

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

# Retirees'

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# News

## The 46th President's Reception for Retirees

The next President's Reception for members of the University of Manitoba Retirees Association (UMRA) is set for **Saturday, October 19**, at 2:00 pm in McLuhan Hall in UMSU on the Fort Garry campus. The Annual General Meeting of UMRA will take place prior to the reception from NOON until 1:30 pm (or so) in the same location.

The featured speaker will be Rick Linden. Professor Linden holds a BA and an MA from the University of Alberta and a Ph.D. from the University of Washington. He is the author of two books, both in



multiple editions: *Criminology: A Canadian Perspective*, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition. Toronto: Nelson, 2019 and *Sociology in Our Times*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Toronto: Nelson, 2017 – the latter

with the assistance of Diana Kendall and Jane Murray. The recipient of ten professional grants, Professor Linden has taught UM courses in Criminology, Criminal Justice, Policing, and Research Methods.

Professor Linden's topic is: "**Will Winnipeg Always be the Crime Capital of Canada?**"

If you are planning on attending this spring's reception, you are asked to RSVP to Lynn Bohonos, Learning and Organizational Development, by Monday, October 6, 2019. You may telephone Lynn at 204-474-9124, or send her an email at: [lynn.bohonos@umanitoba.ca](mailto:lynn.bohonos@umanitoba.ca).



John Mundy and Mark O'Riley at spring reception  
-- the first UMRA president and a new retiree.



UMRA members visiting at the Spring 2019 Reception.

## President's Message

As I write this column, I am looking outside my office window regretting that I am not outside enjoying the hot summer weather. I hope that all retirees have enjoyed the ability to spend time out-doors in another relatively mosquito-free summer. Since our Spring Newsletter, UMRA has undertaken additional activities that should be of interest to retirees.

Our Executive Committee meetings have addressed important issues related to retirees from the University. The retirement planning program, re-initiated last year, continues to be popular. Extra sessions have been scheduled to accommodate interest demonstrated by current employees. The Pension and Benefits Committee continues to meet with Central Administration regarding issues related to the University Pension Plans, and the

Supplementary Health Benefits Plan changes instituted since last July. Meetings are ongoing and there is nothing to report at this time.

I was the UMRA representative at this year's Annual Conference of the College and Universities Retirees Association (CURAC) held at the University of Guelph, and enjoyed seeing Lois Brockman receive a Tribute Award from them in recognition of her multiple leadership roles in UMRA. The conference addressed issues important to retirees, but from a national perspective. I would encourage retirees to visit their website to read the information they publish, including affinity programs for which you may be eligible. I have agreed to serve on their Health Care Policy Committee. You can access the CURAC website from

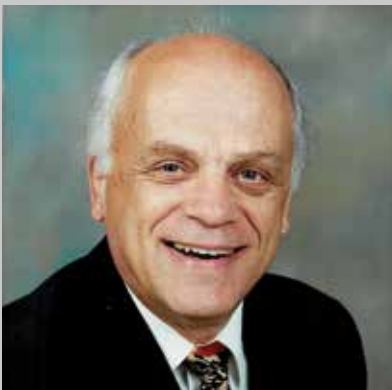


*Daniel Sitar, UMRA President*

a link established on our UMRA website.

At this fall's Annual Meeting of retirees on October 19, changes will be proposed with respect to membership categories in the University of Manitoba Retirees Association. A motion will be presented and considered with respect to this initiative by your Executive Committee.

## From the Editor



*Gene Walz*

When I was asked to assume editorship of this newsletter, I had to scramble to find enough material to fill out four pages. I swore I wouldn't resort to fancy squiggles or irrelevant photos for filler. That meant that I had to include an

editor's column (sometimes inflate) to ensure that there were no empty spaces.

As you can well see, those days are happily behind me. This issue is an unprecedented eight pages long. What's more, I didn't have to go begging for more material at the very last minute.

I was tempted to save a couple of articles for the winter issue and keep this to the usual six pages. But this issue meets some of the other goals that I set for the newsletter way back when.

First, I want this to be about and for all UM retirees – not just academics. So, the "Retired? Not Entirely!" section has stories about

our president (a retired med school prof), about some librarians, and about a staff person.

Second, it contains an article of medical importance for all of us "old folks" – on what's called "Baby Aspirin."

And third, it contains some actual news – which I've reserved for myself. The news? Dan Sitar has generously agreed to serve as UMRA President for a second one-year term – despite pledging to stay for only a year when first sworn in.

*Gene Walz  
Senior Scholar,  
Department of English, Theatre, Film,  
and Media*

## Beyond the Stacks:

### Retirees Create Research Fund for Librarians *By Heather Olynick*

*(reprinted with permission from UIM Today Wed., March 27)*



For Ada Ducas and Nicole Michaud-Oystryk, it was like getting struck by lightning – twice. That’s how rare it is for librarians like them to receive research funding in Canada, considering the mere handful of grants available.

Now, the newly-retired librarians want to pass along their good fortune to others by establishing an endowment fund to support the research activities of librarians and archivists at the U of M.

“If you look at the hundreds of millions of dollars available for other research in the country, there is essentially no money for librarian research,” explains Ducas. “Nicole and I have been lucky, because we applied for the U of M’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grants twice and got them both times.”

In the many cases where they couldn’t secure funding, Ducas and Michaud-Oystryk did what many librarians do – use their

professional development allowance and personal funds to support their work. With this new fund, they hope that burden can be alleviated for future librarians and archivists.

Michaud-Oystryk [BèsA/74, MA/88], who was the unit head of Elizabeth Dafoe Library, explains that “the research librarians do adds to the body of knowledge, which benefits all library users. Some librarians have produced literary works, poetry, artwork or historical books. I recently did a bibliographical and archival survey of works about women in French Manitoba. If you have funds, it opens up the possibilities of what you can study.”

In a world that now thrives on data, librarians also contribute their own analytics by conducting benchmarking studies, applied research,

*The Faculty, Staff and Retirees Giving Campaign is a year-round initiative which raises funds for all areas of the university, including libraries. Learn more about how you can support the campaign and initiatives like the Ada M. Ducas & Nicole Michaud-Oystryk Librarians Research Endowment Fund and build brighter futures for our U of M community.*

service assessments and systematic reviews.

Ducas, who was head of libraries in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences libraries, notes that librarians now play a bigger role in supporting faculty, which requires its own set of resources.

“The whole profession is changing; it’s really an information science profession now. One of the new roles for librarians is providing research support to faculty by managing their data and making it available to others,” says Ducas. “They also work hand in hand with faculty in terms of scholarly communication, digital scholarship and instruction. Librarians become involved in course planning, as well as delivering teaching related to library resources and how information is structured and organized.”

The Ada M. Ducas & Nicole Michaud-Oystryk Librarians Research Endowment Fund is unique to the U of M and one of the only library research funds in Canada funded by private donors.

Both women are thankful for the “exciting” and “energizing” careers they had at the U of M, and hope that like-minded retirees, faculty and staff will do the same as them and pay it forward.

“If you’ve had a good career, maybe it’s incumbent to give back a little bit too to help it become better,” says Ducas. “You have to help the place that helped and nurtured you.”

## Retired? Not Entirely!

### Manitoba's Beach Train History Inspires Retiree

"The railway opened up Manitoba's cottage country," says Barbara Lange, author of a new book *Memories of the Moonlight Special and Grand Beach Train Era*. "Until Highway 59 was built in the 1950s, the train was often the only way to reach places like Victoria Beach."

Barbara's interest in train adventures began in childhood when her father, a British railwayman, used his pass to take the family to resorts on the English coast. In 1978, she immigrated to Canada, by plane to Toronto and then on a VIA train to Winnipeg. She had no idea then that she would later publish books on Canada's railway history.

When she retired after twenty years as an office assistant in the Faculty of Human Ecology, she left with a "wish list" in hand. Her list included certified tour guide (Manitoba Tourism Education Council), movie extra, actor, and riding Canada's ribbons of steel. In the process she interviewed people and encouraged others to write about their train experiences. That led to publication of *Through the Window of a Train: A Canadian Railway Anthology* (2010).

One of the thirty contributors was Jean Tullett Read, another Human Ecology retiree. Jean wrote about a man who told her of the shenanigans he got up to as a youth employed in the Grand Beach dance pavilion. That story, *Bath House Harry and Tales of Grand Beach* (included in the new book) sparked Barbara's curiosity and spurred the two women to research Manitoba's beach train history.

The history of the beach trains goes back over 100 years. In 1914, the Canadian Northern Railway (later Canadian National Railway)

bought 150 hectares on the east side of Lake Winnipeg with the intent of developing a resort at Grand Beach. A rail line was constructed from Winnipeg and extended to Victoria Beach in 1916. It drew thousands of Winnipeggers to Grand Beach, one of 22 scheduled stops, to enjoy its lakeside dance pavilion and white sandy beach. Young people were eager to escape the heat of the city to frolic on white sandy beaches and dance on hot summer nights to live bands in the pavilion beside a beautiful lake.

A mention of the weekend Moonlight Special trains sparked fond memories for many. "It warmed my heart to see seniors' eyes twinkle whenever someone mentioned them," recalled Barbara.

Among the 60 interviewees was a newsie, employed at age 12, who sold hot dogs, coffee, and candy on the train -- but no newspapers; locomotive engineers, conductors, and brakemen; cottagers, and the many seniors who met the "love of their lives" on the beach train.

Eric Ellison and his wife Louise, now in their 90s, recalled their Grand Beach cottage neighbour, Walter Brattson, who made the famous "hot lips" (non-alcoholic) ginger beer from a secret recipe. Eric also remembered that in the days before refrigeration "large blocks of ice would be cut out of the lagoon in winter by handsaw, pulled off by horse and sleigh, and stored in ice houses to supply restaurants and cottagers the next summer."



Earl Symonds, a 16-year-old CN assistant station

agent in 1950 whom Barbara interviewed, recalled the day (Labour Day 1950) that the Grand Beach dance pavilion burned down. "The dance pavilion flared up like matchsticks." Though the carousel, bath house, and station were saved, it was never rebuilt. That was the beginning of the end.

The popularity of the automobile and a new Highway 59 led to the demise of rail service in 1961. Today the many beaches of Lake Winnipeg are still a popular holiday destination, but the railway is long gone.

In 60 stories and photographs, plus introductory essays by Jim Blanchard, Diane Truderung, Peter Lacey, and Henry McFee, *Memories of the Moonlight Special and Grand Beach Train Era* (2018. Borealis Press) captures the clickety-clack of steam trains, and the romances that blossomed in the Grand Beach dance pavilion. It's a poignant reminder of an era long-gone.

*Barbara will be available at the President's Reception for anyone who would like to buy her books. She is happy to talk to groups about Grand Beach and Canadian trains. Contact her at 204-667-8521, or email [writealong@hotmail.com](mailto:writealong@hotmail.com).*

# Retired? Not Entirely!

## Continuing Opportunities

by Daniel Sitar, Professor Emeritus, Max Rady Faculty of Health Sciences

When I retired from the University of Manitoba on December 31, 2009 and concurrently from the practice of Pharmacy, I was appointed Editor in Chief of the Journal of Clinical Pharmacology, the Official Journal of the American College of Clinical Pharmacology. This was an exciting responsibility that, starting with the January 2010 issue, lasted for five years. It was an unexpected appointment, especially since I would be the first Canadian and the first non-physician person to hold the position. This appointment was subsequent to service as the Journal Associate Editor for a number of years, and permitted me to have final authority in determining published content.

Freed from my University job description, the opportunity arose to participate in a number of other activities that were of interest. In 2011, I was appointed to the Board of the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba where I served for six

years, ending my membership as Secretary Treasurer and Chair of the Audit Committee. Although I had been involved with the Alzheimer Society for several years previously, this appointment provided me with the ability to have greater influence in determining the ongoing evolution of the activities of this important community organization.

In 2012, I was elected as a member at large of the Executive Committee of UMRA where I have continued to serve to date. I am also the retiree representative at the U of M for the United Way of Winnipeg campaign. I also volunteer at the Good Neighbours Active Living Centre in East Kildonan, an organization that provides outreach opportunities to elderly community-dwelling adults. These activities allow me to give back to my community and have enriched my ability to appreciate better the needs of

older persons locally and nationally. Finally, I continue to provide continuing education to students and members of the general community through the presentation of invited lectures.

In addition, I have been able to resurrect my music career and have been playing in a band for about six years, with a focus on entertaining the 55+ community. Our band, "Muddy Water Gold" plays a wide variety of popular music that originated from the 1940's to the present time. We are a trio with guitar, accordion and bass as musical instruments and the ability to sing solo and duet compositions.

While diversifying my participations in the community, I have been able to continue to serve the scientific community both in Canada and in the USA with positions at NIH, CIHR and the Canada Research Chairs Programs. I also serve on the Community Liaison Committee to the Canadian Science Centre for Human and Animal Health. This involvement has encouraged me to continue with some of the research that I had been active in directing up to the time of my retirement. My major focus has been on the effects of extremes of age on how humans respond to administered drug therapies. A serendipitous finding was the ability to detect noninvasively- and economically-increased activity of an enzyme present in cancer tissue. That finding has worldwide patent protection, which is owned by the U of M and licensed to a Canadian



Dan and his band Muddy Water Gold.

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## Is Daily Aspirin Right for You?

By Alastair Brown (MD, CCFP) and Phil St. John (MD, FRCPC)

Acetylsalicylic acid (ASA; brand name Aspirin) is a medication commonly used to treat pain, inflammation, and fever. While acetylsalicylic acid was first synthesized in 1853, a related drug known as salicin has been used for millennia. Subsequently, ASA was found to be effective for the treatment of stroke and heart disease. Much more recently, healthy adults have used ASA with the aim of preventing heart disease and stroke.

In this editorial, we will briefly discuss the history and pharmacology of ASA, demonstrate the questionable benefits of using ASA to prevent vascular disease in healthy adults, and highlight the risks associated with daily use of ASA.

ASA's clot preventing properties stem from its anti-platelet actions. Platelets are one of the factors involved in forming a blood clot. ASA impairs the ability of platelets to aggregate into a clot. Unfortunately, ASA also increases the likelihood of gastrointestinal bleeding. Salicin is the active ingredient in willow bark and meadowsweet flower, the former of which was noted to have pain-relieving properties as far back as ancient Sumeria. Salicin was first extracted from willow in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and the oxidized form, salicylic acid, was synthesized shortly thereafter. In 1899, the German pharmaceutical company Bayer began selling the acetylated form of the drug under the trade name Aspirin. Beginning in the

1960s, interest began to mount regarding ASA's possible benefit in preventing recurrent events in heart attack survivors and that interest only grew in the following decades. Current estimates suggest that roughly one third of Americans take Aspirin daily to prevent cardiovascular disease.



The 1980s saw a number of clinical trials examining Aspirin's effectiveness in the secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease. Secondary prevention is an intervention in those people with established disease with the goal of preventing further events. There was initially little research, however, in Aspirin's role in the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease. Primary prevention involves treating healthy people with the goal of preventing a first event.

In 2009, a synthesis of six large clinical trials involving 95,000 individuals was conducted with the aim of determining whether ASA had a role in the primary prevention of vascular disease. It was determined that over 1500 patients would be needed to be treated with ASA daily to prevent one serious vascular event per year.

Patients receiving ASA for primary prevention also experienced a higher yearly rate of extracranial (bleeding outside the brain) bleeds and trended towards a higher rate of hemorrhagic stroke (a bleeding event into the brain.) Since 2009, three large multi-center trials have evaluated whether ASA is an effective tool in the primary prevention of vascular disease. All these trials randomly allocated research participants to receive ASA or a placebo (an inactive substance.) All these trials involved more than 12,000 people and showed no significant reduction in the risk of heart attacks or strokes. Furthermore, the study participants receiving ASA experienced rates of major bleeding events at a rate greater than the reduction in transient ischemic attacks. None of these trials have demonstrated any benefit in reducing the incidence of cancer. The current American College of Cardiologists guidelines do not recommend taking ASA for people without vascular disease.

### TO SUMMARIZE:

There is good evidence that those with vascular disease (such as heart attack, stroke or angina) should take ASA. However, in healthy individuals without history of heart attack or stroke, daily ASA likely offers minimal to no benefit in the prevention of vascular disease. Furthermore, any possible benefit is offset by the increased

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## CURAC/ARUCC

### Tribute Award Nomination

Lois Brockman was a recent recipient of a CURAC/ARUCC Tribute Award presented on May 23, 2019 at the banquet of the Annual Conference at the University of Guelph.

Lois has ably filled leadership positions in UMRA from its inception in 2003. She was instrumental in getting UMRA off the ground when she was elected the first Vice-President in that year and held that office for two years (2003-2005). She then was elected as President and served two terms in that capacity (2005-2009). Among her many activities while president, Lois was UMRA's delegate to CURAC/ARUCC's annual national conference. Following her presidency Lois was Past President for four years (2009 -2013).

Lois' work on several other UMRA committees has been extensive. As Past President she was chair of the Nominating Committee. She chaired or co-chaired the Endowment Fund Committee for seven years (2011-2018). The work of that committee resulted in the creation of the University of Manitoba Retirees Endowment Fund, which provides a bursary for an undergraduate student and will eventually provide a scholarship for a graduate student. In addition, Lois chaired the Ad Hoc Retirement Centre Committee for 13 years (2005-2018), and was an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee for five years (2013-2018).



*Lois Brockman*

As summarized above, Lois' exceptional and lasting contribution to UMRA in a variety of roles over a period of a decade-and-a-half make her most deserving of a CURAC/ARUCC Tribute Award.

## UMRA Tours Manitoba Museum

On Wednesday July 17, 2019, twenty-one University of Manitoba retirees (UMRA) visited the Manitoba Museum on Rupert Avenue for a tour of the 1919 Strike exhibit. A very informative account of important individuals involved in Canada's most important six-week strike, and a timeline of the various strike events was provided by the

tour guides. Artifacts of the early 1900's such as a voting box and car heater were also available for attendees to examine up close. All attendees enjoyed learning a little bit more about this significant event in Winnipeg's history, as this year marks the 100th Anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike.

Finally, I would encourage you to consider volunteering for po-

sitions in UMRA. We could use additional expertise to enhance its activities, e.g. maintenance of our website, communications to our colleagues, interactions with Central Administration, and stimulating new activities that would be of interest to retirees from the University. Much of this contribution may be completed electronically, and would be highly appreciated by current members who would be comforted by knowing that their efforts are being continued to serve our retirees at a high level.



## Continuing Opportunities

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Biotech Company. Research work on this observation has continued to the present time, and has involved travels to China, Japan and the USA, as well as scientific presentations and publications. We are hoping to have this biological characteristic available as a diagnostic test for cancer in the very near future. Our expectations are that this test should be able to detect the presence of cancer before it manifests as clinical illness. Such an occurrence would increase the likelihood of a cure, especially for those forms of cancer most often diagnosed at late stage, e.g. lung and gastrointestinal cancers.

In conclusion, retirement has enabled me to maintain a very active and varied life experience that leaves almost no opportunity to contemplate boredom.

## Is Daily Aspirin Right for You?

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risk of major bleeds. Healthy people should discuss the risks and benefits of ASA should discuss this with the primary care provider.

### TRIAL RESULTS:

The ARRIVE trial evaluated some 12,500 healthy patients with moderate pre-existing vascular risk over five years and found that daily Aspirin did not improve vascular outcomes and doubled the risk of gastrointestinal bleeding when compared with placebo. The ASPREE trial followed just under 20,000 healthy older individuals over five years and concluded that daily aspirin did not extend disability-free survival and may, in fact, slightly increase the risk of death. The ASCEND Study followed some 15,000 diabetic patients over seven years and determined that daily aspirin may slightly reduce the risk of transient ischemic attacks (TIAs or “mini-strokes”) but did not reduce the incidence of heart attacks, stroke, and death.

## Do you have a new email address?

If you are one of the retirees who has registered for the university's “.umr” email address, please send your new email address to: [retirees@umanitoba.ca](mailto:retirees@umanitoba.ca)

If you have changed internet providers and/or you prefer to use another email address, this request for an update of your email address applies to you as well.

This will ensure that you will continue to get regular retiree updates and other missives, including *Retirees News*, the twice-yearly UMRA newsletter.



## Contact information for UMRA

The University of Manitoba Retirees  
c/o Learning & Organizational  
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137 Education Building  
The University of Manitoba,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2  
Phone: (204)474-7175  
E-mail: [retirees@umanitoba.ca](mailto:retirees@umanitoba.ca)

Website:

<http://umanitoba.ca/outreach/retirees>

## Email contact to Retirees

UMRA is using e-mail to send reminders and notices of events of interest to retirees. To receive these, retirees should forward their e-mail address to:

[retirees@umanitoba.ca](mailto:retirees@umanitoba.ca)



## In Memoriam

You may not be aware of the In Memoriam section of UMRA's website. It provides information about deceased retirees (including links to obituaries).

**University of Manitoba - Outreach - Retirees - Corner - In Memoriam**