

Arden Elaine Pierce
March 13, 1928 - September 20, 2021
Resident of Palo Alto



Arden Elaine Pierce, 93, died peacefully on September 20, 2021 at her home in Palo Alto.

She was born March 13, 1928 in Mt. Kisco, New York, and was an only child. She graduated from Northfield School for Girls in 1945, then from Swarthmore College in 1949. Arden met Richard Cordray at Swarthmore and married him in 1947. Starting in 1951, they welcomed 5 children in 9 years.

The family moved to California in 1954 and to the Bay Area in 1960. Arden and Richard divorced shortly thereafter. Arden loved the Bay Area, especially the weather, and resolved to stay.

Arden returned to school at Stanford and became a physical therapist. She worked for 20 years at El Camino Hospital and then for the Visiting Nurses Association. She loved her job and often commented that it was amazing she could get paid for doing something she loved so much. She especially enjoyed getting to know all her patients - people in all walks of life.

Shortly after her divorce she discovered folk dancing. Both she and her children learned to dance, which became an important part of her life and a family activity.

She met Hiram Pierce at folk dancing, and they married in 1968. They were a great team and inseparable until Hiram's death in 2016. They bought land in the Santa Cruz mountains and ran a folk dance campout there (Planina) for many years.

Throughout her life, Arden was known for her warmth and compassion. She opened her house to one and all, including numerous people who lived there for short periods. She also invited "strays" and visitors to family celebrations, especially Thanksgiving and Christmas, and encouraged her children to do the same. She loved socializing and would talk to just about anyone for as long as they were willing to talk.

After receiving help from Planned Parenthood as a young, married woman, Arden donated and volunteered for the organization for the rest of her life.

Arden was an active Quaker her whole adult life. She joined the Palo Alto Friends meeting in 1960 and contributed in many roles. She participated in many Quaker programs including visiting prisoners in jail.

Arden is survived by her children, Alix, Gail, Jacqueline and Edmund; 8 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by husband Hiram, and daughter Virginia.

Visit www.cordray.no for information regarding an online Memorial Nov. 6th at 2 pm. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Planned Parenthood, a Quaker organization, or a folk dance organization of your choice. View/sign guestbook at: cusimanocolonial.com