



One of Hartford's most famous sons - Clint Walker - dies at age 90

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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One of Hartford's most famous sons - actor Clint Walker - died on May 21, 2018, at the age of 90.

Walker was born in Hartford, IL., the son of Gladys Huldah and Paul Arnold Walker. He had a twin sister Lucy, who died in 2000. He was raised in Belleville. He left school to work at a factory and on a river boat, then joined the United States Merchant Marine at age 17 in the final months of World War II.

A friend in film helped him get bit parts and eventually, Warner Brothers became interested in him in the western television series “Cheyenne,” which proved to be a huge break in 1956. Walker has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame at 1505 Vine Street, near its intersection with Sunset Boulevard. In 2004, he was inducted into the Hall of Great Western performers at the National Cowboy Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

Walker had dashing looks and an imposing physique; he was 6-foot-6 with a 48-inch chest and 32-inch waist at one point. His biggest claim to fame was his role as Cheyenne Bodie, a cowboy in “Cheyenne.” He appeared in many other films and parts as an actor, but he never forgot his hometown and came back often through the years to visit the Hartford/Alton area.

Eventually, there was a “Clint Walker Day” in his birthplace of Hartford. Walker starred in a movie directed by Frank Sinatra, “None But the Brave,” and the well-known “The Dirty Dozen.”

Walker continued working in the entertainment business until the late 1990s when he voiced a character in “Small Soldiers.”

Walker married Verna Garver in 1948 and they had a daughter, Valerie, in 1950. The two divorced in 1968. Valerie became an airline pilot.

Walker married Giselle Hennessy in 1974 and she died in 1994. He last married Susan Cavallari in 1997 and they lived in Grass Valley, Calif.