

Marlboro ad man Eric Lawson dies of chronic lung disease

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Eric Lawson, who portrayed the rugged Marlboro man in cigarette ads during the late 1970s, has died. He was 72.

Lawson died on 10 January at his home in San Luis Obispo of respiratory failure due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, his wife, Susan Lawson, said on Sunday.

Lawson was an actor with bit parts on such TV shows as Baretta and The Streets of San Francisco when he was hired to appear in print Marlboro ads from 1978 to 1981. His other credits include Charlie's Angels, Dynasty and Baywatch. His wife said injuries sustained on the set of a western film ended his career in 1997.

A smoker since age 14, Lawson later appeared in an anti-smoking commercial that parodied the Marlboro man and an Entertainment Tonight segment to discuss the negative effects of smoking. Ms Lawson said her husband was proud of the interview, even though he was smoking at the time and continued the habit until he was diagnosed with COPD.

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