

# DEADWOOD WALL OF FAME

2022

## Genevieve Duchene Akrop

**Born: May 29, 1912**

Deadwood, South Dakota

**Died: April 10, 1993**

Deadwood (Buried in Rose Hill Cemetery, Spearfish)



Genevieve Duchene Akrop, born in Deadwood on May 29, 1912, was a self-described “small but mighty” woman who had an impact on her community that was anything but small. At 5’2” tall, and living her entire life without a driver’s license, there wasn’t much that could hold her back.

From the beginning, learning and education was Genevieve’s calling. The nuns at Saint Ambrose Catholic School gave her special permission to start first grade at the age of five, and she excelled as a student. She graduated high school at the age of 16 with the highest grade point average in her class, and had earned her bachelor’s degree from South Dakota State College in Brookings by the time she was 20.

Genevieve began her teaching career immediately, taking a position teaching mathematics and social science at Piedmont High School. Not long after, her parents became ill and she returned to Deadwood to care for them, moving back into her childhood home on Charles Street. She took a teaching position at Deadwood High School, again teaching math and social science. When America joined World War II, Genevieve took over for a time as Acting Principal.

By 1946, both of Genevieve’s parents had passed away. She and her brother inherited ownership of their father’s business, the Deadwood Granite and Marble Works. With her brother living in California, Genevieve and her husband, Paul John Akrop, took on

the day-to-day business activities. Genevieve concentrated full time on this new undertaking until her three children were all in high school in 1963, when she returned to teaching.

Genevieve continued to teach at Deadwood High School and later Deadwood Junior High School, where she was also a guidance counselor, until her retirement in 1977. She was an active member of national, state, and local chapters of education associations through her whole career, as well as a member of several honorary education societies.

Teaching young people is by its nature a call to leadership and decision making. Genevieve spent most of her 45-year career training children - those in her family and those in her classrooms - to become thoughtful and involved members of their communities.

On Saturday morning April 10, 1993 Genevieve walked out her front door, accepted a hand to get into the car, and was driven a few doors down the street to the hospital where she passed away peacefully a short time later.



DEADWOOD  
SOUTH  
DAKOTA

A National Historic  
Landmark