

Suave Cary Grant dies of stroke at 82

From Associated Press reports

LOS ANGELES — Cary Grant, whose masculine elegance and darkly handsome features made him an unrivaled star of sophisticated comedy and chilling intrigue for more than 30 years, has died of a massive stroke at the age of 82.

The debonair leading man with the dimpled chin and clipped accent died at 12:22 a.m. (EST) Saturday at St. Luke's Hospital in Davenport, Iowa, where he was to appear in a 90-minute program that included a talk and clips from his movies.

He had appeared well at rehearsals that afternoon, then seemed to weaken, said Lois Jecklin, director of Visiting Artists, which sponsored "A Conversation with Cary Grant." His condition deteriorated rapidly.

"There was nothing that could be done," said James Gibson, the cardiologist who treated Grant. "There's no intervention when something like this happens."

His body reportedly was returned early Sunday to California. There was no immediate word on funeral plans.

Grant was one of the biggest names in movie history, starring in such classics as "The Philadelphia Story," "Bringing up Baby" and "North by Northwest." But his only Oscar came after his retirement.

He seemed to have been born an aristocrat, but his father was a presser in a garment factory. He was the idol of millions of women around the world, but his private life often was troubled.

"I pretended to be someone I wanted to be, and I finally became that person," Grant once said. "Or he became me. Or we met at some point. It's a relationship."

It was a singularly successful relationship, one that began in 1932 and filled the big screen with 72 movies until 1966, when his last film "Walk, Don't Run" was released.

Grant, film critic Pauline Kael wrote, "had the longest romantic reign in the short history of movies." He was paired with Katharine Hepburn, Myrna Loy, Audrey Hepburn, and Grace Kelly. To him, Mae West tendered the most famous, and frequently misquoted, proposition in movies history: "Why don't you come up and see me sometime?"

He was born Archibald Leach on Jan. 18, 1904, in Bristol, England, the only child of an unhappy marriage. His father often was withdrawn and his mother filled him with

dreams of wealth and taught him to sing and dance.

When he was 9, his mother was placed in a mental institution, and the boy did not see her for 20 years. When he was 13, Archie ran away from home to join a boys' troupe. But his father retrieved him. He later rejoined the group, but left it in 1922 in New York, taking on a variety of jobs, including stilt-walker at Coney Island, a slapstick mime on the vaudeville circuit and a straight man for comedy acts. He began dressing with conservative elegance and was a hit with New York hostesses.

By 1931 he had a movie contract with Paramount and a new name: Cary, for a part he'd had in a play, and Grant, chosen from a list prepared by the studio.

He made seven films in his first year, including "Blonde Venus" with Marlene Dietrich. Then he caught the eye of Mae West, who cast him opposite her in "She Done Him Wrong" and "I'm No Angel." Both were box office smashes.

In 1937 he left Paramount, and the most memorable roles of his career followed. The danger that seemed to lurk beneath the charm made him the perfect lead for such Hitchcock thrillers as "Suspicion" and "To Catch a Thief."

His accent made him a favorite with impressionists, but he never said, "Judy, Judy, Judy."

He was nominated for Academy Award for "Penny Grenade" and "None but the Lonely Heart," and in 1970 received an honorary Oscar for "His unique mastery of the art of screen acting."

Grant, who became a U.S. citizen in 1942, amassed a fortune estimated as high as \$40 million.



DTH/Dan Charlson

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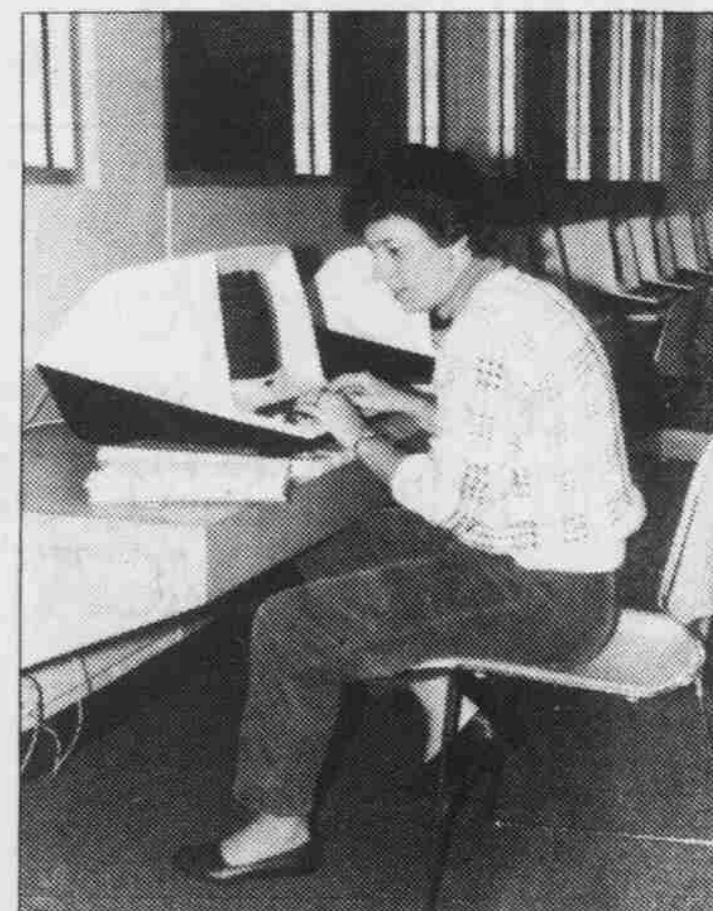
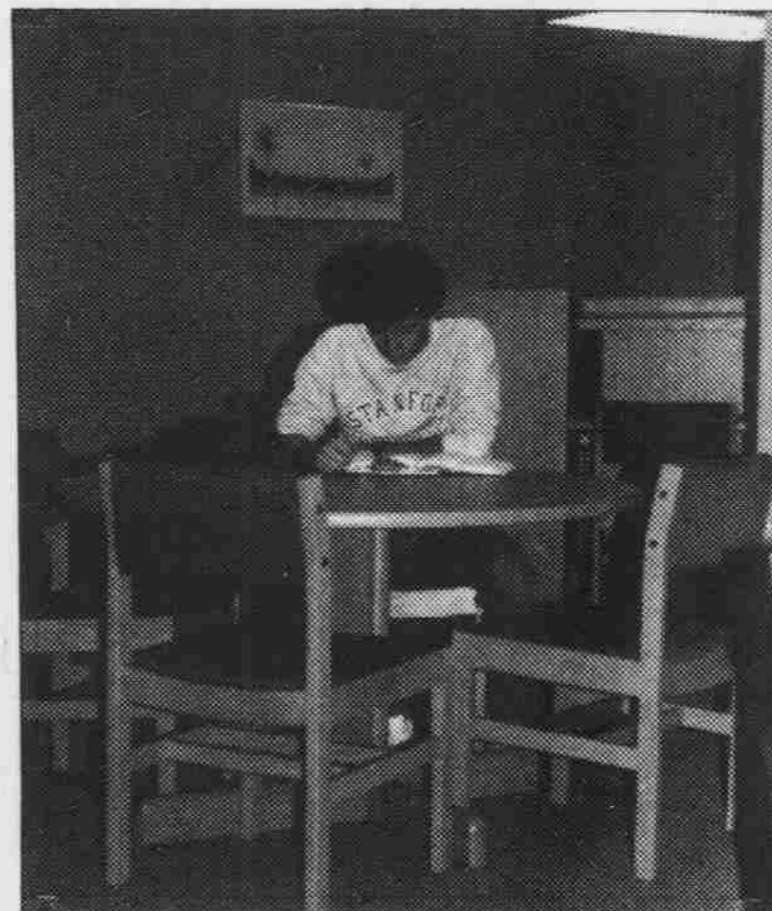
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