

## In Memoriam: Debra Begg (2019)



The death of Debra Begg on August 18, 2019 at age 69 was a sad loss for CAML, as well as Debra's family, friends and colleagues. She retired as Head of the Isobel Firestone Music Library at the University of Ottawa on March 31, 2017. She was President of CAML from 1988 to 1991.

Following a degree in Music at the University of Ottawa, Debra received her Master of Library Science at the University of Western Ontario in 1975 (in the same class as Kirsten Walsh). She then began her distinguished career as Music Cataloguer at the University of Ottawa and became Head of the Music Library in February 1981. In 1981, she also completed her Master of Arts in Canadian Studies (Music) from Carleton University with a thesis on the history of early symphony orchestras in Ottawa.

Throughout her career, Debra was an active and enthusiastic member of CAML, participating on the Board, Committees, planning programs and organizing local arrangements whenever CAML meetings were held in Ottawa, between 1982 and 2015. Debra was Membership Secretary through the 1980s until becoming President in 1988, a position she held until 1991. Debra attended many conferences, including IAML in Tokyo in 1988.

Throughout her career Debra was a dedicated advocate for the University of Ottawa Music Library, ensuring that the Library collection and services were expanded as the School of Music grew from a small undergraduate program to a much larger and renowned School offering advanced graduate degrees. This also involved planning for the Music Library within the new music building, Perez Hall which opened in 1988. Students, faculty and visitors could count on Debra as a source of knowledge and guidance, treating everyone with care and respect. She inspired others to become music librarians, willingly writing letters of reference and offering encouragement and job interview tips.

Debra attended many student and faculty performances at the School of Music, which often featured works she had helped the performers research. She was also involved in the broader music community in Ottawa, attending concerts at the National Arts Centre and other venues.

Debra was always good-humoured, generous and cheerful, with an easy, musical laugh and lovely voice. She was predeceased by her husband, John Hopkins in 2018.

Debra was a dear friend and colleague throughout my career.

Please see links, below, to obituary (death notice) in the *Ottawa Citizen*, and to a video tribute addendum to the CAML AGM, June 2020.

### **Joan Colquhoun McGorman**

CAML President, 1985-1987

(Music Librarian at National Library of Canada, 1978-1988)

Obituary in the *Ottawa Citizen*: <https://ottawacitizen.remembering.ca/obituary/debra-begg-1076763740>

CAML AGM Tribute: <https://youtu.be/2x0qxxraYvBc>