

HOWARD MCNEAR BIO

Howard McNear was born Los Angeles, California to Luzetta M. Spencer and Franklin E. McNear.

McNear worked in radio from the late 1930s, distinguishing himself in the 1938-1940 radio serial Speed Gibson of the International Secret Police as ace operator Clint Barlow. McNear could be effective in such authoritative roles, but he gravitated more toward character roles, often comic. He created the role of Doc Charles Adams in CBS Radio's Gunsmoke (1952-1961)[3]. McNear was under contract to CBS for many years and was featured in many of the network's radio and TV programs. From 1955 to 1960 he appeared frequently, in various quirky roles, in the popular radio detective series Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar.[4] In the TV sitcom Leave It to Beaver, McNear made an appearance as a barber named Andy, a role which proved prophetic.

McNear was best known for his performances as the vague, chatty barber Floyd Lawson on The Andy Griffith Show. During production McNear suffered a stroke that rendered him unable to walk. He continued in the role, however, with the production crew accommodating his disability. In early episodes, he is seen standing and working in his barber shop. After the stroke, he is usually seen seated (in his barber chair or a park bench, etc.). The stagehands constructed a stand for him, which allowed him to stand and appear to be working, usually to comb hair (one-handed, of course).

McNear died in the San Fernando Valley from the effects of a stroke. After his passing in 1969, Howard McNear was interred in the Los Angeles National Cemetery, a former U.S. Veterans Administration cemetery in Los Angeles.

Materials excerpted from Wikipedia, the on-line encyclopedia.