

# ANN MILLER'S BRAVE LAST DAYS

**G**UTSY SONG-AND-DANCE legend Ann Miller — one of America's brightest stars during Hollywood's golden age of musicals — beat breast cancer and colon cancer before dying of lung cancer at 80.

*80-year-old song-and-dance legend was partying with friends, working on a new act and writing her third book*

"Ann was so brave throughout her illnesses," her longtime friend and agent Scott Stander told the ENQUIRER.

"She just kept on going — partying with friends, working on a new act and writing her third book.

"The day before she died, she got a fantastic offer for a movie with Anthony Hopkins. She had an amazing career."

The long-legged entertainer first appeared on the silver screen in 1934's "Anne of Green Gables" when she was 11 years old.

She went on to star in over 40 films, including the classics "Stage Door," "You Can't Take It With You," "Easter Parade," "On the Town" and "Kiss Me Kate." Ann danced well into her 60s — astounding audiences with a nine-year run in "Sugar Babies" with her close friend Mickey Rooney.

"Annie was an angel and a dear friend I loved very much," Rooney told The ENQUIRER.

"It was an honor to have worked with her for so many years. She was a great actress, a great dancer and singer, too. She could do it all.

"Annie will surely go down in Hollywood history as one of the great performers of all time."

Last year, Ann invited ENQUIRER reporter Robin Mizrahi to her Beverly Hills mansion to talk — with defiant humor — about losing five full inches in her spine after a sudden,

debilitating bout with osteoporosis.

"I had three discs collapse in my spine and now it's disintegrating," she said.

"I used to be 5-foot-6, but now I'm a dwarf!

"It's hard to age, but I'm still tapping my foot. There's nothing you can do but keep smiling."

Ann, who was married and divorced three times, had been quietly fighting cancer the past five years, sources say.

She was in remission after successfully undergoing surgery for breast cancer, then colon cancer a year later.

But when the cancer showed up in her lungs,

doctors were unable to remove it all.

"Even though she knew she was dying of lung cancer, Ann went to Sedona, Ariz., where she vacationed every winter," said Stander.

"She spent time with friends, without telling anyone she was ill.

"But the altitude, combined with her lung cancer, made it difficult for her to breathe, so she returned to her home in Beverly Hills."

Soon after returning from Sedona, she fell in the bathtub and broke her leg in two places. On January 17, she checked into Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

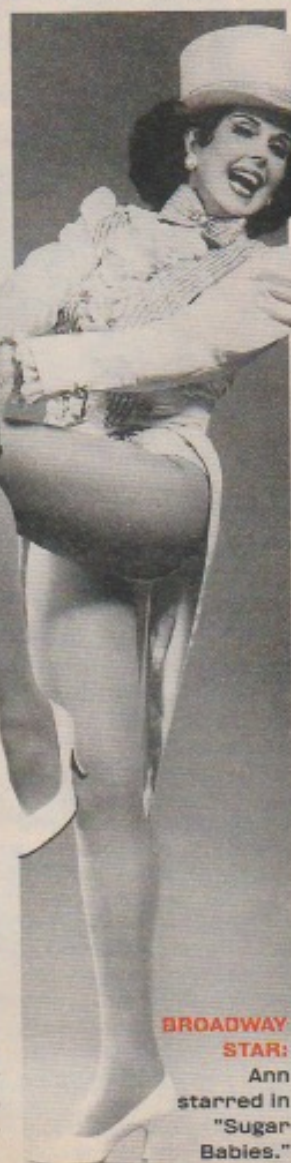
"In the hospital, Ann had



**IN HER HEYDAY:** Glamorous Ann Miller in 1957.



**GUTSY ENTERTAINER** Ann was fighting cancer last year when she invited ENQUIRER reporter Robin Mizrahi to her home for an interview.



**BROADWAY STAR:** Ann starred in "Sugar Babies."



**FILM STAR:** Ann strikes a pose in "Kiss Me Kate."

trouble breathing and swallowing, causing her already declining weight to plummet. She was constantly hooked up to oxygen," said a close pal.

"Ann had recently converted to Catholicism. One of her last requests was to ask for a priest who gave her the last rites."

Stander said: "Ann passed away very peacefully just after midnight on January 22."

"Now she's tapping her way to heaven — a class act to the end."

— ROBIN MIZRAHI