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World's oldest person dies at 117 in Japan

01/04/2015



The nursing home where she lived in Osaka said she breathed her last around 7am (2200 GMT Tuesday).

On the occasion of her birthday early last month, Okawa, a mother of three, grandmother of four and great-grandmother of six, was one of only a handful of people still alive who had been born in the 19th century.

Her birth on March 5, 1898 predated the Wright brothers' first powered human flight by five years, she was already a teenager when World War I broke out and in her 70s by the time of the first moon landing.

When she turned 114, she was officially recognised by Guinness World Records as the oldest woman in the globe.

Japan, known for the longevity of its people, is home to the world's oldest man — Sakari Momoi, who celebrated his 112th birthday in February.

In 2013, life expectancy for women in Japan was 86.61, the longest in the world followed by Hong Kong women, according to the health ministry.

For men it was 80.21, the fourth longest, after men in Hong Kong, Iceland and Switzerland.

The world's oldest person is now believed to be American Gertrude Weaver, who is reportedly

116 years old.

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