

Kirby Grant Hoon, Jr.

Photo:



Date of Birth:

November 24 1911

Kirby Grant Hoon, Jr., aged 73, of Winter Springs, died October 30, 1985. Born in Butte, Montana, Nov. 24, 1911. He entertained millions as the star of the popular Sky King television series.

Kirby was educated at the University of Washington in Seattle, Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, and the American Conservatory of Music, Chicago. He was considered an accomplished violinist while still very young. Kirby Grant began his entertainment career as a radio and supper club entertainer before entering films in the 1930s. He had been a staff singer with the NBC radio network in Chicago when he was transferred to California, where he appeared in his earliest films as a singing extra and playing the violin.

A U.S. Army veteran of World War II, Kirby played the recurring lead role in eight movies about the adventures of Corporal Rod Webb of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, from 1949 to 1954. But it was the adventures of the fictional rancher and private pilot "Sky King" that most will remember him for, and many young people told him that he inspired them to become pilots. The original series ran from 1951 to 1954, and the show appeared in reruns from 1959 to 1966. After the show ended, Kirby traveled with the Carson and Barnes Circus and retired in 1970.

He and his wife Carolyn moved to Winter Springs, Florida in 1971. In 1976, he started the short lived Sky King Youth Ranch for troubled teen-age boys.

He served as a public relations director for Sea World in Florida from 1979 until August 1985, when he took a similar position at Cypress Gardens. He was a popular public speaker.

He is survived by his wife, Carolyn; daughters, Kendra Buck, Granada Hills, Calif., Kristin, Winter Springs; son, Kirby Grant III, Winter Springs; mother, Henrietta Hoon, Missoula, Mont.; brother, Jack Hoon, Missoula; and five grandchildren.

[Compiled from various sources, including the Orlando Sentinel.]

Media data:

Date of Death:

October 30 1985

Place of Birth:

Butte, Montana, United States

Place of Death:

Titusville, Florida, United States

Primary State of Residence:

Winter Springs, Florida, United States

 SHARE