

Cecilia Payne



Fun Facts

Born: May 10, 1900

Died: December 7, 1979

From: Wendover, United Kingdom

Occupation: Astronomer, astrophysicist

Quick Fact/Motivational Set: Do you know what stars are made up of?

Best Known For:

- Explanation of stellar spectra and composition of the Sun
- Making more than 3,000,000 observations of variable stars
- Attended several colleges, starting at St. Mary's College, Paddington and ending at Newnham College, Cambridge University.
- She moved to the U.S. after realizing her only career option in the U.K. was to become a teacher. After the move, she attended the graduate program in astronomy at Harvard University.
- Her groundbreaking conclusion of stars being composed of hydrogen and helium was initially rejected because it contradicted the scientific wisdom of the time.

“Your reward will be the widening of the horizon as you climb. And if you achieve that reward, you will ask no other.”

~Cecilia Payne



Scientist of the Month at CMFDL
is Sponsored by:
Fond du Lac Area United Way

