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Jack McClelland, Peggie Sampson
to receive honorary WLU degrees

Jack McClelland, Canada's best-known book publisher who recently retired, and Peggie Sampson, who has made a magnificent contribution to music across Canada, will receive honorary doctoral degrees at the spring convocation of Wilfrid Laurier University.

More than 900 graduate and undergraduate students will receive their degrees at the convocation, to be held May 31 at the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium, East Ave., Kitchener, starting at 2:15 p.m.

A reception will follow on campus, hosted by Dr. John A. Weir, president of the university.

McClelland, in his 41 years in publishing in Canada, built a stable of many of Canada's best-known authors, including Irving Layton, Leonard Cohen, Pierre Berton, Mordecai Richler, Margaret Laurence, Edna Staebler, and Margaret Atwood.

He once said that a key to successful publishing was recognizing the author as the important part of the publishing equation. "This means," he said, "if you take the role seriously you become everything from the author's wet nurse to his valet."

No one in Canada worked more assiduously for his authors, or helped so many on to successful careers. He was also known as something of a maverick-- once wearing a toga in an open convertible to promote a book set in Roman times.

When he retired this year, McClelland sold his majority interest in Seal Books, the largest publisher of Canadian mass-marketed paperbacks, to Anna Porter of Key Porter Books. He sold the controlling interest in McClelland and Stewart in 1986, the company co-founded by his father 81 years ago.

Peggie Sampson was born in Edinburgh, where she began violin lessons at the age of six. In Canada, she became well known for her work with baroque instruments. She has taught at the University of Manitoba and was active with the Manitoba Consort, one of Canada's first music instrumental groups.

She then went to York University in Toronto where she taught a variety of music courses, until her formal retirement in 1977. She then brought her enthusiasm and talent to Laurier, where she taught and helped establish the faculty's early instrument program.

Peggie Sampson is noted for her work on the viola da gamba, a baroque instrument something like a cello. It has six strings to the cello's four and requires a different playing technique.

In the summer of 1985, she was presented on the Laurier campus with the gold medal of the Canadian Music Council for her "outstanding achievements" in the world of music.