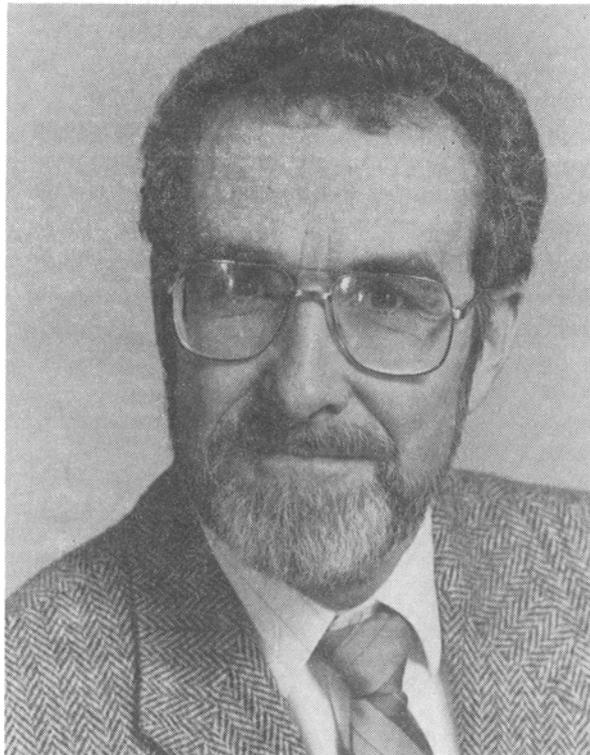


## John Badertscher Religious Studies Department

John Badertscher is proud to have spent 26 years at The University of Winnipeg, taking part in "a grand and worthy experiment in education that's publicly funded, affordable and accessible, without sacrificing academic excellence."

The American-born and educated professor of religious studies goes on to say that, if the experiment has failed in some senses, it has been a failure of political will and of the University's ability to "communicate adequately the public value of what we're doing here." Badertscher, who served on both the University Senate and the Board of Regents, admits it is difficult to retire in these "unsettling times," when the vision of the University's future and direction is unclear. However, he intends to remain a vocal advocate of liberal arts education and of this University.

It is also difficult to give up teaching: "I've always felt a little guilty for collecting a paycheque for having so much fun," he laughs. (He's quick to add that he always managed to swallow the guilt long enough to cash the cheques.) He notes that he



*John Badertscher derives his greatest pleasure from meeting up with former students and learning what contributions they are making to society.*

derives his greatest pleasure from meeting up with former students and learning what contributions they are making to society.

In addition to providing support to his wife, a United Church minister, Badertscher will continue his work in the political realm in his retirement. A large part of that work is with the United Church of Canada's Political Action Committee, a network of lay people and clergy, each of whom maintains contact with one elected official at either the provincial or federal level. The committee's work goes beyond lobbying efforts and lets politicians know their service is valued.

"We offer support and express our concern for those in political office, and let them know we appreciate their willingness to be a part of the political process."

## Long Service Employees

Congratulations to the following, who have served The University of Winnipeg for 25 years:

George Addis  
Larry Didow  
Brian Keenan  
Harold King  
Terry Morton  
Dennis Noble  
Geoffrey Scott  
John Ting

Contact with a former student and a former colleague who both went on to become Members of Parliament made him aware of the difficulties and sense of personal abandonment our elected officials face, Badertscher says.

"One of the biggest crises in Manitoba and Canada is the quality of the political climate and the general disdain for political process and for those who participate in it."

He blames the growth of this "toxic atmosphere" on the technologically-oriented expectations our society has developed. "We expect to have things under control, and that things that aren't working can be fixed. Politics doesn't work like that."

Neither, he thinks, should universities. "There is a temptation for universities to become fixated on technology," he asserts, adding he believes that can lead to a narrowing of people's perspective. "It's an important dimension of human existence, but political, artistic and contemplative aspects are equally important."

It is in those multiple dimensions of human understanding that Badertscher is proud to have served, and where he believes the strength of The University of Winnipeg lies.

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## Dennis Noble

### Theatre and Drama Department

Although he finished teaching in December, Dennis Noble doesn't feel like he is retired yet. "Right now this is like another short sabbatical," he says.

Noble spent 25 years teaching playwriting, directing, acting and theatre history at The University of Winnipeg. In that time, he has seen the University grow significantly. "When I first started, Theatre was a division of the English Department so we were teaching both English and Theatre courses," he recalls.

Noble doesn't expect the reality of retirement to hit him until September when he and his wife Sharon head off to Europe. "We're having our sailboat shipped to Ireland," he explains, adding that the couple plan to spend a year sailing around the Emerald Isle, where they both have family ties, and then three or four years sailing around the Mediterranean. "We're going to see if we can sail it back (to North America), and then we hope to sail through the Panama Canal and up the West Coast."

He acknowledges that their plans will involve a major lifestyle change: "We're moving from a 3000-square-foot house in Tuxedo to a 30-foot Nonsuch."

Despite the Winnipeg weather, Noble says he enjoyed his years here. "The University of Winnipeg was very good to me and I'll go away with a lot of fond memories."

His fondest memories are of the university-wide theatre productions he directed in the late 1970s and early 1980s. "Those productions are still alive for me," says Noble. "I can still see them in my mind's eye. It was hard, hard work, but it was enormously rewarding."

Back then students from any discipline at the University could audition for a role. "Since you weren't limited to a certain class, you had such variety," he notes, citing Moliere's "The Imaginary Invalid" as his favourite production.

Noble says the students were the most rewarding part of his job. "Every once in awhile you'll get someone who is intensely interested in what information you can give them," he observes. "You might have one student every two years who reminds you why you're here and why what you do is valuable."

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## Terry Morton

### Physical Plant

If carpenter Terry Morton had known retirement was this good, he would have retired years ago. "I never thought it could be as good as this," he declares. "We just had two months in Europe. We missed the blizzard and the flood."

Morton began working for The University of Winnipeg in 1972, two years after he left his native Leeds in the north of England to immigrate to Canada. "I didn't think I'd be at the University for 25 years," he concedes. "I thought I'd be here 12 months. But we had a good crew and a lot of fun so I stayed."

Morton didn't just see a lot of changes in his years at the University; he helped make them. His job included moving departments to different locations. Morton can reel off a long list of departmental moves that make the campus sound like a desert inhabited by a vast array of nomadic tribes.

For instance, he remembers moving the library from the Bryce Hall basement to its current rooftop location in Centennial Hall and shifting Athletic Services from the north-east corner of the Riddell Hall basement to the mezzanine of Graham Hall and finally to its current home in Duckworth Centre.

"These were absolutely significant changes in those days," he recalls. "Everybody was so excited."

Even when he wasn't moving departments around, Morton felt the repercussions of change. His job as the campus Mr. Fix-It slowed down after the closure of the Sparling and Graham Hall residences. "The residences kept us hopping," he says, adding that he repaired a constant stream of broken glass and closet doors. "Every weekend there were breakages. It was just kids growing up."

Morton enjoyed his years at the University. "We had year-round employment, healthy working conditions, and four or five good places to eat on or off campus," he observes. "It was a super place to work."

Retirement, however, holds far more attractive charms—time to indulge in his favourite pastimes, golfing and gardening, and the opportunity to follow the sun south in wintertime.

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*in edition* is printed on recycled paper. After you have finished with this issue, please pass it on to a friend.

## Brent Stearns

### Department of Philosophy

Brent Stearns recalls being disconcerted by “the ocean of snow and the vast flat prairie” that greeted him when he arrived in Winnipeg in March of 1970 for an interview with our Philosophy Department. Stearns, whose teaching position at Drury College in Missouri was coming to an end, was encouraged by his friend Albert Moorman to apply at The University of Winnipeg. Despite the bleak landscape, Stearns felt that coming to Canada was “an attractive idea.”

However, the transition wasn't as easy as he had expected. Stearns was surprised, he remembers, at how great the differences were between Canada and the United States. Even teaching Canadian students required an adjustment, and he was “somewhat in the dark” about Canadian political history and social culture. “I had some difficulty, especially teaching social political philosophy.”

And of course, shortly after his arrival, the October Crisis in Quebec erupted. “I remember Walt Stein standing up at a meeting and reading the FLQ Manifesto, which had been banned,” Stearns recalls. “The whole affair raised some serious questions about civil liberties.”

Those events motivated Stearns to join the Manitoba Civil Liberties Association in the early 1970s. Later, he would become involved with the Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties and serve as MARL's president in the 1980s.

Stearns was impressed from the onset with the climate at The University of Winnipeg: “There was a great deal of job security here, even for the untenured. I thought there was a lot of fairness in the way faculty were treated, and was impressed that something like 96 per cent of the faculty voluntarily belonged to the faculty association and paid their dues.” He goes on to say that he feels the University has operated smoothly during his years here: “A lot of credit has to go to the various administrations over the years who have protected the faculty from political interference and economic insecurity.”

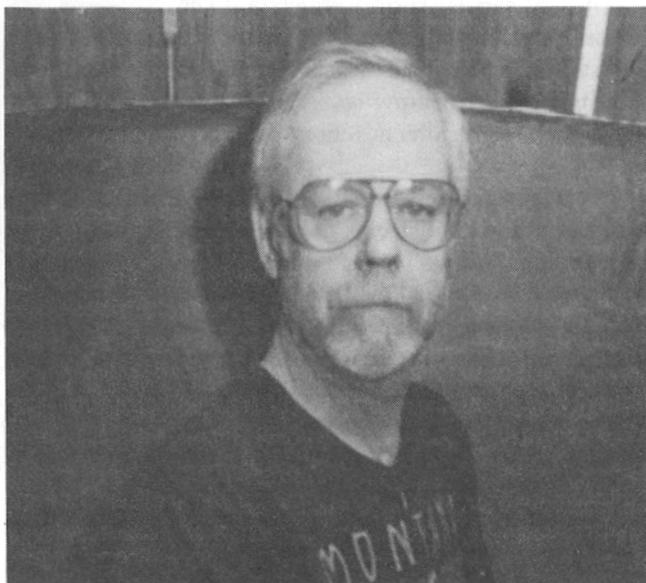
Stearns says he'll miss his faculty colleagues most, but he certainly has no intention of pining away. “I see retirement as something of a career change, a chance to follow my desires and try out new things.”

His immediate plans include coordinating a Folklorama pavillion (a time consuming job that involves arranging for 8,000 perogies, 6,000 cabbage rolls and a few performers) and polishing his skills on some musical instruments. As well, the Manitoba Historical Society has asked him to chair their program committee.

“I'm afraid all my time is going to be commandeered very quickly,” he acknowledges, “but I look forward to doing these things.”

## Gavin Baird

### Technical Support Services



*Now that he's "retired," Gavin Baird continues to work as a consultant, designing and building equipment for the National Research Council*

Gavin Baird remembers well his first project at the University, begun on his first day on the job in 1975: “It was a huge project for [psychology professor] Dave Humphries. I had to build a five-axis display mechanism for projecting images of his drug-induced cats.”

Humphries, Baird explains, was conducting research into the function of the cats' brains.

Baird will tell you there was no manual or blueprint for devising that equipment, or for the many, many other pieces of research equipment he was called on to create in his 22 years as a machinist-technician in Technical Support Services. “That's what made the job interesting. Everything I did was new.”

Baird came to the University well-prepared for these challenges. He had a diverse background in business, tool and die making and machine design, and had studied engineering at the University of Manitoba.

Now that he's “retired,” he continues to work as a consultant, designing and building equipment for the National Research Council. As well, his rare talents have led him to open a business constructing guitars and mandolins, primarily on a commission basis for performers.

Following a gathering in Baird's honour, arranged by his colleagues upon his retirement in March, Baird wrote the following in his letter of thanks: “I can only say that the interaction with each one [of you] has formed a permanent part of my life's experience that will always be a cherished part of my memories .... My sincerest thanks for a wonderful exchange, both from work as well as a personal point of view. I will definitely miss both.”

## Victor Batzel History Department

After 35 years as a History Professor at The University of Winnipeg, Vic Batzel admits, "I'm still trying to decide what the hell I'm going to be when I grow up." He plans to continue the search after he retires in December.

A Minnesota native and self-described "historian of the English experience," Batzel began teaching British and Russian history here in the fall of 1962. Back then, incoming first-year students had to undergo a mandatory physical examination. Batzel was expected to collect their urine samples. "That should have been a warning to me that my career here would be a bit offbeat," he says.

Over his years at the University, Batzel has found himself working on an eclectic mix of projects.

Back in the socially active days of Ross McCormack's vice-presidency in the late '80s, Batzel was among the faculty members involved with "Our Children and the Community," a joint project of The University of Winnipeg, Red River Community College, and the Catholic University of Lima. Funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, the project shared the expertise of University child care staff with Peruvian teacher coordinators, who in turn trained volunteer child care workers.

"I ended up down in Peru," says Batzel. "A historian



*Over his years at the University, Vic Batzel found himself working on an eclectic mix of projects.*

getting involved with child care, how much more logical can you get?"

In 1990 he teamed up with Ilya Gerol, a syndicated columnist on world affairs and visiting professor at The University of Winnipeg, to organize "Cracking the Barrier: A Conference on Soviet and East European Trade." The day-long event attracted trade representatives from Bulgaria, the former Czechoslovakia, Poland—and both the Soviet Union and Ukraine, which "posed just a bit of a diplomatic problem." Batzel hoped the conference would lead to the establishment of an inter-

national trade centre affiliated with the University, but that didn't happen.

Teaching a history and music course for senior citizens led to Batzel's involvement with Harry Strub's Virtuosi series, for which he writes the program notes. He plans to continue this work into his retirement.

Adds Batzel: "I've always tried to get involved with things other than history, and other than the University." Although he had no background in soccer or coaching, he got roped into being a soccer coach when his children were growing up. Now he's the vice-president of the Canadian Soccer Association.

Reflecting on his impending retirement, Batzel says he will miss the students the most. "For the last couple of years, we've had first-rate kids," he reports. "It would be easier to leave if they had been a bunch of deadheads."

He is particularly impressed with the current History Students' Association. "It's one of the most active, interesting groups of people we've had in decades," he says. "They're just fun to be with."

Although he is bidding farewell to his University of Winnipeg career, Batzel isn't saying good-bye to history. "I'm a historian and I'll continue to be one," he concludes. "You don't stop when you walk out the door."

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## Letter to the Editor

*The month of April '96 will remain in the recesses of my mind and heart for the rest of my life. I have lived on Glenwood Crescent on the Red River for 17 years; spring would come and go with the usual excitement of the ice breaking up and the river flowing once again. But never before have I experienced the threat of a flood. With the Flood of the Century upon us, Manitobans joined together to fight the enemy. The unconditional support of individuals and organizations was heartfelt.*

*I would like to express my appreciation to The University of Winnipeg's administration for their compassion during this difficult and trying time. It was comforting to know that I was supported and encouraged to protect my home.*

*I would also like to extend a warm thank you to my colleagues at the Division of Continuing Education. The sandbags were arriving and I was recruiting volunteers to build a dike—my colleagues were there for me and my family and I will never forget their support. Thanks from the bottom of my heart.*

Barbara L. Hirose  
Continuing Education Division

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The University of Winnipeg wishes all the best to the following retirees, who could not be reached or declined to be interviewed for this publication:

Robert Adie, Political Science Department  
Timothy Ball, Geography Department  
Barrie Noonan, Psychology Department  
James Richtik, Geography Department