



Kirby Grant Hoon (1941-1985)

Actor and Hollywood star known as “Sky King.” From 1951-1962 Skyler King was an Arizona rancher-pilot who fought bad guys and rescued people in trouble using his airplane “Songbird”. Hoon did little acting after the show but bought and traveled with the Carson and Barnes circus. Learn about his career and life achievements. The grave of Sky king renders many visitors from around the world each year.

- **1911-Birth.** November 24, 1911 in Butte MT to Henrietta and Kirby Hoon Sr.
- **Marriage.** Kirby married Carolyn and they had three children
- **Actor.** A long time B movie actor. Most notable for lead role in The ‘Sky King’
- Grant was a child prodigy violinist, a singer and one time led a dance band.
- **Education.** Attended through high school in Helena MT. College at the University of Washington in Seattle WA, Whitman College in Walla Walla WA, and the American Conservatory of Music.
- **First jobs** were as a radio and supper club entertainer.
- **1930.** Began playing cowboys and mounties--seldom singing--in mostly forgettable films
- **Until 1945.** He used the name "Robert Stanton". That name was also used by actor Robert "Bob" Haymes.
- **1951.** Took the role of Schuyler or Skyler (Sky) King. The show was filmed in black-and-white during three periods as sponsors changed: 1951-52, 1955-56 and 1957-62. It continued in syndication for years afterward and Grant became an icon to the aviation community. In it Grant played Arizona rancher-pilot Sky King, who fought bad guys and rescued people in trouble using his airplane. In the series the plane was named the "Songbird." Sky King's ranch was named the "Flying Crown."
- Grant did little acting after the show ended although he and co-star Gloria Winters were in demand for personal appearances at fairs and aviation events.
- **1965.** Bought and traveled with the Carson and Barnes circus.
- In real life Grant was a pilot and in the first few years the series used Grant's personal plane.
- **1970.** Retired and moved to Florida from California where he and his wife founded the nonprofit Sky King Youth Ranches of America, which provided homes for throwaway kids.
- He had plans to resurrect the Sky King series with the Flying Crown Ranch becoming a home for throwaway kids and telling their stories, but it never materialized.
- During retirement he also took many lead parts in local theatrical productions.
- **1979.** Appointed Good Will Ambassador for Sea World of Orlando.
- **1985.** Grant was killed in a car accident near Titusville Florida. He was on his way to watch the launch of the Space Shuttle Challenger at Cape Canaveral, where he was also to be honored by the astronauts for encouraging aviation and space flight.
- Montana always remained his ‘home of heart’ and he was an avid fisherman.
- **1985-Death.** Kirby died on October 30, 1985