

# The Happy Road

US / France : 1956 : dir. Gene Kelly : M.G.M / Thor : 100 min  
 prod: Gene Kelly : scr: Arthur Julian, Joseph Morhaim & Harry Kurnitz  
 : dir.ph.: Robert Juillard  
*Bobby Clark; Brigitte Fossey; Jimmy Urbain; Jacques Moullières; Yves-Marie Maurin.....*  
 Gene Kelly; Barbara Laage; Michael Redgrave

| Ref:  | Pages | Sources | Stills | Words | Ω | 8 | € | M | ⚡ | Copy on VHS | Last Viewed |
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| 2611a | 2     | 9       | 1      | 839   | - | - | - | - | - | No          | Unseen      |



*Redgrave, Laage and Kelly try to look concerned about it all.*  
 Source: *The M.G.M Story*

## Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996 review:

"Two single parents – American Kelly and Frenchwoman Laage – are drawn together when their children run away from school together. Pleasant but minor family fare, enhanced by location filming in the French countryside. **\*\*1/2** "

## Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"Kelly's debut as director in a pleasant drama about two children who run away from a Swiss school. Naturally this causes panic with the father (a widower) of the one and the mother (divorced) of the other, who then set out after both of them. **\*\*\*** "

## Halliwell's Film Guide review:

"Two children run away from a Swiss school and are pursued by the American father of one

of them. Whimsical peripatetic comedy which fails to come off despite charming passages. Writers: Arthur Julian, Joseph Morhaim & Harry Kurnitz **\*** "

## The Good Film and Video Guide review:

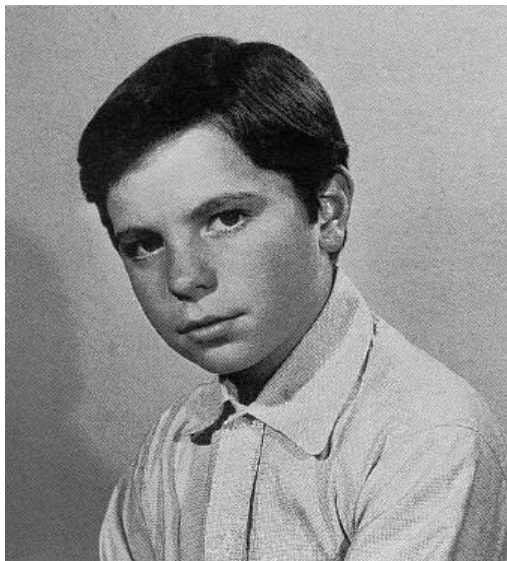
"An American widower (Gene Kelly) and a Frenchwoman (Barbara Laage) pursue their runaway children through much of France, bickering at first but later falling in love. Other aspects of the comedy are Pagnol-esque and the mixture, though almost pleasing, is uneasy. Michael Redgrave is a confused British general. **\*** "

## The M.G.M Story review:

"Gene Kelly put on his director's hat again for **"THE HAPPY ROAD"**, a frisky lightweight about two runaway schoolchildren pursued by the mother of one and the father of the other. He also produced the Joseph Morhaim – Arthur Julian – Harry Kurnitz screenplay, in France, with Bobby Clark and Brigitte Fossey as the kids. But it played to mostly unhappy business."

## Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89 review:

"Engaging escapades of two youngsters who become fugitives in the French countryside when they run away from their Swiss school, and of their respective parents, a US businessman widower and a French divorcée, in pursuit. **\*\*\*** "



*Casting directory portrait of Bobby Clark in 1956, but not a still from the film. Source: Moving Picture Boy*

[no listing in "The Critics' Film Guide", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

#### Radio Times note:

"Story of an American boy who flees from his Swiss boarding school to be with his father in Paris."

"An American boy at a Swiss boarding school runs away to be with his father in Paris. Gene Kelly, Barbara Laage, Michael Redgrave."

#### Daily Mirror note:

"Two children run away from a Swiss school in a bland family comedy. With Gene Kelly.  
\*\* "

#### The Moving Picture Boy entry on Clark:

"Bobby is the little dark boy at the start of **'INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS'**, terrified of his mother whom he no longer recognises. (He calms down, of course, when he himself is "podded".) There had been an earlier juvenile Bobby Clark in Hollywood – a ridin' boy of twelve or so who had been active in 1939: in **"TRIGGER SMITH"**, in the serial **"OVERLAND WITH KIT CARSON"**, and in the **SAGEBRUSH FAMILY** series. The unrelated Bobby II was born about 20 years later, and was acting by the time he was seven. Gene Kelly chose him as co-star in his French-based vehicle **"THE HAPPY ROAD"**, and paired him with Brigitte Fossey, five years after **"JEUX INTERDITS"**. The other French children in the film are led by Jimmy Urbain, Jacques Moullières and Yves-Marie Maurin. Bobby Clark also starred as the hero's son in the TV series **"Casey Jones"**."

No further information currently available, but a plot so feeble deserves little serious attention. Similar pairs of darling runaways taking in the sights were seen many times before and since, in **"THE BLUE BIRD"**, **"ESCAPADE IN JAPAN"**, **"A LITTLE ROMANCE"**, **"TOO BIG"**, etc. That these films were uniformly dreadful might tell the film-makers something...

[Bobby Clark](#), 10 in 1956, played Glenn Ford's kidnapped son in **"RANSOM!"** (55), and made a small handful of B movies – **"REBEL IN TOWN"** (56), **"GUN DUEL IN DURANGO"** (57). [Brigitte Fossey](#), here 12, made her debut with Georges Poujouly in **"JEUX INTERDITS"** ("Forbidden Games", 51) as a bewildered Parisian refugette enchanted with the paraphernalia of death. She also made **"LE GRAND MEAULNES"** (55) and **"ADIEU L'AMI"** (60), presumably among others. Moullières and Maurin were also 12, Urbain 13. The latter two were seen to better effect in **"CHIENS PERDUS SANS COLLIER"** (55).

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