

In case you think I 'm old?



Jeanne Louise Calment had the longest confirmed human Lifespan on record: 122 years and 164 days.

It seems that fate strongly approved of the way Madam Calment lived her life.

Jeanne was born in Arles, France, on 21st February 1875.

When the Eiffel Tower was built, she was 14 year old.

It was at this time that she met Vincent van Gogh.

"He was dirty, badly dressed and disagreeable," she recalled in an interview given in 1988.

When she was 85, she took up fencing, and she was still riding on her bike when she reached 100.

When Jeanne was 114, she starred in a film about her life; at 115 she had an operation on her hip, and at 117 she gave up smoking (having started at the age of 21 in 1896).

Apparently, she didn't give it up for health reasons, but because she didn't like having to ask someone to help her light a cigarette once she was becoming almost blind.

In 1965, Jeanne was 90 years old and had no heirs.

She signed a deal to sell her apartment to a 47-year-old lawyer called André-François Raffray.

He agreed to pay her a monthly sum of 2,500 francs on the condition that he would inherit her apartment after she died.

However, Raffray not only ended up paying Jeanne for 30 years, but died before she did at the age of 77.

His widow was legally obliged to continue paying Madam Calment until the end of her days.

Jeanne retained sharp mental faculties.

When she was asked on her 120th birthday what kind of future she expected to have, she replied: "A very short one."

Quotes and rules of life from Jeanne Calment:

"Being young is a state of mind, it doesn't depend on one's body, I'm actually still a young girl; it's just that I haven't looked so good for the past 70 years."

"I've only got one wrinkle, and I'm sitting on it."

"All babies are beautiful."

"I'm in love with wine."

"Always keep your smile. That's how I explain my long life."

"If you can't change something, don't worry about it."

"I have a huge desire to live and a big appetite, especially for sweets."

"I never wear mascara; I laugh until I cry too often."

"I see badly, I hear badly, and I feel bad, but everything's fine."

"I think I will die of laughter."

"I have legs of iron, but to tell you the truth, they're starting to rust and buckle a bit."

(At the end of one interview, in response to a journalist who said he hoped they would meet again the following year):

"Why not? You're not that old; you'll still be here."