
IN MEMORIAM

Patricia Ann Mickelson Adam 1936–2016

Patricia Ann (“Pat”) Mickelson Adam, a longtime community leader in Pierre and a former president of the South Dakota State Historical Society board of trustees, died on 22 June 2016.

The daughter of George T. and Madge Turner Mickelson, Pat Mickelson was born on 22 May 1936 in Mobridge, South Dakota. Her family lived in Selby before her father’s two terms as governor from 1947 to 1951. Pat Mickelson earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of South Dakota in 1958 and married Thomas C. Adam the following year. She and her husband both pursued postgraduate studies at the university. In 1961, Pat completed a master’s degree in speech pathology while Tom received a law degree. The couple then moved to Pierre, where they raised four children.

An active and involved citizen, Adam invested much of her energy in public education, politics, and the preservation of South Dakota history. A member of the Pierre school board from 1976 to 1986, she served as its president for five years. She also took a statewide leadership role as president of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota from 1981 to 1983. During the 1995 and 1996 legislative sessions, Adam was first assistant to the secretary of the South Dakota Senate. She became secretary of the senate in 1997 and served through the 2006 legislative session. She helped organize the installation of the statues of former governors that grace the streets of Pierre and the preservation of South Dakota first ladies’ inaugural gowns.

Adam was a longtime member of both the South Dakota State Historical Society board of trustees and the board of its fundraising partner, the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation. She provided a steady hand as president of the board of trustees from 1996 to 2004, a time when the society experienced leadership changes. Her service on the foundation board was a continuation of her ongoing support for the State Historical Society and the Cultural Heritage Center.