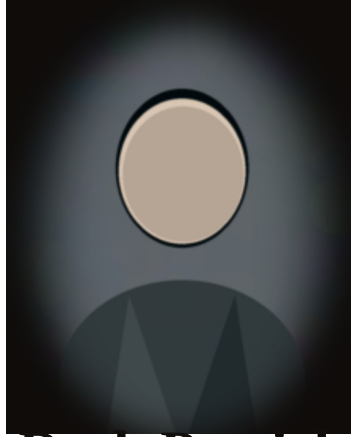




Ruth Patrick

November 26, 1907 - September 23, 2013

Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania

Ruth Patrick - American limnologist and botanist who taught regulators and industries to read rivers by the life in a drop of water - died in Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania, on September 23, 2013. She was one hundred and five. Born November 26, 1907, in Topeka, Kansas, she earned degrees from Cornell and the University of Virginia when laboratory doors for women were still half-closed, then built a lasting scientific home at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

Her insight was deceptively simple: the diversity of diatoms and other aquatic organisms is a living scorecard for pollution. She led river surveys, designed sampling methods still taught in environmental science, and advised companies and federal agencies without surrendering the field notebook to the press release. The Patrick Center for Environmental Research carries her name; medals and a National Medal of Science followed a career that began with creek mud on her boots.

Lafayette Hill was a quiet suburban last address after a Philadelphia scientific life. She worked into extreme old age, proof that curiosity does not punch a mandatory retirement clock.

She died in Lafayette Hill on September 23, 2013. Water-quality labs still count species the way she taught them to.

Patrick's gift was biological literacy for rivers - turning microscopic census into public policy. Notice Nearby keeps the death date so September 23 remembers the Topeka-born scientist who made America's streams answer for themselves.

Services

Died in Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania, September 23, 2013. Limnologist; Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia; National Medal of Science.

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