Trailblazing LGBT+ activist Ken Jones, who helped fund Gilbert Baker’s Pride flag, has passed away after a battle with cancer.

Jones passed away Thursday (14 January) at the age of 70, having been diagnosed with bladder cancer in September last year.

He was a pioneer who pushed for the desegregation of the LGBT+ rights movement, and worked alongside activists like Roma Guy, Sally Miller Gearhart, and Gilbert Baker in San Francisco.

Jones was the first Black chair of the San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration Committee board, worked for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation from its conception, and even illegally traveled to Cuba in the 1980s to help with the AIDS crisis there.

His life was dramatised in the 2017 ABC miniseries When We Rise, and later in life he was ordained as a deacon so he could officiate weddings.

Ken Jones was a hero. He survived many struggles. He deeply loved his family and his community, and dedicated his entire…

Jones’ death was announced publicly by his close friend and fellow activist Cleve Jones on Facebook, who wrote: “Ken Jones was a hero. He survived many struggles. “He deeply loved his family and his community, and dedicated his entire life to the movement for peace and justice. “He was very grateful to all of you who reached out to him with messages of encouragement and love during his illness. “Today Ken lost his fight against cancer. A memorial will be arranged when it is safe once more for us to gather. Rest in Power, Ken. I love you.”

KEN JONES 1950 – 2021 — rest in power my magnificent friend. My heart breaks at this morning’s news that you’ve left…

Screenwriter and activist Dustin Lance Black, who created When We Rise, also shared on Facebook: “Rest in power my magnificent friend. My heart breaks at this morning’s news that you’ve left this world. “Many know Ken as one of the three main characters depicted in When We Rise. Ken was a hero and an inspiration. “An ordained deacon, he worked to desegregate the LGBTQ movement, was a passionate HIV/AIDS activist, and even played a role in helping fund the creation of his friend Gilbert Baker’s Pride flag. “I will never forget Ken’s beaming smile, his deep kindness, and his inextinguishable passion for fairness.”

https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2021/01/16/ken-jones-death-tribute-hiv-aids-lgbt-activist-gilbert-baker-dustin-lance-black/