

# Legend of the month – Stephen Hawking



Professor Stephen William Hawking was born on 8th January 1942 (exactly 300 years after the death of Galileo) in Oxford, England. His parents' house was in north London but during the second world war Oxford was considered a safer place to have babies. When he was eight his family moved to St. Albans, a town about 20 miles north of London. At the age of eleven, Stephen went to St. Albans School and then on to University College, Oxford (1952); his father's old college. Stephen wanted to study mathematics although his father would

have preferred medicine. Mathematics was not available at University College, so he pursued physics instead. After three years and not very much work, he was awarded a first class honours degree in natural science.

In October 1962, Stephen arrived at the [Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics \(DAMTP\)](#) at the University of Cambridge to do research in cosmology, there being no-one working in that area in Oxford at the time. His supervisor was Dennis Sciama, although he had hoped to get Fred Hoyle who was working in Cambridge. After gaining his PhD (1965) with his thesis titled '[Properties of Expanding Universes](#)', he became, first, a research fellow (1965) then Fellow for Distinction in Science (1969) at Gonville & Caius college. In 1966 he won the Adams Prize for his essay 'Singularities and the Geometry of Space-time'. Stephen moved to the Institute of Astronomy (1968), later moving back to DAMTP (1973), employed as a research assistant, and published his first academic book, *The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time*, with George Ellis. During the next few years, Stephen was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society (1974) and Sherman Fairchild Distinguished Scholar at the California Institute of Technology (1974). He became a Reader in Gravitational Physics at DAMTP (1975), progressing to Professor of Gravitational Physics (1977). He then held the position of Lucasian Professor of Mathematics (1979-2009). The chair was founded in 1663 with money left in the will of the Reverend Henry Lucas who had been the Member of Parliament for the University. It was first held by Isaac Barrow and then in 1669 by Isaac Newton. From 2009, Stephen was employed as the Dennis Stanton Avery and Sally Tsui Wong-Avery Director of Research at DAMTP.

Professor Stephen Hawking worked on the basic laws which govern the universe. With Roger Penrose he showed that Einstein's general theory of relativity implied space and time would have a beginning in the Big Bang and an end in black holes (1970). These results indicated that it was necessary to

unify general relativity with quantum theory, the other great scientific development of the first half of the 20th century. One consequence of such a unification that he discovered was that black holes should not be completely black, but rather should emit 'Hawking' radiation and eventually evaporate and disappear (1974). Another conjecture is that the universe has no edge or boundary in imaginary time. This would imply that the way the universe began was completely determined by the laws of science. Towards the end of his life, Stephen was working with colleagues on a possible resolution to the black hole information paradox, where debate centres around the conservation of information.

His many publications included *The Large Scale Structure of Spacetime* with G F R Ellis, *General Relativity: An Einstein Centenary Survey*, with W Israel, and *300 Years of Gravitation*, with W Israel. Among the popular books Stephen Hawking published are his best seller *A Brief History of Time*, *Black Holes and Baby Universes and Other Essays*, *The Universe in a Nutshell*, *The Grand Design* and *My Brief History*.

Professor Stephen Hawking received thirteen honorary degrees. He was awarded CBE (1982), Companion of Honour (1989) and the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2009). He was the recipient of many awards, medals and prizes, most notably the Fundamental Physics prize (2013), Copley Medal (2006) and the Wolf Foundation prize (1988). He was a Fellow of the Royal Society and a member of the US National Academy of Sciences and the Pontifical Academy of Sciences.

In 1963 Stephen was diagnosed with ALS, a form of Motor Neurone Disease, shortly after his 21st birthday. In spite of being wheelchair-bound and dependent on a computerised voice system for communication Stephen continued to combine family life (he has three children and three grandchildren) with his research into theoretical physics, in addition to an extensive programme of travel and public lectures. Thanks to the Zero-G Corporation, he experienced weightlessness in 2007 and always

hoped to make it into space one day.





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# Anna Nicole Smith – Legend of the month

Born on November 28, 1967, in Mexia, Texas, Anna Nicole Smith rose to fame as a model. She was named *Playboy's* Playmate of the Year in 1993. In 1994, she wed 89-year-old oil tycoon J. Howard Marshall II, who soon died. Smith spent years fighting for a share of her late husband's estate. She starred in her own reality show from 2002 to 2004. Smith died of an accidental drug overdose in 2007.

## Early Life

Anna Nicole Smith was born Vickie Lynn Hogan on November 28, 1967, in Mexia, Texas. A high school dropout, Smith's dramatic life began quietly in the small Texas town of Mexia. She had a difficult childhood, growing up without her father who left the family when she was only a baby.

As a teenager, Smith worked at a local fried chicken restaurant. There she met cook Billy Smith, and the pair married when she was only 17 years old. The couple had a son named Daniel in 1984, but the marriage later broke up. Not

content with small-town life, Smith dreamed of becoming the next Marilyn Monroe.

Before her big break, Anna Nicole Smith worked numerous jobs, including as a Wal-Mart employee and a dancer. She left her son in the care of her mother, Virgie Arthur, to work in Houston at a strip club. In 1991, Smith met Texas oil tycoon J. Howard Marshall II while working at a club. She soon had her own reversal of fortune.

## Popular Pin-Up and Personality

After mailing in photos of herself naked to *Playboy* in 1992, Smith got to pose for Hugh Hefner's famed adult magazine. She also appeared in ads for the Guess fashion brand later that same year. In the print advertisements, Smith showed off her impressive curves, looking very much like her beloved icon, Marilyn Monroe.

Smith reached a career milestone the following year, joining a select group of beauties who have been named "Playmate of the Year" by *Playboy* magazine. She parlayed her celebrity into some small film roles. In 1994, Smith appeared in the Leslie Nielsen comedy *Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult*, and *The Hudsucker Proxy* with Tim Robbins and Paul Newman.

With her sexy image, Smith attracted a lot of interest from celebrity magazines and tabloids. The public seemed to have an insatiable interest in the ups and downs of the life of this seemingly bubbly blonde. Smith didn't seem to mind the media scrutiny. According to the *Washington Post*, she once said, "I love the paparazzi. They take pictures, and I just smile away. I've always liked attention. I didn't get very much growing up, and I always wanted to be, you know, noticed."

# Fight for Fortune

Smith married Marshall in 1994. At the time, she was 26 and he was 89. The tremendous age difference between the couple surprised many, and Smith endured allegations of only being after Marshall's sizeable fortune. According to *People* magazine, the bride took off for Greece without her groom shortly after the wedding. The pair also weren't living together in Marshall's final days, and the unusual union ended with Marshall's death in 1995.

Smith claimed that Marshall had promised a share of his estate, but he had not put her in his will. She spent years fighting his son, E. Pierce Marshall, in court. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2006, with the court's decision opening the door for Anna Nicole Smith to collect money from her late husband's estate, though the case was not yet settled.

# Reality Star and Spokesperson

In 2002, television viewers got an inside look at Smith and her wacky, quirky ways with a new series. *The Anna Nicole Show*, a reality program, followed her through her daily activities. At times, the show was difficult to watch as Smith seemed disoriented or confused, but the audience continued to tune in to see what Smith might do or say next. She was often shown in the company of Howard K. Stern, her attorney. While the show went off the air in 2004, Anna Nicole Smith remained popular with the American public.

Having struggled with her weight on and off for years, Anna Nicole Smith became a spokesperson for a line of diet products in 2003. She lost a significant amount of weight and did some modeling and acting. In 2006, Smith starred in the science fiction-comedy *Illegal Aliens*. Her son Daniel also worked on

the project with her.

## Personal Problems

While her professional life appeared to be on the rise, Anna Nicole Smith experienced both joy and tragedy in her personal life. She announced that she was pregnant during the summer of 2006, and gave birth to a daughter on September 7, 2006, at a hospital in Nassau, Bahamas. She named her child Dannielynn, and was thrilled to be a mother again. But her happiness was short-lived. Her 20-year-old son Daniel died only three days later from an apparent drug overdose. Later reports indicated that the interaction of methadone and two different types of antidepressants may have caused his death. Anna Nicole Smith never truly recovered from the loss.

Smith found herself in the middle of media frenzy with reports on her son's death appearing on entertainment news programs on an almost daily basis. She also became embroiled in a paternity lawsuit regarding her daughter. Her ex-boyfriend, photographer Larry Birkhead, claimed to be Dannielynn's father. Smith stated that her attorney, Howard K. Stern, was the child's father, and he is listed on the child's birth certificate. In the midst of all this heartbreak and legal battles, Smith and Stern held a small commitment ceremony, after which they ate fried chicken and drank champagne. While the event symbolized their devotion to each other, it was not legally binding.

## Death and Legacy

Anna Nicole Smith died on February 8, 2007, at the age of 39, after being found unconscious in her hotel room at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Florida. In death as in life, Anna Nicole Smith made headlines around the world. As a tribute, *Playboy* magazine founder Hugh Hefner told



the press at the time: "She was a very dear friend who meant a great deal to *Playboy* and to me personally."

After Smith's death, there was much speculation regarding the paternity of her daughter, including one claim made by Prince Frederick von Anhalt, Zsa Zsa Gabor's husband. He told the Associated Press that he had an affair with Anna Nicole Smith and believed that he was Dannielynn's father. In April 2007, it was determined by DNA test results that Larry Birkhead was the biological father of Dannielynn. Howard K. Stern did not contest this ruling and legal custody was granted to Birkhead.

There was also speculation over the cause of the reality star's death, with authorities eventually announcing that it was an accidental drug overdose. Smith had been taking nine different kinds of medication in the days before her death. Stern and two others were later found guilty of crimes associated with her death. All of these convictions were thrown out in 2011 except for a misdemeanor against Smith's psychiatrist.

That year, the battle over Smith's claims on Marshall's estate once again made it to the U.S. Supreme Court. This time, it was determined that the earlier Texas probate court finding against Smith would stand. Legal proceedings would continue until 2014, with a judge ruling against another lawsuit brought forth by Smith's team.

In 2012, Stern again faced legal consequences for his alleged role in supplying Smith's prescription drug habit. The Second District Court of Appeal objected with the vacating of these convictions against Stern. The court stated that it believed that Stern may have "knowingly participated in conduct designed to avoid detection and scrutiny" in regard to the prescription drugs used by Smith, according to Eonline.com.

While ridiculed by some for her spacey persona, Smith was also

admired for her rise to success despite so many personal obstacles. Perhaps the quintessential underdog, Smith had lots of fans rooting for her to overcome the recent tragedies. Unfortunately, that was not to be. After her death, she has been compared to many of Hollywood's beautiful women who died too young, including Jean Harlow and Anna Nicole Smith's personal favorite, Marilyn Monroe.

Smith continues to be a subject of great fascination and speculation to this day. Her life and sudden death has inspired numerous books, documentaries and movies. In 2011, an opera entitled *Anna Nicole*—telling Smith's tragic tale in song—debuted in London to mostly favorable reviews. In 2013, Lifetime TV network released *The Anna Nicole Story*, with Agnes Bruckner starring as the troubled pin-up and Martin Landau portraying J. Howard Marshall.



AN NICOLE SMITH FROM HER 1990 REMOTE TV SHOW  
ON THE CHALKY WHEELS (MAGNET) SHOW





