

USRA Newsletter

April, 2021

No. 112



In This Issue:

From Our President3
University and USRA Sign MOU5
Summary of USRA 2020-21 Survey Results6
USRA Ad Hoc Committee on Campus Heritage9
Dementia: The Prince Of Maladies - Part 111
University of Saskatchewan Sector Plan.....14
Members in the News.....15
Members No Longer with Us.....16
Upcoming USRA Activities19
Upcoming Activities of Interest.....19
In Our Next Issues:19
Keep in Touch!19

From Our President

Greetings USRA Members,



I am sure that for all of you, it has been a long, challenging year as we anxiously wait for the pandemic to subside. I hope by the time you receive this newsletter that all of you have had at least your first vaccination dose. Our lives have been changed significantly and may be changed permanently in some fashion in the future.

Please know that during these difficult times it has been the goal of the USRA's Executive to continue to interact with our members and to provide meaningful educational and informative monthly sessions using Zoom. While these sessions don't take the place of personally getting together to chat over lunch, we have received very positive feedback from our members. We will continue the Zoom sessions until such time we can evaluate how we can deliver these sessions as well as arrange safe in-person activities.

The Executive has decided that we will not hold the Zoom sessions over the months of July and August unless something arises that we feel is important to distribute to our members.

The Executive has been very busy since we last published a newsletter. Here is a sampling of some of the accomplishments and activities in progress:

- Completed the MOU with the University. (See Rick Bunt's report);
- Completed a survey of all of our members. (See Jim Thornhill's report);
- Revamped the USRA website (Check this out at <https://usra.usask.ca> !);
- Updated our membership list and gathered additional email addresses;
- Continued monthly sessions in 2021 via Zoom;
- Developed an Ad Hoc Committee on Campus Heritage. (See Merry Beazely's report);
- Connected with other Retirees' Associations through CURAC to discuss matters of common interest;
- Planned a virtual welcome for new retirees!

Unfortunately we expect that we will not be able to hold the annual June BBQ event. We will let you know in the August newsletter if the AGM and Awards Banquet will be held in person.

In our survey, all of the respondents reported they looked forward to receiving the newsletter and rated it as being very important to continue to keep connected with the USRA. The newsletter takes a team effort to assemble and I would like to thank the Communications Committee: Dean Jones (chair), Mary Dykes, Jackie Huck and Judith Henderson especially for all their efforts in bringing it to you.

We hope that soon we will be able to meet again in person but meanwhile I am glad so many of us are adapting to our new world and using new technology to keep in touch.

Stay safe and healthy,

Brad Steeves

Your USRA Board members at their meeting February 2, 2021 (Zoom)



Top row: Merry Beazely (Immediate Past President), Dean Jones, Beryl Radcliffe, Rick Bunt

Middle row: Tom Wilson (Treasurer) and guest, Bryan Harvey, Jackie Huck (Secretary), Jim Thornhill (Vice President)

Bottom row: Brad Steeves (President), Mary Dykes, Yannis Pahatouroglou, Judith Henderson

Committees : Chairs:

- Awards Committee; Communication Committee: Dean Jones
- College and University Retirees Associations of Canada: Bryan Harvey
- Education, Social, and Recreation Committee; Ad Hoc Committee on Determining Future Priorities of USRA: Jim Thornhill
- Membership Committee: Judith Henderson
- Engagement Committee: Rick Bunt
- Ad Hoc Committee on Campus Heritage; Nominations Committee: Merry Beazely
- Honorary Degrees Committee: Tom Wilson

University and USRA Sign MOU

Rick Bunt, Chair of the Engagement Committee

On March 26, 2021, after more than a year in development, set back by both the University's shutdown and a change in contact person, President Peter Stoicheff signed a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize the elements of a mutually beneficial relationship between the University and the USRA. In the MOU's preamble the two parties acknowledge that many former faculty and staff wish to continue to participate in the life of the University and the various elements of the MOU seek to enable that. For its part the University affirms that it welcomes the continued participation of retirees and agrees to promote and support their continued scholarly, creative, professional or volunteer activities. The USRA agrees to act as the official liaison between the University and its retirees, to keep the University aware of retirees' concerns and to keep retirees informed of opportunities to engage with the University.

The USRA's formal connection to the University is anchored in the office of the Vice President, University Relations, and a Coordinating Committee is established to manage the MOU and the relationship it represents. With representation from both the USRA and the Office of the Vice President, the Coordinating Committee will meet at least once a year. The MOU also formalizes a relationship between the USRA and the Alumni Association (USAA). The USAA already recognizes retirees who are not graduates as Associate Alumni in its bylaws, thereby entitling retirees to all the benefits alumni enjoy, and the Executive Director of the USAA commits to working with the USRA and the Vice President, University Relations, to enhance collaboration between the two organizations.



President Brad Steeves signs the MOU on behalf of the USRA

From the outset the project was motivated by a desire to provide long-sought clarity as to what the University provides for its retirees, for USRA members and for the USRA itself. These include ICT and Library services and are set out in detail in the MOU and on the USRA website (<https://usra.usask.ca/about.php>). Individual retirees may negotiate additional benefits for themselves, depending on their role, but the MOU provides a common baseline from which to begin.

The MOU's development was directed by our Engagement Committee in collaboration with the University's Associate Vice President, Development and Chief Development Officer. At the outset this was Guy Larocque, who initiated the project; after Guy's departure from the University Danielle Dunbar took over and brought the project to a successful conclusion. Negotiation with a number of units within the University was required and this could not have been done without the assistance of staff in the office of the Vice President, University Relations. And, without the commitment and persistence of my Engagement Committee

colleagues – Bryan Harvey, Yannis Pahatouroglou, Jim Thornhill and Brad Steeves – we would never have left the starting gate, let alone reach the finish line.

We now turn our attention to implementing the terms and benefits outlined in the MOU. This will involve discussions with several university units and the Alumni Association. We plan to publish a special issue of the newsletter when we have complete information on the implementation of the MOU.

Summary of USRA 2020-21 Survey Results

Jim Thornhill, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee

1. Introduction:

The Retirees Survey, co-sponsored by USRA and the University, has been completed. Seeking input from USRA members on how our Association could improve its programs, social activities, and communication, it was sent to the whole USRA membership either by email (to 287 members in October 2020) or by Canada Post (to 130 members in January 2021), depending on contact information available. Response rates were 22% (61/287) for email and 35% (45/130) for post. Data were analyzed and graphed by Alumni Relations.

Response differences to questions between the online and mail-out surveys may be partially due to age differences between the 2 groups.

The Ad Hoc USRA Priorities Committee that managed the surveys felt that this survey was very helpful in learning the expectations of the membership towards the activities and goals of the USRA and suggests that such surveys be continued in the future in a regular (e.g., every 5 years) or as needed basis. The USRA Executive wishes to thank all those who participated in the survey.

*Congratulations to the winners of the Alumni gift packages
Bonnie Schoenfeld of Saskatoon and David Bond of Brights Grove, Ontario!*

2. Personal Information of Members

A high proportion of results in both surveys came from members living in the Saskatoon area (68% in online group and 85% in mail out group). The responses from this large group of local online and mail out members need to be carefully considered, as many of our current activities and programs are directed to members living in and around Saskatoon. However, it is also important to maintain “virtual” activities so that members in more distant locations, or those locally who are disabled, can also participate in USRA programs and events.

Other results from this section indicated that most members were aware of retirement planning programs before they retired and if they attended these planning sessions, they found them helpful.

We received responses from faculty, ASPA, and CUPE members. Because we received no responses from sessionals or research personnel, the USRA needs to continue to work with the People and Resources unit at the University to identify people retiring from these groups and to seek ways to show these members that the USRA is present for them when they retire from the University. It is recommended that further promotion of the proposed Retirement Channel on PAWS may be a good way to reach out to these individuals.

3. USRA Statement of Purpose

Members were asked to rate the importance of each item in our Statement of Purpose. (see website <https://usra.usask.ca/about.php>). Respondents, in general, felt that all items were important: to keep in contact with University-related activities; to keep in contact with University colleagues; to foster activities between retirees and the University; for the USRA to be a channel of information between the retirees and the University; and for the USRA to provide opportunities to work with the University on matters of common interest to both parties. Also, results from this section showed that the vast majority of retirees knew about the USRA before they retired.

4. Benefits of Membership

Most retired faculty thought it was important to have library access and the vast majority of all retired members wanted the services of ICT such as email. Most members wanted the link to community services and those living in Saskatoon liked the membership discounts to the Bookstore/Shop USask. Obviously, those living away from Saskatoon don't see the same potential benefit to those items mentioned above as those retirees living in the Saskatoon area. For those retirees living in Saskatoon, having better access/availability to University parking was highlighted.

In regard to potential benefits of being an USRA member as mentioned above, it must be noted that a new **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** has now been signed between the USRA and the University (please see exciting announcement in this newsletter). The USRA will be working closely with the University to confirm the benefits afforded retirees of the University of Saskatchewan.

The membership, in general, was unsure of the benefits we receive through our affiliation with the national body, **College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC)**. More education and promotion of CURAC's benefits is required.

5. Educational and Social Activities

Both online respondents and mail-out respondents told us that our activities are most relevant to those retirees living in the Saskatoon area. As noted above, this local group of responding retirees did account for a large percentage of the total results from the survey. The monthly educational noon hour seminars were deemed important to the membership; whether they were held in person at a local restaurant before the pandemic occurred or via Zoom

videoconferencing during the current pandemic. The annual June barbecue was not rated highly, while the AGM banquet and the President's December reception, in general, were rated higher for their importance to local members.

The Ad Hoc Priorities Committee realizes the need to better focus the intent of these social events and explore the content of each event (e.g., need to have a guest speaker?), together with the costs and chosen venues of these events in the future. Once the focus and cost of these social activities is determined, more selective promotion of each event can be undertaken.

6. Newsletter

The whole membership stated the high importance of the newsletter (>90% rated the newsletter as important or very important, the highest rated question for importance to the membership). Membership liked the various sections of the current newsletter. Some asked if more stories of USRA members could be included and mail-out retirees who have no access to the monthly educational seminars asked if the seminar presentations, or some of them, could also be written in the newsletters.

We greatly appreciate that 27 members of the mail-out group were able to share their email addresses so that we can better communicate with them.

7. Members' Suggestions for Activities

A large number of local members asked if we could arrange more local tours. The Education, Social, and Recreation Committee will investigate this and make it a priority for the future when it is safe to do so.

*Please pass along any ideas you have regarding future tours to the USRA
(see contact information on last page of newsletter).*

8. Members' Suggestions for Educational Seminars

Members stated that they wished more information related to the use of digital technology, travel opportunities, estate planning, healthy lifestyles, housing and giving back to the University. The Education, Social, and Recreation Committee has already addressed some of these requests in our monthly Zoom educational series (travel, estate planning, digital technology) and will continue to present keynote speakers on other stated areas of interest in the future.

*Please submit your suggestions for other topics, and any names of potential speakers
(see contact information on last page of newsletter).*

9. Monthly Seminars on Zoom

There was variance in the response to these 2 questions between the mail-out group and the online group (with 39% of the mail-out group being familiar with Zoom technology whereas 72% of the online respondents were familiar with Zoom). Secondly 33% of the mail-out group is interested in participating in our monthly seminar series via Zoom if the seminar is of interest to them vs. 84% for the online group).

The Ad Hoc Committee feels that Zoom videoconferencing should be continued for our monthly educational series during the COVID pandemic and afterwards and monitored for its in-person and post-session usage.

10. Conclusion:

In summary, this survey of USRA members has provided us with important data regarding the wishes and expectations of the members towards current USRA goals, programs, communication and social activities and will guide us in deciding how we best meet your needs and expectations in the future.

Thank you again for your participation with the survey.

USRA Ad Hoc Committee on Campus Heritage

Merry Beazely, Chair



Concerns about preserving heritage buildings on our beautiful campus were brought to the USRA in 2019 by Board member Hank Classen. As a result, our Board spoke with current and former USask employees, and in July 2020, we wrote to Greg Fowler, Vice-President Finance and Resources, about this issue. We were pleased to hear back from Greg, indicating that the USRA will be invited to participate in finalizing the **Campus Master Plan** and as well in considering **solutions related to heritage preservation**. We have also written to Janelle Hutchinson, Chief Strategic Officer for Infrastructure in VP Fowler's office to reiterate our interest and offer support.

At our AGM this fall, member John Courtney noted additional heritage considerations, such as preserving building cornerstones and burial sites on campus, notably Sir Frederick Haultain, first chancellor of the University, who is buried just inside the University gates, and former Prime Minister John and Olive Diefenbaker, who rest outside the Diefenbaker Centre. Hank added the importance of opening up USask buildings to the public. Bryan Harvey noted that there are so

many interesting stories (including folklore) about the campus and its buildings that it would be great to preserve.

In early October we established an ***Ad Hoc Committee on Campus Heritage***, with members Yannis Pahatouoglou and President Brad Steeves, with Merry Beazely as chair. In addition to 'built form,' we are keen to acknowledge and celebrate related historical elements such as building cornerstones, invaluable artifacts, the many collections and museums on campus, and the wonderful stories and legends of the USask. We have drafted terms of reference that stress how important it will be for 'heritage' to have a permanent 'home' and strong 'advocate(s)' on campus.

We have had subsequent discussions with other interested individuals to gain perspective and advice, including Dr. Gordon DesBrisay, Vice Dean of Arts and Science, who is involved with antiquities and museums on campus; Chancellor Emerita Vera Pezer, and Peggy Sarjeant, President of the Saskatoon Heritage Society and David Pantalony, Curator of Physical Sciences and Medicine Canada Science and Technology Museum. David provided us with information on heritage initiatives at North American universities, notably the University of Alberta. In Yannis' correspondence with him, David added that he feels we have one of the best chances to be the next university in Canada to establish a successful heritage and collections structure. He noted the special strengths of our Archives and other units that sponsor collections on campus. He also praised our practice of making USask exhibitions open – open for the community and open for learners.

We have discussed a possible model and sequence of steps we could suggest to our University to establish an 'umbrella' heritage initiative, including both artifacts and historic buildings. We recognize that the academic mission of the University needs to drive this. We see the USRA's role as reaching out to assist, be advocates, provide guidance and input (e.g., relevant history/historical facts). However, we do appreciate that such an initiative will not be ours to manage or sustain. We are also keenly aware of the stresses the University is experiencing as a result of the pandemic and ongoing funding issues. So, for now, we will continue to envisage ways we can contribute. We will look forward to hearing back from Greg and Janelle soon, to begin our involvement in campus heritage.

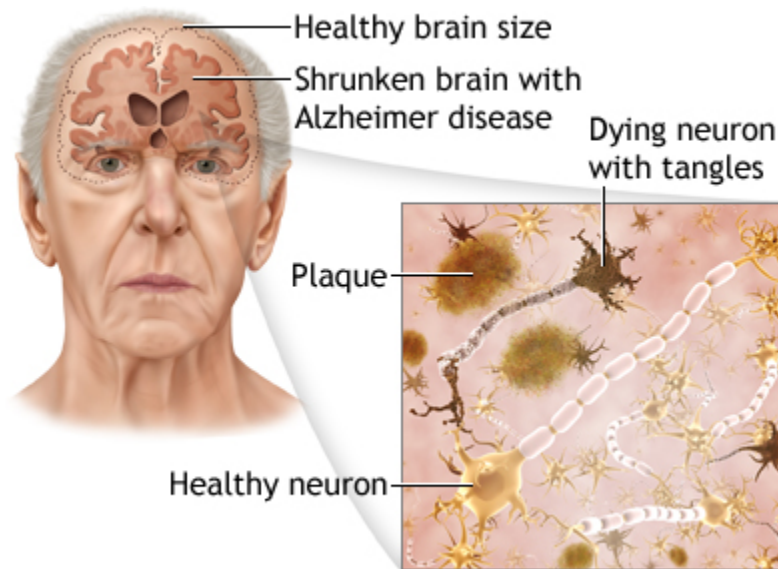
Yannis, Brad and I welcome your comments and questions to merry.beazely@usask.ca.

Dementia: The Prince Of Maladies - Part 1

Tom Wilson

Physician author Siddhartha Mukherjee has dubbed cancer the “emperor of all maladies”. If so, dementia should be the prince. In this column, I’ll explore what we know of dementia and what we are learning. Dementia, defined simply as loss of cognitive ability, shares several features with cancer. Both are common: cancer now is the leading cause of death in Canada (about 1 of 3), while dementia, although rarely listed as a cause of death, occurs in 1% of people aged 60-64 increasing to about 33% in those over 85¹. Both cause a huge burden on caregivers and the health care system. Age is the most common predictor of both. Moreover, lifestyle risks such as diet, lack of exercise, and tobacco use increase the likelihood of each². Genetic mutations can cause both. Finally, both cancer and dementia can be regarded as syndromes: they encompass many different diseases.

By far the most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer’s disease. In 1906, Dr. Aloisius Alzheimer published the case report of Auguste D., a woman who died at 51 after several years of cognitive decline, hallucinations, delusions and impaired social functioning. At autopsy her brain contained amyloid plaques, neurofibrillary tangles and degenerating brain cells (neurons). These three features, or “ATN,” are regarded as diagnostic of Alzheimer’s.



Source: <https://www.healthing.ca/Alzheimer-disease/wcm/20c7f358-e9dd-11e9-b087-0242ac110004>

1. “A” is for **amyloid plaques** that are found outside neurons (brain cells) and consist of small protein molecules called beta amyloid. These are fragments of a larger protein molecule: amyloid precursor protein (APP). Normally, APP is attached to neurons and functions to

keep that neuron healthy. In Alzheimer's, certain enzymes, called gamma and beta secretases, break down APP, depriving the neuron and forming beta amyloid³. A reasonable hypothesis is that inhibiting the secretases should prevent this process. A randomized clinical trial was designed to test it: 2211 men and women with mild or moderate Alzheimer's received verubecestat (a secretase inhibitor) 12 mg, 40 mg, 60 mg or placebo daily. The main outcome measure was the change from baseline in an 11 domain scale called the Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Scale-Cognitive Subscale after 78 weeks. The trial was stopped after about a year because interim analyses showed "virtually no chance of a positive effect"⁴. Perhaps the drug was started too late in the disease, long after the damage was done. Therefore, a later trial in patients with mild cognitive impairment and elevated brain amyloid was begun. It found progression to Alzheimer's in 25% of those receiving verubecestat and 19% of those on placebo⁵. Another lovely hypothesis bites the dust.

2. "T" is for **neurofibrillary tangles**. The Tau protein is found inside neurons and attached to microtubules, the main transport system for the cell. When Tau is damaged, the cell's transport system is disrupted, causing the "tangles", and death of the cell. Abnormal Tau proteins have been found in many types of degenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's⁶. They are found not only within neurons, but in the fluid (cerebrospinal fluid, CSF) that surrounds the brain. Measuring CSF levels of abnormal Tau proteins may allow us to diagnose Alzheimer's earlier⁷.
3. "N" stands for **dead or dying neurons**. Obviously, this leads to the clinical manifestations of Alzheimer's.

There are several other hypotheses to explain Alzheimer's, including inflammation, metal ions (iron, copper, zinc), and even air pollution. Whatever the cause, the natural history of Alzheimer's is well described. An initial, "prodromal" phase, characterized by loss of short term memory, is followed by early, moderate and advanced phases. During the latter, the patient is entirely reliant on others for activities of daily living. Difficulty swallowing, malnutrition, weight loss, and loss of mobility, lead to pressure sores, pneumonia and death, 3 to 10 years after diagnosis⁸.

Are there treatments for Alzheimer's? Cholinesterase inhibitors, like donepezil (Aricept™) offer modest and temporary benefits in cognition and behaviour at the expense of adverse effects such as nausea, diarrhea, and nightmares⁹. Memantine (Ebixa™) with its different mechanism of action, offers similar modest benefits but appears to have more adverse effects including increased mortality⁹. Supportive care, including moderate exercise, attention to cardiovascular risk factors ("what's good for the heart is good for the brain"), social interactions and changes to living arrangements, plays a role. Careful use of tranquilizers for behavioural problems and agitation is recommended by experts¹⁰.

Prevagen™. Most of us have seen the television ad for this supplement: "You take something for your heart, and something for your digestive system. Now take something for your most important organ: your brain". Testimonials from enthusiastic customers are usually appended. Unlike prescription drugs, supplements have to be proven safe, but can make no specific, measurable claims of efficacy. Quincy Bioscience, the makers of Prevagen™, flouted this regulation by claiming that it "improved age related memory loss". This claim was challenged by

the Federal Drug Administration, and after a series of court battles, a class action lawsuit was allowed. Perhaps surprisingly, there is a published randomized controlled trial. 218 adults aged 40-91, with self-reported memory problems, were randomized to take Prevacen™ or a placebo for 90 days¹¹. The primary outcome was change from baseline in the International Shopping List Test. For this, a researcher speaks 16 common items that might appear on a grocery shopping list. The subject is then asked to list all of those they can remember in one minute. The overall results were negative: Prevacen™ was no better than placebo.

Is there any good news? Yes. The prevalence of dementia in developed countries has decreased even though the population is aging¹². A plausible explanation is the reduction in risk factors: smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

In Part 2 of this column, I'll look at the enormous research effort into dementia diagnosis and treatment. I believe it offers hope.

Further reading

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3. Hooper NM, Trew AJ, Parkin ET et al: The role of proteolysis in Alzheimer's disease. *Adv Exp Med Biol* 2000;(477): 379-390.
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8. Zanetti O, Solerte SB, Cantoni F: Life expectancy in Alzheimer's disease (AD). *Arch Gerontol Geriatr* 2009;(49 Suppl 1): 237-243.
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11. Moran DL, Underwood MY, Gabourie TA et al: Effects of a Supplement Containing Apoaequorin on Verbal Learning in Older Adults in the Community. *Adv Mind Body Med* 2016;(30): 4-11.
12. Wu YT, Beiser AS, Breteler MMB et al: The changing prevalence and incidence of dementia over time - current evidence. *Nat Rev Neurol* 2017;(13): 327-339.

Definitions for medical terms can be found in *The Free Dictionary* by Farlex available at <https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com>

University of Saskatchewan Sector Plan

Reproduced with thanks to [University Sector Plan | Saskatoon.ca](#) and the Varsity View Community Association, Spring/Summer 2021 Newsletter.

When our University was founded in 1907, it came with significant endowed land, on Treaty Six Territory and the Traditional Homeland of the Métis. USask land comprises an area of about 1/20 of today's urbanized Saskatoon, with about 1000 acres in the heart of the city remaining undeveloped.



In 2008 a land-use task force was formed, bringing together the University, the City, the Meewasin Valley Authority and the Province, to create **Vision 2057 Sector Plan**. The *Plan* aims to align the city's growth with development of the University lands. Quoting from the *Plan*, the University lands "will become complete, vibrant, sustainable, and distinct urban communities that support a walkable, transit-oriented lifestyle, connect with USask, while harmonizing and integrating with surrounding communities. They are intended to become neighbourhoods of the future, housing Saskatoon's growing population, while sharing a unique relationship with one of Canada's leading universities."

The vision of the Sector Plan will be achieved according to the following principles:

- "Support the Academic Mission: Recognizing the lands are a long-term strategic and economic asset to be retained and leveraged to support the university's mission.
- Indigenous Engagement: Enacting inclusive, respectful, and reciprocal processes with Indigenous Peoples, communities, and organizations to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are represented and realized in the pursuit of design excellence.
- Pursue Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action: Embody environmental sustainability in land infrastructure, open space and building development.
- Create Communities that Advance Well-being and Sustainability: Support sustainable community development including mixed use, transit supportive development."

Feedback on the *Plan* and questions are welcome by emailing universitysector@saskatoon.ca.

As our newsletter 'goes to press,' Scott Larson of CBC News posted the following article on April 22, 2021, [University of Saskatchewan, city have big plans for developing endowed lands](#) | CBC News." Please check it out.

Members in the News

Bob McKercher



The March 31, 2021 issue of the *Green and White* included a profile written by John Grainger of Bob McKercher *Pioneering ag prof grows deep roots on campus: USask becomes a family affair for McKercher family.*

“Like many students heading to the University of Saskatchewan (USask) campus, professor emeritus Robert (Bob) McKercher (BA’54, BSA’54, MS’56) came from farming roots.

He may not have realized back then that the roots he was setting down would lead to a long academic career in soil research at USask as well as cultivating family ties with the institution for the next two generation of McKerchers.”

The full article, and Bob’s and son Grant’s pandemic photo, is available at <https://alumni.usask.ca/news/2021/pioneering-ag-prof-grows-deep-roots-on-campus.php>

Asit Sarkar



The Saskatoon Open Door Society honoured our member Dr. Asit Sarkar for his contribution as an individual who has made a difference during the pandemic and worked hard to make a positive impact on front-line workers, recently landed newcomers and the community at large. He received the **Community Hero** award in March at their Annual Diversity Gala.

“Asit Sarkar has promoted diversity and inclusion in the Saskatoon community in numerous ways. He set up a fund at the Saskatoon Community Foundation to support inclusiveness in all aspects of Saskatoon’s community engagement, and as a member of the Saskatoon Immigration Partnership Council he integrated those principles into the Saskatoon Partnership’s Strategic Plan. From his seat on the Advisory Board for the Saskatoon Open Door Society’s Women’s Business Hub, he has developed new community connections for the WBH, and with the onset of COVID-19 he was instrumental in mounting its Face Mask Project. As a Nutana Rotary member, he worked with the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre to facilitate engagement of Newcomer youth with their peers in the Indigenous community, an effort extended with the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan’s BRIDGES Program to include Indigenous, Newcomer and ethnocultural youth.” (From the SODS website)

Members No Longer with Us

The USRA has learned of the deaths of the following members. We extend our sympathies to their families. Surviving partners of deceased Life Members remain members of the Association.

Lothar Emil Bartz (January 7, 1931 – December 10, 2020) is survived by his wife, Margaret, whom he married in 1955, a year after immigrating from Germany as a skilled tradesman in plumbing and pipefitting. He worked at M.E. Cook & Sons and at Honeywell Controls before finishing his career at the University of Saskatchewan. He retired in 1995 from the Buildings and Grounds Department.

Maha Maya (née Mukerji) Chakravarti (June 28, 1934 – February 14, 2021) was predeceased by her husband, Professor Emeritus Aninda Kumar Chakravarti (3 December 1926 - December 1, 2007), who taught at the University of Saskatchewan from 1965 to 1994. Both Maya and Aninda were born in India and earned bachelor's and master's degrees there. Aninda was a lecturer at the University of Allahabad (1953-60) when they married in 1957 and had their daughter Anita a year later. Maya remained in India with the baby for two years after Aninda took up a Fulbright Scholarship at the University of Wisconsin (M.S. 1961, Ph.D. 1967). After the family earned enough to be reunited in Madison, WI, Maya continued as primary caregiver and also worked outside the home there and later at Sears in Saskatoon. She became a pillar of Saskatoon's growing South Asian Community, a pioneer in developing what became the Hindu Society of Saskatchewan (Shri Lakshmi Narayan Hindu Temple). In the wider community, she volunteered with the Friendship Inn, Salvation Army, and YWCA Crisis Shelter and also developed many projects of her own to help those in need. Her compassionate community service was recognized by a 2005 nomination for the YWCA Women of Distinction Award and by International Women of Saskatoon, India Canada Cultural Association, City of Saskatoon, Saskatoon's Bengali community, and more. She is survived by her daughter Anita Chakravarti (Parm Lalli) and family.

Frederick Ernest Fulton (August 12, 1928 – December 29, 2020), USask B.S. Agriculture 1950, Master's in Continuing Education 1972, continued to farm near Kincaid while teaching on the faculty of the USask School of Agriculture for 38 years, from 1954, the year of his marriage to Norma. Serving as her primary caregiver in her later years, he was predeceased by Norma on August 7, 2020 (see USRA Newsletter no. 110, September 2020, p. 12, for her obituary).

Jean Elizabeth (née Haight) Peterson Hamilton (August 26, 1929 – January 29, 2021) was predeceased by her first husband Ivan Peterson and is survived by her husband of 65 years, Gavin Hamilton, former Dean of Veterinary Medicine. She was a mother and grandmother with 15 great-grandchildren.

Eiler Humbert (Michigan State U.), retired faculty member in Food Science, College of Agriculture, died December 15, 2020, at age 93. He was predeceased by his wife Catherine Jean Humbert (June 15, 1928 – July 17, 2017). Married August 26, 1950, in Regina, they had four sons, Mark, Doug, Greg, and Paul.

Don Cameron Kerr (1936 – December 8, 2020), Professor Emeritus of English, was born in Saskatoon and earned a USask B.A. Honours before pursuing graduate study at the University of Toronto (M.A.) and the University of London, England. While teaching English and Drama at the University of Saskatchewan for 42 years and through his retirement, Don was a writer, editor, and historian. He edited for regional co-op publishers Coteau Books and NeWest Press and wrote his own books of poetry, history, and biography. Several regional theatres performed his plays. His tireless community service to many cultural, educational, nature (MVA), and heritage organizations included Saskatchewan governor for the Heritage Canada Foundation. Saskatchewan awarded him the Order of Merit for his lifelong service to the Province and later named him its Poet Laureate for three years. Don is survived by his wife Mildred, whom he met in 1956 at St. Thomas More College. They celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary (1960 – 2020) last August.

Dr. William Klassen, retired USask Associate Professor in Family Medicine (UToronto, 1954), died at age 93 on March 23, 2017, survived by his wife Margaret, according to his Canadian Medical Association obituary. After a 43-year career at the Medical Arts Clinic in Regina and completion in 1980 of a specialty in geriatrics, he joined the Family Medicine Unit at the Regina Plains Health Centre, where he trained medical residents. He was named Saskatchewan Physician of the Year, 1989. He remained active after his 1997 retirement, especially by teaching RCMP Training Depot cadets in Regina about the neglect and mistreatment of elderly people.

Che Kan Leong (May 10, 1931, Canton, China – November 30, 2020, Edmonton, AB), Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the College of Education, died at South Terrace Continuing Care Centre in Edmonton, AB, at age 89. He is survived by his wife Theresa Sek Yin Wang and their family. Educated in Hong Kong and Australia, he earned a Ph.D. at the University of Alberta. His 49-year USask career began in 1969. For his research (on reading and writing English and Chinese and on developmental dyslexia), he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Umeå, Sweden; a USask Earned Doctor of Letters; and the International Dyslexia Association's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Thelma Vivian (née Stevens) Pepper (July 28, 1920 – December 1, 2020) was born 100 years ago in Kingston, Nova Scotia. She studied biology (Acadia U, B.Sc. 1941; McGill U, M.Sc. 1943), and married one of her former lab students at McGill, chemistry Ph.D. candidate James Pepper, in 1945. Jim predeceased her in 2003. From 1947, when they moved to Saskatoon, Thelma focussed her attention as wife and mother on supporting his USask professorial career. At age 60, after their four children had left home, she took up the art of photography, learned in childhood from her grandfather and father. Her awards have included the Saskatchewan Arts Board Lifetime Achievement Award (2014) and Saskatchewan Order of Merit (2018). A biography by Amy Jo Ehman, *Thelma: A Life in Pictures*, was released in September. Thelma died just before Remai Modern opened on February 13 its retrospective exhibition of her photography, "Ordinary Women", which runs until August 15. It is co-curated by Remai Modern and the University Art Collection, both of which hold substantial collections of her work. See the article in USRA Newsletter no. 110 (September 2020, pp. 10-12).

Edith Irma (Bergman) Riekman (June 11, 1932 – January 19, 2021) is survived by her husband of 65 years, George, retired pedodontist in the College of Dentistry. She was active in the Nutana Park Mennonite Church and enjoyed nature with their four sons Glen, Bruce, Mark, and Brian and families at Candle and later Emma Lakes.

Gail Sparks (Edmonton, AB, March 15, 1946 – Saskatoon, April 13, 2021) is survived by her husband Gordon, a 2014 faculty retiree in Engineering, their two daughters Terri and Jennifer, son Larry, and families (including the Sparks' six grandchildren). Gail met Gordon, a civil engineering student, during his 3 months as a patient at UAlberta Hospital in Edmonton where she was a student nurse (RN). A year after both had graduated, married, and moved to Red Deer for jobs in their fields, Gordon got funding for graduate study in transportation engineering at UCalifornia, Berkeley. Gail became Head Nurse in a seniors' convalescent hospital there and gave birth to their first child. But their roots were in Alberta and Saskatchewan (birthplace of Gail's parents), so Gordon turned down U.S. job offers to join the USask College of Engineering. During his 43-year career, Gail shared many of his world travels as she helped him as business manager for his consulting firm for 26 years, and when he became involved in the Canadian Transportation Research Forum, became its secretary and business manager.

For notices in memory of former employees of the University, as well as current students, employees, and others honoured when the flag on the Thorvaldson Building is flown at half mast, please see the In Memoriam website maintained by the University Secretary:

<https://governance.usask.ca/about/flag-at-half-mast.php#InMemoriam>

Upcoming USRA Activities

There are only two zoom presentations left on our 2020/21 schedule. An invitation will be sent by email before the meeting.

Wednesday May 5, 2021 login at 11:45

Dave Mandeville will talk about Photography for Beginners

Wednesday June 9, 2021 login at 11:45

Dr. Volker Gerdts, Director and CEO VIDO, will talk about Research and Development of Covid Vaccines

The **fall AGM** will probably to be held through zoom again this year.

Did you miss a previous presentation? You can view it on our website <https://usra.usask.ca>

Upcoming Activities of Interest

The **Respiratory Research Centre** is hosting a public presentation by Dr. Alyson Kelvin on COVID Vaccines and Older Adults on May 6 11:00-12:00 via Webex. For more details email britney.duncan@usask.ca

Saskatoon Council on Aging is having their AGM on May 27, 2021. See their webpage to register http://scoa.ca/?page_id=354

In Our Next Issues:

We plan to publish a special issue as soon as we have complete information on the implementation of our MOU plus a **comparison of the benefits** available to USRA members, Alumni Association associate members, and individual members of associations affiliated with CURAC.

The August issue will include information about the **AGM**.

Keep in Touch!

We welcome your letters to the editor. Write, phone or email us.

Moving? Changing your email address? Don't miss an issue of our newsletter or notices about upcoming activities! Make sure you let us know your new contact information.

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