

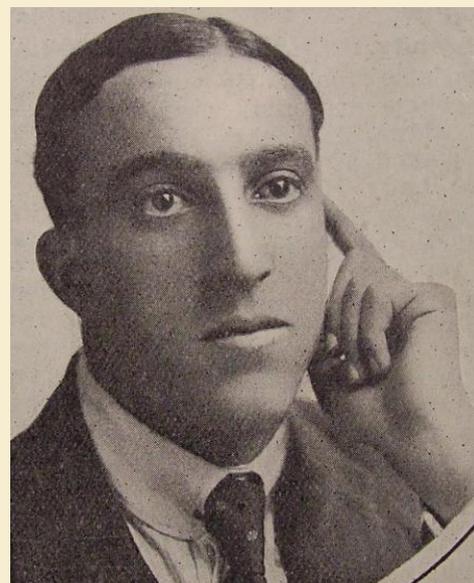
## ROY RENE

One of Australia's greatest ever larrikin comedians, Roy Rene worked for F.M. Clark, James Brennan, J. C. Williamson's, Harry Clay and J. C. Bain before joining the Fullers' vaudeville organisation in 1915. The following year he teamed up with Nat Phillips to create Stiffy and Mo - the duo that still remains one Australasia's most successful and influential comedy partnerships of all time. Between 1916 and 1928 (apart from a break of 18 months), the pair toured Australia and New Zealand as the stars of a series of original revusicals and pantomimes written by Phillips. From mid 1925 to early 1927 Rene left the Fullers to work as a straight actor. He also featured in a George Marlow pantomime (*Aladdin*) and briefly teamed up with Fred Bluett (as Bluett and Mo) on the Tivoli circuit. After he and Phillips split up for the final time in December 1928, Rene toured his own troupe, The Merrymakers (aka Merry Monarchs) and worked as a solo comedian for Frank Neil and other firms. In 1931, he joined Mike Connors and Queenie Paul in producing their own revues, and two years later starred in his only film, *Strike Me Lucky*. Rene continued to perform on stage past World War II, and in 1946 signed a contract with Colgate-Palmolive to appear on radio. He soon afterwards began presenting his much acclaimed *McCackie Mansion* series, followed by *The New Atlantic Show* (1952).

[The following biography engages primarily with Roy Rene's career between 1910 and 1916 and 1929 up until the mid-1930s]

Long regarded as one of Australia's most popular and significant comedians, Roy Rene's career was carved out over more than half a century and saw him involved in live theatre, radio and film. He was also associated with all the leading variety organisations of the period, including the [Fullers](#), the [Tivoli circuit](#), [J. C. Williamsons](#), [Harry Clay](#), [J.C. Bain](#) and George Marlow. With his distinctive Hebrew make-up and leer, Rene was also on half of arguably Australia's greatest-ever comedy partnership, Stiffy and Mo. Together Phillips and Rene all but dominated the World War I and post-war era - a period which also saw the emergence of extraordinarily popular troupes led by comedians such as [George Wallace](#), [Jim Gerald](#) and [Bert Le Blanc](#) and Jake Mack. In her entry on Rene in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Celestine McDermott writes of Rene's ability as a comedian:

Mo's greatest asset was his superb timing, which enabled him to get away with the suggestive double entendre - he never did say anything technically obscene. Able to make his audience laugh or cry, he was the master of the physical nuance; his facial expression, gesture, stance and movement were welded within the black and white caricature of a Jewish comedian, with Australian mannerisms, delivering local vernacular with Semitic lisp (361).



*Theatre Apr.* (1915), 35.

### 1891-1912

The son of cigar manufacturer Hyam (or Henry) van der Sluice and Amelia (nee Barnett), Roy Rene was born Harry Van der Sluice in Adelaide on 15 February 1891. At age ten he won a singing competition in his home town, and three years later, shortly before his family moved to Melbourne, he made his appearance on the professional stage as a juvenile in *Sinbad the Sailor* (Theatre Royal). In later years, Rene said that it was after he arrived in Melbourne that he began to seriously study vaudeville performers on the Rickards circuit in the hope of making it big in that business himself (Rene 31). Over the next few years, he found occasional work on suburban vaudeville programmes as "Boy Roy the Singing Soprano" and, after his voice broke, as "Boy Roy." It was around this time that he changed his stage surname to Roy Rene (after the famous French clown). Although he secured an engagement with [F. M. Clark](#) in Melbourne at age sixteen, Harry Van der Sluice's career juvenile career was largely unremarkable. In early 1910, however, he was noticed by entrepreneur [James Brennan](#), who subsequently gave him an opportunity to appear in Sydney at the National Amphitheatre. Sometime later in the year Rene returned to Melbourne for several months before a minor role as a stable hand and jockey in J. C. Williamson's Sydney production of *The Whip* (17 Dec.). One of his fellow stable hands in the show was Vic Hagan, the son of [Martyn Hagan](#) and Lucy Fraser (two of Australia's leading minstrel performers during the latter decade of the nineteenth century).

Rene left *The Whip* production in late January 1911 (before the season closed) to take up an engagement with Ted Holland at the Theatre Royal. He was back with James Brennan, playing a season in Hobart in April, followed by Melbourne. The *Age* records his debut appearance as being a hit:

There were two new appearances in the first part at the Gaiety Theatre on Saturday – Messrs. Alf Verne and Roy Rene. They are both capital comedians, and their reception by a crowded house was of the friendliest description.<sup>1</sup>



Often billed as "The Yiddisher Boy" Rene is believed to have remained on Brennan's circuit for most of 1911, playing a season in Brisbane with the entrepreneur's touring Vaudeville Entertainers Company (Theatre Royal, 18 Sept.), followed by the National Amphitheatre (Sydney) around the end of the year. Early the following year he made his first appearance with J. C Bain's Vaudeville Enterprises at Sydney's Princess Theatre<sup>2</sup> before being once again linked to Brennan's operations.<sup>3</sup>

Roy Rene's brief engagement with J. C. Bain at Sydney's Princess Theatre in early 1912 was to be a pivotal one in terms of his career. The engagement was significant in that not only did he finally come to the personal attention of Benjamin and John Fuller but it was the first time that he had attempted to do a Hebrew comedy turn. Indeed, his imitation of US comedian [Julian Rose](#) went over so well that he was subsequently invited by the Fullers to play a season in New Zealand at Wellington's Theatre Royal. His reception there was such that he went on to play the other major cities - Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin.

*National Theatre Australia* 4 (Mar/Apr 1988), centrefold section.

## 1913-1916

Following engagements in Adelaide and Perth in early 1913, Rene came back to Sydney once more, this time to play at the National Amphitheatre for the newly formed Brennan-Fuller organisation beginning 30 May. By the end of June, however, he was contracted to Harry Clay, who had offered him a tryout at after they bumped into each other at the corner of Pitt and Market streets. According to *Mo's Memoirs*, Rene had been attempting to meet the manager for months "but no matter how often I went to his office, they would never let me in" (42). He further recalls this meeting and his first night with Clay:<sup>4</sup>

He took a look at me and then came up and said "What are you doing to-night, Jewboy?" I said "Nothing, Sir." "Go and get your props and come out to Balmain to work to-night, one of my turns is off sick." I didn't stop to ask how much money I'd be getting or what I'd be doing or anything else. I just bolted back to my room, picked up my props, shoved them in my port and raced off to the theatre.... I must have been about nineteen then, and this felt like a big chance. When Mr Clay arrived, he said to me, "Go on the corner and do your number." Well I went on and did my biggest number, a thing called "That's All She Lets Me Do," which was all about a man and his girl and how he never even gets kissed good-night. I was very thin in those days, and I wore black tights and very big boots and funny make-up with stripes like a zebra down my back. I'd already taught myself eccentric dancing, and I went on that night and I really was a riot. Even so, I got the surprise of my life when I was packing up after the performance, [and] Mr Clay said "you'll stop for the rest of the week." He gave me £6 at the end of that week, and I certainly thought I was made of money. I can tell you it was pretty good money, too, most of the performers only got £4. Mr Clay must have liked me quite a lot because after that I was with him for many years playing his circuits (42-43).

In June 1913 Rene was sent north to join Clay's touring Queensland company on its return leg journey from Charters Towers. Others to have appeared on the tour were [Ward Lear](#) and the up-and-coming team of [Shipp and Gaffney](#). Upon his return to Sydney, Rene went back to work at Clay's Newtown headquarters, continuing to appear there on a frequent basis until around mid-to-late 1914. Billed as a comedian and impersonator, Rene was a popular addition to the troupe, judging from performance reviews of his appearances on Clay's Sydney and Queensland circuits. Of his time with Clay's company, Rene readily admits that he benefited greatly from the guidance given to him by several experienced Clay comedians, particularly [Ted Tutty](#) and [Frank York](#).<sup>5</sup>

While Rene was mostly associated with Harry Clay during the years 1913 and 1914, he is known to have accepted other casual engagements whenever they became available. These included appearances with J.C. Bain at the Princess

<sup>1</sup> "Amusements." *Age* 15 May (1911), 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 17 Feb. 1912, 3. **Advert.**

<sup>3</sup> See "Historical Notes and Corrections" regarding some inaccuracies in Rene's recall of events for the period 1910-1913, including his first attempt at Hebrew comedy under the management of J. C. Bain.

<sup>4</sup> See "Historical Notes and Corrections" regarding inconsistencies between Rene's recall and primary source research into his movements between 1910 and 1913.

<sup>5</sup> Rene 53

Theatre (Sydney) beginning 8 October 1913, followed by seasons under the Fuller-Brennan management at Melbourne's Gaiety Theatre in November and the Lyric Theatre (Fitzroy) in January 1914. He was also one of a select group of entertainers to perform at a special smoke concert for the Australian Terriers Society, a club for which his brother Albert Sluice would later hold an executive position. For this evening, Rene joined other established celebrities such as [Leonard Nelson](#), Alf Edwards, and [Les Levante](#) in entertaining the large audience of members.

By mid-1914, however, Rene had once again established himself as a feature attraction on Clay's Sydney suburban circuit, and at Clay's Bridge Theatre in particular. Interestingly reviews from this period regularly highlighted his singing as much as his comedy. His reputation (and personality) had by that stage begun to attract attention from gossip columnists as well as critics. He was one of several subjects, for example, in a "Can You Imagine" section of *Australian Variety*. His inclusion simply asked "Can you imagine Roy Rene going to Church?"<sup>6</sup> Among the reviews published in the same magazine are the following:

Roy Rene has established himself as a firm favourite [at the Bridge Theatre], and does much to make the first part go; his songs are sure winners, and he has such a way with him on stage one has to look and laugh at him, which is a valuable asset to such a comedian.<sup>7</sup>

Roy Rene does not get off under four songs nightly, which says well for this performer.<sup>8</sup>

Roy Rene and Ted Tutty share the applause for the first part - neither can be separated.<sup>9</sup>

It has not been established when Rene ended his association with Harry Clay in 1914, but it appears that sometime around August/September he undertook another brief engagement with J. C. Bain at the Princess Theatre in Sydney. An *Australian Variety* review from around this period reports on one of his performances with Bain: "Roy Rene, the well-known akim-foo comedian and the originator of that beautiful phrase, 'I haven't got a feather to fly with,' left his end coat at home the other night. Being stuck up somewhat for the most desired article, he espied an old dummy used in farces hanging up on one of the flies. Promptly letting it down, he seized the bob-tail coat of the scarecrow and emerged triumphant, just as the rag went up. It fits him good so he's hanging on to it".<sup>10</sup>

TOWN HALL. TOWN HALL.  
FOR THREE NIGHTS ONLY.  
commencing:  
**TO-NIGHT. TO-NIGHT.**

**HARRY (CLAY'S) HARRY  
NEW (VAUDEVILLE) NEW  
COMBINATION.**

NEW ARTISTS WITH NEW ACTS.

LESLIE (SHIPP & GAFFNEY) JIM  
Comedians and Expert Dancers.  
MISS ADA SADLER,  
A Songstress of High Quality.  
MR. ROY RENE,  
Comedian and Impersonator.  
MISS IDA JARVIS,  
A Popular Comedienne.  
MR. WARD LEAR,  
The Most Versatile Comedian in the  
Business.  
MISS MAZIE LYALL,  
A Lively Little Lady.  
MR. DAN WELDON,  
A Fine Baritone.  
MISS DORA LYALL,  
The Petite Speciality Artist.  
MR. WALLY EDWARDS,  
An Old-established Favorite.  
MISS RENE CAMPBELL,  
The Brilliant Musician.  
AND OTHERS.

ADMISSION AS USUAL.  
Pit, 6d.; Stalls, 1/; Dress Circle and  
Reserved Stalls, 1/ extra.

Further particulars see day bills, etc.

*Toowoomba Chronicle* 31 Jul (1913), 6.



*Australian Variety* 25 Oct.  
(1916), n. pag.

Around late November/early December Rene accepted a number of engagements in Victoria (including Bendigo) before returning to the Fullers firm through an engagement in Adelaide that went though until 5 February 1915. The following month the Fullers assigned him to a troupe being put together by New Zealand comedians/sketch artists, and siblings, [Albert and Maud Bletsoe](#). After debuting at the Victoria Theatre in Newcastle, Bletsoes' Tabloid Musical Comedy Co (aka Bletsoes Musical Revue Co.) presented its small repertoire of revusicals during seasons in Melbourne, Adelaide, Wellington (New Zealand), Brisbane, and regional Queensland. Rene remained with the troupe up until late-June, playing a final season in Rockhampton.

Prior to ending the Rockhampton season on 24 June, the Bletsoes' advised the Fullers that they would be retiring after the final show. With the company having already been booked for an engagement in Sydney, Benjamin Fuller asked his former producer Nat Phillips to take over the management of the company. Phillips, who was in Brisbane at the time performing with his wife [Daisy Merritt](#), subsequently returned to Sydney with Rene, dancer/choreographer [Rosie Bowie](#), and several members of the ballet. He supplemented the Bletsoe performers with a number of high-profile performers from the Fullers' stable of artists and initiated a series of intensive rehearsals. Renamed Nat

<sup>6</sup> *Australian Variety* 19 Aug. (1914), n. pag.

<sup>7</sup> *Australian Variety* 8 July (1914), 13.

<sup>8</sup> *Australian Variety* 15 July (1914), n. pag.

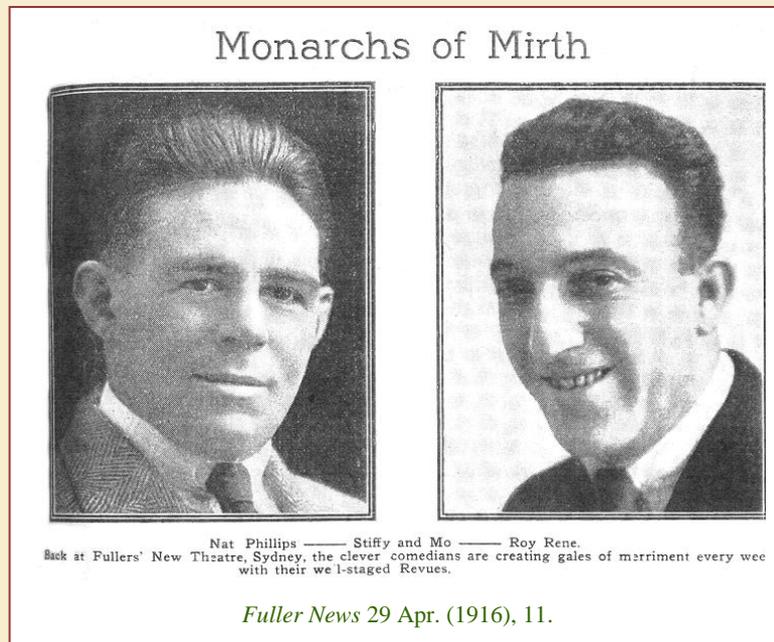
<sup>9</sup> *Australian Variety* 22 July (1914), 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Australian Variety* 14 Oct. (1914), 7.

Phillips' Tabloid Musical Comedy Company, the troupe undertook a spectacularly successful debut season at the Princess Theatre (Sydney) beginning 8 July 1916. It later became known as Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Revue Company or simply.... Stiffy and Mo.

## 1916-1925

[For details of Roy Rene's career during this period, see entries for *Stiffy and Mo* and *Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Revue Company*.]



## 1925-1926



Following the disbanding of the Stiffy and Mo troupe, Rene initially moved away from vaudeville, accepting an engagement to play the role of Albert Kruger in the play *Give and Take* (opposite American Hebrew comedian Harry Green). The comedy premiered in Melbourne on 17 October 1925 and later played several other capital cities. The Sydney season began on 16 January 1926 at the Criterion, before transferring to the Palace Theatre on 3 April. It was also given a revival season in Melbourne, beginning 31 July 1926. Of Rene's performance, one Melbourne critic records: "Mr Roy Rene was ludicrously clever from beginning to end,"<sup>11</sup> while another similarly reports that his delineation was extremely funny and that his "remarkable gyrations caused endless amusement."<sup>12</sup> Even the *Bulletin* found much to applaud in his performance. Noting that Rene had never before had a set part, the magazine's "Sundry Shows" editor wrote: "There is no doubt about his rank as a natural comedian."<sup>13</sup> Further insight into Rene's presence in the play can be gleaned from the *Argus'* review of the initial Melbourne production:

While Mr Green deftly provided light character comedy, Mr Rene offered the contrast of broad burlesque, much in the manner in which he has been appearing as 'Mo' in revue for a good many years. This variety of humorous absurdity with its oily smiles, its poses and writhings, its quaint misunderstandings and mispronunciations, and its comic falls has a skill of its own, and it pleases the fancy of many theatregoers. Mr Rene had a full share of applause and laughter. He was allowed plenty of scope throughout the play, and Mr Green brought him forward to share the curtain honours.<sup>14</sup>

*Bulletin* 29 Oct. (1925), 34.

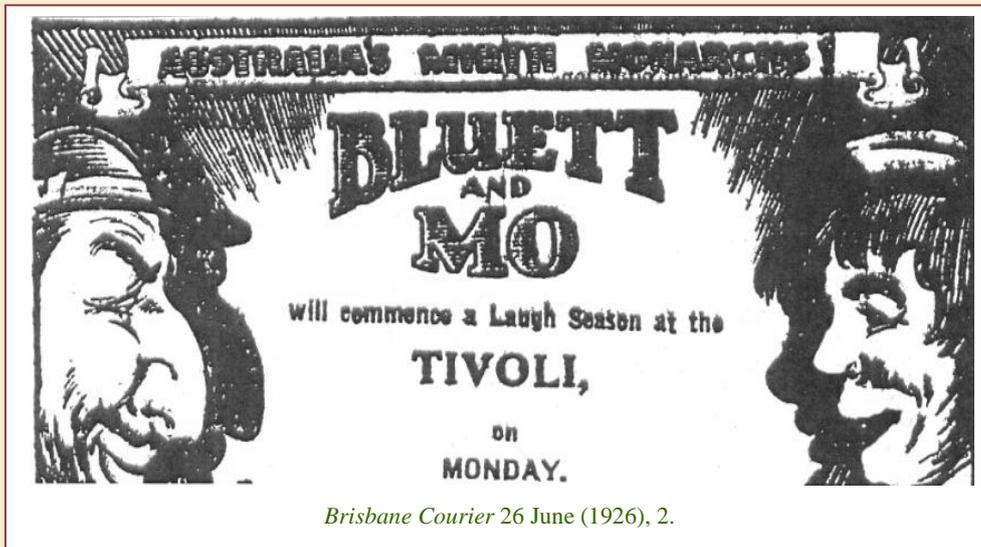
<sup>11</sup> "Athenaeum: *Give and Take*." *Age* 19 Oct. (1925), 14.

<sup>12</sup> "*Give and Take: Revival at Theatre Royal*." *Argus* 2 Aug (1926), 14.

<sup>13</sup> *Bulletin* 22 Oct. (1925), 34.

<sup>14</sup> "*Give and Take: Bright Character Comedy*." *Argus* 19 Oct. (1925), 14.

Sometime around May the following year, Rene returned to vaudeville, joining forces with comedian [Fred Bluett](#) on the Tivoli circuit in an act billed simply as "Bluett and Mo." They initially played seasons in Sydney and Melbourne, before undertaking a national tour, which included Brisbane (in late June/early July) and Adelaide (beginning 16 Oct.). Their act comprised at least two sketches: *The Admiral and the Sailor* (aka *Fun on the High Sea*), with Mo as the admiral and Bluett as a "jolly tar" who resents the commands of his superior, and *Oxford Bags*. The *Brisbane Courier*, in reporting that their engagement had been extended to a second week due to popular demand, indicates that the latter piece burlesqued "the latest mode which has created so much discussion."<sup>15</sup>



[For details of Roy Rene's career during this period, see the AVTA entries for *Stiffy and Mo* and Nat Phillips' *Stiffy and Mo Revue Company*]

### 1929-1939

FULLER'S THEATRE. TO-DAY, 2.30 AND 8.  
**THE BIG LAUGH SHOW.**  
**MO AND HIS MERRYMAKERS.**  
**ROY RENE AS MO**  
 IN THE  
 BUBBLING, BOUNCING, BREEZY REVUE,  
 "A LA CARTE."  
 A RIOT OF LAUGHTER, DANCING, SINGING, AND BEAUTY.

Here are a few of the Fun Stations stopped at on the Express of Merriment:—  
**SCHOOLDAYS.**—When MO steps out as the happy-go-lucky school kid—what a roar of laughter.  
 In "JUST MARRIED" he'll appear as the blushing bridegroom. Imagine what a riot this will be.  
 With MONTE, his boy friend, he'll put the seal on the greatest fun show ever presented at Fuller's.  
 Among the Chief Merry Makers will be—

SADIE GALE,	MAY DALY,	VALMIE RAINE,
LULLA FANNING,	RENE VANDO,	CHAS. MEGAN,
PETER BROOKS,	DAN WELDON,	BILL MILLER.

THE GLORIOUS BEAUTY BALLET,  
 THE SIX BRUNETTES.

DAVE MEREDITH AND HIS MELODY BOYS.

Fuller's Commonsense Prices:—Week Nights: 3/, 2/, 1/. Saturday Nights: 4/, 2/. Matinees: 2/5, 2/  
 1/6, 1/. Plan at Theatre.

*Sydney Morning Herald* 8 Dec. (1928), 2.

<sup>15</sup> "Tivoli Theatre." *Brisbane Courier* 5 July (1926), 17.

The night after Stiffy and Mo played their last show together (7 Dec. 1928), Rene opened with a new company, The Merrymakers. The troupe toured for several months on the Fullers' circuit, presenting a first-part vaudeville and second-part revue. The company initially included Mayo Hunter, the Hawaiian jazz band leader and multi instrumentalist. Also in the company was Rene's fiancée [Sadie Gale](#). In April 1929, Rene accepted an engagement from Clay's Bridge Theatre Company to tour its Sydney circuit.<sup>16</sup> Later that year, he also went through a much-publicised divorce from his first wife, Dorothy "Dot" Claire Davis, whom he had married in 1917. [Dot Davis](#) had been a member of the Stiffy and Mo Revue Company between 1917 and 1925. According to an *Everyone's* article that highlights the divorce proceedings, Rene and Gale were then receiving £70 per week on their contract with Clay's. Referred to as Harry Vander Sluice, Rene is said to have told the registrar (in opposing an alimony increase from £10 to £15) that he held the fear "that when his Clay contract finished there would be difficulty in him securing remunerative employment because of the talkies."<sup>17</sup>



**Dot Davis**  
*Fuller News* 21 Jan. (1922), 16.

Almost immediately after his divorce was granted, Rene and Gale married, spending their honeymoon with the merry Monarchs on a north Queensland tour underwritten by Clay's Bridge Theatre Ltd (the troupe was advertised as Mo's Merrymakers, however). Reviews published in the various regional newspapers indicate that the troupe attracted large audiences, no doubt due to Rene's well-established (almost iconic) status and the fact that he and Phillips had rarely played outside the major Australian metropolitan centres during their career together. "Mo will make his first appearance in Rockhampton," wrote one the *Morning Bulletin* theatre critic. "[He] has been credited with all kinds of gags, the same as car gags are hung on to Henry Ford and economic gags on to [Harry Lauder](#). But 'Mo' first and last, is a true humorist, and too clever to stoop to the vulgar gag. The fact of his starring for 15 years in all the principal theatres of Australia should be sufficient guarantee of Mo's entertaining abilities."<sup>18</sup> A few nights later, the same paper noted that "the humour, though undeniably broad, was of the type on which these artists' reputations were gained, and was apparently expected by the crowd."<sup>19</sup>

AMUSEMENTS

**COLISEUM**

GRAND GALA RE-OPENING,  
**SATURDAY NEXT, SEPT. 21st.**

LOOK WHOSE HERE—

**MO, MO MO,**

The Famous MO of STIPPY & MO.  
AND ALL NEW COMPANY,  
Headed by

**SADIE GALE SADIE GALE,**

The Acme of Versatility.

There is Mo in Motor, the Mo in  
Moth, the Mo in Molar; but the MO  
in MONOTONY is Exited by MO.

THE MONARCH OF MIRTH.  
BOOK NOW AT PALING'S.

**THE KING'S—"CLOWNS IN CLOVER"—To day at 2.15**  
14 Months' Run at the London Palladium—136 Nights in Sydney.

Under the PATRONAGE and in the PRESENCE of  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR and LADY SOMERS.

GRAND GALA OPENING, TO-DAY, AT 2.15,	TO-NIGHT, AT 8.
GRAND GALA OPENING, TO-DAY, AT 2.15,	TO-NIGHT, AT 8.
GRAND GALA OPENING, TO-DAY, AT 2.15,	TO-NIGHT, AT 8.

**FRANK NEIL'S**

**MAGNIFICENT LONDON MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA.**

"CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER."	ANN PENN, ANN PENN, England's Famous Impressionist. A Dozen Stars in One Brilliant Individuality.	"CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER." "CLOWNS IN CLOVER."
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**ROY RENE,** Prime Minister of Mirth.  
**HARDGROVE BROS.,** Novelty American Dancing Comedians.  
**THE LITTLEJOHNS,** Palace of a Million Jewels.

SADIE GALE, MARY GANNON, NEVA CARR GLYN, VIOLET ELLIOT, LEONARD RICH, ERIC MASTERS, CLAUDE HOLLAND, ST. JUSTE HARVE, JOHN V. DOBBIE, CARR and CARLOTTA, and the YOUNG AUSTRALIA DANCE REVUE.  
100 DANCING and SINGING COMEDIANS—WHOOPEE'S FAMOUS BALLET and CHORUS  
PLANS OPEN at ALLAN'S, THEATRE (C., 11,370), All Hotels, NO BOOKING FEE.  
Prices.—6/, 4/, 2/; Mats., 4/, 3/, 2/; Sats. and Hols., 7/, 5/, 2/5; Res. 1/ Extra.

Left: *Morning Bulletin* 17 Sept. (1929), 2.

Above: *Age* 30 Nov. (1929), 32.

Despite being deemed a success by the critics, Rene's biographer Fred Parsons claims that, overall, the tour was disappointing for its star performer. According to Parsons, Mo had been "unfavourably compared with George Wallace, who had [once] cut cane up there for a living" and that "this rankled with [him] especially as George had been Sadie's first boy-friend."<sup>20</sup> Towards the end of the tour, too, Rene began to showing signs of suffering from peritonitis. After the conclusion of the Queensland tour, he and Gale travelled to Melbourne to appear in [Frank Neil's](#) production of *Clowns in Clover* (King's Theatre). As with *Give and Take*, Rene again worked a straight comedy role and garnered a good deal of positive criticism. Although describing him as "grotesquely amusing," the *Argus* theatre

<sup>16</sup> *Everyone's* 8 May (1929), 37.

<sup>17</sup> *Everyone's* 31 July 1929, 39.

<sup>18</sup> "Mo's All New Merrymakers." *Morning Bulletin* 17 Sept. (1929), 3.

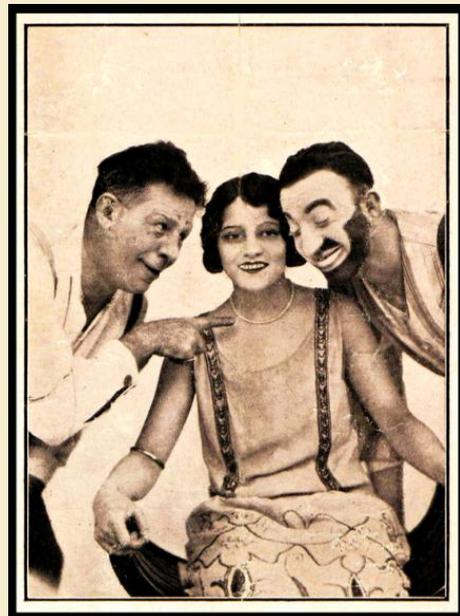
<sup>19</sup> "Mo and His Merrymakers." *Morning Bulletin* 23 Sept. (1929), 3.

<sup>20</sup> Fred Parsons. *A Man Called Mo*, 27.

critic nevertheless suggested that not all theatre-goers would find his comedy inviting given too much quantity, and that he should therefore "not be expected to carry so large a portion of the show." The same critic similarly proposed that despite being a clever Australian comedian, "Gale also appeared in the entertainment too often."<sup>21</sup> Three weeks after the start of the King's Theatre season, the couple joined a number of the other cast members in presenting matinee productions of *Mother Goose*, while also appearing in *Clowns in Clover* at night. While on stage in early January 1930 Rene collapsed from the peritonitis. He was rushed to hospital but although almost dying, within six months, he was back on stage again. During the interim, Gale accepted an engagement with Jim Gerald's Revue Company, which started a five-month season at the Melbourne Tivoli, beginning in March.

In 1931, Rene joined ex-Stiffy and Mo members [Mike Connors](#) and [Queenie Paul](#) at the Haymarket Theatre in Sydney. Connors and Paul later converted the old Sydney Opera House into a new Tivoli Theatre, and it was here that Rene and Jim Gerald, one of his arch rivals for the attentions of "the mob," appeared over the next decade or so. In 1932, Rene starred in his first and only film. Directed by Ken G. Hall, *Strike Me Lucky* was a somewhat disappointing venture for him, as it failed to compare favourably with the cinematic efforts of his other main rival, George Wallace. Rene continued to perform on stage past

World War II, including headline appearances with the [Ernest C. Rolls](#) Revue Company. One of his earliest associations with Rolls was in 1935, through the revue extravaganza *Rhapsodies of 1935* (2 Feb.), which also featured ex-Stiffy and Mo members [Alec Kellaway](#) and [Keith Connolly](#), along with rising stars such [George Moon Jnr](#) and Will Perryman. Much of the music for that production was composed by [Jack O'Hagan](#).



**Sadie Gale with Nat and Roy**  
Source: Roy Rene, *Mo's Memoirs* (1945).

## 1940-1954

In 1943, with editorial assistance from Max Harris and Elisabeth Lambert, Rene released his autobiography, *Mo's Memoirs*. Two years later, he made his last appearance at the Tivoli Theatre (Sydney), effectively marking the end of an era in Australian popular theatre. In 1946, he signed with Colgate-Palmolive to appear live on 2GB's *Calling the Stars* broadcast. It was as part of this programme that he soon afterwards began presenting his much-acclaimed *McCackie Mansion* series of sketches (1947-49). Jacqueline Kent writes that as Mo McCackie, Rene played "a devious, ingratiating character who was inclined to be obsequious to people's faces but who would mutter things about them behind their backs" (14). Originally slated for a six-week season, it eventually ran for two-and-a-half years. Part



of the success of *McCackie Mansions* was its reliance on many of the ingredients of vaudeville. Many of the show's stock phrases, notably Rene's 'you filthy beast' and [Hal Lashwood's](#) "aaah McCackie, you've done it again," became part of the Australian vocabulary for years to come. The show also created classic Australian characters such as Spencer the Garbage Man (played by Harry Avondale); McCackie's young son, Harry (Harry Griffiths); and Mo's next-door neighbour, Horrible Herbie (Jack Burgess). A revue, *McCackie Moments*, was staged in 1949 at the King's Theatre, Melbourne, marking Rene's final appearance on stage.

**"Mo of Australia as Elizabeth of England"**  
Photo by John Lee  
*Australian National Journal* Dec. (1941), 60.

<sup>21</sup> "*Clowns in Clover: Revue at King's Theatre.*" *Argus* 2 Dec. (1929), 18.

The 1950s saw Rene appear in multiple productions: *Cavalcade*, opposite Jack Davey; *It Pays to be Ignorant* (as Professor McCackie); *McCackie Manor* (1951); and finally *The New Atlantic Show* (1952), which again captured a nationwide audience. The late 1940s and early 1950s were not good ones for Rene in terms of his health, however, as he battled against a gradually worsening heart problem.

**THEATRE ROYAL**  
 Props., John Fuller and Sons.  
**CROWDED HOUSES NIGHTLY.**  
**LAST FOUR NIGHTS OF FASOLA!**  
**LAST FOUR NIGHTS OF FASOLA!**  
**LAST FOUR NIGHTS OF FASOLA!**  
 The Great Indian Necromancer.  
 His Illusions this week are **MORE WONDERFUL THAN EVER!**  
 Including the Great **STOCK CHALLENGE!**  
**FASOLA** is firmly secured within the stocks, and releases himself within **TWO MINUTES.**  
**A TREMENDOUS TEST!**  
 But nothing on earth can hold this **GREAT MAGICIAN!**  
**THE YIDDISHER BOY,**  
 ROY RENE An ROY RENE  
 ROY RENE Absolute ROY RENE  
 ROY RENE Scream! ROY RENE  
 This Artist's Wonderful Hebrew Impersonations are responsible for shrieks of laughter from every evening's vast audience.  
**THE WINDSOR CHORISTERS!**  
**THE WINDSOR CHORISTERS!**  
 Receive ovations for their Wonderful Singing. A Musical Treat.  
**FOURTEEN FIRST-CLASS ARTISTS!** 14 **ARTISTS!**  
 Also figure on the Programme.  
 Dress Circle and O.S., 2s; Stalls, 1s.  
 Plan at Dresden (Booking only 6d extra).

While in *The New Atlantic Show*, he suffered a heart attack. Although he recovered, he never worked in radio again. He eventually died on 22 November 1954 at his home in the Sydney suburb of Kensington, and was survived by his wife and two children, Sam and Myra (aka Milo).

*Argus* 21 Dec. (1935), 25.

Wellington (NZ)  
*Evening Post* 19 Mar. (1912), 8

**APOLLO**  
 Commencing Boxing Day and Night.  
**CONNORS and PAUL — ROY RENE**  
**AMALGAMATION.**  
 Present Their  
**MODERNISTIC MUSICAL**  
**VAUDEVILLE REVUE**  
**"GO TO TOWN"**  
 Headed by  
**ROY MO RENE**  
**Mike Connors**  
**QUEENIE PAUL.**  
**Sadie Gale,**  
 LULLA FANNING, MAURICE BARLING,  
 DORIS WHIMP, RONNIE HAY, RITCHIE  
 BROS., MAX REDDY, EDNA CAHILL,  
 PAT WHITE, CHICK ARNOLD,  
 ROLLING ROLLOS,  
 Skaters with Pace and Grace.  
**SEVEN FLYING WARRENDS.**  
 Astounding Acrobats.  
**THE LINDSTROM TWINS.**  
 Swedish Boy Wonders.  
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**Special! Matinees Daily.**  
**PANTOMIME REVELS.**  
 You Must Bring the Children to See  
 the 30 Australian Shirley Temples.

## SEE ALSO

- Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Revue Co.
- Sadie Gale
- Stiffy and Mo
- Mo & His Merrymakers
- Bletsoes' Tabloid Musical Comedy Co.

## TROUPES/COMPANIES

(associated with)

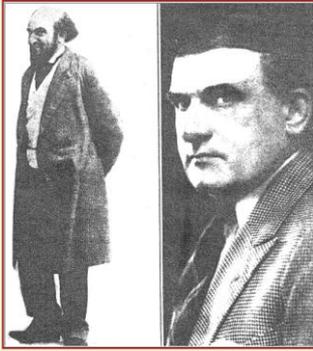
Bletsoes' Tabloid Musical Comedy Co • Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Co • Mo & His Merrymakers •  
 Madge Cloherty's Celebrities • Graham Mitchell's Jesters

## HISTORICAL NOTES AND CORRECTIONS

1. It is presently unclear when Rene first worked for Harry Clay as *Mo's Memoirs* (written some twenty years after the events) either does not provide specific dates or times, or in some instances the memoir contradicts evidence from various primary sources. Concerning his association with Clay, for example, Rene recalls his attempts to make contact:

After *The Whip* finished its season I decided to stay in Sydney because I thought there was more scope for me there, I found things perhaps more difficult than I had working in the Melbourne suburbs. I started off by trying to see Harry Clay... [and] went on trying to see [him] for months, but no matter how often I went to his office, they would never let me in" (41-42).

The problem here is that research into Rene's movements from January 1911 indicates that he in fact finished up with J. C. Williamson's *The Whip* production well before it closed. In this regard his name appears on the bill of Ted Holland's Theatre Royal (Bris) program for 28 January (*The Whip* season ran from 17 December 1910 up until 2 March 1911). Furthermore, he is recorded as being back with James Brennan for most of 1911 (having also spent much of 1910 with the entrepreneur). This is an aspect of his early professional career which he interestingly overlooks in the autobiography. The "Engagements Chronology" below shows, for example, that his appearances under Brennan's management in 1911 began in April with a season in Hobart followed by Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and a return season in Sydney at the end of the year. No record of him being with Clay's during the interim periods between these engagements has yet been located. While the length of each season is unclear, they do tend to indicate that Rene could not have "stayed" in Sydney "for months" at any stage during 1911. While it is perhaps feasible that he returned to the New South Wales capital between engagements and worked for Clay, this scenario does not appear to match the substance of his memoir concerning his time on Clay's Sydney circuit (the "Chronology" demonstrates, too, that Rene could not have been with Clay at any stage during 1912).



**Julian Rose**

*Green Room* Mar. (1924), 33.

Further temporal confusion occurs in the chapters "Boy Roy" and "A Hebrew Comedian" when Rene indicates that until the time he was with Bain in Sydney he'd never done a Jewish act at all:

I'd never thought of being a Hebrew comic," he writes. "It just simply had never occurred to me. After Clay, I was working with Jim Bain at the Princess Theatre, the Sydney one, when the cast kidded me into doing some imitations of Jordan and Harvey, and the famous Julian Rose.... I was working as a cornerman, still black-face, but I had learnt one of their numbers, 'Yiddle on your Fiddle, Play Some Ragtime,' and did it. Then I did an imitation of Julian Rose in his act 'Levinsky at the Wedding.' It was supposed to be an imitation of Rose, but I was no more like him than a fly in the air, though somehow with a black-face the act was a riot. What started out as a joke in the first place turned out to be the most important thing that ever happened to me in my career. That piece of black-face fooling led to my eventually developing into a real comic (45-46).

Although the inference here is that his Hebrew comedy career began "after" his time with Clay, Rene unfortunately does not indicate which year this occurred. He then goes on to recall that it was act (under Bain's management) that caught the in an attention of the Fullers and led to him being booked to play Wellington's Theatre Royal and subsequently resulted "18 months" tour.<sup>22</sup> Rene's billing on that tour (now established as being undertaken in 1912) clearly identifies him as presenting "wonderful Hebrew impersonations,"<sup>23</sup> and as "our Hebrew friend."<sup>24</sup> Given his engagements time frame and the fact that he was presenting his Hebrew act as early as February 1912, Rene's only opportunity to be on "Clay time" earlier than 1913 would have been (as suggested above) for very brief engagements in 1911.

2. The ongoing replication of historical mistakes relating to Roy Rene and the Stiffy and Mo partnership is of much concern, especially given the increasing number of websites which are uploading content from sources which the writers, editors and publishers have not verified for accuracy. Examples of this can be seen in the following:

**Year of birth:** Often recorded as being 1892 (see his entry in *Laughterlog.co*, *Wikipedia*, *Skwirk.com.au* and the *sahistorians.org.au* websites). A number of sites also record both dates (e.g. *Live Performance Australia* and the National Library of Australia's *Trove* database). Jon Fabian, who is currently compiling a biography of Rene and has cited Rene's birth certificate, notes that the replication of the 1892 year of birth can be traced back to a miscalculation on the part of Max Harris and Elizabeth Lambert in *Mo's Memoirs*.

**Stiffy and Mo's first performance:** The start of Rene's partnership with Nat Phillips as Stiffy and Mo has in several instances been brought forward by several years (see for example *Laughterlog.com* and *Internet Movie Database* entries which propose 1914 as the year they teamed up).

**A "blue" comedian:** One of the most enduring myths surrounding Stiffy and Mo, and Roy Rene in particular, concerns the indecent or risqué ("blue") nature of their comedy.

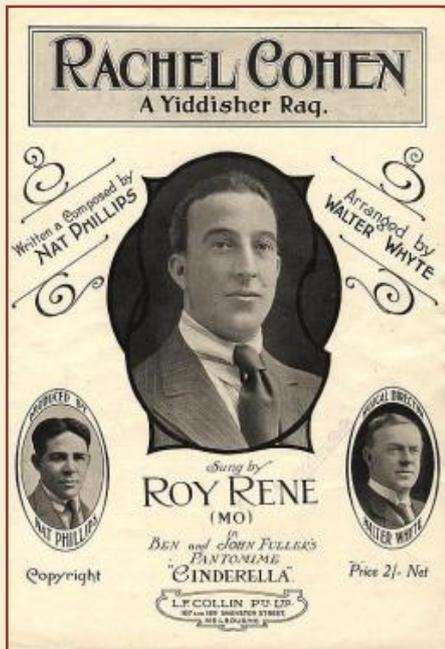
According to Billy Moloney, in *Memoirs of an Abominable Showman*, Rene's humour has been remembered as being much worse than ever presented: "I was able to see a lot of Mo [and] while there was a certain amount of double entendre, there never was a tittle of the smut that unreliable memories and distorted hearsay have attributed... actually one needed a dirty mind to know what was going on." As Moloney recalls Mo saying once, "Thometimeth my gath have a double meaning. I object to a thow vere ther ith no get-out. I leave it to the audienth to take thingth dirty if they vant to." Moloney further notes that "Mo's expressive leer was no sure sign of lechery," and indeed the problem wasn't due so much due to Rene but with the audience, which could easily find dirt where none was intended. "For all his all his reputation," writes Moloney, "Roy Rene was most critical of other comedians' 'blueness'" (23-24).



<sup>22</sup> Rene's first New Zealand tour could not have lasted any longer than 10 months due to the engagements he played in Australia between late February and early November 1912.

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Post* (Wellington, NZ) 19 Mar. (1912), 8. Advert.

<sup>24</sup> *Evening Post* (Wellington, NZ) 16 Oct. (1912), 8. Advert.



An extensive analysis of reviews published throughout Rene's and Phillips' time on stage together also supports Moloney's claim, with mention of Rene's blue humour being found in only a couple of isolated reviews, and then only towards the end of their 1927-1928 reunion period.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, when the "doubtful nature of the humour" is raised in these few instances, neither comedian is singled out suggesting that Nat Phillips may have been an equal partner in approaching the boundaries of what was then considered acceptable stage humour. An item from the *Bulletin's* 'Sundry Shows' page in 1927 explains one reason for the occasional lowering of the comedy tone:

On Saturday Stiffy and Mo kept the crowded audience at Fullers' Theatre in a roar of hilarity with matter which had few objectionable features; the stuff that calls for managerial interference appears to creep in on some of the week nights, in an endeavour to play up to a section of the audience that least deserves consideration. The pair are good enough comedians to do without stuff of this sort; and the management should insist that they shall do without it.<sup>26</sup>

Source: National Library of Australia

Interestingly, during the 1924/1925 period, no reference to "blue" or morally contentious humour can be found in any reviews published in either the *Sydney Morning Herald* or the *Argus*. It is only the *Age* that appears at this time to have questioned the comedians' delivery, and then only on a couple of occasions during the Stiffy and Mo company's four-month season at the Bijou. In one review, for example, the paper's theatre critic writes, "Their work is as fresh as ever but there is still a tendency to create a doubtful type of humour."<sup>27</sup> More typical of the critiques published during their career together is the following from the *Adelaide Advertiser* in 1928:

There may be nothing particularly subtle about their jokes, but their comedy is clean, and the humour, though boisterous, is excellent in its way. The pair have only to appear on the stage for an expectant audience to smile in anticipation of what is to follow, and they seldom disappoint their admirers. Mr Rene has an amazing faculty of turning a joke, and his expression is sufficient, as a rule to make the proverbial cat laugh.<sup>28</sup>

The control that Benjamin and John Fuller had over their circuit is an issue that has long been overlooked. Their policy was that the entertainment they presented had to be suitable for families, and offensive material was effectively banned from their shows. This was tightly maintained by the company's theatre and circuit managers, and any act which went too far was dismissed. There is no doubt that some performers pushed those boundaries - Rene and Phillips, and Daisy Jerome, being the most prominent. In his memoirs, Rene clearly indicates that he and all the other artists on "Fuller time" were both in awe of and intimidated by the Fullers, and especially Benjamin Fuller. Getting on the wrong side of the company's management anywhere along the Australian and New Zealand circuit would therefore have been professionally disadvantageous.

The telling of 'blue' or offensive jokes has also been seen as the issue which led to Phillips and Rene ending their partnership in 1925. See for example the *Companion to Theatre in Australia* (561), John West's *Theatre in Australia* (125), and Kathy Leahy's "Roy Rene 'Mo'" (95) and the *Sqwirk* website. In this instance Phillips is said to have been forced into firing Rene in Adelaide after he uttered a piece of vulgarity relating to one of the city's nude statues (a topic that was decreed taboo by Sir Benjamin Fuller). Evidence from a variety of sources indicates, however, that this issue has also been exaggerated. Jon Fabian has also noted that the incident took place around the same time that Rene's contract was to expire, and given that he and Phillips had been together for almost a decade, the main issue would more likely have been the need for a break. It's interesting, too, that the pair reunited 18 months later - at the same time the Fullers were resigning artists for long term contracts - the company tended to contract their long-term performers (18 months was the standard period) in January and July each year.

**Roy as the comedian and Nat as the straightman:** The belief that the Stiffy and Mo partnership fell into the traditional comedian/straightman category is another enduring myth, and has been allowed to become a supposed fact because no one has previously bothered to conduct any primary research. Typical of the statements to be published comes from the *Sqwirk* educational website:

<sup>25</sup> See Clay Djubal, "**What Oh Tonight.**" (2001) Chapter 6.

<sup>26</sup> "Sundry Shows." *Bulletin* 7 Apr. 1927, 52.

<sup>27</sup> "**Bijou Theatre.**" *Age* 23 Feb. (1925), 11.

<sup>28</sup> "**Majestic Theatre: Snappy Entertainment.**" *Advertiser* (Adelaide) 2 July (1928), 6.

The 'Stiffy and Mo' style of risqué humour and innuendo made them one of the most successful comedy acts in Australia. Their recipe for success relied on the combination of 'Stiffy' as a 'straight' character and 'Mo' with his slapstick humour.

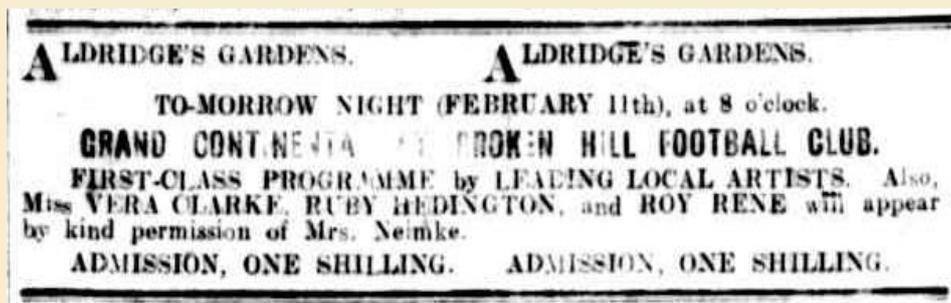
**NB:** This issue is discussed in more detail in the AVTA's "Stiffy and Mo" biography. It should be noted, too, that the above extract is also incorrect in its description of Mo's comedy as "slapstick." That type of comedy relies on a fast physically-orientated performance. It was not a feature of the Stiffy and Mo performances.

**Roy and Nat's supposed falling out:** The fact that Roy and Nat split up in 1924 and again in 1928 has been perceived as the result of their strained relationship. The *Sqwirk* website provides a typical example:<sup>29</sup>

[Rene] continued to perform with other partners until he was persuaded, in 1927, to reunite the "Stiffy and Mo" act. While it repeated its previous achievement of immediate success, the friendship did not last long and the two permanently parted while in New Zealand in 1928. In 1936 'Stiffy' died.

This statement (as with others of its ilk) is a fabrication. As historian Jon Fabian notes, with his evidence supported through interviews with Roy's wife, Sadie Sale and son Sam Van der Sluice, the two comedians remained friends to the end. The split was in fact due to two reasons: Phillips' falling out with the Fullers' and his decision to turn towards producing revues.<sup>30</sup> Further evidence comes from Rene's auto biography, in which he explicitly refers to Phillips as his friend and records that the two were in the process of organising a second Stiffy and Mo reunion (possibly on the Tivoli circuit) shortly before Phillips died (132). Also, Phillips died in 1932.

The often-repeated statement that Rene and Phillips parted at the conclusion of the 1928 New Zealand tour is also incorrect. Their final performances together took place at Fullers' Theatre in Sydney between 1 and 7 December 1928. The following night Rene opened at the same theatre for the Fullers with his own company, Mo's Merry-makers in a revue called *A La Carte*.



*Barrier Miner (Broken Hill) 10 Feb 1910, 3.*

4. Rene's brother, Albert Sluice, a prominent member of the Australian Terriers Terriers' Club and leading Sydney-based bookmaker, was being advertised in *Australian Variety* in 1916 as the "longest-odds place bettor in Australia."



**Albert Sluice**  
*Australian Variety* 4 Oct. (1916), n. pag.

## **RECORDINGS**

The following recordings are available commercially and/or through various Australian libraries. See also the **Stiffy and Mo** entry.

### **Compilations (compact disks):**

- *Australian Memories: Recordings from 1926-1943*. Crystal Stream Audio, CD, IDCD10, 1998. ('Mr McCackie').
- *Christmas with Mrs 'Obbs, Dad and Dave and Friends*. National Film and Sound Archive, CD 9710558, 1997 [Series: Australia's Radio Favourites from the 1930s, 40s and 50s.] ("*McCackie Mansion* 1947 Christmas Edition").

<sup>29</sup> "**Roy Rene.**" *Sqwirk: Online Education*. [sighted 26/10/2015]

<sup>30</sup> Ctd. Jon Fabian, draft copy of Roy Rene biography, and NAA "Sadie Gale" interview, 1975.

- *Our Century*. Columbia, CD, 492991.6, 1999 (radio excerpts).
- *Stars of the Australian Stage and Radio: Volume 1*. Larrikin, CD, LRH 429. [Series: Warren Faye Presents Yesterday's Australia] ("McCackie Madhouse"- with Sadie Gale and Harry Griffiths; and "Tit Bits" – Stiffy and Mo)
- *Stars of the Australian Stage and Radio: Volume 2*. Larrikin, CD, LRH 430. [Series: Warren Faye Presents Yesterday's Australia] ("Eucalyptus Baby" – Stiffy and Mo)

### Vinyl:

- *This is Mo*. Festival, FL30767, 196-. Incl. "Underneath the Arches," "Mo Writes to Hollywood," "The Rose of No-Man's Land," "The Difference," "The Barmaid and the Butcher," "Dreaming," "Two Very Ordinary People," "Mo's Cow," "My Night Out," "Mo's Anniversary Party" and "Tribute to Mo").
- *This is Mo: Vol 2*. Festival, FL-30 751, 196-. "Introduction," "The Xmas Present" (from *McCackie Mansion*), "Free," "Jolly Good Pals" (Phillip and Aubrey), "The Jockey," "The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo (Phillip and Aubrey), "The Barmaid and the Butcher," "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now," "Burglar Alarm" (from *McCackie Mansion*), "Life is a Very Funny Proposition."



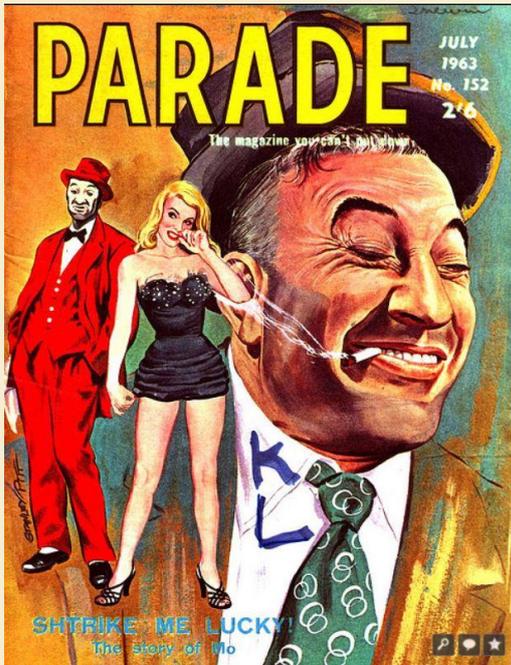
## ENGAGEMENTS CHRONOLOGY (1909-1916)

[For details of Rene's career between July 1916 and 1925 and 1927 to December 1928 see *Nat Phillips' Stiffy and Mo Revue Co.*]

- 1909:** LUCAS' GRAND TIVOLI VAUDEVILLE Co (Temperance Hall, Hobart, ca. 4 Oct.-\* > company also known as Lucas's Gaiety Co) ► MRS NEMKE (Hippodrome, Broken Hill, NSW; ca. 13-31 Dec.\*)
- 1910:** MRS NEMKE (Aldridge's Gardens, Broken Hill, NSW; 1 Jan. - 26 Feb.) • LENNON, HYMAN & LENNON (Empire Th, Adel; ca. 4 Mar. - Apr.\*) • JAMES BRENNAN (National Amphitheatre, Syd; ca. 13 May -\*) ► J.C. WILLIAMSON'S (Her Majesty's, Sydney; 17-31 Dec. > *The Whip*).
- 1911:** J.C. WILLIAMSON'S (Her Majesty's, Sydney; 1 Jan.-\* > *The Whip*) ► TED HOLLAND (Theatre Royal, Brisbane; ca. 28 Jan.) ► JAMES BRENNAN (His Majesty's, Hobart; ca. 12 Apr.-\*) • (Gaiety Theatre, Melbourne; 15 May -\*) • (National Amphitheatre, Sydney; ca. 29 July - 15 Sept.) • (Theatre Royal, Brisbane; 18 Sept. - ca. Nov.) • (National Amphitheatre, Sydney; ca. 20 Nov. -).
- 1912:** J.C. BAIN (Princess Theatre, Sydney; ca. 17 Feb.-\*) ► FULLERS' (New Zealand tour; ca. Mar.- Oct. \*) ► BRENNAN-FULLER (National Amphitheatre, Sydney; ca. 7-25 Nov.\*) • (King's Theatre, Adelaide; 2-31 Dec.).
- NB:** New Zealand tour dates incl. Wellington (Theatre Royal; ca. 19 Mar.; 2 June and 16 Oct.). Rene is also known to have left Dunedin on 6 August for Auckland (*Evening Post* 7 Aug. 1912, 6).
- 1913:** BRENNAN-FULLER (King's Theatre, Adelaide; 1-3 Jan.) • (Melrose Theatre, Perth; 11 Jan. - 7 Feb) • (National Amphitheatre, Sydney; 30 May -\*) ► HARRY CLAY (ca. June - Oct\* > incl. Regional Qld tour from ca. 3 July - Aug.\*) ► J.C. BAIN (Princess Theatre, Sydney; ca. 11 Oct.-\*) ► BRENNAN-FULLER (Gaiety Theatre, Melbourne; ca. 8 Nov-31 Dec.).
- 1914:** BRENNAN-FULLER (Gaiety Theatre, Melbourne; 1 Jan.-\*) • (Lyric Theatre, Fitzroy, Melbourne; ca. Jan.\*) • (Theatre Royal, Hobart; 20 Feb.-\* > leased to Sadler/Beveridge) • HARRY CLAY (ca. July-Aug.) ► J.C. BAIN (Princess Theatre, Sydney; ca. Sept-Oct\*) ► FULLERS' THEATRES (King's Theatre, Adelaide; ca. 28-31 Dec.\*).
- 1915:** FULLERS' THEATRES (King's Theatre, Adelaide; 1 Jan.- ca. 5 Feb.\*) • (Theatre Royal, Hobart; 27 Feb.-13 Mar.) ► FULLERS' THEATRES (Victoria Theatre, Newcastle, NSW; 23 Mar. - 30 Apr. > Bletsoes' Co) • (Bijou Theatre, Melbourne; 8 May - 18 June > Bletsoes' Co) • (King's Theatre, Adelaide; 26 June -16 July > Bletsoes' Co) • (National Theatre, Sydney; ca. 20 Nov. - Dec.\* > Bletsoes' Co)
- 1916:** FULLERS' THEATRES (His Majesty's, Wellington, NZ; 31 Jan. - 26 Feb. > Bletsoes' Co) • (Empire Theatre, Brisbane; 13 May - ca. 9 June -\* > Bletsoes' Co) • (Theatre Royal, Rockhampton; 17-24 June > Bletsoes' Co).



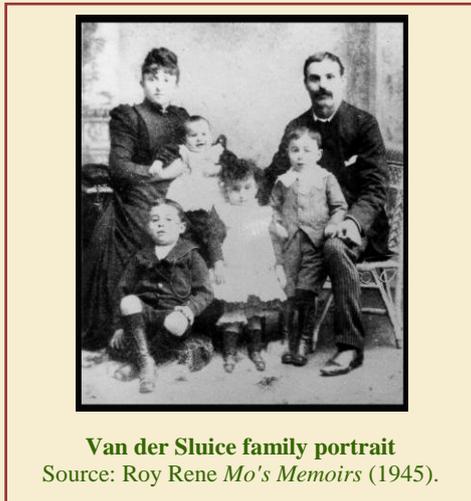
Adelaide Advertiser 10 Mar (1910), 2.



*Parade* July (1963).



**With son, Sam**  
*Sydney Morning Herald* 12 Oct. (2007), n. pag.



**Van der Sluice family portrait**  
 Source: Roy Rene *Mo's Memoirs* (1945).



**ca. 1940**  
 Source: Bruce Howard Collection  
 National Library of Australia

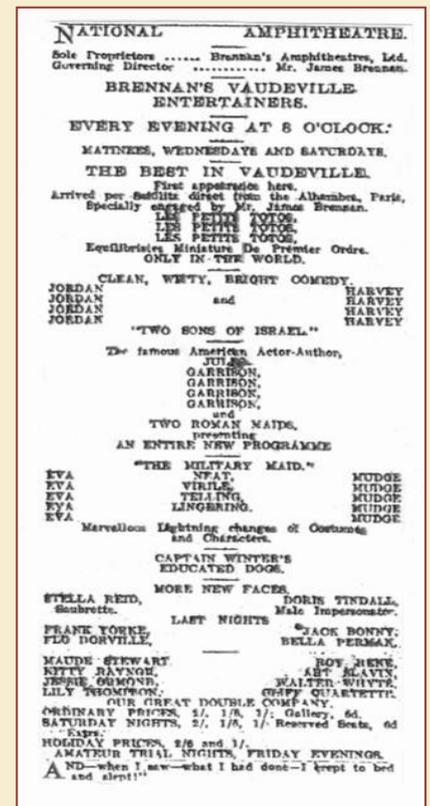
**A COMBINATION OF COMEDY AND DIGNITY.**

Mr. Roy Rene, comedian, known as Mo, of the *Stiffy and Mo*, theatrical combination, and a Dodge Brothers Victory sedan. Mr. Rene is enthusiastic about Dodge cars, having owned five of them.

*Advertiser* (Adelaide) 21 Aug. (1928), 22.

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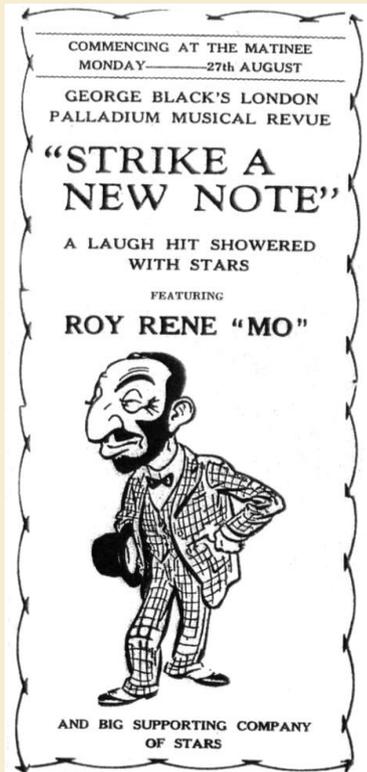
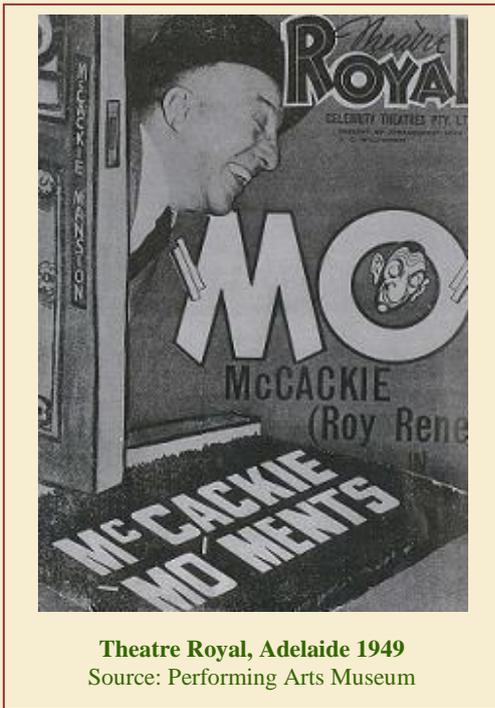
**Hal Lashwood and Roy Rene ca. 1946-1949**  
 Source: National Library of Australia

### See also:

- Barrier Miner** (Broken Hill): 13 Dec. (1909), 5.  
**Evening Post** (Wellington, NZ): 19 Mar. (1912), 8 • 16 Oct. (1912), 8 • 7 Aug. (1912), 6 • 2 June (1914), 2.  
**Mercury** (Hobart): 4 Oct. (1909), 8.



*Smith's Weekly* 20 Nov. (1926), 10.



*Fuller News* 24 June (1922), 2.

