

## OBITUARY

### DONNA C. ROPER

Donna C. Roper, 68, Manhattan, died Saturday, Aug. 15, 2015, from colon cancer. A colleague provided some of the following information.



ROPER

Donna was born in June 20, 1947 in Oneonta, New York, the daughter of Norman and Laura (Deitz) Roper and sister to Marilyn. Donna was a professional archaeologist and authority on native peoples and archaeology in the central plains.

Donna followed a long family tradition at Hartwick College in Oneonta, earning a bachelor's degree in history with departmental honors in 1968. She became interested in archaeology during a college experience in Veracruz, Mexico, and participated in archaeology in New York before graduate studies in anthropology, emphasizing archaeology. She earned master's and doctorate degrees, respectively, at Indiana University (1970) and the University of Missouri (1975).

Her family instilled in Donna an appreciation of reading and music. A fluent reader by age three, she continued this pastime throughout her life. She played trumpet from third grade through college, attended summer music camp, sang in choirs and attended concerts.

Donna enjoyed sports and activities such as camping, skiing and lacrosse. In later years,

she honed skills in astronomy, photography and birding, the latter with the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society.

A prolific archaeologist, Donna directed projects in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas and other states. She held research positions with the University of Missouri's American Archaeology Division and the Illinois State Museum. In the 1980s she joined Gilbert/Commonwealth of Jackson, Michigan as Senior Archaeologist, and later partnered with Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group.

Donna came to love the Great Plains. She fulfilled her dream to live there, moving to Manhattan in 1991, becoming Research Associate Professor to K-State's Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work and an independent researcher and consultant. She also was adjunct research associate with the Archaeological Research Center at Kansas University.

Donna occasionally taught at K-State and Kansas University and was an integral graduate committee member for nine master's and doctoral students of archaeology. Her training and influence helped prepare students for successful careers in archaeology.

Her curiosity, breadth of understanding and keen mind stimulated students and colleagues in the plains, midwest, and beyond. She edited two books and prepared monographs, professional and public articles, book chapters and technical reports. Donna was active with professional organizations, filling leadership roles, regu-

larly presenting her research, and debating at professional meetings.

She regularly shared her insights with local public groups, eliciting valuable discussions about Native prehistory. She co-led public archaeology projects through the Kansas Archaeological Training Program sponsored by the Kansas Anthropological Association and the Kansas Historical Society.

In 2015 Donna received the Distinguished Service Award of the Plains Anthropological Society and the W. Duncan Strong Award of the Nebraska Association of Professional Archaeologists, joining a select group of renowned recipients.

Donna was preceded in death by her father in 1986, her mother in 2009, and her companion dogs, Martin and Bonnie. She leaves behind her dog Bailey. Donna's ashes will be spread at a later date at her favorite place in southern Nebraska.

A memorial fund has been established through GoFundMe at [www.gofundme.com/ea4d4mtc](http://www.gofundme.com/ea4d4mtc).