

## Barbara (Huff) Pierce

(1939 - 1995)

Barbara Pierce was a founding member of the Santa Fe Trail Council in 1986. The Council became the Santa Fe Trail Association in 1987 and Barbara served on the governing board as a director from Kansas. She led the efforts to host the 1987 Symposium at Hutchinson Community College, Hutchinson KS. She arranged a magnificent Symposium, with excellent programs and field trips, typical of her enthusiasm, energy, hard work, and persistence. More than 350 participants attended.

Marc Simmons paid tribute to her at the Hutchinson Symposium by relating his nearly fatal auto accident the previous November with a story that, as he was trapped and nearly crushed in his wrecked car awaiting emergency crews to extricate him, an angel kept after him to come along to his final reward. Marc replied he could not go because he had promised Barbara Peirce he would give the keynote address at the Hutchinson Symposium, and he would rather say no to God himself than say no to Barbara Peirce.

A graduate of Kansas State University, she taught Kansas History at Hutchinson Community College. She became fascinated with the Santa Fe Trail long before there was a Santa Fe Trail Association, and she arranged field trips to the Trail remnants at Ralph Hathaway's farm in Rice County KS for her students and other groups. She named "Ralph's Ruts" and arranged a Symposium field trip there, including a covered wagon in the imposing ruts. When Barbara died of cancer in 1995, Ralph wrote "we have lost a great person, a dear friend."

Barbara was also the retired owner of Pierce Puzzle Co. which manufactured jigsaw puzzles of several state maps. We are grateful for her many contributions to the Santa Fe Trail.

