

STEPHEN HAWKING
1942-2018

"My goal is simple," Hawking (in Washington, DC, in 1988) once said. "It is a complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all."



Hawking and first wife Jane on their wedding day in 1965.



With his second wife and former nurse, Elaine Mason, in 2004.



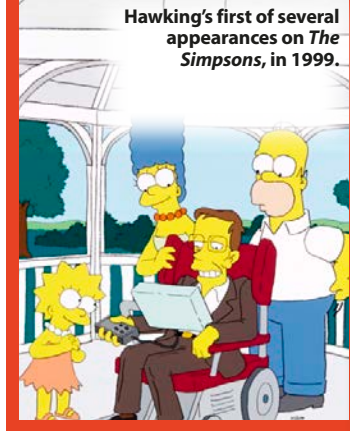
Floating in zero gravity in 2007.



Hawking with his family in 1981 (from left, daughter Lucy, sons Robert, standing, and Timothy, and wife Jane).



On the set of *The Big Bang Theory* in 2012.



Hawking's first of several appearances on *The Simpsons*, in 1999.



With actor Eddie Redmayne, who portrayed Hawking in *The Theory of Everything*.

For the better part of nearly five decades, Stephen Hawking was confined to a wheelchair, tethered to a respirator and unable to speak or move a single muscle save for his eyes. But the disease never tamed his mind—or his sense of humour. "Life," he told *The New York Times* in 2004, "would be tragic if it weren't funny."

It was that witty perspective that endeared the brilliant Cambridge University physicist—who died peacefully at his home in Cambridge, England, on March 14, at age 76—to millions around the globe. "Hawking's deep understanding of the origin of everything, of the nature of space and time, changed the way every one of us thinks about the cosmos and our place within it," says Bill Nye, US TV science personality and CEO of the Planetary Society.

Hawking was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) in 1963 while working on his PhD thesis in cosmology at Cambridge. Despite being given just two years to live, he went on to become the world's foremost theoretical physicist, developing groundbreaking theories on the origin of the

universe and the nature of black holes and gravity. His 1988 bestseller *A Brief History of Time* sold more than 10 million copies and made him an unlikely celebrity, leading to cameo appearances on television shows like *The Simpsons*, *The Big Bang Theory* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. His own life was the subject of the award-winning 2014 film *The Theory of Everything*, adapted from the memoir of his first wife, Jane.

News of Hawking's death lit up social media, with thoughts and condolences coming from such disparate sources as Katy Perry, NASA and former US president Barack Obama, who tweeted, "Have fun out there among the stars." Despite Hawking's

supercharged intellect, the twice-married father of three admitted there was still one subject that baffled him. "I once asked [him] in an interview what puzzles him the most in all the universe," tweeted Larry King. "'Women,' he answered."

In recent years Hawking warned against the dangers of global warming and artificial intelligence. But ultimately his was a voice of optimism for our species. "Where there is life, there's hope," he said. "There are no limits to the human spirit." •

"His work is an inspiring reminder of what human minds are capable of"

—Bill Gates

Farewell to a BRILLIANT MIND

Refusing to let ALS slow him down, Hawking explored space from his wheelchair and ultimately transformed humanity's view of the universe

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