



Carole F. Huxley

January 01, 1938 - January 26, 2020

Carole Frances Corcoran Huxley

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**In her own words (from remarks given at Mt. Holyoke):**

“Everything depends on the ordinary tending to the details and demands of life in the course of an hour, a day, a life. These demands may come at inconvenient times, even in the midst of other crises, but you need to be attentive to the needs of your family and friends and to the forms of ritual that make holidays, weddings, funerals, and christenings profound markers of the human experience. Noting the weather and celebrating seasons, attending to what others say, making time for music and conversation, retaining curiosity - these qualities make the days last much longer because one is alive to every minute. I am trying to make my days - one by one - count for more.”

Carole Frances Corcoran was born January 1, 1938, in Evanston, Illinois, to Angela and Harold Corcoran. The cherished youngest daughter of the family (she was predeceased by her sisters Betty Ann and Mary), Carole enjoyed a happy childhood she recalled fondly for the rest of her life.

Carole graduated from Hamden Hall Country Day School in Connecticut. She received her BA from Mt. Holyoke in 1960 and her MAT from Harvard in 1961. She joined the American Field Service (AFS) and traveled the world escorting students to and from the United States. She relished these adventures and told spirited stories of her trips.

Through mutual friends at AFS, Carole met Michael Remsen Huxley. They were engaged in 1970, and their 48-year-long [marriage](#) began in 1971. Carole began working at the National Endowment for the Humanities in Washington, D.C., where she made many dear and life-long friends.

In 1982 the Huxleys moved to Albany, N.Y., where Carole had accepted the position of Deputy Commissioner of Cultural Education for New York State. She held that post for 24 years. In lieu of a restricted and stuffy retirement dinner, she elected to have a potluck meal in the State Museum near Halloween, invited everyone in the department from custodian to commissioner, and asked attendees to wear costumes. In honor of her decades of public service to the State of New York, the theater in the State Museum is named the Carole F. Huxley Theater.

After her retirement, the New York Board of Regents appointed Carole to serve as Interim Commissioner of Education, overseeing the work of more than 700 school districts with 3.2 million students; 7,000 libraries; 900 museums; and more than 50 professions encompassing nearly 900,000 licensees. She held the position for six months, until a successor was named, during which time she admirably helmed this large and important piece of the future of the state. She received numerous awards and accolades for her efforts throughout her public service career on behalf of her work for the cause of cultural education, the children of New York and the students of Mt. Holyoke.

Carole had a lasting impact on everyone lucky enough to know her. She was a dedicated public servant; loyal friend; exceptional mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother; and a passionate volunteer for the causes in which she believed. She served many years on the boards of Mt. Holyoke College, Historic Cherry Hill, and the New Netherlands Institute. She truly lit up every room she was in, with her intelligence and good cheer and a deep and empathetic interest in the people around her. She was a talented chef, a lover of Tanglewood, music, books, long walks, and dogs.

Carole is survived by her husband, Michael; sons Sam (Elsa) and Ian (Erika), and three grandchildren: Amelia, Harold, and Aidan. Memories of Carole's brilliance, infectious sense of humor, love of life, care for her beloved family, and dedication to public service, cultural education, and her fellow human beings will be cherished by her wide circle of family and friends. Her memory will inspire all who knew her to make every day count for more.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 7 at 11:00 am in the Carole F. Huxley Theater at the New York State Museum in Albany, N.Y. All are welcome. Donations in Carole's memory may be made to support scholarship aid at Mt. Holyoke College (indicate with "Carole Huxley '60") or Historic Cherry Hill in Albany, N.Y.