

## Actor Roddy McDowall dies at age 70

By Bob Thomas  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP) — From an intellectual chimpanzee in "Planet of the Apes" to Octavian Caesar in "Cleopatra," Roddy McDowall proved his versatility during an award-winning career in stage, television, and film that spanned more than six decades.

Yet the soft-spoken actor, who fled England as a child during the London blitz for Hollywood, was remembered by many friends as simply a sweet, genuine man.

McDowall died Saturday of cancer at his home in the Studio City area of Los Angeles, said Dennis Osborne, a friend who cared for the actor. He was 70.

McDowall was diagnosed in April with an incurable cancer that had spread throughout his body, Osborne said.

Angela Lansbury, a longtime friend who appeared with him in "Bedknobs and Broomsticks," called McDowall "the best friend you could possibly have had."

After appearing in several British films, McDowall at 11 was evacuated to the United States during the German bombardment of London, which began in 1940.

Hollywood producers were impressed with the boy's innocent face and precise diction, and he was first cast in Fritz Lang's "Man Hunt." The boy emerged as a star in John Ford's saga of Welsh coal miners, "How Green Was My Valley."

southerner in "No Time for Sergeants."

He was born Roderick Andrew Anthony Jude McDowall on Sept. 17, 1928 in London. His father was Scottish, his mother Irish. Educated at St. Joseph's school, he made his film debut at 8 in "Murder in the Family."

When McDowall arrived in America in 1940, he was placed under contract with 20th Century Fox and later moved to MGM.

The young actor proved popular in films with animals, notably "My Friend Flicka" and "Lassie Come Home." He also appeared as

Malcolm in Orson Welles' "MacBeth."

McDowall spent most of the 1950s in New York, making his Broadway debut in 1953 in "Misalliance."

He won both an Emmy and Tony for best supporting actor in 1960. The Emmy came from an NBC production of "Not Without Honor," his Tony for playing Tarquin Edward Mendigales in the Jean Anouilh play "Time's Fool," now known as "The Fighting Cock."

McDowall's film career enjoyed a rebirth in the 1960s, notably in three epics: "Cleopatra" (as Octavian Caesar), "The Longest Day" (as a soldier), and "The Greatest Story Ever Told" (as Matthew). He also spent a year on Broadway in the musical "Camelot."

"I still have the actor's disease," he admitted at the time. "I always think I'll never get another job."

Nevertheless, McDowall remained one of the busiest actors

in films and television. His most successful film was the 1968 "Planet of the Apes," and he appeared in the ape makeup in three sequels.

Among his other films: "Five Card Stud," "Bedknobs and Broomsticks," "The Poseidon Adventure" and "Funny Lady."

He also became a favorite in horror films such as "Cult of the Damned," "The Legend of Hell House," "Fright Night," and "It!"

In the 1980s and 1990s, he worked mostly in television dramas such as "The Martian Chronicles," "Alice in Wonderland," "Hollywood Wives," and "Around the World in 80 Days."

McDowall, who never married, was also an accomplished photographer who produced five coffee table books, starting with "Double Exposure" in 1966. Photos he took of a nude Elizabeth Taylor appeared in a layout for Playboy magazine in 1963.

Miss Taylor, who co-starred with McDowall in "Lassie Come Home," said she was "shocked and grieving" about McDowall's death.

A longtime student of film, McDowall gathered one of the largest private collections of old movies and had served as the Screen Actors Guild's representative on the National Film Preservation Board.

"He had such a wonderful future as an archivist of our business, the motion picture business. And he was good because he loved the people in it. Taylor, Bacall, many of us loved Roddy," Ms. Lansbury said.

McDowall was "a true gentleman," said Hollywood honorary mayor Johnny Grant, who laid a wreath by his the actor's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. "I think of him as a fellow that had something that nobody else in this town had as much of, and that was the trust of the people in the community."

Plans for services or interment were not available Sunday night. McDowall's body was to be cremated by The Neptune Society, Osborne said.



WWW.SMITHWAY.ORG/RM/MOVIE/APES/2-BAA.JP

As a youth, his career flourished. "The only trouble was that by the time I got to be 17 or 18, Hollywood was still thinking of me in terms of what I had delivered at the age of 11," McDowall said in a 1963 interview.

"They said I couldn't play anything but an English boy. I knew I could. So I went to New York and started to study because I knew I had to learn a lot about myself as an actor; you can't act the same as you did as a child."

For about six years he played a variety of roles from Mexican-Americans to Midwestern Americans. He also played a boy from Chicago in "Compulsion," then a

## The Native American Club

meets Mondays at 5:30 p.m.  
in the  
Multicultural Resource  
Center  
(Founders 203-a)

### Video, cont'd from page 8

serves as representation of the oppressive phallus, threatening to tear into the flesh of K.C. and Jo. The two have just been released from prison, where they served time for prostitution. So, we see them liberated from their former roles as harlots. At first, the phallic chainsaw terrifies them. The women are powerless against its vicious aggression.

To escape the mindless redneck, they retreat to the wa-

ter itself. Within the water, the primordial ooze if you will, a new evolution takes place. The chainsaw is waterlogged, or in other words, the phallus is deflated and can no longer symbolize virility, power, and control. The women emerge victorious; Junior gets eaten by an alligator (an agent of the Earth Mother, of course). They are free to live their lives as they wish.

Immediately, they shack up with a couple of buff bayou boys and giggle as the credits roll.