, including trips to British Columbia. Here's an Associated Press story about an unusual cross-country auto journey. It's from August 27, 1948.

Phil Harris at Fargo With Jack Benny's Car

FARGO—(AP)— Orchestra Leader Phil Harris and his guitar player, Frank Remley, were fishing near Detroit Lakes, Minn., Thursday. They arrived in Fargo Wednesday and went to Little Detroit Lake, where they are staying at the cottage of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Paulsrud, Fargo. Harris and Remley were driving an English car which Jack Benny bought on his trip to Europe this summer. Harris and his wife, Alice Faye, and Mr. and Mrs. Remley accompanied Benny on the trip.

"When we landed at New York, Benny intended to ship the car to California but Remley has told me so much about Fargo and the lake district that we sent our wives home by train and we're driving to Hollywood."

Remley is a nephew of Nick Remley, fire chief at Moorhead, Minn.

Frankie accompanied Benny in performances on the road, too. They appeared together at the 93rd California State Fair in Sacramento in 1952. They also went to Korea together during the War in a taxing tour of military camps.

Remley's name and off-mike laughter remained on the Benny radio show until it signed off in 1955. Benny was busy with television at the time and the real Remley actually showed up on camera a few times and spoke. He was also conducting his own orchestra by the mid-50s; Benny once plugged it on radio and its club appearances were broadcast for a while late night on KABC radio.

The most print Remley got may have been when he passed away on January 28, 1967. Newspapers all over North America picked up the story. There was a sad sidebar to it.

Frank Remley Dies at 65

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Frank Remley, known to radio fans as the humorous drunk who traded quips with Jack Benny, is dead, a victim of heart failure.

The 65-year-old guitarist, a fixture on the comedian's shows of nearly 30 years, died Saturday of a cardiac arrest after open heart surgery.

His death came only a few months after the presumed death of his only child, Frank, Jr., 24, who disappeared with friend last Aug. 14 while sailing from Newport Beach to Portland, Ore. No trace of them was ever found.

Remley was born in Moorhead, Minn., on Oct. 23, 1901, grew up in Valley City and Fargo, N.D., and came to Hollywood in 1920.

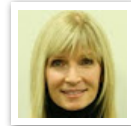
He eventually joined the Phil Harris Orchestra and, in 1938 [sic], became a member of Jack Benny's group. He was a left-handed guitar player on the Benny show.

Survivors include his widow Helen; a brother Edward Kennelly; a sister Alice Schmallen; and his mother, Mrs. Nell Kennelly, all of Fargo.

references may be found regarding two-strip Technicolor. I have been guilty of discussing Walter Lantz's King of Jazz (1930)...

1 day ago

AFRTS Archive



Mary Turner 1985 - Mary Turner today Mary Turner really

rocked the house. Normally when any of the jocks got a reaction, it'd be split. The ones that were really liked wou...

3 days ago

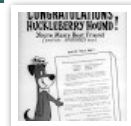
The World of Knight



TONIGHT, 11:54 PM. - COPYRIGHT 2020 BY MILTON KNIGHT

3 days ago

Yowp



Hanna-Barbera Birthday Bid-You-Knows - 63 years ago today, some

forms were signed by George Sidney, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera creating what eventually became the biggest TV cartoon operation i...

1 week ago

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



Wabbit Twouble: A Small Addendum to An Outstanding Podcast -

Original animation drawing from Wabbit Twouble with color notations for the ink and paint department. Release date: 12/20/41 Availability: Looney Tunes Gol...

3 weeks ago

Mark Kausler's CatBlog

The Lady and the Tiger - From the Cathy Hill Archive of Unpublished Comics comes "The Lady and the Tiger". This story was drawn before Cathy started the "Mad Raccoons" series. U...

4 weeks ago

Termite Terrace headlines

Porky's Hot Dog Intake - Western Publishing definitely isn't free of cannibalism when it comes

Besides being travelling companions, Benny and Remley were great letter writers and exchanged correspondence, some of which would never be approved by radio censors. Benny wasn't above using four-letter words off the air. Frank Remley seemed to enjoy life and have fun, and that sets a pretty good example for us all.


Posted by [Yowp](#) at [07:06](#)



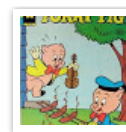
Labels: [Jack Benny](#)

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to comics featuring Porky Pig. These are just some of the covers in which

Porky is ei...
4 weeks ago


[Peter Gray's Comics and Art](#)



An early Tom Thug page for sale and other comic art by Lew Stringer go

to link and ebay.. -
<http://lewstringercomics.blogspot.com/2020/02/original-art-for-sale.html>
https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/graphite47/m.html?_nkw=&_armrs=1&_ipg=&_from=
5 months ago

What About Thad?
[Cartoon Logic Podcast](#) -
And yet another distraction from this brick and mortar blog... I've entered the world of podcasting with renowned animation director and historian Bob Jaques...
10 months ago

 **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...
1 year ago

 **Dr. Grob's Animation Review**
[The Flying Man](#) - 'The Flying Man' is a very short absurdist film in which a man drops his coat to take a swim in mid air. Another man with a dog drops by, tries the same th...
1 day ago

Blog Archive

- [2020](#) (215)
- ▼ [2019](#) (376)
 - [December](#) (32)
 - [November](#) (30)
 - [October](#) (31)
 - ▼ [September](#) (31)
 - [Kiss of the Hick Chick](#)
 - [Radio Time With Jack Benny](#)
 - [Am I Happy! And Will YOU Be Happy!](#)

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

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[Spike Surprise](#)

[W. Wren, Take Two](#)

[Fred, Fans and Fuzzless Peaches](#)

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[West of the Pesos Background](#)

[Look Who's In Town](#)

[He Came to Save Van Beuren](#)

[Agony](#)

[Fish! FIIIIISH!](#)

[He Was Always a Boy](#)

[Viva Unmatched Shots](#)

[Blitz Wolf Background](#)

[The Towel and Billboard Lady, Phyllis Newman](#)

[Two Remleys, Part Two](#)

[The Other Guy at Terrytoons](#)

[Where'd That Come From?](#)

[Popcorn Chicken](#)

[Two Remleys, Part One](#)

[Washing Away the Housewife](#)

[McKimson's Farmer](#)

[I Made Jack Benny](#)

[NBC Comics, the Unanimated Cartoons](#)

[Contented Cows](#)

[Bouncing Off the Cow](#)

[No Razzin the Fazzin](#)

[It's Helpful, Anyway](#)

[Fishy Vodka](#)

[The Muse of Labor Day](#)

► [August](#) (32)

► [July](#) (31)

► [June](#) (30)

► [May](#) (32)

► [April](#) (31)

► [March](#) (31)

► [February](#) (30)

► [January](#) (35)

► [2018](#) (379)

► [2017](#) (380)

► [2016](#) (396)

► [2015](#) (389)

► [2014](#) (390)

► [2013](#) (388)

► [2012](#) (397)► [2011](#) (106)

Labels

[Aline Mosby](#) (17)[Art Davis](#) (33)[Bad Luck Blackie](#) (9)[Bob and Ray](#) (10)[Bob Clampett](#) (82)[Bob McKimson](#) (59)[Bob Thomas](#) (53)[Chuck Jones](#) (142)[Columbia](#) (33)[Counterfeit Cat](#) (8)[Cynthia Lowry](#) (26)[Dick Thomas](#) (14)[Don Patterson](#) (17)[Earl Wilson](#) (6)[Erskine Johnson](#) (37)[Felix the Cat](#) (27)[Film Daily](#) (50)[Fleischer](#) (154)[Frank Tashlin](#) (24)[Fred Allen](#) (43)[Fred Brunish](#) (11)[Friz Freleng](#) (137)[Gene Deitch](#) (18)[George Pal](#) (10)[Grant Simmons](#) (4)[Hanna and Barbera unit](#) (99)[Hanna-Barbera](#) (2)[Harman-Ising](#) (61)[Henry Morgan](#) (13)[Irv Spence](#) (8)[Jack Benny](#) (453)[Jay Ward](#) (30)[Jimmy Durante](#) (17)[John Crosby](#) (84)[John Sutherland](#) (28)[Johnny Johnsen](#) (27)[Kenny Baker](#) (6)[King-Size Canary](#) (8)[Laugh-In](#) (11)[Legend of Rockabye Point](#) (6)[Little Rural Riding Hood](#) (7)[Magical Maestro](#) (9)[Maurice Noble](#) (12)[Mel-O-Toons](#) (4)[MGM](#) (553)[Norm McCabe](#) (5)[Pat Matthews](#) (10)[Paul Julian](#) (13)

Paul Terry (2)

Sara Berner (5)

Screwy Squirrel (34)

Spider-Man (1)

Terrytoons (84)

Tex Avery (468)

Tom and Jerry Human (29)

Tralfaz Sunday Theatre (17)

Ub Iwerks (80)

UPA (57)

Van Beuren (94)

Vernon Scott (42)

Virginia MacPherson (14)

Walt Disney (145)

Walter Lantz (241)

Warner Bros. (586)

Who Killed Who (10)

