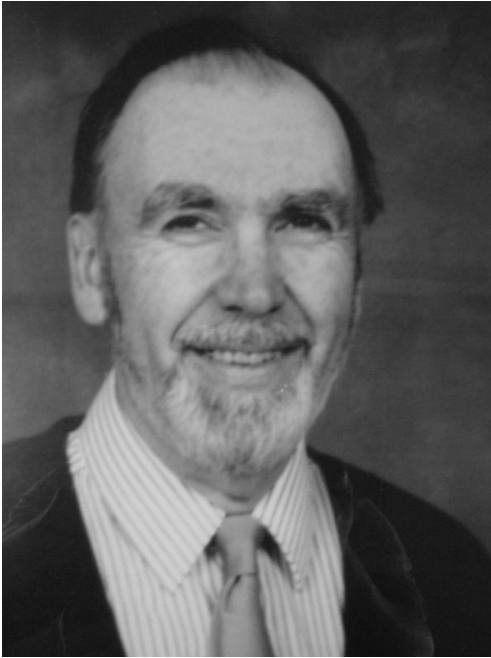# Charles M. Wilson (2006)

Charles M. Wilson received his B. Mus and D. Mus from the University of Toronto and shortly after came to Guelph as Organist and Choir Director of Chalmers United Church where he served for ten years, training both senior and junior Choirs. At the same time, he was instructing music students and orchestra at the Guelph Collegiate and Vocational Institute, and founded the Guelph Opera and Oratorio Company, directing one operetta each year, as well as an oratorio. He supervised music for rural school in the Guelph Township and instructed at Georgetown Collegiate until 1969.

For thirteen years, he was conductor of the Hamilton Bach-Elgar Choir and combined that choir with the Guelph Oratorio Society to sing his oratorio "Angels of the Earth", accompanied by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra for Centennial Year.

He was commissioned to compose "Heloise and Abelard" for the Canadian Opera company where he had been Chorus Master for nine years. Among his other operas is 'The Selfish Giant", a children's opera and "The Summoning of Everyman", a church opera.

Later, he joined the faculty of Music at the University of Guelph and was named Composer-in-Residence and Director of the Electronic Music Studio. He retired in 1994 and moved to British Columbia where he continues to compose, mostly vocal music and is re-working some of his operas.

During the first part of his career, he wrote instrumental or choral works. He said of his early years: "I love teaching and have done so from Grade one to University. Students' comments and reactions can change how I think. Teaching brings together whatever creative instincts I have, within a social context"

Elaine Keillor, speaking of Wilson's compositions, said, "His style maintains a strong emotional lyricism while incorporating an eclectic range of musical idioms." For almost 40 years, Charles Wilson was an outstanding figure in the musical life of Guelph and has been an influence in the lives of hundreds of people, old and young.