THE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I was somewhat dismayed when our Newsletter editor informed me that, as President of UWRA, one of my obligations is to furnish a President’s message for the UWRA Newsletter. In normal times I would have relished the opportunity to inform the readership of the many exciting details of my everyday life, serve up a generous helping of bons mots, and generally inspire UWRA members to strive for better things. But these are not ordinary times, and since the introduction of Covid-19 protocols, my life has descended into a sea of banality, where the highpoint of each month is a trip or two to the grocery store. This message will reflect this. Like Seinfeld, it is about nothing.

There is an exception to everything, of course, and the exception is a sincere thank you to Jane Barske, for her long service to UWRA. She started in 2006 by editing the Newsletter and for the last eight years, as Communications Officer, she tracked our membership information, circulated the minutes of our meetings, and performed a multitude of other tasks. To my great regret, Jane tendered her resignation a short while ago. On behalf of UWRA: Thank you Jane! Your input will be missed.

There is no doubt that the Covid experience will have some lasting effects on the way we socially interact. A year ago, I was only dimly aware of Zoom, now it has become a part of everyday life. I watched a hockey game last week with friends in Moncton, Kamloops and Medicine Hat, and I suspect that this is not uncommon these days. Last spring, I participated in an on-line conference, making a couple of on-line presentations. It was a technological nightmare, a very steep learning curve and, ultimately, a rather unsatisfactory experience. It confirmed my long-held opinion that the value of academic conferences lies in the social interaction between attendees as much as it does in the formal presentation of research findings.

On the other hand, the advent of Zoom has expanded opportunities for our organization to recruit guest-speakers from outside Winnipeg. The speakers for our recent March meeting spoke to us from their home in England. In the 2021-22 academic year we are scheduled to have Zoom presentations from people based in Victoria, Toronto, and Vancouver, and, in all probability, from Winnipeg also.

I will also be using much of my free time to unraveling some of the mysteries that have occupied my mind for far too long. It all started when I recalled an incident that occurred when I was still living with my parents.

(continued on page 3 →)
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Meetings are normally held at 10:30 to 12:00 in the University Club from September to April on the first Tuesday of the month except in September when it is on the second Tuesday and in January when there is no meeting.

Because of the Coronacrisis, Fall and Winter meetings were held remotely, using the Zoom platform. This mode of delivery proved quite successful, with the added benefit of allowing members from distant points to participate. At the time of this Newsletter, it’s uncertain whether this format will be required in the Fall but that is liable to be the case. A final decision and Zoom instructions will be provided in the August Newsletter.

September 14 – ZOOM
Speaker: Niigaan Sinclair
Reconciliation in Principle and Practice

October 5 – ZOOM
Speaker: Bill Zuk
Amelia Earhart in Canada

November 2 – ZOOM
Speaker: Derek Thompson
Planning Parks with Indigenous Peoples

December 7 – ZOOM
Speaker: Ken and Linda Bauman
The Architecture and Design of Frank Lloyd Wright

January 2022 – NO MEETING

February 1 – ZOOM
Speaker: Ed Cloutis
What the Perseverance Rover Is Learning About Mars

March 1 – ZOOM
Speaker: Ben Nobbs-Thiessen
Mennonites in South America

April 5 – ZOOM
Speaker: Bashir Khan
Treaty Medals and Treaties

UWRA welcomes the following 2021 retirees:

- Tim Babcock
  (Theatre & Film)
- Bhupinder Bector
  (Mathematics)
- Debbie Bradley
  (Education)
- Judith E Harris
  (Urban & Inner City Studies)
- Brian E Howelko
  (Centre for Academic Technologies)
- Murielle Jennings
  (Chemistry)
- Andrea McCluskey
  (Micro-Communities)
- Ken McCluskey
  (Education)
- Ron McFadyen
  (Applied Computer Science)
- Clint E Miller
  (Technology Solutions Centre)
- Ortrud Oellermann
  (Mathematics)
- Gary Pawlychka
  (Financial Services)
- Liliane Rodriguez
  (Modern Languages & Literatures)
- John R Smyth
  (Aurora Family Therapy Centre)
- Catherine Taylor
  (Rhetoric, Writing & Communications)
- Allan Wiebe
  (Education)

Cheers to good health and happy days ahead!

New members
SUMMER CALENDAR

MOTHER’S DAY - Sunday, May 9
VICTORIA DAY - Monday, May 24
D-DAY ANNIVERSARY - Sunday, June 6
UW SPRING CONVOCATIONS - June 10/11
FATHER’S DAY - Sunday, June 20
SUMMER SOLSTICE - Sunday, June 20
CANADA DAY - Monday, July 1
TERRY FOX DAY - Monday, August 2
PERSEID METEOR SHOWER - August 12/13

The annual Perseid Meteor Shower occurs when Earth passes through the debris in the tail of Comet Swift-Tuttle. As the debris encounters the atmosphere, it burns, creating a bright streak.

The Perseid is the most prominent of several such showers that occur through the year. It was even referred to by John Denver in his song Rocky Mountain High where the line “I’ve seen it raining in the sky” apparently refers to his observations of the shower during a family camping trip near Aspen, Colorado.

President’s Message continued from page 1

My father, who was educated in Germany, and fluent in English and German, tutored German architectural students who were engaged in on-site work-experiences. Klaus, a very correct and earnest fellow, asked my Dad to explain the difference between a shovel and a %#$%!* shovel. Such are the mysteries of language.

From an early age I have been fascinated by what is euphemistically called bad language. My Irish Catholic relatives were fluent in it and used it in everyday conversation, so to me it seemed to be merely an extension of the Irish brogue. But I never really understood the power of swearing until I was 16 or so, and worked during my vacations on a nearby market garden. Along with my school friend “Banno” I was assigned to work with Alphonso, an Italian migrant worker. We were forking manure when Alphonso encountered a particularly noxious decomposed chicken and threw down his fork in disgust. Unfortunately, a tine of his fork passed through his boot and foot, skewering it to the ground. After a moment of stunned silence, he let loose with a carefully thought-out stream of blasphemy, the likes of which I have not heard since. Banno and I, like his foot, were transfixed. We were awed by the fluency and cadence of the torrent of profane Italian. He put a lot of thought and feeling into it. I am not religious, never was, but I was amazed by the inventive way that religion could be used to express emotion. After that experience, the scatological and sexual allusions of English-language swearing have seemed to me to be inadequate. But, and I am not making this up, an Inuit student told me that since it is not acceptable for Inuit to express anger, it is impossible to swear in Inuktitut, so they use English swear words. Too bad. Italian would be much more effective.

Jock Lehr, President UWRA

The shower will be active July 17 to August 24 but the peak will be about August 12 when 50-80 streaks/hour might occur. The best viewing time is in the late evening of August 12.

To view the shower, go to a site away from the effect of city lights and look to the north or northeast. It is best to look steadily in that direction rather than scanning the whole sky.
EXCELLENT RESULTS FOR OUR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

As our Scholarship and Bursary representative Ed Byard reports later in this Newsletter, UWRA punches above its weight in donations to the annual campus fundraising campaign (about 10% of all donations). This past year, retirees contributed $41,637.87 and participation was 14.7%, up from 12% last year!

AND EVEN BETTER, in order to reduce the pandemic’s effect on post-secondary students, the province provided additional money for the University to distribute. This additional funding allowed the UWRA awards to be fully matched from the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative (MSBI). Thus, this year we were able to provide one additional $3000 Scholarship and two additional $1000 Bursaries!

OUR 2020/21 SCHOLARSHIP and BURSARY WINNERS

SCHOLARSHIPS ($3000)

NIKOLAS FURLETTI (UWRA): A Biochemistry Major, Nikolas chose UW because of the small class sizes, the facilities, the overall program and welcoming environment, and because his mother and sister are both alumni who “had excellent experiences here”. He hopes to attend medical school, eventually specializing in pediatrics, surgery, or sports medicine. He is most grateful to UWRA for the scholarship. It gives him “a sense of accomplishment” and in the future he hopes to be able to “give back to the community as you all have done.”

Name Withheld By Request (Matching): This BA/BEd student was attracted by the University's values of inclusion, diversity, and access, and without this scholarship, might not have been able to continue toward the goal of becoming a resource or EAL teacher.

BURSARIES ($1000)

YUSUF TAGURI (UWRA): Yusuf is pursuing a BA in Political Science. In choosing the University of Winnipeg Yusuf emphasized the opportunity to “directly engage with professors and fellow students in a manner that promotes various outlooks and perspectives”. He has his sights set on becoming a human rights lawyer to defend victims of genocide and war crimes.

SANDESH FERNANDEZ (UWRA): Sandesh is a History student whose wife and friends are UW graduates. This award will help with the cost of his immigration procedures but with that behind him, he hopes to use his degree (and background as a drum teacher) to teach History and Music at the Middle/High School levels.

MARIA CORDOVA (Matching): Maria arrived in Canada from the Philippines in 2011. The mother of two in college and another in high school, she was selected to participate in the International Teacher Education Program at Seven Oaks School Division in partnership with UW. She was hired to a permanent position in Seven Oaks in 2019 and began her studies for a Post Baccalaureate Program in Education. This financial assistance will allow her “to grow further in [her] career as a teacher” and she believes “the ultimate beneficiaries are her students.” She hopes to “pursue graduate studies if given the opportunity.”

HAYLEY AMBROSE-CHATEAUNEUF (Matching): Hayley chose the University of Winnipeg because of its central location, smaller class sizes, and the ability to interact with faculty. With COVID-19 restricting her summer employment opportunities, this award is helping her complete the final year of her BSc in Neuroscience with no student loans. Having funded her degree herself, the bursaries makes her feel like she has “a family member out there somewhere that’s helping [her] succeed with [her] post-secondary education”. In the coming year, she intends to apply for medical school.

ON BEHALF OF THE RECIPIENTS, OUR REPRESENTATIVE ED BYARD, AND THE UNIVERSITY THANK YOU TO ALL WHO DONATED
According to the latest update from the University, issued on March 19, “based on the current timeline of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in Manitoba, we are optimistically preparing for a return of in-person programming on the UWinipeg’s campus for the 2021 Fall Term”. However, this update reflected the situation when the province was near the trough of a long decline in daily case numbers to less than 25% of the disastrous late fall peak. As we know all too well, this situation changed dramatically in April when case numbers in all provinces began to rise again steeply toward another peak. Manitoba is no exception (see the graph from the Winnipeg Free Press) and we are now beginning another phase of increased restrictions. At the same time, however, the vaccination rate is also increasing and by late summer may well result in the impressive reductions in case numbers seen in UK and US which might permit the University’s hopes to be realized. More information will be included in the Fall Newsletter in early August.
2020 Report of the President

Last spring, the world turned upside down. When Peter C. Blake observed, “We’re not watching a movie; we’re writing one, together, until the end,” I responded, “The movie I would like to write would have us back in fellowship again, enjoying one another’s company, reflecting on issues of the day, and supporting our university and community. We’ll do that in whatever way we can.”

And so we did by meeting remotely, sharing Bill Rannie’s splendid newsletters, and answering appeals from United Way and UW Foundation, ably facilitated by Linda Dietrich and Ed Byard (despite HR office snafus distributing United Way materials).

Being the Covid President hasn’t been all that hard, thanks to the great support UWRA enjoys. Besides Bill, Linda and Ed, we can thank Steve Coppinger, Rayna Rieger, Jane Barske, Bob Young, and my Board colleagues for making it happen.

When it became apparent that we needed to convene by Zoom, Steve recruited Rayna Rieger from the UW Foundation to host our meetings on the Foundation’s Zoom account with Steve as co-host. Indeed, Rayna joined us on her honeymoon for our September meeting!

In her thorough, thoughtful, and gracious way, Jane Barske kept us on track and connected as our parliamentarian, membership records keeper, and communications officer.

In the AGM reports, you will see the important work done by your elected officers – the Board and Pension Trustees. My deep thanks to Debbie Machula for recording our proceedings, to Ed Byard and Murray Wiegand as Pension Trustees and Murray as Treasurer too, and to Jock Lehr for securing speakers for our 2020-2021 program. And special thanks for years of service and farewell to departing Directors Chris Leo and John Friesen.

Last summer, I also bid farewell to Tracey Hilderman and told her how much we had enjoyed her years of warm, efficient, and delicious hospitality at the University Club.

Finally, I want to welcome and thank our new volunteers. We elected Martin Robson as Board member-at-large in December. And Brian McGregor and Judith Huebner volunteered to serve as technical hosts for our 2021 Zoom meetings.

I wish I could also welcome a new Vice-President to replace Jock as he becomes President. But that position remains vacant and Jock and I will fill the gap until we recruit a replacement. We all have busy lives and some of us face health challenges of our own or of family members. But let me plant this seed in the back of your fertile minds. UWRA plays important roles for our membership, our university, and our community. It depends on volunteers to exist. And those who volunteer join the company of other inspiring companions to support our common enterprise. Try to imagine yourself amongst that company. If, down the road, a way clears to spend a few hours a month with us, we’d love to hear from you.

ED. NOTE: AT THE FEBRUARY AGM, NEIL BESNER WAS NOMINATED AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AS VICE-PRESIDENT.

Peter Miller, UWRA President

2020 Report of the Past President & Chair, Nominating Committee

The role of the Past-President of UWRA is to ensure that a slate of candidates is recruited to fill elected UWRA Board positions for the following year. So far, we have been unable to recruit a candidate for Vice-President. The positions of President and Past-President are filled pursuant to Clause 10.2 of our Constitution. The officers in bold, were elected or re-elected to their positions at our December 1st, 2020 General Meeting. The Board Associates are appointed by the Board. Board Directors assume their new positions at the close of our AGM on February 2, 2021. Here is the slate of officers for 2020-2021.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFICER</th>
<th>FROM 2019-2020</th>
<th>APPOINTED TO 2020-2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRESIDENT:</td>
<td>Jock Lehr</td>
<td>APPOINTED BOARD ASSOCIATES:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAST-PRESIDENT:</td>
<td>Peter Miller</td>
<td>SCHOLARSHIP &amp; BURSARIES:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICE-PRESIDENT:</td>
<td>Vacant (Neil Besner - see Ed. Note in President’s Message above)</td>
<td>UNITED WAY OFFICER:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECRETARY:</td>
<td>Debbie Machula</td>
<td>COMMUNICATION OFFICER:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREASURER:</td>
<td>Murray Wiegand</td>
<td>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMBER-AT-LARGE:</td>
<td>Martin Robson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PENSION TRUSTEES:</td>
<td>Murray Wiegand [1st year of 2-year term]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ed Byard [2nd year of 2-year term]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leaving the Board (along with myself) is John Friesen (Member-at-Large and Membership Chair). My thanks to John for his service over the past two years and to Bob Young and Murray Wiegand for their contributions to the work of the Nominating Committee.

Christopher Leo, UWRA Past-President, January 2021
2020 Report of the Vice-President & Chair of the Program Committee

The primary role of the UWRA Vice President is to ensure that members have an interesting and varied roster of guest speakers for our monthly meetings from September to April.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UWRA transitioned from its normal operating procedures to a somewhat modified program schedule for conducting business and holding gatherings. The Board of Directors decided that our meetings would be held remotely, using the Zoom platform, to provide a safer environment for everyone. These meetings were well attended as were the break-out sessions which allowed time to chat with colleagues. Of course, the Meet-and-Greet and Holiday luncheons were put on hold until such time as we could gather again.

We thank each presenter who graciously accepted our invitation. The calendar for 2020-2021:

- **September 15, 2020**  
  ZOOM MEETING  
  Guest Speaker: Greg Thomas “Arctic Tourism”

- **October 6, 2020**  
  ZOOM MEETING  
  Guest Speaker: Tom Carter “Panhandling in Winnipeg”

- **November 3, 2020**  
  ZOOM MEETING  
  Guest Speaker: Fred Headon “Manitoba Railways”

- **December 1, 2020**  
  ZOOM MEETING  
  Guest Speaker: Gail Perry “Winnipeg Terra Cotta Heritage: Buildings of Clay”

- **January 5, 2021**  
  NO MEETING

- **February 2, 2021**  
  ZOOM Annual General Meeting  
  Guest Speaker: Shirley Render "No Place for a Lady: Women in Aviation"

- **March 2, 2021**  
  ZOOM MEETING  
  Guest Speaker: Dr. John Everitt and Elaine Mandrish "Surviving Irma: Life and Near-death in the British Virgin Islands"

- **April 6, 2021**  
  Zoom meeting  
  Guest Speaker: Mark Stroski "The Ancient Art of Feng Shui"

Report from the Treasurer for 2020
14 January, 2021

2020 has been a very unusual year for our association due to the pandemic. Our in-person meetings were limited to two, which reduced our expenditures considerably from previous years. Meeting expenses are typically the major cost incurred by the association.

Revenues were reduced in 2020 from the previous year due to the fact that the two luncheons normally held at the University Club were not held in 2020. The luncheons in 2019 had costs that slightly exceeded revenues, so this was no net loss to the association. Membership dues were up almost $200 from the previous year. Whereas there was a net shortfall in revenues compared to expenses in 2019 of $287.81, there was a surplus in 2020 of $777.58. Obviously, the 2020 experience is not the means by which we want to improve our financial position.

The year’s revenues and expenses are detailed in the Summary Financial Statement attached to this report. A system for verification of the “Toonie Jar” receipts, which was identified as a concern last year, was developed and instituted at the March meeting. I was away for the February meeting.

In an attempt to improve our financial position, which had been deteriorating for some years, a few initiatives were undertaken in 2020. The Association increased dues effective 2020, which had a positive effect on revenues. Also, the University was approached with a request for help. Various administration members were quite amenable to our requests and in the fall, we received confirmation that they will continue to provide a subsidy of 50% of the costs of new life memberships. In addition, they have now agreed to pay our University Club and CURAC dues for a period of 2 years, ending in September 2022. At that point, the subsidies will be revisited. These revenues will appear in the 2021 statement. In my dealings with both the administration and the Foundation, they have shown a great deal of respect for the UWRA and its contribution to the University at large.

The Association maintains an account on deposit with the University, which was originally established to cover printing, postage or similar costs. In late November, there was an erroneous postage charge to that account of $5.18 plus GST which is in the process of being corrected.

I wish to thank the members of the Board and the Board Delegates for their cooperation and support in my efforts.

Respectfully submitted, Murray Wiegand, Treasurer
UWRA Annual Summary Financial Statement 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUES</th>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U of W subsidy for 2019 life memberships</td>
<td>CURAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$550.00</td>
<td>$126.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership fees</td>
<td>Meeting refreshments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,240.00</td>
<td>$431.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURAC</td>
<td>Bank fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$165.00</td>
<td>$42.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Toonie Jar” (Feb., March)</td>
<td>Minister of Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$137.35</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book Plates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member fee refund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wesman Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University Club dues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Revenues            $2,092.35  Total Expenses            $1,314.77
Opening Balance (01 January) $2,057.90
Less expenses             $1,314.77  Uncashed cheques (date 13 Dec.) $300.00
Closing balance           $2,835.48  Total
Plus uncashed cheques     $300.00
Stated bank balance (31 December) $3,135.48

Note 1: fee refund is due to one member paying the life membership twice

Respectfully Submitted, Murray Wiegand, Treasurer

TEN YEAR HISTORICAL COMPARISONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Income</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
<th>Memberships (Life)</th>
<th>In Memoriam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$2,609.00</td>
<td>$2,907.00</td>
<td>154 (60)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$2,974.00</td>
<td>$2,214.42</td>
<td>164 (72)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$1,875.00</td>
<td>$3,195.00</td>
<td>156 (90)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$3,325.00</td>
<td>$3,090.83</td>
<td>154 (90)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$2,655.00</td>
<td>$3,399.66</td>
<td>142 (89)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$3,575.00</td>
<td>$3,362.00</td>
<td>157 (113)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$3,115.00</td>
<td>$3,820.00</td>
<td>165 (128)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$2,345.00</td>
<td>$3,250.44</td>
<td>172 (139)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$2,976.23</td>
<td>$3,264.04</td>
<td>181 (150)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$2,092.35</td>
<td>$1,314.77</td>
<td>186 (157)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Auditor’s Report for the 2020 Financial Year
January 20, 2021

I have reviewed the financial records of the U.W.R.A. and checked them against the CIBC bank statements, deposit slips, cheques, and bills submitted for payment. My review covered the period from January 1 to December 31, 2020. I am able to confirm the accuracy of the financial statement presented today.

Respectfully submitted, Daniel Stone UWRA Auditor
2020 Report of the Member-at-Large and Membership Committee

Obtaining a list of 2020 retirees from Human Resources proved to be somewhat problematic this year. Thanks to the efforts of the President, Peter Miller, and Jane Barske the list was received late in the year. Peter Miller sent a letter to each of the retirees inviting them to become members of the University of Winnipeg Retirees Association. Notification was also received that one person would be retiring on December 31, 2020. The Membership Committee chairman sent an invitation to this person by email.

The 2020 year-end membership statistics, provided by Jane Barske, are included here for information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>Deceased</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honorary Life Members</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Members</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular (Annual) Members</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Members (non-voting)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members as at December 31, 2020</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That constitutes the work of the Membership Committee for the year 2020!

Respectfully submitted, John Friesen, Chair

2020 Scholarship & Bursaries Report

This my second year as Scholarship and Bursaries rep for the UWRA, having inherited the job from Bob Young, who left the fund in excellent shape indeed, and it has continued to thrive.

The UWRA established a Bursary fund in 2011 — this Bursary is intended to encourage and support continuing students with financial need who have completed at least 60 credit hours, and who have a record of volunteerism. The two 2019/20 recipients received awards of $1000 each. After donations from UWRA members in the annual campaign, the fund has a market value of $75K.

The UWRA Scholarship was established in 2010 — it is intended to encourage and support a continuing student who has completed at least 60 credit hours, and who has a record of volunteerism. The 2019/20 recipient received an award of $3000. After donations from UWRA members in the annual campaign, the fund has a market value of $106K.

The UWRA should be proud of the support it provides for the awards described above, but also for their generosity in supporting the annual Campus-wide fundraising campaign. Year by year fully 10% of all the monies raised from all donors were contributed by Retirees — we punch well above our weight!

If you have not yet made a gift and would like to, please contact Cindy Doyle at 204.786.9509 or by email at c.doyle@uwinnipeg.ca.

Submitted by Ed Byard, UWRA Scholarship and Bursary Representative
2020 Report of the Pension Trustees
Submitted by UWRA Pension Trustees Ed Byard and Murray Wiegand

BACKGROUND: The University of Winnipeg Retirees Association (UWRA) is entitled to appoint two Association representatives to serve as Trustees on the University of Winnipeg Trusteed Pension Plan Board of Trustees. Each Pension Trustee shall serve a two-year renewable term, commencing July 1st.

The Board of Trustees, on behalf of all Plan members and beneficiaries, is responsible for all aspects of the operation and administration of the University of Winnipeg Trusteed Pension Plan and Pension Trust Fund for the purpose of providing Plan benefits in accordance with the Plan, the Trust Agreement and applicable legislation, except that the Board cannot change contribution rates or plan eligibility requirements, as these are subject to negotiations with the stakeholders of the Plan. Each trustee has a fiduciary duty to administer the Pension Plan prudently and in the best interest of the Pension Plan and all Plan Members. To that end each trustee also serves on a committee—these committees are advisory to the Board of Trustees, and their general duties are summarized below:

Operations Committee ensures that the governance and operating framework for the Trusteed Pension Plan functions effectively, in accordance with the Board terms of reference and pension plan law. Some activities are: to produce a calendar of deliverables that identifies annual activities that the Board will undertake and to specify committee work and reporting required; to ensure an annual financial audit of the Plan occurs; to develop the annual operating budget for the Board; to develop education plans for trustees and orientation programs for new Trustees; to prepare Plan member communications; to publish an annual report; and to maintain the Plan website.

Defined Benefit Committee is responsible for all aspects of the DB component of the Pension Plan. This includes the examination of alternative investment options that are appropriate to a pension plan that is closed to new members. To this end, recently the Committee has addressed the challenge of the transition to an investment strategy that is more closely aligned with growing liabilities, a steadily declining active member base and the ongoing underfunded position of the DB component.

Defined Contribution Committee is responsible for all aspects of the DC component of the Pension Plan. This includes regular reviews of the investment holdings and asset allocation of the DC component of the Plan and education sessions specifically tailored to DC Plan members regarding investment education and pre-retirement planning.

For a full actuarial report or information regarding the management of the Plan please refer to the Board of Trustees webpage at http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/hr/benefits/pension-trustees.html or https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/hr/benefits/pension.html for information concerning the plan in general.

Of particular interest to UWRA members are the following:

A] Pension Supplement Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)

The University of Winnipeg Trusteed Pension Plan provides for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to be added, usually on July 1, if the Pension Fund earned a net investment return (calculated as the geometric average of four years of returns) that is greater than 6% per annum. The increase payable is the investment return, less 6%, capped by the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the same period. For further explanation of the geometric average calculation please go to http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/hr/benefits/glossary.html#Geometric.

At the time of writing this report, the information regarding a COLA adjustment in the current year is not yet available. Year-end financial reports have not been finalized; thus, the plan actuary does not have the information to calculate the rate of return. Usually, the plan actuary is in a position to recommend if a COLA adjustment is warranted between the end of February and end of March. You will be updated just as soon as the UWRA Trustees have the appropriate recommendation. Note that this COLA adjustment applies only to those members in the Defined Benefit portion of the plan.

B] Pension Plan Financial Statements and Annual Report

The University of Winnipeg Trusteed Pension Plan financial statements and Annual Report from the Board of Trustees for the year ending December 31, 2020 are not as yet available. When they are approved by the Board for publication, they will appear on the University’s Financial Services web site, at http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/financial-services/financial-statements.html, or at the Board of Trustees’ web page under Announcements and Reports where it is called Annual Report. The link is: http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/hr/benefits/pension-trustees.html

In the past year, the UWRA Pension Trustees were:

Ed Byard—He Chairs the Operations Committee, which oversees operational matters of the Pension Plan, including compliance with regulatory requirements and any legal matters that arise. His term ends June 30, 2022.

Murray Wiegand—He serves on the Defined Benefits Committee, which oversees investment decisions of the DB portion of the Pension Plan along with other policy matters, and the Defined Contribution Committee which oversees the operation of the DC plan. His term ends June 30, 2023.
At this stage it is reasonably certain that few members of both the faculty and the administration would know how the unionization of the faculty came about or how the system of Heads of departments was changed to Chairs of departments.

As it turned out, it was on my initiative that both of these developments occurred. Recently in going through my personal “archives”, I found all the supporting documentation for these two developments. Over the years I had meant to turn these documents over to the faculty association so they could be placed for historical purposes in the UWFA archives. But . . . somehow this never happened. And so recently, after contacting Jacqueline Romanow, the UWFA president, I gave all this material to her, and she will arrange to have this properly archived.

These documents, however, to be meaningful, require a historical account of their significance and importance. As such, in addition to the publication of this article, a copy of it will be placed with these documents.

By way of background, I was a Geography professor at the U of W from 1964 till my retirement in 1996. When I became “Head” of the Geography Department in 1967, it troubled me that it was the Dean who appointed me rather than being elected by the members of the department. Moreover, this had been the system ever since the university was founded, and this was the prevailing system in many universities in Canada and the USA. However, a new procedure was emerging in a large number of universities where the department members would elect a Chair for a set number of years, instead of having an administration-appointed Head in office indefinitely “at the pleasure of the Dean and the Board of Regents.”

Being a junior member in the faculty, I somehow had the audacity to draft a resolution on the idea of department members electing a Chair. I then convinced the Heads of seven departments to sign this, and on February 6, 1968 we submitted this resolution to the Senate for its consideration. At its meeting on February 20, after some debate, the Senate appointed a five-person committee, with me as its chair, to examine the procedures for electing department chairs, compile a report and submit it to the Senate.

I then proposed to my committee members that we should conduct a survey of Canadian and American universities on this matter. I drafted a letter for this purpose and with the committee’s approval I proceeded to write to 35 universities in Canada and 125 in the USA. There were responses from 23 in Canada and 73 in the USA, including Harvard, Stanford, Cornell, Rutgers and other high-profile universities. Some of the letters were brief but many were two to three page detailed replies and many included lengthy documents and university regulations.

Our extensive survey revealed that only a minority of universities in both Canada and the USA operated with the traditional position of Department Head. Instead, almost 80 percent in both Canada and the USA had Chairs for a set number of years. The Chairs were elected/appointed in various ways but all had term appointments.

On the basis of this response, I drafted a 19-page report for my committee’s consideration. After a few minor amendments, in October of 1968, we recommended that the provisions of our report be adopted by the Arts and Science Faculty Council, the University Senate, and by the Board of Regents. In due course this was done, with an amendment to elect a Chair for a 5-year term instead of our proposed 3-year term. Unfortunately, I don’t have the exact date, but the provision to elect Chairs was approved in 1968. Interestingly, the University of Manitoba continued with its Heads policy for some years afterwards.

I kept all the letters from the 96 universities and these letters will now be in the UWFA archives, along with our 19-page summation report. Unfortunately, the four members who served on this committee with me have now all departed, leaving me the only survivor. The members who served on this committee with me were Vince Rutherford (History), Walter Swayze (English), Emmett Mulvaney (Economics) and Jack Dixon (French).

As for the unionization of the faculty, this was a far more involved procedure and took almost half a year to accomplish, but we succeeded in this venture – at a time when few universities were unionized.
This process started in September 1980 when I made a comment at a Geography Department meeting that for my next sabbatical leave I would apply for only a half year instead of the usual full year sabbatical. I was then told that the University had rejected the faculty association’s request for half-year sabbaticals. I was astounded to hear this because I distinctly recalled that in the spring of 1978, at a well-attended faculty meeting, there was a unanimous vote to request the administration to enact half-year sabbaticals. However, when the request was submitted to the administration, it was flatly rejected. I didn’t know about this because in early May of 1978, at the beginning of my 1978-79 sabbatical leave, I set out for an 8-month research project in Asia. During that time, I conducted 70 case studies of agricultural operations in 12 countries – from Japan to Afghanistan. Upon my return I wasn’t informed of the administration’s rejection of our half-year sabbatical proposal.

On hearing this news, I pointed out to my colleagues that the University of Manitoba had half-year sabbaticals so why wouldn’t the U of W agree to this. I was then brusquely told, “Yes, but the University of Manitoba faculty are unionized whereas we are not unionized.” And my response was: “Well, if that’s the case we too should get unionized.” One of our members was on our faculty association’s executive and so I asked him to find out if they would agree to conduct a unionization vote. Upon this member’s inquiry he was told that they couldn’t be bothered because they were certain that our members would not go along with this.

At this juncture I decided that I would go from office to office with a petition requesting our faculty association to conduct a unionization vote. The petition was straight forward: “We the undersigned faculty members and professional libraries of the University of Winnipeg, hereby petition the executive of the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association to arrange for a formal faculty unionization vote at the earliest possible date.”

It should be pointed out that by not being unionized, our faculty association at that time was essentially nothing more than a social club. It had no power to intervene on behalf of faculty for increases in salary, promotions, tenure or anything of any real consequence to faculty members.

Going from door to door I explained to my faculty colleagues the advantages of being unionized. I was not unduly surprised that most faculty members were in agreement with me and readily signed my petition. However, a sizeable minority was hesitant or even hostile to such a procedure.

In the course of my petitioning when I went to see Vince Rutherford, the Chair of the History Department, he not only signed but also offered to help me with my project. He then proceeded to sign up members in his department and others nearby.

At the end of two weeks, we contacted all the faculty members, a total of 241 at that time. I signed up 127 members and Vince signed up 36, for a total of 163 or 68% of the faculty. I then presented this petition to the President of our faculty association. To say that he was astounded would be an understatement. He called a meeting of his executive and they immediately contacted the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) for advice on how to conduct an official unionization vote.

CAUT then sent a representative to Winnipeg and he proceeded to instruct us on how to proceed. A faculty member agreeable to unionization would be required to sign a special form and pay $1.00. We formed a unionization committee of ten members with me as the Chair. Each of these members would be responsible for signing up the members from one to three departments. I in turn would be responsible for seven departments, all of which had some members who were opposed to unionization.

In my initial survey I had discovered that some departments were totally supportive while others had one or several members opposed, and in one instance, in the Chemistry department, all 12 members were opposed to unionization. Initially, a lab instructor signed my petition but then refused to sign up officially.

It took about a month to complete the sign-up process. At the end we signed up 188 members or 78% of the faculty. Near the end of November, we submitted all these “ballots” to the Manitoba Labour Board. It took until February 11, 1981 to get a response. They informed us in legalese language “that the Applicant (UWFA) was a union within the meaning of the Act. . . . etc., etc.”

To celebrate the occasion, we held a “Certification Party” on March 6 in the Faculty Club. I was assigned the task of drawing up an appropriate invitation for the members. I chose to draft it in the form of a pompous Queen’s “Proclamation”, saying near the end that “a Great Seal would have been hereunto affixed, if we had had one.” At the party a great time was had by all. Since this “Proclamation” is rather humourous, I have decided to include it in its entirety as an addendum to this article.

Fortunately, I kept all the extensive petition documents and signup sheets as well as a lengthy letter, dated February 23, 1981, from University President Harry Duckworth acknowledging the formation of the union and that “University and UWFA
representatives will meet soon to begin discussions of the first contract.” All these documents will now be stored in the UWFA archives. These documents may be of considerable interest to some of our faculty members.

Shortly thereafter the UWFA executive appointed a five-person negotiation team, consisting of John Coté, John Ryan, Geraldine Sweet, Sandra Zuk, with Claudia Wright as our Chief Negotiator. The University’s negotiation team was composed of John Clake, Stephen Coppinger, Larry Didow, Ross McCormack, Michael McIntyre, and Robert Dick as Chief Negotiator.

Prior to and during our ensuing negotiations our team could always rely on advice from CAUT, especially from Ron Levesque and Howard Snow. Also of great importance to us was legal advice from Mel Myers, an attorney from the law firm Pollock, Nurgitz, Skwark, Bromley & Myers. It was Mel Myers who advised us not to rush any part of our negotiations and to take as long as necessary to get the best possible terms for every aspect of our contract because to try to make changes later is a difficult thing to do.

We relied on Mel’s sage advice and consequently it took almost two years before we concluded our 1982-1984 Collective Agreement, signed on September 16, 1982. We were much rewarded for our perseverance because afterwards a number of our provisions were used as models for faculty associations at other universities.

Once our contract was signed, our negotiating team and faculty members in general made some interesting discoveries. Up until then, when faculty members were hired it was solely the Dean who determined their salaries, and as such faculty members had no idea what the salaries were of their colleagues. We were startled to learn that up until our negotiated agreement the majority of women faculty members were underpaid. But it wasn’t only women who were underpaid. The most egregious case was a male lab instructor in Chemistry who wound up getting a 29 percent salary increase!

Ironically, when I initially came into this person’s office to ask if he would be prepared to sign my petition to form a union, he shouted at me, “Get the hell out of here! I am a professional! I don’t want to be in a damn labour union!” But then, some two years or more later, after our new agreement came into effect, when our first pay cheques with catch-up salaries came, many of us went to a nearby bank to deposit our cheques. While in the line, I noticed that a few persons ahead of me was this Chemistry lab instructor with his heavy catch-up pay cheque! After depositing his cheque, he saw me in line and was visibly startled. A few moments later he nudged my shoulder and said he’d like to talk to me.

He later apologized to me and I recall he said, “I trusted them! I trusted them! That’s why I acted the way I did. Now I will be a staunch union supporter.” Afterwards we became good friends.

After we were unionized there were still some problems for a few members adjusting to the new situation. I suppose it was for this reason that I decided to run for President of the UWFA and so I held that position during 1984-1985. We were extremely fortunate at that time to have Michael McIntyre as Dean of Arts and Science, a position he held from 1982 to 1992. Right from the beginning, Mike had been highly supportive of faculty unionization.

Mike and I had always been good friends and during this year we resolved a number of problems that reflected on our union. I recall one instance when Mike called me to his office and showed me a letter he had received from the chair of the faculty promotion committee. It was a request to the Dean to “confidentially” provide some information to the committee about a faculty member. This was totally contrary to the terms of our collective agreement, which stated that anything the Dean would give to a committee would also have to be given to the faculty member. We then drafted a proper response to this unjustified request.

Afterwards, to try to resolve such problems, I wrote a lengthy editorial in our UWFA newsletter on April 2, 1985, entitled “Living with the Collective Agreement – Whose Responsibility?” In it I pointed out the importance of fully understanding the provisions of the agreement. I concluded by saying “Seeing that the bulk of grievances and problems stem from peer committees, we as UWFA members must assume our share of responsibility for the Collective Agreement. And we must take care that an old Turkish proverb does not become apropos: ‘When the axe came into the forest, the trees said, ‘The handle is one of us.’”

In May of 1984, as President of the UWFA, I attended the annual meeting of the CAUT in Ottawa. A major item of discussion was the high amount of funds that faculty associations in Canada’s universities were paying for legal costs in grievance cases. This was done in alphabetical order so my turn for the University of Winnipeg came near the end. As it turned out, with Mike McIntyre as Dean and Jim Richtik from Geography as the UWFA Grievance Officer, we managed to resolve all grievance issues in a satisfactory manner, without the expenditure of any money for legal action. As such ours was the only university in all of
Canada where the faculty association didn’t spend any money that year on legal costs. This was to the astonishment of all in attendance, and so I then explained how we managed to do this at our university.

At the May 1985 CAUT meeting, however, my efforts to make a change within the CAUT were not successful. Over the years it had troubled me that university professors were somehow agreeable to be called “teachers” instead of professors in their nationwide organization. There is a profound difference between schoolteachers and university professors. It is not a requirement for schoolteachers to engage in research and to publish articles or books on their research. The public at large is generally unaware of this distinction. And as a result, in some quarters there is resentment that schoolteachers get a two-month vacation whereas it would appear that professors get a four-month vacation. In actual fact, professors are entitled to only a one-month vacation while the other three months are to be devoted to research.

This distinction was brought forth dramatically for me while I was President of the UWFA. During the spring of that year Manitoba’s minister of finance at one point publicly derided professors for enjoying a four-month holiday, compared to schoolteachers who get only two months. I then made an appointment to see the minister to clarify this matter. Accompanied by my colleagues Tony Kuz and Reg Skene, we had a lengthy productive meeting with the minister. The minister thanked us for clarifying the situation but then inquired why the national union of professors call themselves the Canadian Association of University Teachers. We were at a loss to explain this to him.

It was shortly after this encounter that I attended the May 1984 annual CAUT meeting in Ottawa. At this meeting I put forward a notice of motion on behalf of the UWFA (agenda item #22) to change the name of the Canadian Association of University Teachers to the Canadian Association of University Professors. Prior to this I had the unanimous approval of the UWFA executive to take this course of action. Right after I put forward this notice of motion I was commended for this action by a number of professors at the meeting, and so I was hopeful that it would be approved at the May 1985 meeting. In preparation for that meeting, I later submitted to the CAUT a detailed three-page rationale for making this name change with the request that this be distributed to all the CAUT delegates at the meeting. This name change rationale was published in the UWFA newsletter on May 1, 1985.

At the CAUT meeting in May of 1985 the detailed rationale I had prepared explaining the benefits of changing the CAUT’s name was circulated as Agenda Item 19A and so members had ample opportunity to read this. In addition, I spoke at length, with additional reasons in support of the change; few spoke against it, some citing costs for new stationery! Yet to my amazement, when the vote came, with a slight majority, the proposal was defeated. And it seems that in the past 35 years no one has tried to reopen the issue. So, till this day, the CAUT helps to perpetuate the idea that professors are simply privileged teachers.

A few years before my retirement I once again conducted a door-to-door petition that was signed by 189 members or 80 percent of the faculty. More would have signed but 20 members were on sabbatical leave and I was able to contact only 4 of them and all 4 signed. This was a petition that Reg Skene, Bruce Daniels and I presented on December 9, 1991 to the University President, Marsha Hanen. This was a petition in objection to the way President Hanen had proceeded to enact some major administrative changes within the University despite strong faculty opposition. This was an important issue, as cited in our petition:

In spite of the fact that the Board of Regents has already approved a resolution proposed by the Futures Committee which would alter the Senior Academic Structure of the University of Winnipeg effective July 1, 1992, we, the undersigned Faculty members, feel strongly that these issues should be reopened and reconsidered. We are unhappy about the way the Futures Report has become “policy” without the Faculty being given an opportunity to register the extent of their opposition to some of its proposals. We particularly object to the provision that there be three Associate Deans to be responsible for subject areas and to the provisions to dismantle the present organizational structure of the office of the Dean of Arts and Science. Because this is not a large university, we would prefer the present functional division within the office of the Dean, modified if necessary, but essentially on the current model which we feel now functions as an effective and efficient unit within the University administration.

A substantial body of the Faculty is opposed to the proposed administrative changes and the method by which they have been affected. In light of this petition, we ask that you now reopen the issue.

In response to this, President Hanen on January 21, 1992 wrote an open letter to all Faculty, but despite its length it skated around our basic concerns and ignored the central thrust of our petition which was the reorganization of the Dean’s office. In conclusion she stated: “Creating a future means, to me, involving everyone, but it does not necessarily mean that everyone will
agree on all matters." As such, it was obvious that she ignored the fact that 80 percent of the Faculty opposed her proposed changes.

And so, on January 30, 1992 I wrote a lengthy rebuttal to the President, pointing out the shortcomings of her communication. I concluded with: "It now appears that on the central issue raised by the petition, you have chosen to disregard our views. We note this with regret. You say that in 'creating a future ... some disagreement is an almost inevitable consequence ...' That's entirely true, but when the disagreement reaches proportions of 80 percent and is then dismissed, I have some concerns about the future. In the spirit of open communications and our own variety of glasnost in our institution, I am taking the liberty of sending copies of this memo to all members of the Faculty.'"

The end result of all this was that the President ignored the views of the vast majority of the Faculty and proceeded to enact all the provisions of her Futures Report, including the highly controversial reorganization of the Dean's office. She surely didn't endear herself to the faculty. I kept all the documents relating to this issue and they are now in the UWFA archives.

In conclusion, the main purpose of this article was to alert faculty members to the fact that now in the UWFA archives there is a collection of all the documents that led to two major significant developments at the University of Winnipeg: first, the changeover from administration-appointed Heads of departments to faculty-elected Chairs, and second, the account of how the faculty association became unionized. I also took the liberty to explain how these changes evolved over the first few years at the University. Also, I dealt with a few other matters. Finally, I extend my apologies for not organizing all this material earlier and getting it into the UWFA archives. But now this is done.

To put faculty unionization in perspective, at present 80 percent of Canadian universities are unionized, compared to only about 20 percent in the USA. However, some prominent Canadian universities are still not unionized, for example, the University of Toronto and McGill.

TO ALL TO WHOM these Presents shall come or whomever the same may in anywise concern, especially Members of the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association.

GREETINGS

A Proclamation

WHEREAS the Manitoba Labour Board, on the 11th day of February, 1981, order and declare that after having "Satisfied itself that the Applicant (UWFA) was a union within the meaning of the Act, and that the majority of the affected Employees were members in good standing of the Applicant union on the date of application, ordered certification to issue"

"WHEREFORE, the Manitoba Labour Board hereby certifies to all parties concerned that the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association is the properly chosen bargaining agent for a unit described as: "see and read full text as per Section 303 of the Act," and such bargaining agent and employer are entitled to exercise the rights conferred upon them and are subject to the provisions of the Act."

AND WHEREAS it is appropriate that those privileges extended to our faculty should be observed by all Members of our Association.

NOW THEREOF YOU that we, the UWFA Collective Bargaining Committee, by this our Proclamation declare and direct the 11th day of February, 1981, to be known as "Certification Day" from sea to sea.

AND WE DO HEREBY declare and invite all Members and Friends of the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association to a "Certification Party" to be held at the Faculty Club, Wesley Hall, on Friday the 5th day of March, 1981, beginning circa 7:30 p.m. and lasting until the last Member shall leave. It is known that to add to the movement to the war will be open for cash sales and that an open bar will be forthcoming. Although any corner of $1.50 was to be served will be served until the last person will be served to attend the party (or 45 for a couple), which will cover Oak rental, staff and staff costs. The fee may be less if large numbers of Members indicate they will attend.

Note: The UWFA further advised that whether or not you are a member of the Faculty, O.K. you are welcome to attend the Certification Party.

OF ALL WHICH Our Members and all others whom these Presents may concern are hereby required to take notice and to govern themselves accordingly.

ALSO BE IT KNOWN that hallowed guests at the Certification Party will be: Ken Levran, Howard Snow, and Mel Meyers — our Honorary Members of the Association.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, we, the Collective Bargaining Committee, have certified this Memo to be made Public and to be circulated to all Members and Friends of the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association, and a Great Seal shall be put hereto after it has been sealed.

AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT AND AN ADVICE, perhaps it should be made known that no member of the Collective Bargaining Committee or its counsel or any member of the Association solely or jointly, is to attend the Certification Party, or any other similar party.

NOTWITHSTANDING ANYTHING SAID HERETOFORE, it is advised that all is an invitation to a Certification Party, and that should be great fun — please plan to attend.

Note: It is essential for us to have a reasonable estimate of attendance so we may determine the size of the rental space and the quantity of printed and other paraphernalia to be available. Please telephone, write or telephone for John Ryan at ext. 36B or 947 1960, or contact any member of the Collective Bargaining Committee.
The Frisbee was invented by optometrist Dr. Walter Morrison who had begun experimenting with pie lids and cake pans in 1937. Morrison originally called it the “Whirlo-Way”, then the “Flyin-Saucer”, and finally the “Pluto Platter”. After acquiring the marketing rights in 1957, the Wham-O Company changed the name to Frisbee, after a defunct Connecticut bakery, the Frisbie Pie Company, whose empty pie tins were being used by New England college students. Morrison himself thought it was a horrible name but the company sold hundreds of millions of them and the name Frisbee has become synonymous for all copy-cats in the fashion of other generic items like Kleenex, Xerox, Scotch tape, etc. Morrison died in 2010 at 90. Oddly, he and his wife married and divorced each other twice.

In 1968, the casual recreational use of Frisbees, often associated with the counter-culture, evolved into the sport of Ultimate Frisbee, more commonly simply called Ultimate. According to the Manitoba Organization of Disc Sports (MODS), Ultimate is played in more than 80 countries by 7 million people; in 2015, Canada was ranked #2 out of 44 countries. Ultimate was recognized by the IOC as eligible for inclusion in the 2024 Olympics but was rejected by the Paris Organizing Committee in favour of such peculiar alternatives as break dancing, skate boarding, sport climbing, and surfing. It is more likely to be included in the 2028 Los Angeles games because of the strong history of disc sports in the US, and particularly California.
1816 – “THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER”

The “summer” of 1816 was a remarkable one – remarkable because it seemed like it almost didn’t occur. Snow fell in New England in June with drifts up to two feet deep and people went sleighing as far south as Virginia. Water froze in cisterns in Virginia and birds froze to death in Montreal. Frost in all summer months destroyed crops throughout eastern US and Canada. Historians have suggested that the severe summer may have caused the major migration out of New England to the territories of Indiana and Illinois. In Europe, the cold, extremely wet weather led to widespread failure of corn and wheat crops, famine, food riots, and one of the worst typhus epidemics in history. In Ireland, it rained non-stop for 8 weeks, the potato crop failed, and thousands died from starvation or typhus. In China, unseasonably cold, wet weather killed trees, rice, even water buffalo, caused floods, and produced widespread severe famine. Northwestern University historian John Post called it “The Last Great Subsistence Crisis in the Western World” in his book of that title and it has come to be known as the “YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER”.

The cause of all this misery was the massive eruption of Mt. Tambora, Indonesia, the year before, probably tied with Santorini as the largest volcanic eruptions in recorded human history; they both expelled c. 100-150 km$^3$ of rock, compared with Krakatoa (1883) which lost c. 18 km$^3$, Pinatubo in Philippines (1991) c. 10 km$^3$, Vesuvius (AD 79) only c. 3 km$^3$, and Mt. St. Helens Washington (1980) a mere 1 km$^3$. The main eruption occurred on April 10, 1815, when the top third (1,500 m) of the mountain was blown away creating a caldera 6 km across. The original blast, pyroclastic (ash) flows, and tsunamis killed more than 10,000 people and destroyed the homes of more than 35,000. As many as 80,000 more people in the region are thought to have died from subsequent disease and famine. The sound of the explosion may have been heard as far as 2500 km away.

The eruption column of ash, dust, and sulphur dioxide reached 44 km high, well into the stratosphere, and began to spread around the world, eventually casting a pall over most of the globe. Spectacular sunsets occurred as far away as London and it has been argued that the dramatic skies in paintings of the time recorded these sunsets and other atmospheric effects caused by the ash. It has also been suggested that the cold, dismal summer and enforced holiday confinement of Mary Shelley with Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron on Lake Geneva contributed to her writing of Frankenstein and may have created the environmental inspiration for Byron’s apocalyptic poem Darkness which described a world suffering from an extinguished sun, cold, and famine. Eventually the entire planet experienced a drop in temperatures and in many regions, extreme precipitation. In Geneva, Paris and Boston, June-August temperatures averaged 2-3°C cooler than the 1799-1821 reference period; the first decades of the 19th C were already experiencing cool temperatures but most of the 1816 cooling was attributable to Tambora. There is a large literature (both academic and popular) about this summer, much of which is easily accessed through Google.

Tambora is not the only volcanic eruption that produced a miserable summer. Krakatoa (Indonesia) in 1883 had widespread climatic effects and within our own time, the 1982 eruption of El Chichon, Mexico, cooled the Northern Hemisphere by about 0.4°C. The most notable recent climatically-relevant eruption was Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991. Although 10-15 times smaller than Tambora, Pinatubo still produced a memorably cold wet summer in the Northern Hemisphere in 1992. In the US, it was the third coldest and third wettest in 77 years, particularly on the Great Plains, and the conditions extended into the Canadian Prairies.

Eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, 1991
Watermelons are the quintessential summer fare. From their original versions in Africa (5,000-year-old seeds have been identified from Egypt), more than 1200 varieties have evolved - seeded or seedless, red, yellow or even the Cream of Saskatchewan variety brought to Saskatchewan by Russian immigrants, shaped in the normal oval or as cubes (developed in Japan and grown in glass boxes to make them fit into refrigerators better) or even as hearts. They vary in size from the cute little cantaloupe-sized individual servings to the Guinness World Record 159 kg giant. China is the world’s largest producer of watermelons (60%), followed by Turkey, Iran, United States, and Egypt.

Although watermelons are 92% water, they are surprisingly nutritious with significant quantities of Vitamins A and C. They are also high in anti-oxidants, amino acids, and particularly lycopene which has been linked to heart and bone health, prostate cancer prevention, has anti-inflammatory properties, and has been said to increase libido and produce Viagra-like effects.

The Eiffel Tower in Paris grows about 6 inches taller in the summer due to heat.

The ‘Dog Days of Summer’, from July 3rd to August 11th, get their name from the Dog Star Sirius in the constellation Canis Major which the Greeks blamed for the extreme heat and drought of the summer.

Americans reportedly eat 150 million hot dogs on July 4, enough to stretch from Washington DC to Los Angeles five times. From Memorial Day to Labour Day, they consume 7 billion hot dogs, enough for 230 more trips from Washington to LA!

Dominion Day was renamed Canada Day in 1982 via a private member’s bill originally introduced two years earlier. The bill passed unanimously, a deceptive degree of parliamentary agreement since only five Members were present for the vote. After a more contentious voyage through the Senate, Royal Assent was finally granted on October 27, 1982.

A section of Rouge Road in west Winnipeg was given the honorary name SLURPEE WAY in 2018, in recognition of Winnipeg’s 19th consecutive year with the title Slurpee Capital of the World. The designation was renewed for two years in 2020.

Canada’s warmest month occurs when Earth is furthest away from the sun (on July 5 in 2021).

Winnipeg’s highest recorded temperature since records began in 1873 was 42.2°C on July 11, 1936; the highest in Manitoba was 44.4°C in Emerson and St. Alban’s also on July 11, 1936. The highest in Canada was 45.0°C on July 5, 1937, in Midale and Yellow Grass, Saskatchewan.