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UK News

Tycoon Died After Drink And Drugs Binge

Thursday, 26th July 2007, 15:57

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The millionaire boss of a \$2 billion US dollar international finance firm died after taking a lethal cocktail of cocaine, booze and other drugs, an inquest heard.

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The body of tycoon Beaufort Clarke, boss of Icon Capital Corporation, was found nearly naked and covered in blood on a bed at his luxury west London home surrounded by drugs paraphernalia and several wraps of white powder.

Blood tests revealed the 60-year old American, known to pals as Beau, had taken "significant amounts" of cocaine and the horse tranquiliser Ketamine which are often mixed together to be sold as trendy street drug CK, the hearing was told.

The previous evening, divorcee Mr Clarke, whose ex-wife lives in the US, had invited some friends round to his large rented pad in Gilston Road, Chelsea, which he had only just moved in to, the inquest heard.

Mr Clarke who came out as gay following his divorce was chairman and chief executive of Icon - the fifth-largest independent leasing and financing company in the US.

He was well known on the New York social circuit as a philanthropist and as the partner of DJ Tony Moran. The couple spearheaded several AIDS fundraising events in New York.

They shared a large apartment in SoHo New York, a residence in the South Beach section of Miami and a bayfront home at the foot of Beach Hill Walk in Fire Island Pines.

Tony Moran has remixed records for the likes of Celine Dion, Cher, Janet Jackson and Gloria Estefan.

Christopher Steiner, who worked for Icon which Mr Clarke bought in 1996, told Westminster Coroner's Court he received several phone calls from his boss on Sunday April 29th this year.

At around 8pm that night Mr Clarke asked him to deliver some photographs to his



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house and, after letting himself in with his key, Mr Steiner said he heard Mr Clarke's voice telling him to leave the pictures on the table.

He said Mr Clarke told him he was expecting some friends around that evening.

The next morning, Mr Clarke's personal assistant Marius Tarvydas called Mr Steiner to say his boss had not got up and at lunchtime they let themselves in again.

Mr Steiner told the hearing: "I went into the bedroom and Mr Clarke was lying on his back in bed with blood on his face. He looked dead. I told Marius not to touch anything, and went to call police."

Police arrived to find the dead man wearing nothing but a blood soaked t-shirt which had ridden up over his chest and with blood caked around his nose and mouth.

On a large wooden desk they found several wraps of white powder, a rolled up bank note and an Amex card covered in powder, along with half drunk bottles of wine. They also found pills prescribed by Mr Clarke's American GP for hypertension, amnesia and high cholesterol.

Detective Constable Richard Tovey said: "There was no sign of a struggle. I believed the death was not suspicious, caused by use of cocaine combined with alcohol and prescription drugs."

Pathologist professor Sebastian Lucas, who carried out the post mortem, told the court Mr Clarke had a hole in his septum - which separates the two nostrils - which he said was consistent with years of cocaine abuse.

The Professor gave the cause of death as acute heart failure caused by Ketamine and cocaine poisoning. Both drugs caused a surge in blood pressure, he added, which probably killed Mr Clarke, who had an enlarged heart.

His blood alcohol level was around the legal limit for driving, the court heard.

Coroner Dr Paul Knapman said Mr Clarke may not have known he was taking Ketamine as cocaine sold on the streets was frequently mixed with other substances. He recorded the cause of death as non dependant drug abuse

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Actress Samantha Morton has announced she is expecting a baby with her fiance, director Harry Holm. Samantha, 30, wh	
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A councillor in charge of cutting down on boozing has sparked fury after being caught drink-driving. Shamed Denise Ca	
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Pension records of nearly a million British World War One heroes have been published on the internet. The collection	
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Harry Potter author JK Rowling has lost a High Court action seeking to ban the publication of a picture of her son.	
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Watchdogs have upheld a complaint that a Darfur crisis campaign group misleadingly published a death toll figure as fact	
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Traditional family summer breaks at a British seaside resort or holiday camp are the least child friendly in the world,	
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One in five young adults - three million in all - would consider going bankrupt as a solution to financial woes, researc	
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