

Billy Gray

Titles: 29 Sources: 2 Stills: 4

Born: Los Angeles; January 13th 1938
No relation to Gary Gray [\[qv\]](#); but related to actress Coleen Gray?



In the tepid US football drama "THE GUY WHO CAME BACK"

Source: The Moving Picture Boy



Grilling the duty sergeant in **"TALK ABOUT A STRANGER"**

Source: original front of house still

Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion entry:

"American juvenile actor of the fifties."

The Moving Picture Boy entry:

"His mother, Beatrice, was an actress whose career was effectively halted by Billy's arrival: she withdrew from a publicity tour for her last film, and was shown the door by the ever-compassionate RKO.

From his movie debut at seven, Billy proved to have one of the strongest personalities of all Hollywood's children, and to be equally adept at comedy or drama. With a formidable scowl, he had an impatient honesty that marked him out from the normal run of ingratiating studio kids. He was bolshy and argumentative, a natural for the Penrod-based character he played in the Doris Day musicals **"ON MOONLIGHT BAY"** and **"BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON"** (His name, as Doris's kid brother, was "Wesley" - surely in homage to the first **"PENROD"**, Wesley Barry). Choked by dust or food in these well-loved films, he would come up with a graveyard cough of which he was justly proud.

His most often-seen performance, nowadays, is in **"THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD**

STILL", one of the most moral and seminal of flying-saucer movies. His hero-worship fighting with deep suspicion of Michael Rennie (Klaatu, alias Mr Carpenter) gives the formula story one of its most human elements, and few could have delineated the basic expressions of scepticism, alarm and wonder as Billy did - all this while incarnating the normal American kid worried about his homework.

In the mid-1950s Billy Gray became involved in the TV series **"Father Knows Best"**, with Jane Wyman and Robert Young as his parents, plus a brace of sisters. His all too gosh-and-golly role of "Bud" was an embarrassment to this down-to-earth boy, not accustomed to deal in such old-hat currency. The steady income was hard to spurn, though, so he held his nose and got on with it - for the next six years or so.

The occasional feature film cropped up: **"THE SEVEN LITTLE FOYS"** (55), **"THE EXPLOSIVE GENERATION"** (61), **"TWO FOR THE SEESAW"** (62), **"THE NAVY vs THE NIGHT MONSTERS"** (66), **"DUSTY AND SWEETS McGEE"** (71), **"WEREWOLVES ON WHEELS"** (71).



In the sitcom "**Father Knows Best**"

Source: *How Sweet it Was*

Billy Gray (later Bill) shouldn't, incidentally, be confused with Bill Gray (sometimes Billy), a squashy-faced character actor who died in 1978. In 1962 he got a three-year sentence for driving under the influence of drink and/or drugs (hotly denied by Gray, though he didn't deny that marijuana and alcohol had passed his lips in the past). He was an expert driver, particularly of motorcycles in his early days. But above all he was an excellent and salty actor, who has been sadly neglected in his adult prime."

[no listing in "Those Endearing Young Charms"]



In "**TALK ABOUT A STRANGER**"

Source: *A Pictorial History of the Talkies*

FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
45	7	THE STRANGE AFFAIR OF UNCLE HARRY	
46	8	CLUNY BROWN	
46		OUR OLD CAR	
46		SPECTER OF THE ROSE	
46		TO EACH HIS OWN	
		with Gary Gray	
47	9	CURLEY	
		with Larry Olsen, Peter Miles, Dale Belding, George Nokes	
47		THE GANGSTER	
48	10	FIGHTING FATHER DUNNE	
		with Billy Cummings, Donn Gift, Eric Roberts	
49	11	ABANDONED WOMAN	
49		BAD MEN OF TOMBSTONE	
50	12	FATHER IS A BACHELOR	
		with Gary Gray, Tommy Ivo, Mary Jane Saunders	
50		GENE AUTRY AND THE MOUNTIES	
		with Teddy Infuhr	
50		THE GOOD HUMOR MAN	
		with Peter Miles	
50		IN A LONELY PLACE	
50		SINGING GUNS	
50		THREE LITTLE WORDS	
51	13	THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	as Bobby Benson
51		THE GUY WHO CAME BACK	
51		JIM THORPE – ALL AMERICAN	
		with Jimmy Hawkins, Jimmy Moss	
51		ON MOONLIGHT BAY	as Wesley
51		SIERRA PASSAGE	
52	14	THE GIRL NEXT DOOR	
52		THE RETURN OF GILBERT AND SULLIVAN	
52		TALK ABOUT A STRANGER	in central role
53	15	ALL I DESIRE	
53		BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON	as Wesley
53		HURRICANE AT PILGRIM HILL	
53		THE OUTLAW STALLION	
54-59	16	Father Knows Best	US TV sitcom, as Bud
		with Lauren Chapin	
55	17	THE SEVEN LITTLE FOYS	as Brynie
		with Lee Erickson, Paul De Rolf, Jerry Mathers, Lydia Reed	
- -		Alfred Hitchcock Presents: "The Hatbox"	US TV portmanteau series