Beat: Miscellaneous

World's oldest person, Besse Cooper, dies in Georgia at 116

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USPA News - Born at a time when Grover Cleveland was President of the United States and decades before women gained the right to vote, Besse Cooper, the world`s oldest verified person, died Tuesday at a nursing home in the U.S. state of Georgia. She was 116 years old.

Cooper died just after 2 p.m. local time on Tuesday at the Park Place nursing home in Monroe, a city in Walton County. She had recently suffered from stomach flu but was feeling better on Tuesday morning, when a stylist visited her to do her hair. But she later began having difficulty breathing and passed away in her room, where she had lived for the past 11 years. "She died peacefully after 2 p.m. and we are very thankful for that and the time she was with us," her son Sidney Cooper told the local Walton Tribune newspaper. Funeral arrangements are expected to be announced later this week when more family members have arrived in Monroe. Cooper was born in Tennessee in August 1896 at a time when Grover Cleveland was President of the United States and Queen Victoria was the monarch of the United Kingdom. It was also decades before women gained the right to vote in 1920, an issue important to Cooper as she joined the suffrage movement and encouraged people to be involved in politics. The former school teacher, who celebrated her 116th birthday in August, was the oldest verified living person in the world. With her passing, the oldest verified living person is now 115-year-old Italian woman Dina Manfredini, who currently lives in Iowa and will turn 116 in April. The oldest undisputed person to have ever lived in the world was Jeanne Calment who died in France in 1997 at the age of 122 years and 164 days. The oldest undisputed person ever from the United States was Sarah Knauss who died in December 1999 at the age of 119 years and 97 days.

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