

LIVEWIRE

CBC PNA ONTARIO REGION

TALES FROM THE TRENCHES: AN EFFORT TO PRESERVE THE STORIES OF THE CBC

LEGACY INTERVIEWS IS A PILOT PROJECT TO TELL THE HISTORY OF OUR WORK

BY SUSAN HELWIG

A small group of PNA members has been taking first steps towards creating a new oral history project: to tell the history of the CBC through interviews with former employees. Who better to ask than the people who spent their working lives in radio and television?

Continued...



COUNTERSPIN | CANADA: A PEOPLE'S HISTORY | CHORAL CONCERT | RICHARDSON'S ROUNDUP | THE DEAD DOG CAFÉ
COMEDY HOUR | MY PLAYLIST | MORNINGSIDE | STREET LEGAL | THE TRANSCONTINENTAL | BETWEEN THE COVERS
C'EST LA VIE | SATURDAY AFTERNOON AT THE OPERA | UNDER THE UMBRELLA TREE | THE WORLD THIS HOUR
AFGHANADA | KIM'S CONVENIENCE | NATIONAL FARM RADIO FORUM | SATURDAY NIGHT BLUES | THE FRIENDLY GIANT
SOUND ADVICE | SUNDAY MORNING | QUIRKS & QUARKS | LAUGH OUT LOUD | JAZZ BEAT | TALKING BOOKS
THE INSIDE TRACK | GILMOUR'S ALBUMS | MURDOCH MYSTERIES | AS IT HAPPENS | DISCDRIVE | MIDDAY
THE HAPPY GANG | COMMENTARY | LITTLE MOSQUE ON THE PRAIRIE | IN CONCERT | THE RICK MERCER REPORT | TONIC
MR. DRESSUP | HOME FIRES | 90 MINUTES LIVE | DISPATCHES | THE BEACHCOMBERS | CANADA READS
BARONESS VON SKETCH SHOW | IDEAS | FINKLEMAN'S 45'S | THE VINYL CAFÉ | THE NATURE OF THINGS | WIRETAP
IN PERFORMANCE | THE JOURNAL | CODCO | KING OF KENSINGTON | BUNNY WATSON | DOC ZONE | DA VINCI'S INQUEST
DOUBLE EXPOSURE | WORLD REPORT | ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FARCE | THE NEXT CHAPTER | FRAGGLE ROCK
THE SUNDAY EDITION | JUST FOR LAUGHS | THE MEDICINE SHOW | THE RED GREEN SHOW | BASIC BLACK
THIS COUNTRY IN THE MORNING | THE AGE OF PERSUASION | DEFINITELY NOT THE OPERA | THE CURRENT
À PROPOS | THE WORLD AT SIX | WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

We have lived through momentous times, as world events and technological progress have changed our lives. Our stories matter, and they will be of interest to others, today and in future generations.

How would this work? Legacy Interviews proposes to start small, with a pilot project to complete audio interviews with ten PNA members from a range of different backgrounds, in radio and television, including news, sports, music, drama, technical production, and leadership.

This is a volunteer effort. The PNA has many members with professional expertise as researchers, producers, interviewers, librarians, managers, and technicians. We're asking for your help.

So far, this project has been met with enthusiasm. We tested the idea by asking a number of retirees, some of them prominent public figures, whether they would agree to be interviewed. Everyone said yes. It seems clear that PNA members want to share their stories. They like the idea of leaving a recorded legacy for future generations.

Based on that enthusiasm, and some research, we are considering these parameters for the first ten interviews:

Continued...

Livewire is the Ontario Region newsletter of the PNA



**The CBC Pensioners
National Association**

Preserving our Future, Sharing our Past

**L'Association nationale
des retraités de la SRC**

Assurer notre avenir, partager notre passé

Editor – Talin Vartanian

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Contributors – Gail Carducci, Leone Earls, James Hay, Susan Helwig, Paul Kennedy, Lise Lareau, Frank Quinn, Barbara Saxberg, Talin Vartanian

Feedback and ideas are welcome. Write to pnalivewire@gmail.com

- Audio recordings only, to start.
- Initially, interviews would become the property of the PNA, to be used for Livewire, or the national newsletter Contact, or posted on our website.
- In future, the Legacy Interview collection would reside at an established university or government archives, with an interest in making them available for future generations.
- With success, this is an idea we can share with colleagues across the country.

We have received advice and support from Ira Basen, Gail Carducci, Jeffrey Dvorkin, Paul Kennedy, Lise Lareau, Talin Vartanian, and Bob Waller. We need people with a range of experience. We'd also like to hear from anyone who'd like to be interviewed about their own career at the CBC.

With your help, this project can evolve. If you're interested, please write to pنالivewire@gmail.com, with "Legacy Interviews" in the subject line.

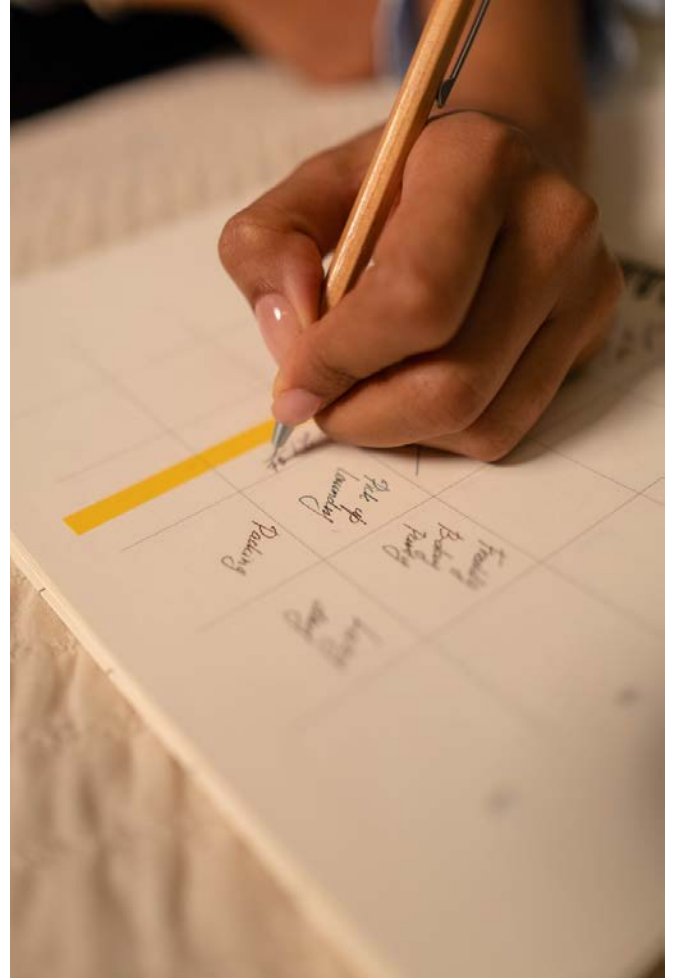
SAVE THE DATES!

Wednesday, October 4th - 1 p.m.,
Toronto get-together, Noonan's Pub, 141
Danforth Ave.

Friday, October 6th - Deadline to
register for PNA Ontario Region AGM,
email ontario@cbcpensioners.ca (see
page 10 for details)

Wednesday, October 11th - PNA
Ontario Region Annual General Meeting
via Zoom, guest speaker Dan Oldfield
for Q&A on pension surplus (see page 10
for details)

Continued...



SAVE THE DATES, CONTINUED...

Wednesday, November 29th – Golden Horseshoe holiday Lunch at the Burlington Convention Centre, reception at 11 a.m., lunch at noon, oodles of prizes, tickets on sale in late September

Thursday, November 30th – Deadline to confirm you’re coming to the Toronto holiday lunch (see page 29 for details)

Saturday, December 2nd – 12 noon, Toronto holiday lunch at the Bier Markt, 58 The Esplanade (see page 29 for details)

Saturday, December 2nd – Southwestern Ontario holiday dinner at the Giovanni Caboto Club in Windsor, reception at 4 p.m., dinner at 6.

BY THE NUMBERS

BY JAMES HAY

Total pensioners: 10,252

Total deferred pensioners: 2,173

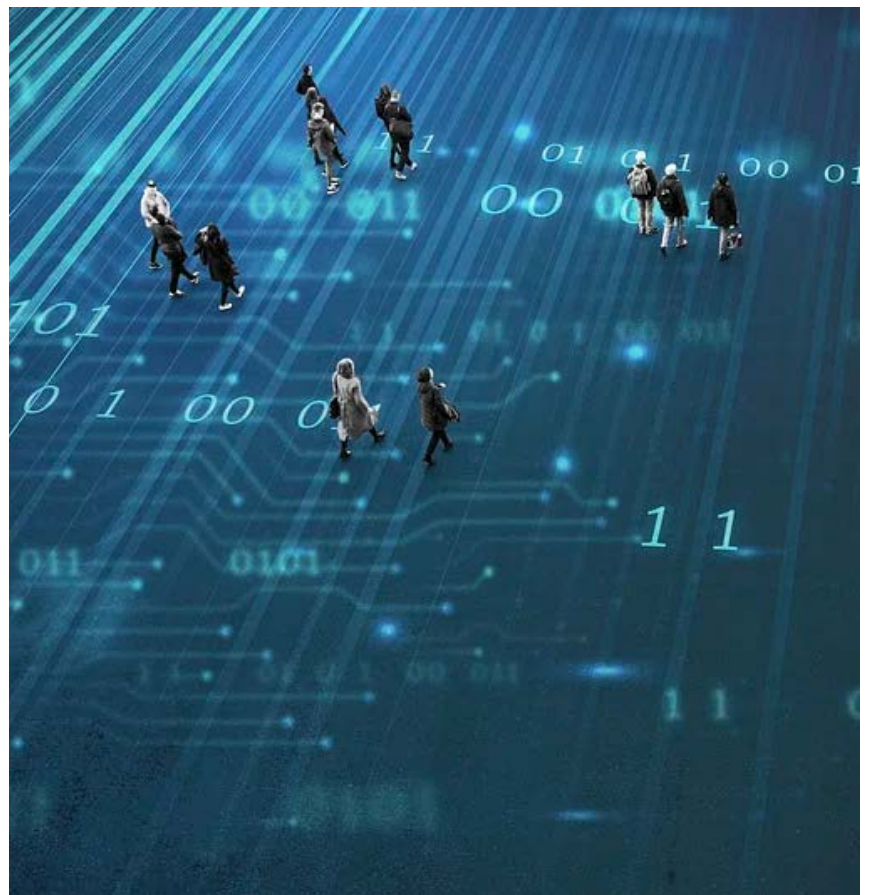
Average age of CBC pensioners, at retirement: 61.7

Number of CBC pensioners who are centenarians: 18

Number of CBC pensioners who are nonagenarians: 692

Longest pension paid to a CBC pensioner: more than 55 years

Statistics from the most recent CBC Pension Financial Overview (2022)



IS THE CHEQUE IN THE MAIL? AN UPDATE ON OUR SHARE OF THE CBC PENSION SURPLUS

BY DAN OLDFIELD

We've been assured that the CBC's Pension Administration Centre (PAC) is doing the necessary work to generate payment to retirees and employees before the end of the year. The math is complicated. It involves calculations for more than 20,000 contributors, and the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions must approve the process.

While we had hoped that the deadline of October 1 in our Memorandum of Agreement could be met, that now seems unlikely.

Pensioners, employees, surviving spouses, and deferred pensioners are eligible for a payout of the pension surplus. The amount each person receives will be based on a percentage of their total contributions, with interest. Eligible surviving spouses will receive 60% of the retiree's contributions.



There will be tax implications. Anyone with room in an RRSP will be able to shelter the money there. Whether the amount will be before or after minimum taxes are deducted is yet to be determined. In circumstances where retirees and employees do not have available RRSP room, the CBC will be obligated to deduct minimum taxes from each cheque, at these rates:

- 10% (5% for Quebec) on amounts up to and including \$5,000
- 20% (10% for Quebec) on amounts over \$5,000 up to and including \$15,000
- 30% (15% for Quebec) on amounts over \$15,000

If you have other specific tax questions, please consult a financial advisor. Our commitment is to keep you informed of further details as they become available.

MEET A MEMBER: DITA VADRON

BY TALIN VARTANIAN



CBC Radio producer Dita Vadron, in the early 1970s (CBC photo, courtesy of Dita Vadron)

In the summer of 1958, when she was 26, Dita Vadron had yet to decide what to do with her life. Fate intervened and decided for her.

At a small gathering one evening, she met an interesting man named Harry J. Boyle. It was a chance encounter that led Vadron to a career in public broadcasting, one that enriched her life for more than four decades.

She later learned that Boyle—who was ahead of his time in employing a mix of interesting people at the CBC—had a policy of hiring no one who was born in Toronto. Vadron’s birthplace is Vienna.

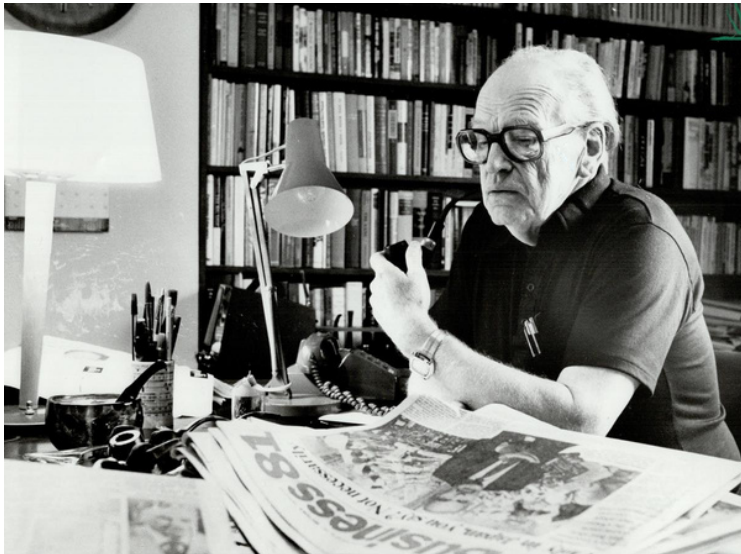
“He said to me that he’d get in touch with me, and I thought it was the usual—a middle-aged man and young woman. A couple of days later I got a call from his secretary, and we had a talk at the Celebrity Club which, in those days, was quite elegant,” Vadron recalls. “A few days later, I was hired as a tape editor.” (An aside: At the time, the Celebrity Club was in a Jarvis Street mansion, and later became the Red Lion Pub. Both were favourite haunts for CBC Radio employees, who worked across the street.)

When she protested that she had never edited tape before, Boyle replied that it wasn’t an issue “because women learn that sort of thing very quickly.” Vadron says that was her “favourite sexist remark.”

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She was, in fact, a quick study: marking the magnetic tape with a grease pencil, positioning it on an editing bar, and slicing with a single-edged razor blade.

Vadron's CBC career began with *Assignment*, a one-hour program that followed the evening radio news. She edited contributions from all over Canada and around the world, a task she performed so well that she was promoted to producer. A few years later, Boyle created *Project*, an hour-long documentary



The late Harry J. Boyle, CBC Radio visionary, and later vice chair of the CRTC (Image from Toronto Public Library Archives)

program, and Vadron became one of two producers working with a stable of freelancers who traveled to collect stories. In 1968, she was asked to produce a special broadcast called *Talk-In*. It was a high-impact, high-profile, five-part series about the future of Canada, capitalizing on the success of Montreal's Expo '67. Each segment was recorded before a packed audience at York University.

Talk-In caught the ear of CRTC Chair Pierre Juneau. The program

was another Boyle brainwave, and it led to his appointment as vice-chair of the regulatory agency. In 1975, Boyle succeeded Juneau as head of the CRTC.

She missed her mentor: "Harry was very good to me. He was the kind of boss, you could storm into his office and say, 'You know what that guy did?' and he would say, 'Simmer down, simmer down.' He would never not back me up. Never."

Radio was her first and only passion. Vadron didn't even own a television early in her career, and she says radio producers in every department—news, talk programs, public affairs, music, farming—tried to get as much airtime as possible,

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and fiercely guarded their turf. One of her most vivid memories was of sneaking from time to time into a big production studio, and standing quietly on the steps as Esse Ljungh, the Swede who headed Radio Drama, worked his magic. She is saddened that the CBC Radio no longer produces drama.

Vadron became a well-established and well-respected producer who made her mark. As a result, she says, “Supervisors left me alone. They hardly ever said no to my ideas.”

Her credits include notable programs of the day, such as *Your Two Bucks’ Worth* (a reference to the \$1.98 that each Canadian paid for the CBC) hosted by Warren Davis; *Music of Our People*, featuring artists such as contralto Maureen Forrester, and recorded at Studio 4S, a high-tech facility on Yonge Street south of Summerhill Avenue; and *Music from Other Continents*, hosted by George Finstad.

“Max wasn’t easy to work with because he antagonized a lot of producers, but he and I got on beautifully!”

One of Vadron’s most memorable assignments was as producer of *The Max Ferguson Show*: “Max wasn’t easy to work with because he antagonized a lot of producers,” she recalls, “but he and I got on beautifully!” She remembers visiting Ferguson at his cottage in Cape Breton, and producing the program from the CBC studio in Sydney, featuring sidekick Allan McFee.

The Radio Building on Jarvis Street was “home” for most of her career, then she moved to the CBC’s International Relations department on Bay Street, where she dealt with programming and programmers from other countries. Those years also

are filled with memories, some from her travels—such as a six-month trip meeting with public broadcasters across Europe—and some while entertaining visitors to Canada, including a delegation of ten Chinese who arrived in Toronto after Mao’s death in 1976.

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Dita Vadron produced The Max Ferguson Show. (CBC photo collection)

“They wanted to see the Science Centre, and I took them up to Bethune House, in Gravenhurst,” says Vadron. “You know, they walked around and picked up leaves from the ground to take home. It was very touching.”

When she ended her career in the early 1980s, Vadron was fifty-something. She says she was quite content with the money she had earned at the CBC, but discovered she could make considerably more as a self-employed editor.

Vadron escaped a boss who was “not bad, but he was stupid.” She laughs as she adds that, “Bad would have been a challenge. But stupid? There’s nothing you can do about that.”

Although, at age 91, she finds it challenging to recall some dates and details, her mind is as sharp as her opinions, as she holds court from her bed in north Toronto: She loves Matt Galloway; hates the music that’s used as bridges on her favourite CBC Radio talk programs; and thinks The National is “a disaster.”

Most of all, Vadron misses radio announcers who can enunciate, managers who value the principles of public broadcasting, and audiences that care about the CBC.

Dita Vadron laments the loss of something that was valued at the CBC during her tenure, from the late 1950s to the early 1980s: proper pronunciation and diction:

“At the time, we had an Announce Department, and I wish sometimes when I listen that that would be revived. A man named Steve Brodie had connections to various consulates and embassies. He was in charge of not letting announcers mispronounce the names of foreign cities and countries. I wish they had something like that today. The announcers were also taught another thing I think we should revive: phraseology. Today’s people, they breathe at the wrong time, which of course often destroys the sense of the story.”

ZOOM YOUR WAY TO OUR BIG MEETING OF THE YEAR!

We need your support, your smarts, and your vote at 11 a.m. on October 11th, at Ontario's annual general meeting (AGM) via Zoom.

It's the one day of the year when every PNA member in the province has a say in the way our organization is run, and this year is particularly important. The Ontario Board of Directors has approved a new, improved set of bylaws, and we need your endorsement at the AGM.



Vice President Barbara Saxberg and Toronto Director Lise Lareau have done the heavy lifting: filling in gaps, reworking language, and introducing a few critical amendments. The most significant change moves us to electronic elections. This means everyone will be able to cast a ballot, either online or by phone, and proxy voting will be discontinued.

Note this date, too: Friday, October 6th. That's the deadline to tell us you're coming. Please send an email today to ontario@cbcpensioners.ca to register.

You'll find a link to the new draft bylaws on the bottom left of the Ontario page of the PNA website: <https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/regions/ontario>.

What do, and don't, you like about our Ontario Region newsletter? Is there a particularly interesting PNA member you'd like us to profile? Have any other ideas for features you'd like to read?

Please share your thoughts by writing to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

ALL THE LOWDOWN FOR PNA MEMBERS IN THUNDER BAY

Last month, CBC retirees in Thunder Bay gathered for a luncheon, and heard from two local members who sit on the PNA National Board of Directors. Dan Oldfield, our representative to the Consultative Committee on Staff Benefits, was a key player in discussions with the CBC about the pension surplus. He answered a slew of questions about that, as well as about the benefits plan, and Special Assistance Fund. Ontario Region Vice President Barbara Saxberg spoke about the value of the PNA, and the importance of supporting the Association. The group is looking forward to the next time they meet, for a holiday lunch in December.



Thunder Bay PNA members Gene Balec, Brad Laco, Cathy Alex and Fred Jones. (Photo by Barbara Saxberg)



Dan Oldfield, with an update on the pension surplus. (Photo by Barbara Saxberg)



Barbara Saxberg, praising the efforts of the PNA. (Photo by Dan Oldfield)

NEW ROLES AFTER THE CBC: THREE WHO ARE MAKING IT ON STAGE AND SCREEN

BY LISE LAREAU

Want to be in show business? PNA members will tell you it's never too late—and they have the stage and film credits to prove it. Vince Carlin, Dan Karpenchuk, and Barbara Saxberg are just three CBC pensioners who have found new roles in life, as actors.

While they all had been interested in acting or had been on stage before their CBC careers, those dreams were parked away during the decades of deadlines and family responsibilities. But the acting bug snuck back on all of them at different times, and in different ways.



Vince Carlin playing Scrooge in 2017. (Photo courtesy of Act of Faith Productions)

Vince Carlin was interested in theatre growing up in New York, but it wasn't until well into his CBC career that he did something about it. He saw a little notice in an Oakville newspaper for "readings."

"I didn't realize 'readings' was another term for audition. I went to read and then I was asked if I was available for the Arthur Miller play, *All My Sons*,"

Carlin recalls. "At first I told him I couldn't." His wife convinced him otherwise. He was working as head of radio news at the time, and says he was able to work out an arrangement where he would be unavailable some evenings during the play's run. That was about 25 years ago. Since then, he's played dozens of roles in community theatre and had a few parts in TV and film, especially since his retirement as CBC

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ombudsman in 2009. This fall, he plays a New York City police detective in *Arsenic and Old Lace*, at the Dundas Theatre.

Dan Karpenchuk wanted to be an actor after high school, but when that didn't work out, he ended up in radio news at CBC. In 2000, he saw a notice for auditions for the Port Perry Theatre production of *Inherit the Wind*. He got the key part of lawyer Henry Drummond. He, too, was still working at the time, but had enough annual leave banked to take the role, and perform in more seasons of summer theatre. He did both CBC and theatre work until his retirement in 2017, and continues to work as a professional actor. He's been in dozens of plays, many of them at the Upper Canada Playhouse in Morrisburg, Ontario, and has had recent roles in a series of holiday TV movies. He's narrated audio books and, for the past several years, he has been the voice of Santa at the Christmas Trail, for Black Creek Pioneer Village.

Barbara Saxberg worked as an actor in her twenties, but set it all aside until years after her retirement from CBC radio, in 2013. Six years later, she noticed a social media post that older actors were needed for the 10x10 Short Play Festival in Thunder Bay, where she now lives. She auditioned and, "much to my surprise and delight," got a call to be in one of the 10-minute plays.

"During the first performance of the play, I remember sitting backstage waiting to go on. Something about that moment reminded me how I loved doing this. I'd forgotten how much fun this was. With each performance we were getting better, and I felt the audience response. I felt I wanted to do more," Saxberg recalls.



Dan Karpenchuk as Kris Kringle. (Photo courtesy of Dan Karpenchuk)

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And she has done more. During the pandemic, she did online classes and readings, more short plays, and landed an agent in 2021. After a few more community theatre roles, she got a break, and was cast as a judge in the Lifetime Network Movie of the Week. *Would You Kill For Me? The Mary Bailey Story* is scheduled to air in November.

All three say they love the life of an actor. "You get to throw yourself into being another person. Some are odd, some are hilarious, some are tragic," says Saxberg. "It's just fun getting to be different people."

And they agree there are some advantages to being an older actor. Carlin says he notices there are more plays and films about older people because the population is aging.



Barbara Saxberg in *The Best Man's Speech* (Still from the film.)

"There are fewer older actors to compete with," Saxberg adds, "though there are also fewer good roles." However, there are many secondary roles for the older wise friend, teacher, parent, police officer or "the cranky old guy," as Carlin puts it.

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Another advantage is that the work “engages the brain,” Karpenchuk says, citing a huge block of dialogue he needed to remember for his most recent play, *Drinking Alone* by Norm Foster. Actors can be expected to memorize between two and 70 pages of dialogue just for auditions. Carlin admits that remembering a lot of lines is becoming harder as he approaches his 80th birthday.

None of these thespians do it for the money, though there is some to be made. Under the Actors’ Equity agreement, professional theatre companies pay between \$400 and \$1,000 a week during the play’s run, depending on the role and size of the theatre. TV and movies are more lucrative, especially if it’s a principal role. But there are also expenses for things such as coaching, agent fees, and professional head shots. Saxberg says between travel and accommodations, she broke “about even” shooting the TV movie. She and the others say their passion for performance is made much easier by having a solid pension from the CBC.

And there are non-monetary benefits that you may not expect. Karpenchuk relishes a role in which he got to yell at another character in a production of *12 Angry Men*. That character happened to be played by his former boss at the CBC, Vince Carlin. “That was fun.”

Want to take to the stage?

Here are some tips from three of the PNA’s thespians.

- Just do it. If you’re about to retire or are retired, get involved in something right away. Go to reading groups or audition at your local community theatre. They’re good places to work and to network, because a lot of people there are former professional actors.
- Build up a resume. List every part you get, big or small, community theatre or student film. It all matters.
- Find a good acting school, either in person or online.
- Learn how to make your own voice reels and demo reels. There are many resources online. Here’s where previous work as a broadcaster comes in handy.

More tips from the PNA's thespians...

- Prepare to invest money. Classes, coaching and professional head shots are all necessary to be taken seriously.
- Prepare to invest time. It can take years before you make headway, but keep doing the classes, the readings, and the auditions. It's all acting.
- Get an agent. This isn't always easy, but once an agent believes in you and signs you up it's a major turning point. Most TV and film productions won't look at you without one.
- Enjoy yourself. You have to want to do it in the first place, but you must love acting to keep going.

Have you been bitten by the acting bug, too?

Share your story with us by writing to pnalivewire@gmail.com

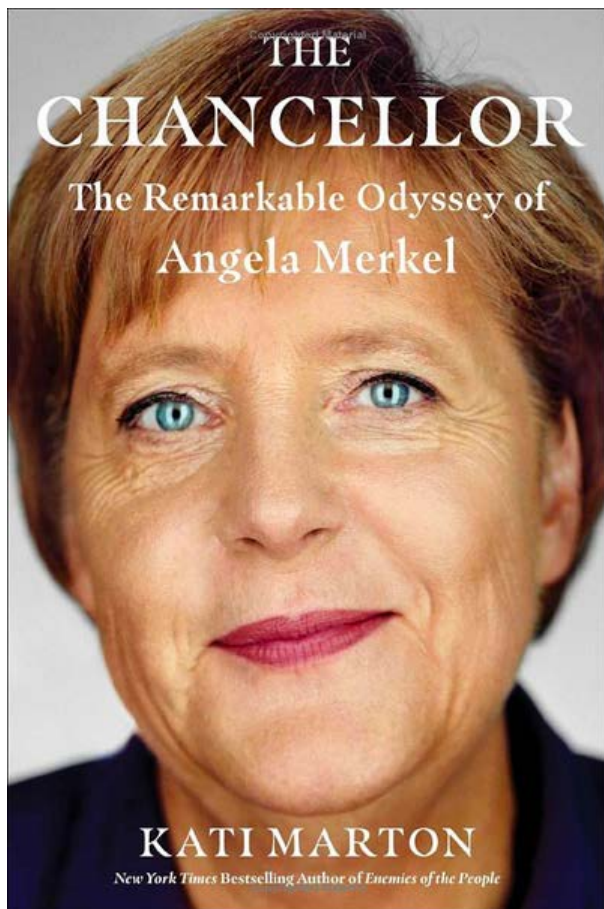


THE INSIDE WIRE: CRITICAL TENSION IN TWO BOOKS ABOUT STRONG WOMEN

BY FRANK QUINN

In *The Chancellor*, author Kati Marton has given us insight into the life of one of our most relevant political leaders, Angela Merkel. The book spoke to me as a catalyst for deeper critical thinking about the media. Merkel was always unique, not just as Germany's first female chancellor, but because she always struck me as the opposite of a media celebrity. Marton says Merkel hates having a camera pointed at her. She resisted when media staffers attempted to change her wardrobe or makeup. Her power is deeper than that. As a former East German citizen, she had a unique empathy for the immigrant. As a scientist with a doctorate in quantum chemistry, she was an analytical problem solver.

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While reading *The Chancellor*, I found a connection with another book, *The Bully Pulpit* by Doris Kearns Goodwin. It's a historical account of the complicated relationship between Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. And what has that got to do with *The Chancellor*? I was intrigued not just by the two famous frenemies, but by a female journalist named Ida Tarbell, who reported on the monopoly control of the powerful railroad barons of her time.

Tarbell travelled the rails to expose the unfair practices of the railway monopolies that controlled all manner of interstate commerce including rolling stock, freight rates and the real estate on which the railroads were built. Her reporting, in no small part, led to the anti-

trust legislation of the Roosevelt administration which, in some ways, is still in effect today. And the challenge of monopoly control has affected many aspects of our lives, including the media.

When taken together, the Marton and Goodwin books expose a critical tension between modern media and public policy, as exemplified by two notable female changemakers, Merkel and Tarbell.

Merkel is the anti-Trump, in that she doesn't care about optics or narratives in the press or social media. She believes actions speak louder than words, and that if you want a job done, give it to a busy woman. She didn't have time for daily rage tweets, and disagreed with Trump on immigration, NATO, coronavirus, and other major issues. In news conferences, she thought questions about her personal feelings were irrelevant, and would never tweet about them.

Ida Tarbell is a woman on the other side of that equation. She believes in the fourth

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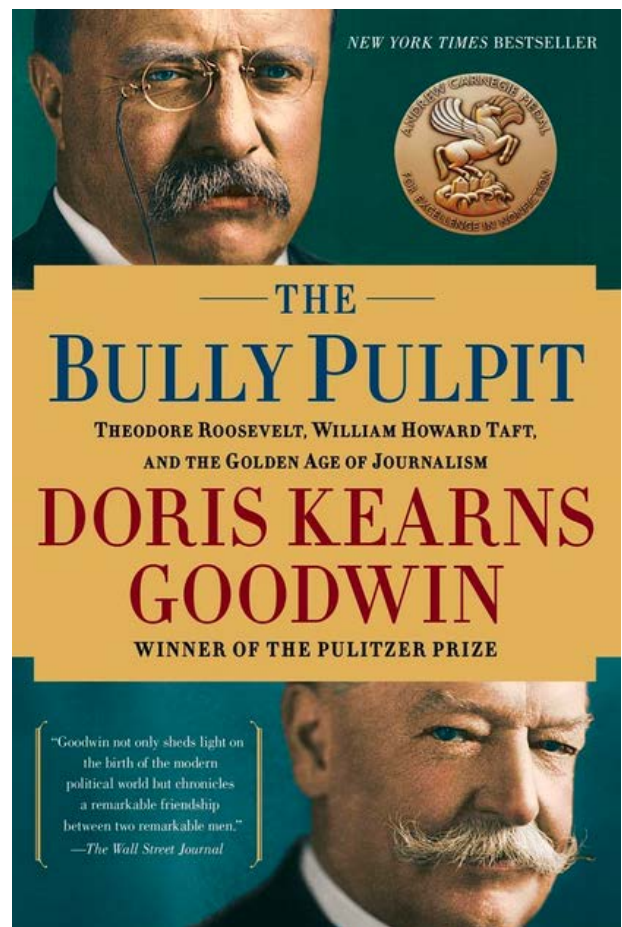
estate as an ecosystem that educates citizens, and leads to social change. In her view, the media act as a safeguard against power structures that, if left unchecked, could destroy democracy.

Tarbell and Merkel were pioneers who had to excel in a man's world. Merkel's hero was Marie Curie, the Nobel Prize-winning physicist who said, "Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood." Merkel was not your typical politician, beholden to the latest polling data. Her calculations were those of a scientist, made in the service of concise policy. She looked upon the world as an academic, not as a technocrat like Elon Musk who sees the challenges of governance as engineering problems.

Musk is an intelligent, successful visionary but I can't help but wonder whether his purchase of X (formerly Twitter) is a gesture of male bravado, rooted in hard political and economic power. Marton's book on Merkel is a testament to soft power. Musk

and other media monopolists are no different from the railroad or newspaper barons that Tarbell reported on. Musk takes no responsibility for the traffic on his social media stream, but profits from the toll he charges. At least, William Randolph Hearst had the courage to call himself a publisher.

The jury is out on whether newsrooms will survive. The fragmentation of audiences forces them to appeal to the lowest common denominator, and many decry the absence of solid policy discussion, asking why journalists don't focus on facts, rather than opinion. Merkel would agree. A scientist looks at data as facts, hypotheses as strategy and theory as policy. Opinions must be curated and peer reviewed. In



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newsroom parlance, stories are multi-sourced and vetted to maintain integrity. This happens at the risk of being called elitist by some. Today's media leaders believe they are forced to follow the audience, rather than having the audience following them.

Too many news consumers choose entertainment over education because facts are complex and demand an active and inquisitive mind. That is why compelling non-fiction books, in-depth reporting, and local newspapers are so vital.

I am struck by the proliferation of strong female leaders like Merkel and Tarbell, and by women like Martin and Kearns Goodwin, who make their work known.

Frank Quinn worked for 47 years at the CBC. His last role was as associate director in TV News. Since he retired in 2018, he has been gardening, traveling, programming software, spending time at his cottage, and "endlessly repairing things."



If you'd like to recommend a book, a film, a TV series or a podcast our our feature *The Inside Wire*, write to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

PLEASE DON'T HIDE!

Have you changed your email address or phone number? Or moved into a new home? And have you told us about it at the PNA?

Without up-to-date contact information, we can't ensure you're informed. Please keep us posted, so we can share what's new with your pension, remind you of the benefits you have as a CBC pensioner, and tell you about PNA events. Email any changes to your contact information to info@cbcpensioners.ca or pnalivewire@gmail.com or both!

JON SOPER WILL BE OUR VOICE AT THE TABLE



Jon Soper, our new rep on the CBC Pension Board of Trustees. (Photo by Norah Lee)

The CBC Board of Directors has appointed Jon Soper, PNA president for the Newfoundland and Labrador Region, as the retiree representative to the CBC Pension Board of Trustees. Soper replaces Alain Pineau, effective immediately.

Soper has considerable experience in the role, having previously served for 16 years as the Pension Board's representative for CBC English employees. Jon also brings broad knowledge of employee and retiree issues from his 24 years on the Consultative Committee on Staff Benefits. The PNA and the Pension Board are lucky to have him.

EVER DREAMT OF BEING CALLED PRESIDENT?

You can make that dream a reality, if you live in the North Central Ontario (NCO) Region. It's geographically big, but with a smaller population than most PNA areas. Archie Reid valiantly has been holding the fort as vice-president, but the NCO still needs a president. It's gratifying work, and not onerous: attend a few meetings, and arrange events from time to time.

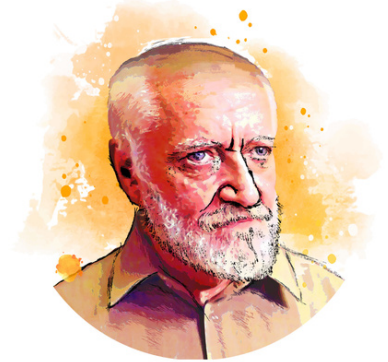
If you're looking for a new experience, and a chance to collaborate with your former CBC colleagues, please email pnalivewire@gmail.com with an expression of interest or any questions you may have.

PAUL KENNEDY'S IDEAS ON CLUTTER

BY PAUL KENNEDY

I recently typed the word "clutter" into the search engine on my laptop.

In less than the blink of an eye, I was presented with no fewer than 193,000,000 possibilities. The actual time was precisely 0.51 seconds, although the nine-digit number containing six zeros looks suspiciously like something of a guesstimate to me.



In any event, there seemed to be no point in wasting any more time trying to calculate how long it might take to investigate all these options. A rough estimate suggested something like more than a hundred thousand lifetimes, so I set out to superficially explore the general lay of the land.

It became immediately obvious that 99.9% of the suggested websites weren't about clutter at all. Mostly, they promised to provide advice about DE-cluttering, or ANTI-hoarding, or ULTRA-organizing, or just generally "Cleaning-Out-those-Old-Augean-Stables."

Continued...

Now, I'm no Hercules, but it doesn't take a demi-god to determine that clutter has a bad rap. It seems to be almost directly synonymous with "crap"—which is the polite name for the horse shit Hercules was tasked to shovel out of those ancient stables. Hundreds of thousands of websites, podcasts, TV shows, and advice columns are stuffing wallets, and cluttering bank accounts, by offering helpful hints about how to remove clutter from your life.

DON'T DO IT!

When I was still working (which is now almost four years ago, although I slaved away at the Mother Corpse for more than four decades before that) I quickly came to the conclusion that a clean desktop was a clear indication of an empty mind. Anybody who had enough spare time to make their workspace look like the Apple showroom at the Eaton Centre plainly didn't have anywhere near enough work to do.

Now that I'm retired, I'm proud to announce that my tiny studio apartment is cluttered with souvenirs of my relatively productive past, as well as with harbingers of projects that I'm continuing, or planning to pursue. The two are not unrelated. What's past is prologue. Life is a continuum. It never hurts to have some idea of where you've been, and where you're hoping to go.

Let's also admit that life is essentially messy.

Sterility is... well... sort of sterile.

Creativity—let alone basic human contentment—requires a certain amount of confusion, and sometimes minimal doses of chaos.

I've already confessed that I live in a minuscule and extremely cluttered apartment. The richness of the resources within two meters of any direction from my desk—and

“Let's also admit that life is essentially messy.”

Continued...

we haven't even begun to talk about the books that line all four walls - will be more than enough to keep my mind active for whatever time is left to me.

Yeah, I guess my place is cluttered, but I honestly wouldn't have it any other way.

Seriously though? Nearly two hundred million hits in just over half a second? Yeah, let's talk about clutter! As for the thousands of DE-clutterers who so brazenly clutter the web with advertisements for their services, I am throwing down the gauntlet for a public debate. Tickets, anyone?

SUNSHINE IN SEVERN FOR THE PNA PICNIC

PHOTOS BY TALIN VARTANIAN

August 23rd was a rainy day in Toronto, but the weather gods smiled on the North Central Ontario (NCO) picnic. It was held at Lake Couchiching, on the beautiful grounds of the home of Bob Burt. Everyone appreciated the efforts of the organizers: NCO Vice President Archie Reid; Helen Hoffman; and her husband, NCO Chapter Treasurer Paul Hoffman.



Former Ontario Region President John Dixon, PNA member Ron Earle, and his wife Landa.



Ontario Region President Gail Carducci and NCO VP Archie Reid



MEET A MEMBER, STU PATERSON

BY TALIN VARTANIAN

"During Covid, I really missed people," says Stu Paterson, at the end of a long, friendly phone conversation. He's an effervescent storyteller, who laughs that his wife Nancy Smith says, "You talk too much." (She also worked at the CBC, in the Jarvis Street building dubbed "The Kremlin," for two years.)

Paterson's long and varied career as a broadcaster began in 1964, at private radio stations in Smiths Falls, Kingston, and Niagara Falls, working in many different roles: copywriter, rip-and-read anchor, DJ, assignment editor, news director, TV producer, film processor, even cameraman. ("I was terrible as a cameraman," he reveals. "I'm not technical at all!")



Stu Paterson (Photo courtesy of Stu Paterson)

An RCA record plant in Smiths Falls produced Beatles records for the North American market, and Paterson recalls having early access to them. "When the Beatles '65 came out in late 1964, every second song on my show was from that album. CHUM phoned us many times. They were angry because they claimed to be 'The Beatles Station,' and we actually were."

In 1976, Paterson landed his first job at the CBC as a TV news reporter for the supper-hour and late-night newscasts. He estimates he filed more than three thousand stories during his career at the Corporation, and one of the most challenging assignments came early in his career, covering the 1977 provincial election.

"It was my first time reporting live, and it was from Bill Davis's headquarters on election night. I was sharing the camera with Ann Medina who was doing live hits to The National, and I was doing Ontario coverage," Paterson recalls. "During my live hit into the 6 p.m. show, I remember being so nervous that the backs of my legs were sweating. But by the time I did two or three more, I was fine."

Continued...



Stu Paterson (Photo courtesy of Stu Paterson)

That was in 1990, and marked the beginning of the decline of local news at the CBC. The newscast was relaunched in Windsor in 1994. When he left the CBC in 2000, Paterson and Smith, both avid fishers, made trips to three different provincial parks with their 14-foot boat. Soon after, interesting contract work landed in Paterson's lap, as a public relations officer for a variety of organizations, including a conference of Ontario municipal governments, the Boat Show, and the Home Show.

He is also a director in the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and works in community relations with the Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen's Association. "I hunt only with a camera," he says. "I couldn't kill a deer or a moose."

Paterson lives in Georgian Bluffs, near Warton, and recently joined the North Central Chapter of the PNA. He says he's already impressed by the professionalism of the organization.

Stu Paterson is a dedicated volunteer

"I have always believed in volunteerism helping make your community a better place," he says.

Paterson has served on broadcasting advisory boards; at Niagara, Seneca, Loyalist Community Colleges; Rotary (hosting their trivia nights for 14 years); the Easter Seal Telethon more than two decades; the Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen; the Ontario Federation of Hunters and Anglers for 19 years; Canadian Corporate Television Association for five years.

"A lot of friends in private broadcasting think I'm nuts. So what!"

WRITTEN ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? OUR MEMBERS WRITE BOOKS, AND WE'D LIKE YOU TO KNOW ABOUT THEM.

***The Giddythumps* by Dan Oldfield**

Children's fiction, published 2023
Giddythumps are tiny creatures who don't always get along. This is a tale about friendship, forgiveness and the power of the apology.

***More than a Footnote: Canadian Women You Should Know* by Karin Wells**

Non-fiction, published 2022
A series of compelling profiles of lesser-known Canadian women who lived big lives and made a difference.



***Extraordinary Canadians: Stories from the Heart of Our Nation* by Mark Bulgutch and Peter Mansbridge**

Non-fiction, published 2022
A heartwarming collection of first-person stories about Canadians who are making our country a better place for us all.

***Conspiracy of Hope: The Truth About Breast Cancer Screening* by Renée Pellerin**

Non-fiction, published 2018
A searing indictment of breast cancer screening, and how "women, and their doctors, continue to buy into a myth perpetuated by greed, fear, and wishful thinking."

***Triumph at Kapyong: Canada's Pivotal Battle in Korea* by Dan Bjarnason**

Non-fiction, published 2011
The story of the first battle by Canada's soldiers in the Korean War, and how they beat off some of the toughest troops on earth.

Continued...

***Reconcilable Differences: Marriages End. Families Don't.* by Cate Cochran**

Non-fiction, published 2007

The author explores the lives of ten families (including her own) that have reconfigured in unusual and inspiring ways in the wake of divorce.

***Hana's Suitcase* by Karen Levine**

Young adult non-fiction, published 2002

Multi-award-winning story in which a child's suitcase from Auschwitz connects three generations and three continents.

If you're an author and would like us to share news about your book, please write to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

BORED? LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO?



If the skills, the smarts and the workplace wisdom you used every day at the CBC are growing stagnant, please accept this invitation to put them to good use.

The PNA runs largely on the steam of a network of volunteers from across the country. They make financial decisions, publish newsletters, organize events, and get involved in creative projects. Help is wanted! Here are a few areas where we could use a hand...and a brain:

Continued...

Toronto director – We have opening for a Toronto representative on the Ontario Region Board of Directors. This involves attending about ten Board meetings a year, and collaborating with the other Toronto directors (Susan Helwig, Paul Kennedy, and Lise Lareau) to organize gatherings for Toronto PNA members.

Facebook page moderator – There’s now a Facebook page called “Ontario Region CBC PNA,” and we need someone to be its moderator. Fun to do, and not onerous.

Calling all creatives! – Join a savvy, talented group of pros to help create some entertaining PNA videos. We need people with skills in writing, producing, sound and video, who enjoy collaborating with a team.

Event planning help – There are PNA events across the province, thanks to the dedicated people who volunteer their time to organize them. This might involve scouting for a location, menu planning, gathering prizes, or organizing raffles. More hands make light work. Put up your hand, and we’ll connect you with local folks who would welcome your help.

Please write to pنالivewire@gmail.com with questions, and to express interest in any of these opportunities.

In a roomful of “No!” people, be the one who says “Yes!”

FOR LIVEWIRE LOGOPHILES

What do Cher, Twiggy, Drake, and Oprah have in common? They’re known by a name that consists of only one word. And there’s a word for that: They’re all mononymous. It’s from the Greek for one (mono) and -nym (name).



COME FOR GOOD FOOD, GOOD FRIENDS, GOOD GIFTS, AND A GREAT TIME!



You are invited to the Toronto PNA holiday lunch.

Saturday, December 2nd at 12 noon

**The Bier Markt
58 The Esplanade
(conveniently located a short walk from Union Station)**

Please send \$25 (per member or guest) via e-transfer to PNAONTEvents@gmail.com on or before November 30th.

MEGATHANKS TO MARY DePOE, STALWART PNA SUPPORTER

BY ONTARIO REGION PAST PRESIDENT LEONE EARLS



Toronto Director Mary DePoe has resigned from her position on the Ontario Region Board of Directors, after many years of long service to the PNA.

She worked in radio before becoming a script assistant at CBC TV, first with children's television, then in TV variety. DePoe went on to become a unit manager, and later worked in Labour Relations as a talent relations officer

In 2002, the Association of Television Producers and Directors presented her with a Golden Globe Award.

As a PNA member, DePoe was instrumental in the creation of a Toronto committee, never quite understanding how and why the Ontario Region was structured as it was. She and other Toronto members pushed for change, and their efforts were rewarded with the first appointment of a Toronto director on the Board. Now there are four.

DePoe loved her CBC career, and she continues to share her entertaining memories. She understands the value of the PNA, and the need to have an active voice for all pensioners. We all owe her a debt of gratitude.

Alert for crossword nerds!

Keep on going...coming up, in this issue of *Livewire*, a PNA-CBC puzzle, with a prize!



IN MEMORIAM



Barbara McLean died on May 1 at the age of 91. She was a spousal member of our Association, the wife of George McLean, TV News journalist, and host of *The National*.

Beverley Palef died on May 22. (We do not have information about her role at the CBC.)

Jean-Marc Theriault died on May 26 at the age of 82. He worked for French Services in Toronto.

Bryon Lowe died on June 1 at the age of 84. He was a TV switcher, working on *Marketplace* and Friday night studio shows. Bryon was a driving force behind NABET Local 700.

Thomas Adamtau died on June 2 at the age of 78, in Niagara Falls. (We do not have information about his role at the CBC.)

Eleonara d'Antonio Ferraro died on June 19 in Toronto. (We do not have information about her role at the CBC.)

Tim Lorimer died on July 5 at the age of 65, in a tragic drowning on Rice Lake. He was a Toronto-based Network Radio engineer.

Continued...

Elsie Jokinen died on July 18 at the age of 92. She was manager of operations at CBC Enterprises, during the 1980s and '90s.

William (Bill) Lawrence died on July 14 at the age of 91. He announced weather, news, documentaries, game shows and specials on CBC Television for 28 years.

John Bryden died on July 23 at the age of 91. He worked for CBC Toronto for 37 years, finishing his career as a senior lighting director and technical producer.

John (Jack) Litchfield died on July 31 at the age of 93. He worked in Montreal throughout his CBC career, as a supervising engineer in both radio and TV. Jack moved to Toronto when he retired, and became a member of the PNA Ontario Region.

Gail Coleman died on August 8 at the age of 85. She was a script assistant, then a production manager, particularly enjoying her work on *Reach for the Top* and *The Wayne and Shuster Show*.

DID YOU KNOW?

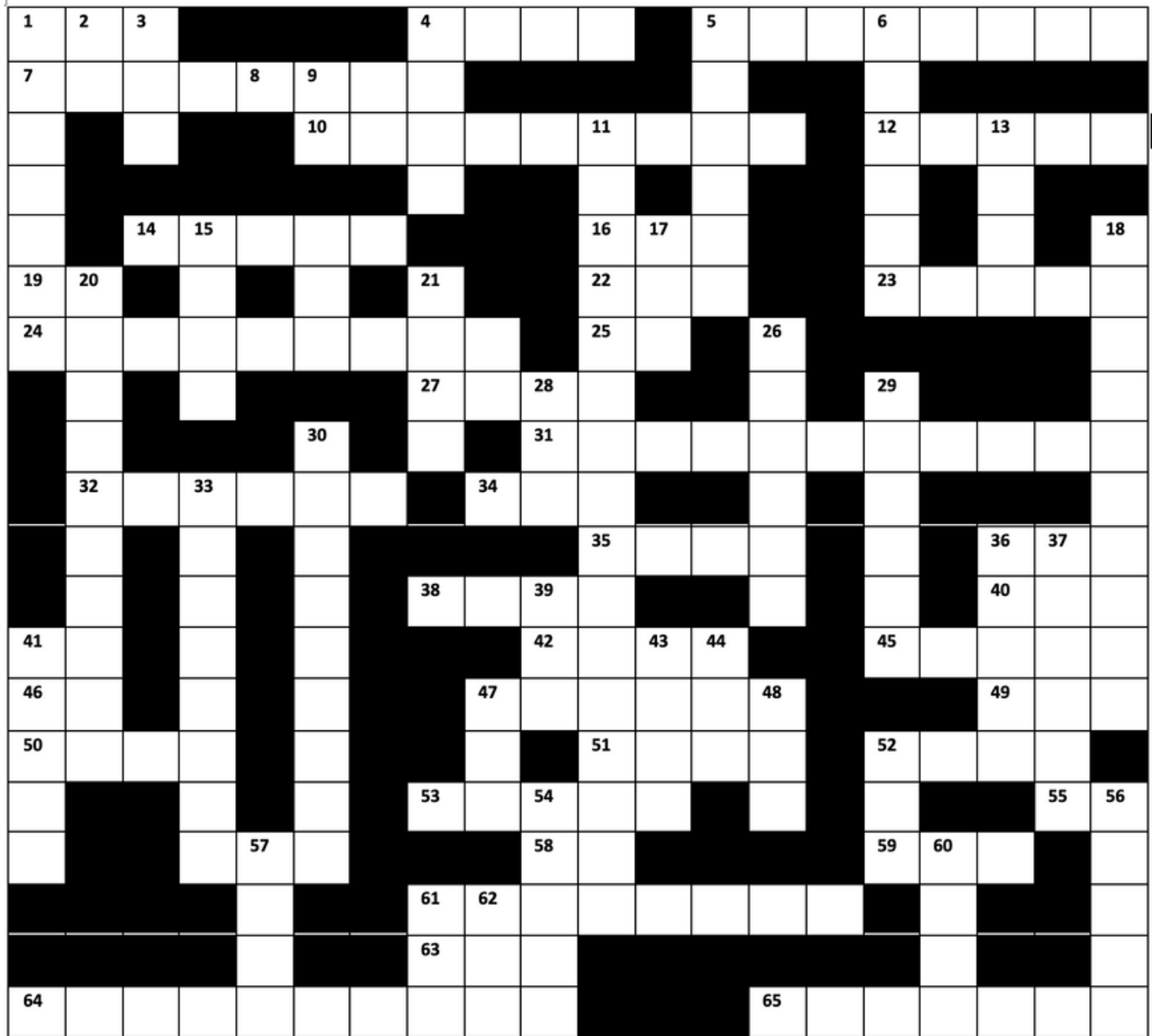
There are advantages to logging in as a member on the PNA website www.cbcpensioners.ca?

At the top right-hand corner of the main page, click on "Member Login," and fill in your email address and password. The heading "Member Resources" will appear at the top of the page. From there, you can access information about discounts on travel, home and car insurance, the Special Assistance Fund (see our March 2023 issue for details on the SAF), healthcare, and how PNA members can access the CBC's web portal, iO!



A PNA-CBC PUZZLER!

CREATED BY TALIN VARTANIAN



Puzzle prize!

The first Ontario Region PNA member to submit a correctly completed puzzle will win a \$50 grocery gift card for the store of their choice. Email a photo or a scan of your legible grid to pnalivewire@gmail.com.

PNA-CBC PUZZLE CLUES

ACROSS

1. It expands sound
4. Broadcast regulator (abbr.)
5. Think of them as deferred salaries
7. First city with a CBC TV station
10. Radio tower shared by two stations
12. Command
14. Join in a common cause
16. Literary "before"
19. Lava
22. More than plump
23. Gung ho
24. Ernie Coombs' alter ego
25. Common preposition
27. Tolerate
31. Top priority for all PNA members
32. CBC _____, name of the radio app
34. "My" in French (plural)
35. Acidic
36. Commotion
38. _____ anise
40. Open the throttle
41. Silver (abbr.)
42. _____ Blanchett
45. Jargon
46. Computer support dept. (abbr.)
47. "_____ lives here," former CBC slogan
49. That thing
50. Persian ruler
51. Nub

ACROSS, cont'd.

52. Homeowner's money pit
53. It led the 1981 strike at the CBC
55. Ingen, nie, nyet or neyn
58. Either/____
59. Not to be confused with "it is"
61. Braggarts
63. You need a good one to work in
radio
64. Calgary sports team
65. Public broadcasting advocacy
group

DOWN

1. Tooth cement
2. Method of doing things (abbr.)
3. It defends our rights (abbr.)
4. Snippet of video or audio tape
5. _____ bureau: single reporter
in a city
6. Current federal heritage minister
8. "And" en français
9. Sentimental interjection
11. First Canadian TV show shot in
colour (with 35 down)
13. Minor dent
15. Name of the Royal Commission
on Radio Broadcasting

Continued...

PNA-CBC PUZZLE CLUES

DOWN, cont'd.

- 18. CBC president with shortest term
- 20. CBC relationship to federal government
- 21. Castro country
- 26. _____, inclusion and diversity
- 28. Exist
- 29. Piles
- 30. Former name of CBC TV all-news channel
- 33. Selects from multiple video sources
- 35. See 11 down
- 36. Once more
- 37. CBC president with longest term
- 39. Assoc. of Canadian Archivists (abbr.)
- 41. Theatregoer's getaway route
- 43. Successor to Lacroix
- 44. Newsroom honchos (abbr.)
- 47. One of its locals is the CMG
- 48. Consumed
- 52. CBC management decimated it (abbr.)
- 54. Wild pigs
- 56. Portents
- 57. Tout de suite!
- 60. Formerly magnetic, now it's digital
- 61. Busy as a ____
- 62. Propel on water

FIRST TIME, IN A LONG TIME

Ontario's Board of Directors usually meets online. Earlier this month, they gathered in person in Toronto, at the Celebrity Club in the Performing Arts Lodges.



Left to right (front) Gail Carducci, Tain Vartanian, Lise Lareau, Susan Helwig; (rear) Rochelle Porter, Effy Terry, Phil Peck, Ben Daube, Gino Piazza, Paul Kennedy. Hiding in the back, Bob Waller.

Barbara Saxberg and Archie Reid joined the meeting via Zoom.

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Visit the Ontario page of the PNA website for information about upcoming events, and to read our bylaws, and minutes of our meetings.

<https://www.cbcpensioners.ca/regions/ontario/>