



Phoebe Jane Titcomb

September 21, 1949 - September 3, 2026

Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Phoebe Jane Titcomb died in Portsmouth on September 3, 2026. She was seventy-six. Born there on September 21, 1949, she grew up knowing the yard as a weekday neighbor, not a postcard. As a young woman she spent two years as a storekeeper on a tender; she mentioned the work in conversation and never asked anyone to treat it as a costume. Her father hauled ice. Phoebe learned that steam is a set of rules that do not care how late you are for supper.

For thirty-two years she was a helper and then a planner's clerk at the navy yard, first folding drawings that never quite came dry in August, later the woman who could hear a tired pump in the language of a work order. She did not advertise the town. She kept the rooms honest. She would write up a cracked tile even when a tour was already promised. She charged a fair hour on the side when a church van needed a lift more than a sermon.

She married George Titcomb in 1971. They raised three children in a frame house that needed a new porch every twenty years. George kept the garden and the choir. Phoebe grilled on Sundays and considered a plate of steamed clams a seasonal obligation. After her knees quit the worst shops she still came out for a favorite Saturday, moving slower, doing the same honest work.

Friends remember a woman who left a room cleaner than she found it, who could stand in a hiss without making it a personality, and who loved the river at evening. She died in Portsmouth, in the city whose yard had written her calendar. The dry dock still opens. Someone else will hear the knock that means trouble.

Services

Visitation in Portsmouth, then a simple service. A gift to a yard-workers' assistance fund or a neighborhood

pantry is welcome.

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