

USRA Newsletter

November, 2024

No. 123



Top: Memorial Gates: Lest We Forget: Remembering USask alumni who gave their lives in the First World War (1914-1918)
Bottom: Memorial Gates Ceremony November 11, 2024: Peter Stoicheff, Kathryn Warden, Merry Beazely, Beryl Radcliffe, Lea Pennock, Jacqueline Huck, and Jim Thornhill. Photo credit: Don Beazely



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From Our Co-Presidents

Hello everyone! We hope this message finds you all doing well.

It was great to see so many of you at our October 16th luncheon and hear the always fascinating Jeff O'Brien tell us about the prohibition era in our city. We were pleased to present Jim Dosman with our Continuing Contribution Award. The carved roast beef lunch was excellent, thanks to the first-rate WDM staff. We appreciated your questions and comments at the AGM which followed. If you haven't had a chance, please see reports on the past year's activities distributed prior to the AGM.

We are pleased to welcome Joe Angel and Peggy Proctor on the Board and thank Rick Bunt and Mary Dykes for their ongoing support to the Board. We bid a fond farewell with sincere appreciation to Caroline Cottrell, Judith Henderson and Yannis Pahatouoglou who have stepped away. At our Board meeting in November, we determined the membership for each of our standing committees and other responsibilities for the year. Please see page 4 and the USRA website for details.

At the AGM, Merry and Jim described the solid, ongoing connections between the USRA and the University in our shared goals to support USask retirees. These include the welcome and much appreciated return in 2024 of an annual retirees celebration, hosted by President Peter Stoicheff and Kathryn Warden; upcoming regular meetings of the USRA Co-Presidents with Vince Bruni-Bossio (Acting Provost and VP Academic) and Cheryl Hamelin (Vice-President University Relations) to discuss common issues; and meetings with Marcy Hildebrand and Alexandra Foster to ensure the success of our **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**. The MOU focuses on maintaining "a mutually beneficial relationship characterized by collaboration and respect," including the University's commitment to help us promote our goals and activities to current members, retirees who have not yet joined and those planning to retire.

The MOU Articles of Agreement include access to University staff to support our operations. We thank Board member Vera Pezer, who is representing us on the search committee for a Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator, who will provide us with .40 FTE assistance. Starting this fall, the USRA has a representative on the University Senate, and we thank David Mandeville for taking on this role.



Merry Beazely, Bryan Harvey and David Mandeville visit with attendees
Photo credit: Jim Thornhill



Tom Wilson presents award to Jim Dosman
Photo credit: Merry Beazely

The USRA hosted a promotional booth again this year at the Saskatoon Council on Aging's annual exhibition, **Spotlight on Seniors**, held at TCU Place on October 8th. It was a jam-packed day with 87 informational booths focusing on services, health, recreation, counselling and housing for older adults. There was a great lunch menu, live music, exercise, dance and cutting the cake for the 25th Anniversary of the Council. We wish to thank our board volunteers who spoke to many folks, including potential members. We also provided our contact information to organizations who will let their clients know about the USRA, as applicable. Much appreciation to Mary Dykes and Treasurer Tom Wilson for organizing our booth.

For almost a century, the University of Saskatchewan has hosted a **Remembrance Day ceremony** at the Memorial Gates on November 11, in honour of those who have served and continue to serve our country [Remembrance - Spotlight | University of Saskatchewan](#). And, for many years, USRA members have attended this moving ceremony and have laid a wreath from our Association. Thank you to Jackie Huck for arranging our wreath in remembrance this year.

As in past years, our thanks to President Peter Stoicheff and Kathryn Warden who will be hosting the **USRA Holiday Reception** at the President's Residence on Wednesday, December 11th from 3:30-5:00 p.m. Your invitation will be sent to you soon.

We hope you can attend our monthly luncheons at the WDM, organized by our Education, Social and Recreation Committee. Please see our website homepage [Upcoming Activities](#) for information. We welcome your ideas for future topics, speakers and potential places to which we could arrange tours!

Please let us know of any questions and concerns you have about the USRA. We can be reached by phone at 306-966-6618, by post at 221 Cumberland Avenue North, Saskatoon SK S7N 1M3, or by e-mail at ss.usra@usask.ca, or to either of us directly. We would love to hear from you.

Wishing you all the best as we head into winter.

Merry Beazely (merry.beazely@usask.ca) and Jim Thornhill (jim.thornhill@usask.ca)
Co-Presidents

Board and Committee Members for 2024-2025



Tom Wilson, Jackie Huck, Peggy Proctor, Vera Pezer, Merry Beazely, Jim Thornhill, Bryan Harvey, Kathryn Warden, Bob Card, Joe Angel, and David Mandeville. Beryl Radcliffe pictured at right
Photo credit: Lori Hagen

Board Members

Co-Presidents:	Merry Beazely and Jim Thornhill
Vice President:	TBD
Secretary:	Jacqueline Huck
Treasurer:	Tom Wilson
Immediate Past Co-Presidents:	Merry Beazely and Jim Thornhill
Members-at-Large:	Joe Angel, Bob Card, Bryan Harvey, David Mandeville, Vera Pezer, Peggy Proctor, Beryl Radcliffe, and Kathryn Warden

Standing Committees

Committee	Chair, Members
Awards	Merry Beazely , Bryan Harvey, David Mandeville, Vera Pezer, and Kathryn Warden
CURAC	Bryan Harvey
Communication	Jacqueline Huck , Joe Angel, Bob Card, and Kathryn Warden
Education, Social and Recreation	Peggy Proctor and Jim Thornhill , Bob Card, David Mandeville, and Beryl Radcliffe
Membership	Beryl Radcliffe , Jacqueline Huck and Peggy Proctor
Campus Heritage	TBD , Bob Card, Vera Pezer, and Kathryn Warden
Honorary Degrees	Tom Wilson , Merry Beazely, Bryan Harvey, Vera Pezer, Asit Sarkar, and Kathryn Warden
Nominations	Tom Wilson , Merry Beazely, Jim Thornhill, and Kathryn Warden
Ad Hoc Committee to Review USRA Documents	Merry Beazely , Bryan Harvey, David Mandeville, and Jim Thornhill
MOU Coordinating Committee	Jim Thornhill , Joe Angel and Rick Bunt
USask Senate Representative	David Mandeville

Education, Social and Recreation Committee Report

Members: Peggy Proctor and Jim Thornhill (Co-Chairs), Bob Card, David Mandeville, and Beryl Radcliffe

Noon-Hour Lunch and Presentations

All presentations will be held at the Western Development Museum (WDM) unless otherwise stated. Doors open at 11:30 a.m., and lunch is at noon with a presentation to follow. E-mail invitations will be sent to the members about two weeks before each event with information about the speakers, lunch menu and cost.

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Sarah Forgie, new Dean of the College of Medicine since July of 2024, will highlight the college’s mission and her vision for its future.

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

Zeba Ahmad, CEO of the Saskatoon Public School Foundation, will discuss the important topic of vulnerable children in our community and how we can help them with their learning journey.

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Colleen Dell, public sociologist and human-animal researcher, will discuss the role of therapy dogs in the treatment of mental health, addictions and well-being.

Noon-hour presentations for Spring, 2025 are currently being arranged. Suggestions for future speakers are most welcomed. The monthly WDM dates for these luncheon events are all booked until May, 2025.

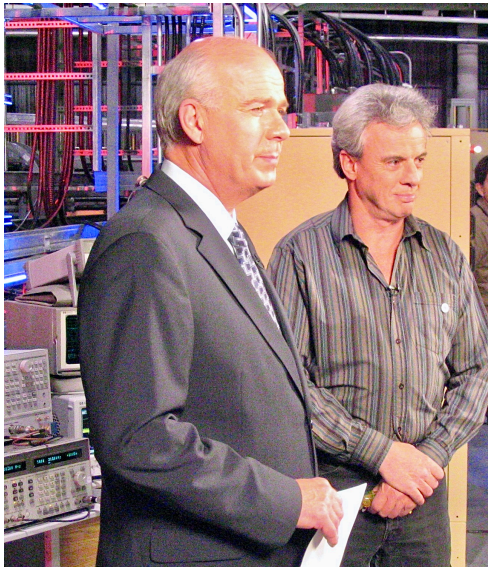
President’s Holiday Reception

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

USRA members are invited by President Stoicheff and Kathryn Warden to attend a Holiday Reception at the President’s Residence from 3:30-5:00 p.m. An e-mail invitation from the President’s Office will be forwarded to USRA members and details will be included on the USRA office phone greeting (306-966-6618).

Spotlight on USask History: The CLS Story: Shining a Light on the Path to Brilliance

Kathryn Warden



Twenty years ago this fall, CBC’s Peter Mansbridge hosted The National from the centre of USask’s huge synchrotron experimental hall to mark the impending launch of the nation’s largest science project in a generation—the Canadian Light Source (CLS).

“Tonight, Field of Beams,” Mansbridge began. “A Canadian first. Scientists turn a piece of prairie into a world-class super microscope.”

A “microscope” in the sense that by producing light millions of times brighter than the sun from the energy of electrons racing around an enormous ring at nearly the speed of light. As a result, the synchrotron enables scientists to use this intensely bright light to “see” the microscopic nature of matter—whether in metals, plants, fabrics or human cells—right down to the level of atoms.

Photo credit (courtesy CLS): CBC’s Peter Mansbridge and Bob McDonald report from the CLS in 2004

Bob McDonald, host of a CBC Quirks and Quarks radio show on the CLS launch, predicted that there'd be "things done here people have not even thought about yet." He was certainly right about that.

Today, more than 1,000 academic, government and industrial scientists use the CLS beamlines to shed light on a wide variety of scientific and medical challenges. These include improving drug delivery in patients, finding vaccines against gastric cancer or pig diseases, developing a way to convert patient blood types into the universally useful O-negative, discovering new materials for electronic devices, finding ways to turn mine waste into healthy soil, and using pulp and paper waste to scrub carbon from emissions.

Building the CLS, a dream of scientists for decades, catapulted USask into the big leagues of scientific research. The 20th anniversary will be celebrated during this 2024-2025 academic year.

How did USask become home to Canada's only synchrotron? The answer in large part is that the university would not have been awarded the synchrotron by an international scientific panel were it not for the strong foundation of expertise and facilities we'd already built.

The unique-in-Canada spectroscopy lab set up in the 1930s by Dr. Gerhard Herzberg, who used light spectra to figure out the structure of molecules and went on to win the Nobel Prize in 1971, was an important first step in developing excellence in radiation chemistry. Other key steps led to USask's highly regarded nuclear and accelerator physics expertise including:

- USask physicist Ertle Harrington used high-energy gamma rays to provide Saskatchewan cancer clinics with radon for cancer radiotherapy (1931 to 1962);
- Canada's first betatron high-energy accelerator for radiation therapy and research was purchased and installed in 1948 by USask electron accelerator expert Dr. Leon Katz and Dr. Harold Johns (who in 1951 was responsible, along with Dr. Sylvia Fedoruk, for the USask medical breakthrough of using cobalt-60 radiation to successfully treat a cancer patient);
- With the help of USask math professor Dr. Roger Servranckx, a globally recognized expert on electron ring designs, Katz led construction of the linear accelerator or "linac" which was completed in 1964, attracting researchers from around the world.

Already a national leader in particle physics, USask was able to contribute its existing multi-million-dollar linear accelerator to the CLS project. Given the \$173.5-million CLS construction cost, this was an important advantage, along with the remarkable \$2.4-million contribution from the City of Saskatoon and the \$27 million from the Saskatchewan government and SaskPower. While USask put up \$7.3 million as the facility owner, 18 other universities endorsed the project and two of them put up \$300,000 each. The result was unprecedented funding for a Canadian science project from government at all levels, universities and industry.

Not surprisingly, science using synchrotron experiments is a signature area of USask research and a huge advantage for USask researchers and students. For instance, a new composite ceramic glass material shows promise for safer storage of nuclear waste, canola meal pellets could potentially be used to heat homes, and research into phosphorus use in soil is helping farmers in Nigeria and the Republic of Benin grow vegetables less expensively and more sustainably with less fertilizer.

Earlier this year, the 60-year-old CLS linear accelerator was dismantled and replaced with an updated one that will soon be brought online. Given that synchrotron technologies are evolving, the national group of synchrotron users is currently conducting a review of what they and the global community will need from a Canadian synchrotron for the future.

As well, the Canada Foundation for Innovation is looking at developing a new funding model for major science facilities such as the CLS.

In the 2004 national broadcast, it was pointed out that there was no other university in Canada that stepped up the way USask did: “Where others wouldn’t, the University of Saskatchewan would.” Unique scientific expertise, unparalleled determination, and unprecedented collaboration brought the CLS to Saskatoon, and will continue to shape its future.

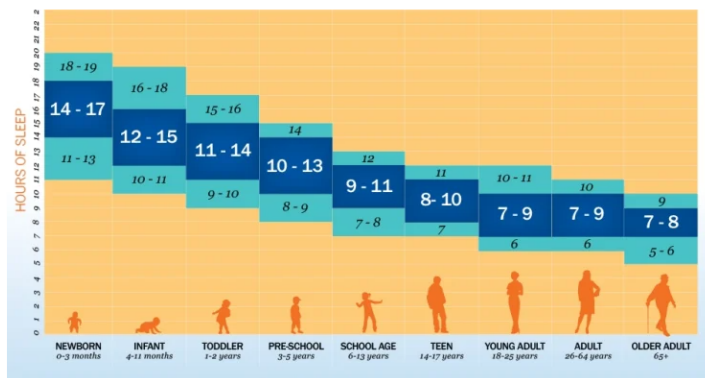
Health Column: Sleep

Dr. Tom Wilson, Professor Emeritus, USask College of Medicine

“Sleep that relieves the weary labourer and heals hurt minds. Sleep, the main course in life’s feast, and the most nourishing.” – William Shakespeare, Macbeth

Given that we spend one third of our lives sleeping, it is surprising that medical science ignored it until the late 20th century. From 1900 to 1949, only 12 published papers mentioned sleep. But from 1950 to the present, there have been more than 300,000¹ papers on sleep.

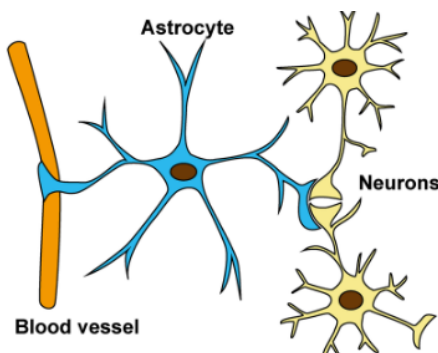
Sleep occurs in all mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and even insects². Early research found that rats subjected to total sleep deprivation died within 11 to 32 days³, despite having adequate food and water. The average duration of sleep varies among animals. In general, predators sleep longer than their prey. For us human omnivores, the average sleep duration varies with age. Note that we get less sleep as we get older.



Getting less than the recommended amount of sleep is associated with a myriad of physical and mental problems: weight gain, insulin resistance, diabetes, heart attacks, stroke, dementia, and depression⁴.

Of course, association is not causation, but an intriguing hypothesis put forward by University of Rochester researchers suggests that poor sleep may cause these problems. Inadequate sleep may impede the flushing of wastes from the brain and

central nervous system. This cleaning system uses channels, formed by star-shaped cells called astrocytes⁵, to move wastes and toxins from the brain (*see picture below*). During deep sleep, waste products are removed so that they can’t damage nerve cells. One waste product is amyloid, which can damage nerve cells and is thought to contribute to Alzheimer’s dementia.



Also during deep sleep, blood pressure goes down which makes transferring fluids containing waste from astrocytes into those blood vessels easier, so wastes can then be carried away from the brain. This simple hypothesis is supported by research which shows that high nighttime blood pressure is associated with heart and blood vessel damage⁶.

Having found that inadequate sleep, particularly inadequate deep sleep, is hazardous to our health, what can we do about it?

Sleeping pills or “hypnotics” which are safe and effective for long periods are a longstanding target for researchers. In the mid-19th century, simple molecules such as chloral hydrate and various bromine compounds were touted (remember Bromo-Selzer?). All were abandoned due to toxicity, particularly overdoses.

By the 1900’s, barbiturates (e.g., secobarbital, Seconal™) took over. Although they were somewhat safer, they too suffered from overdose dangers including death⁷. In the mid-20th century, benzodiazepines “benzos” such as diazepam (Valium™), temazepam (Restoril™), and triazolam (Halcyon™) became sleeping pills of choice. Newer candidates are the “z-drugs”: zopiclone (Imovane™) and zolpidem (Ambien™). Benzos and z-drugs are certainly safer than barbiturates in overdoses, but they too have unwanted side effects.

The newest “kids on the block” are orexin antagonists (inhibitors). Orexin, a small protein secreted by a tiny part of the brain called the hypothalamus⁸, acts on many parts of the brain to cause increased appetite, wakefulness, addiction, and anxiety. Conversely, decreased orexin is associated with depression. An orexin antagonist, lemborexant (Dayvigo™), was approved for the treatment of insomnia in Canada in 2019. Short-term studies found it superior to a placebo and equal to zolpidem⁹. (*More on orexin in future columns.*)

All sedative/hypnotic (sleep-inducing) drugs can cause three groups of adverse effects. The first is “tolerance and withdrawal”: after daily use for two to four weeks, larger doses are needed to cause sedation¹⁰ (tolerance), and when the drugs are suddenly stopped, withdrawal symptoms including insomnia, anxiety, tremors, and even seizures occur.

A second adverse effect is prolonged sedation invading daytime hours. This plays a role in increased falls and motor vehicle accidents¹¹ in people who take hypnotics chronically.

The third type of adverse effect, common to all sleeping pills, is a change in “sleep architecture.” Sleep is divided into two types: rapid eye movement sleep (REM) and non-REM which has four¹² stages. REM sleep is associated with dreaming, while stages three and four are the restorative deep sleep mentioned above. We elderly folk spend less time per night in deep sleep. Unfortunately, hypnotics increase lighter stages of sleep at the expense of deep sleep¹³.

In summary, sleeping pills can provide short-term relief from insomnia. If used daily for a month or more, they become less effective and prone to adverse effects.

So, what are we left with? Experts recommend “sleep hygiene”¹⁴ which includes:

- Have a nightly bedtime routine. At the same time each night clean your teeth, dress in bed clothes, etc.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine four hours prior.
- Do something calming before sleeping: reading, listening to soft music, or meditating.
- Dim the lights and have the bedroom cool.
- If you don’t fall asleep in 20 minutes, get up and repeat the calming routine.

But don’t worry if you have a bad night. You will likely “catch up” the next night.

For the reference list, please contact Tom at: thomas.wilson@usask.ca.

Did you know? Our national umbrella organization, College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC), has a Health Care Policy Committee which includes among its members our very own Dr. Tom Wilson. The Committee publishes their annual reports and bulletins on topics such as chronic pain, medications, social isolation, opioids and more on the [CURAC Health Care Policy Committee](#) webpage.

YOU can be part of USRA's 2025 Globe Walk Team!

Co-Captains Mary Dykes and Lea Pennock

USRA's team, the ***Intensely Vigorous USask Retirees***, is now recruiting for the 2025 season of Saskatoon Council on Aging's (SCOA) Globe Walk!

Globe Walk is a city-wide program that was started 11 years ago by our very own Vera Pezer as a way to encourage older adults to keep active and socially engaged in the winter months between January and April. Globe Walk participants have counted kilometres to walk around the globe, to the moon, to the sun, and to various themed locations such as the Blue Zones. This season we will discover Canada's UNESCO World Heritage sites both online and at SCOA's monthly in-person events.

Here are a few more key points about Globe Walk and the Intensely Vigorous USask Retirees team:

- All you have to do is keep track of the time you spend each month doing whatever activities get you off the couch! Participate for one month or all four months whatever works for you.
- Our team does not meet to exercise as a group. However, this year we might arrange some group campus walks.
- All exercise that you do counts for Globe Walk—in the gym, in the pool, at the curling rink, on skis or bikes, walking around your neighbourhood, and (inevitably) shovelling snow!
- You don't have to be in Saskatoon to be a member of the USRA's team. In the past, a USask retiree living in Switzerland joined us. Many of our members travel between January and April and continue to count their activity.
- Once a month you e-mail your results (number of minutes and/or kilometres of exercise) to your team leaders, and we keep track of the team's effort as a whole. Nobody but your team leader sees your personal results...but we all get a sense of accomplishment from seeing our team's results.

If you've joined us in the past, we're looking forward to seeing you on our team again. If you haven't joined us before, what are you waiting for?

To sign up for our team, please e-mail Lea Pennock lea.pennock@usask.ca or if you don't have e-mail, just phone the USRA office at 306-966-6618 by **Monday, December 2nd**. We will contact team members later that week with details about the *option* to purchase at a discount a lanyard for walking in the Field House.

Mary and Lea look forward to this season, USRA's fourth, of fielding a team in Globe Walk. For more information, please visit [SCOA's Globe Walk page](#).

Members No Longer With Us

USRA Board Members

The USRA has learned of the deaths of the following members. We extend our sympathies to their families. Surviving partners of deceased Life Members may inherit their partner's membership if they wish to remain members of the Association. Please contact USRA via e-mail at ss.usra@usask.ca or phone 306 966-6618 for further information.

Jack Adam Cleveland Kernan (August 16, 1927-September 23, 2024)

USRA life member Jack Kernan trained in the Reserve Forces as an artillery gunner at CFB Moose Jaw and CFB Shilo. Following the war, he earned a B.Sc. in chemistry and a master's in organic chemistry from the University of Saskatchewan (USask). Jack met pharmacy student Faye Popoff at USask and they were married in Saskatoon in 1954. The family moved to Ontario and Quebec before returning to Saskatoon in 1966 where Jack was employed by the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) until his retirement.

USRA life member Faye Kernan, the first pharmacist to work at a veterinary teaching hospital in Canada, died in 2021. For more information regarding Faye Kernan's contributions to her profession and USRA, please visit these two pages on the USRA website: [2015 Prime of Life Achievement Award](#); and the Members No Longer With Us section of the [September 2021 Newsletter](#).

Members No Longer With Us Who Were Honoured at the 2024 AGM

We have learned of the deaths of the following 20 members since our report at the September 12, 2023 Annual General Meeting. For additional information about these deceased members, please consult our November 2023, April 2024 and September 2024 newsletters, which are accessible on the [Newsletters](#) page on our website.

Margaret May Bartz (September 19, 1927-October 29, 2023)

John (1936-November 30, 2023) **and Helen Courtney** (1937-November 30, 2023)

Violet Evelyn Ehman (November 4, 1928-November 1, 2023)

Walter Gantner (December 5, 1932-December 16, 2023)

Hilda Marie Hackett (November 9, 1932-March 17, 2024)

James Leslie (Les) Henry (July 7, 1940-June 14, 2024)

M.U. (Mel) Hosain (February 4, 1938-May 23, 2024)

Linda Carol Hodgson (September 1948-June 23, 2023)

Winnifred Kelm (May 25, 1935-August 6, 2022)

John King (November 4, 1938-December 27, 2023)

Jose F. (Pepe) Lopez (January 19, 1930-March 1, 2024)

John William MacEdward (June 21, 1939-January 21, 2024)

Alice F. McAuley (died May 21, 2023)

Donald James McEwen (1930-November 5, 2023)

Robert Barrie McKercher (1931-January 1, 2024)

Julie Muir (1930-January 7, 2024)

Dorothy Bell Peake (November 4, 1930-November 5, 2023)

John Wilson Quail (March 19, 1936-October 14, 2023)

Dorothy Riemer (November 1, 1933-March 6, 2024)

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.

Keep in Touch!

We welcome your letters to the editors Jackie, Bob, Joe, and Kathryn. Do you have an event of interest to retirees and seniors you want to let other members know about? We are happy to pass on news about your event by e-mail and in the newsletter. Please send information by e-mail.



Moving? Changing your e-mail address?

Don't miss an issue of our newsletter or the e-mail notices about upcoming activities!
Make sure you send us your new contact information.

University of Saskatchewan Retirees' Association
221 Cumberland Ave N
Saskatoon, SK S7N 1M3
phone: 306-966-6618 e-mail: ss.usra@usask.ca

website: <https://usra.usask.ca>

Scenes from 2024

USRA Awards and Wrap-Up Celebration May 30th



Airini and emcee Jim Thornhill



Merry Beazely, Chair Awards Committee



Members and Guests

USask Celebration for New Retirees June 19th



The USRA Board was invited to attend the afternoon reception at Marquis Hall to honour new retirees



Rick Bunt, Kathryn Warden and Jim Thornhill

USask Employee Appreciation Picnic June 26th



David Mandeville and Tom Wilson



Bob Card and Howler

USRA Luncheon Presentation October 16th with Jeff O'Brien *Saskatoon and Prohibition - Banning Booze in a Temperance Colony?*



Jeff answers questions from the crowd



Caroline Cottrell describes regulations for Louis' Pub