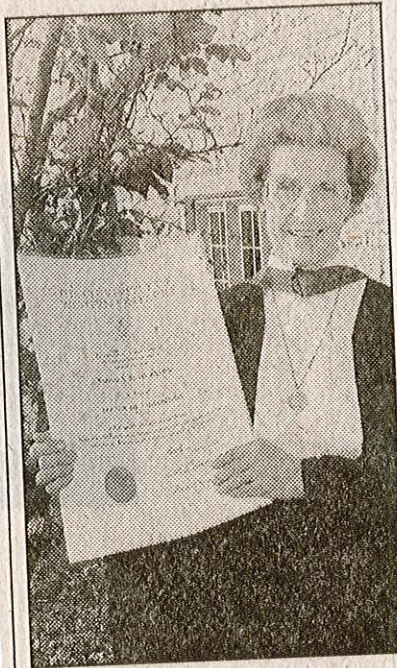


OPTIMISM HELPS: "I'm sure that my optimism has helped me a



Barbara Ryerse of Port Dover holds the diploma she received when she was awarded a doctorate in English at UWO's convocation Friday.

lot," he said after the ceremony, at which he received an honorary science degree. "I'm pretty sure that my chemistry has kept me alive . . . I surf and ski and play tennis and enjoy myself. I have to go a little bit slower, but that's all right."

Cram sang his ditty for graduates of diploma and degree programs in the faculties of graduate studies, dentistry, education, engineering science, law, music, physical education and science, as well as Brescia, Huron and King's colleges and the program in journalism for native people.

The crowd broke into surprised applause at the musical finale to Cram's convocation speech, but that applause was rivalled when Barbara Ryerse walked across the stage to accept her PhD in English.

Ryerse will say only that she's "definitely a senior citizen" but Western president George Pedersen said she's in her 70s.

But no one disputes that it took her about 25 years of part-time studies and driving "thousands" of kilometres between her Port Dover home and the UWO cam-

pus to earn her three degrees.

LEARNING FOREVER: "I don't think years matter," she said. "(Learning) starts at kindergarten and goes on forever and ever and ever."

"I think everyone would consider it was time I retired. However, it's not likely I will."

Ryerse plans to "do some more writing and some more studying. Definitely some more studying."

For Dr. William Sulis, left, studying is a relative term.



Dr. William Sulis

Sulis, 34, a geriatric psychiatrist at Victoria Hospital, earned his fourth degree Friday — this time, a PhD in mathematics. Sulis merges medicine and mathematics to shed light on normal and abnormal psychology, and said his collection of degrees will probably continue to grow.

"I can't see myself stopping. It's too much a part of me."

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