



Canadian Music Educators Association
L'Association canadienne des musiciens éducateurs
Promoting Excellence in Music Education

Brian Roberts (Presentation Oct 19, 2001)
CMEA ACEM Executive Award Recipient

When the Board of Directors of the Canadian Music Educators Association L'association canadienne des éducateurs de musique, met in Victoria in February 2001, one of its driving forces was not sitting at the table. Brian Roberts, the man and his wit, remained a continent away. For approximately twenty years, (with a short R&R break of a few years in the middle) Brian's personality, ideas, vision, humour, and whistling had been both heard and felt at conferences, symposia, and at meetings. Whenever someone asked, What is CMEA, most people respond by saying the publications Brian served as editor of the CME Journal, as editor of the Newsletter, as editor of books and as a voice for research in music education. Brian encouraged people from across Canada, from across the world, and from within Newfoundland and Labrador to write columns about music and music education. He produced excellent journals and books. Because of his work, CMEA was delivered to the homes of 1500 members and in libraries of schools and universities across the globe. People read about the work of other Canadian music teachers, about music courses in other provinces, about technology and music education, about research by Canadians to advance music teaching and learning. He initiated a student essay writing competition for graduate and undergraduate students who aspired to become music educators.

Brian has a vision for music education in Canada and he works tirelessly to achieve that vision. He brings enthusiasm and passion for life into his work, whether he is teaching, singing, exhorting, or advocating for students, teachers, and for music.

Brian has helped to shape CMEA ACEM. At meetings, he was always able to see another possibility for action or develop another strategy. Whenever we discussed how to raise money for the association, Brian stood, dropped 1 \$100.00 bill on the table and challenged the others around the table to do the same. Those of us who were there know that Brian does follow his words with deeds. In fact, he matched the funds the rest of us donated that day. His commitment and drive sustained CMEA in troubled times. When his assistant editor, Jane Atkinson from BC died, he edited the Newsletter as well as the Journal. He reminded us of our past while he was pushing us into the 21st century. He dared us to take chances and encouraged us to make our dreams come true.

Probably all of you here today know Brian in some capacity: as performer, as teacher, or as mentor and advocate. I met Brian in 1984 when I was president of the Manitoba Music Educators Association. I met him at conferences, at meetings at least once a year. When he resigned as editor of CMEA, I felt both a professional loss and a personal one. You see, CMEA is more than its publications. CMEA is people, people like Brian who work tirelessly with their students, with their colleagues, with their administrators, and with policy makers to awaken the capacity to experience the beauty, to experience joy, and yes, to experience the hard work and frustration of doing music, of awakening feelings, and of being part of something exhilarating. Brian, the Board misses you. We are in your debt. But we know that you will keep whistling, that your humour will entertain and persuade, that you will express your ideas forcefully and eloquently in Newfoundland, in Canada, and globally.

We, the members of CMEA, offer you the CMEA Executive Award for dedication and distinguished service and an Honorary Life Membership in the association that has shaped you as you have shaped it.

Dr. Barbara Graham
President, CMEA ACEM
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