

# MARITIME STATION BREAK

## Advocacy highlighted at AGM

The story of how PNA members around the Maritimes supported the CBC during the recent federal election dominated presentations at the AGM in Moncton on May 8th. *Page 2*

## Cormier recognized for volunteer work

Ronald Cormier, a founding member of the PNA in Moncton, has been recognized for many years of volunteer work. *Page 7*

## Fredericton PNA member still “on the air” as he nears his 90th birthday

Ross Ingram retired from CBC decades ago. But he is still broadcasting every day from a studio in his home. “I’m not one to be sitting in a rocking chair,” he says. *Page 3*



President Geoff Turnbull addresses Moncton AGM.

## Two Surplus payments coming in 2025

The man who manages the CBC Pension Plan says pensioners can expect two separate surplus payments this year. Duncan Burrill, the Managing Director and CEO spoke to the national annual general meeting of the CBC PNA on Thursday, May 15th.

Burrill says that a payout for 2023 is in progress, waiting for clearance from the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI). That surplus payout is due soon, triggered by the good performance of the pension plan in 2023, plus interest. Approximately \$61-mil will be shared with plan members probably by mid-July. You’ll remember sending in your vote to approve the payout either by electronic means or mail, once the Canada Post strike was over last winter. That vote will mean any surplus payments for the next five years are approved without further votes. But Burrill says CBC can’t prepare the payments until OFSI gives its final approval. There is no way to know for sure when that will arrive but Burrill hopes it will be paid out in July.

*Cont. on page 2*

Cont. from page one.... Surplus

Burrill says plans are also underway to pay out a second, similar surplus amount to cover the Plan's performance in 2024. He projected that pensioners will receive the second payment sometime in November of this year. Once the second payment is delivered this year, Burrill said any future surplus payments will come once a year. Depending how investments perform for the rest of the year, he says there could be a payout in 2026.

Burrill also reassured people on the AGM zoom that the overall health of the Plan's investments are secure. Annual returns remain well within the Plan's 6% target. Pensioners will receive an annual report with details on the Plan's investments in June.

# Regional AGM highlights advocacy efforts

By Wendy Martin

CBC pensioners in the Maritimes took to the streets and to social media this spring to advocate for the corporation's future. The campaign to save and strengthen the CBC was one of the main topics at the annual general meeting of the Maritimes branch of the PNA May 8.

About 50 members attended the meeting in Moncton, which was held outside the Halifax area for the first time.

Connell Smith of the Fredericton-Saint John chapter gave an update on the advocacy campaign. Smith is a member of the national advocacy committee, and spearheaded efforts in the Maritimes.

He said several dozen volunteers in all three provinces handed out postcards and circulated petitions at gatherings such as farmers markets and musical events. They also launched campaigns on social media platforms, such as Facebook.

"We talked to a lot of people," Smith said. "There is a lot of support for CBC here."

The campaign was launched in response to the Conservative party election promise to defund the CBC.

Although the Conservatives did not win the federal election in April, Smith said the region is in a "much better" position now, should a similar campaign be needed in the future.

Regional president Geoff Turnbull said the cost of the campaign was minimal, at about \$1600, which was used to print postcards and banners. He noted that all the work was done by volunteers.

Turnbull said there is a need for more volunteers in the organization.

He said he hoped some of those who stepped forward to help with advocacy efforts might stay on in some capacity.

In other business, members at the AGM also voted unanimously to allow the regional treasurer to conduct banking by electronic transfer.

Carole Ryan of the Moncton chapter was nominated for the vacant position of regional vice-president and accepted. The position of secretary remains vacant.

Several members were acknowledged at the meeting for their efforts with the organization.

Geoff Turnbull thanked Barb MacPherson of the PEI chapter for her work in emailing and calling members across the region, and tracking membership numbers.

MacPherson said the region gained 39 new members this past year; 18 in New Brunswick, 12 in Nova Scotia and 7 in PEI. She said 20 members passed away over the year.

Kathy Large of PEI, the newsletter editor, presented Helene Branch of the Moncton chapter with flowers. Branch has stepped down as French editor of the regional newsletter. Large said that Don Langis of Moncton, who passed away this past year, was at the forefront of creating a bilingual newsletter. Recruitment efforts to find Branch's replacement continue.

# Ross Ingram: Almost 90 and still busy in the broadcast booth

By Chris Morris



At close to 90 years of age, Ross Ingram still has no time for the traditional notions of rest, relaxation and retirement.

Almost every day, he makes his way to a cramped but well-appointed recording studio in his Fredericton home where he records news broadcasts and works on programming for his CJRI internet radio station. “I’m not one to be sitting in a rocking chair,” the soon-to-be nonagenarian says. “I like to be busy.”

It is a remarkable understatement. So far, Ingram has worked in radio, television, newspapers, political communications, public affairs for military and police services. He was an officer in the military reserve, an auxiliary officer in the RCMP and in the now-defunct New Brunswick Highway Patrol. And, oh yes, he has several theology degrees and is an ordained inter-denominational minister.

His CJRI station is a Christian format operation that airs news, gospel music and religious teachings. The station has a call sign that nudges listeners to “Get in touch with God.” Ingram broadcasts a Maritime newscast at 7:35 and regular weather reports.

He was the host of the popular singing group, The Gospelairens, on CHSJ-TV in the 1990s and interviewed New Brunswick politicians and movers and shakers on his weekly CHOICES program on the same station. He continues to be a regular contributor to New Brunswick independent station, CHCO-TV, in St. Andrews.

Ingram first joined the CBC in 1958 in Halifax and retired from the corporation in Fredericton in 1986. He is truly one of the pioneers of Canadian broadcasting, and from the time he was a child growing up in St. Catharines, Ont., news gathering and radio broadcasting were in his blood.

He still remembers how, as a boy, his family would gather around the radio and listen to the sonorous voice of Lorne Greene delivering reports from the battlefields of World War II.

“We never missed the news and the other thing we never missed was Don Messer and the Islanders, every night at 5:45 p.m. Ontario time from Charlottetown.”

His first significant job was CKEC in New Glasgow. Ingram eventually landed at CHSJ in Saint John and while he was there, he heard a CBC program called Maritime Magazine from Halifax.

“Harold Hathaway was the producer and I gave him a call and said, ‘You don’t have anything from New Brunswick so how can you call yourself Maritime Magazine?’ Hathaway said, ‘You’re right. Do something about it.’ So I started doing broadcast items from New Brunswick.”

Next stop was CBC Halifax, then onto CBC Sydney and eventually a call from Hathaway about a new station opening up in Fredericton. It was 1964, and when Ingram arrived in the New Brunswick capital and became the first voice broadcast on the new CBC channel, he knew he had found his home.

Ingram smiles when he thinks about that first broadcast in Fredericton. Jack Fenety, a popular private broadcaster and manager of CFNB, the city's other radio station, had complained to regulators that the new CBC channel was muscling in on his frequency.

“So our first broadcast was a close call,” Ingram says. “Harold and I were sitting there at 5:50 a.m. waiting for approval from Ottawa to go on the air. Harold had a phone to his ear and at four minutes to the top of the clock he said, ‘It’s a go.’ It was that close.”

Ingram’s life in broadcasting weaves a rich tapestry filled with characters many CBC pensioners would remember – people like Hathaway, Gordie Tapp, Sid Kennedy, Jack McAndrew and so on.

He was friends with Bill Langstroth and the Singalong Jubilee crowd in Halifax and told Langstroth about a university student he saw singing in Fredericton one evening in her bare feet. Langstroth eventually met that young singer, Anne Murray, and the rest, as they say, is history.

# Don’t Be Afraid to Step Up!

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President’s Report by Geoff Turnbull

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It seems to me that every year the business of the PNA gets busier. This past year was certainly no exception.

Wrangling the pension surplus payout has been even more demanding than last time, though we believe the work will pay off by making the process smoother – and quicker – next time.

Next time is this year, and maybe next year, too. None of it possible without the work done by the people in your association.

A federal election and the call to “defund the CBC” electrified us pensioners and we mounted campaigns at chapter, regional and national levels to fight back – and provide a stronger, more positive message for Canadians. We think we made a difference.

In between we held a national convention and chose a vigorous new board headed by Dan Oldfield, who was recognized as the right person to face the issues we have been immersed in.

None of this happens without people willing to volunteer.

In this region we have members deeply involved in the work to make all this happen.



Connell Smith in Advocacy, Kathy Large in Communications, Rachel Forbes and Chris Morris in Recruitment, Linda Gillan Young in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Dozens of other retirees in our five chapters provide the glue which holds us together.

This is a vital region, thanks to all of you. Many volunteers do the important work to help each other when we need it, to keep us informed, connected and entertained, and to protect our pension and other interests.

Then there's YOU.

You can help in small ways as well as big – by turning up at meetings, by stepping up to take on board and executive roles, by organizing fun events, or just by sharing your ideas and concerns.

The PNA needs all of us – really! Just as much as we all need the PNA.

You are the whole reason we exist – maybe this is your year to find out what we, and you, are made of.

Geoff Turnbull  
May 8, 2025.

# Advocating for the CBC: Election 2025

By Connell Smith

The CBC's very survival was an election issue this year. And, as the public broadcaster, it was unable to advocate for itself at the political level.

In the months leading up to the April 22nd vote it seemed the network's retirees - now numbering 6,000 PNA members across Canada - were the ideal group to take on the task. We have the expertise, we have the connections, and we'd really like to keep the place going.

To that end, our goal was to create an advocacy committee from among retirees in each of the three Maritime provinces. From there we would sing the praises of the national broadcaster while soliciting support from the public. It seemed pretty straightforward and, with a few minor hitches, it was.

The easiest method to reach the public is through social media, in particular, Facebook. New Brunswick's Don Flatt quickly got the Facebook group, Let's Protect CBC in New Brunswick, established, and we invited our personal Facebook friends to join.

The next step was to get word of the site out to as large a group of people as we could find. I immediately thought of Saint John Chatter Chasers, a site I'd posted to a couple of years ago for a fundraising event. It has 40 thousand followers. Any one of them can post. Easy Peasey!

It was late January, the polls showed a majority CPC election win was almost a certainty. I prepared a post for the Chatter Chasers site talking about the potential loss of CBC Saint John, a fixture in the community and a major source of local news, investigative reporting, and current affairs.

Over the years the station - in partnership with the Port of Saint John - has also raised over \$4 million dollars for food banks in southern New Brunswick. I made the post early the following morning just before I left for the 20 minute drive into the city.

On arrival I checked my phone for responses. There were already 18 comments on the site, and they were distressing. The local CBC team was dismissed - along with everyone else at the broadcaster - as 'Liberal propagandists'. 'Burn it down' demanded one critic, to which others responded with 'likes' and fire emojis. Even worse were the laugh emojis at the suggestion the CBC might be preserved.

The few people who dared to speak up for CBC Saint John were also taking hits. I got two private messages telling me this particular community site had devolved, and that a small army of trolls now waited there to pounce on posts that could be seen as "woke" or progressive.

Chastened, we've kept a close eye on what is posted on our own Facebook group which, in New Brunswick, grew to almost 600 members. Retirees in Nova Scotia, meanwhile, launched their own site: Strengthen the CBC in Nova Scotia, with over 500 members. And in Prince Edward Island it is: Stand Up for CBC in PEI, which also has over 500 members.

Retirees in all three provinces produced printed postcards which described what defunding could do in this region. In New Brunswick that meant listing Information Morning shows, Shift, the TV news, [cbc.ca/nb](http://cbc.ca/nb) and popular regional programs like Weekend Mornings and Maritime Noon. These cards were handed out by volunteers at farmer's markets and at arts events like the Rose Cousins concert and Symphony New Brunswick.

We also sent letters to candidates from all parties asking each for their position on funding for the CBC. No Conservative candidates responded, but there were plenty of replies from candidates from the other parties. It was interesting to learn, for instance, that the only two People's Party candidates who got back to us - one in Nova Scotia, and one in New Brunswick - are both in favour of continued funding for the public broadcaster.

The president of the Moncton chapter, Sylvie St. Onge arranged to send a letter to the editor of all French language newspapers in the four Atlantic provinces. It was signed by five retirees from CBC-Radio Canada. It tied the threat to CBC to Radio Canada. All the papers agreed to publish the letter.

Additionally, in Prince Edward Island, committee chair Ian Petrie took part in a public forum at UPEI on challenges facing all conventional media today. Those challenges include the growing influence of social media, disinformation, and conspiracies.

Nova Scotia retirees carried their campaign even further, launching two petitions, one online and one that saw volunteers gather support directly with the public at markets and shopping malls. Working with fellow volunteers from Friends of Canadian Media they also co-hosted a hugely successful music event with artists who performed free of charge at the Carleton in Halifax.



A second music event - also very successful - was hosted a few days later in Mahone Bay. In all, there were dozens of volunteers across the region, both CBC retirees and supporters of the public broadcaster, who stepped up. The takeaway from all of this: There is a lot of public support for the CBC. But no one involved believes this is a one and done. The threat posed to the network is real and it will come back.

Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre has worked for years to undermine public support for CBC, and there are many Canadians today who parrot his opinions word for word. He remains leader of the party. Groups like the PNA need to remain on guard.

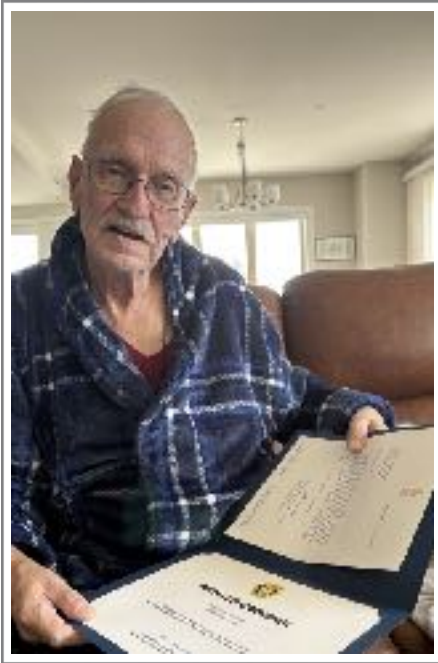
A post election day meeting of the national advocacy committee confirmed that nowhere outside the Maritime provinces was there anything close to the level of organization during the election campaign.

Provincial committees were not formed, there were no retiree-launched petitions, no live music events, no video testimonials posted to PNA-run Facebook groups. There's no question these sorts of activities are easier to arrange in this part of Canada. The CBC plays a bigger role in our communities. But in my experience, you cannot do this sort of thing by sending out a mass email under the PNA banner. You have to phone and message people directly person to person.

The national advocacy group is planning a full review this fall of what worked and did not work over these past few months. It should better prepare us for the 'Defund CBC' sequel we all anticipate.

## Certificate Recognizes Volunteer Work

by Sylvie St-Onge



Ronald Cormier was a radio producer for news and public affairs at Radio-Canada Acadie in Moncton. He wrote several books, including **Forgotten Soldiers** (french version: *J'ai vécu la guerre*), **Bombs and Barb Wires**, (*Entre bombes et barbelés*) and **Les Acadiens et la Seconde Guerre mondiale**.

His knowledge of various world conflicts led him to write and direct four episodes of a series for History Television. He also served as historian for the Dieppe Veterans Association from 2003 to 2025 and as secretary of the Canada-France National Association from 1997 to 2025.

In July 2000, he was among the first members of the newly created Moncton chapter of the CBC/Radio-Canada Pensioners National Association. He served as secretary of the chapter for over 20 years.

To recognize all his years of dedicated and effective service, where he faithfully ensured continuity and consistency in our chapter's documents, the Hon. Louise Imbeault, Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, recently presented him with a certificate in recognition of his many years of volunteer work.

## Humour Kept Us Going: Travel Claims!

By Rich Knowles

Travelling was always fun at CBC, and I did a lot. When I retired, I had a desk drawer that was completely full of airplane boarding passes from all over Canada, the US and some to England and Europe. A scary collection if one had to pay for it. All of it legitimate for training and testing and development projects.

The travel office was very particular and wanted every dime accounted for. Proper thing!

I got in trouble for telling the truth when I submitted a claim that had a cab fare to the airport, but no charge for the return trip. That part was OK as we did not need receipts for cabs, however it bounced back to me with a terse note asking how I got home. I replied with some smart-assed answer that I got dropped off as they flew right over where I lived on the way to the airport, hence no charge. I had got a lift from a co-worker as I lived right next door to the office and we were both returning from Ottawa or some other exotic trip.

That wasn't good enough. They insisted that I had to charge a cab for all trips to and from the airport, so I obliged and finally submitted a travel form for all the taxis I had taken and kept track of but had not actually paid for. Dated correctly, neatly written and accurately accounted, they filled an entire travel form. I think the total was around \$400 as each trip was around \$35.00 as I recall. That got them really wound up as they had to go through all the corresponding forms I had filed and reconcile the whole shebang.

That disappeared into the adding machines, and I got paid. A while later I got a telex from HO accounting asking what the hell I was doing on all those trips. Please resubmit with trip details. Doggone!!! I did so and learned my lesson. From then on, no matter how I traveled, to where and when, I always filed a claim for taxis both to and from the airport. The noise went away. Phew!

## Halifax Chapter Report by Geoff Turnbull

Since the Christmas party, we have had four meetings which welcomed about 80 people to our monthly lunch and learn sessions at the Legion in Bedford. Highlights included a virtual talk with our national president, Dan Oldfield, and a report on our “Strengthen the CBC” campaign by Costas Halavrezos, who emceed our wildly successful Kitchen Party concert at the Carleton Hotel in Halifax.

A baker’s dozen performers, including top Nova Scotia singer-songwriters and two comedians, made it a memorable night.

## Moncton Chapter Report by Sylvie St-Onge

In June 2024, we held our lobster dinner, attended by nearly 90 people. We resumed our monthly meetings in September. We took inspiration from the Prince Edward Island project and created our own recruitment poster for the CBC and Radio-Canada employee lunch room in Moncton.

Every month, we send birthday greetings to our retirees whose birthday is during the month.

These greetings are either virtual card or paper card, for those who don’t have email access. Our retirees seem to appreciate that.

In December, nearly 100 people attended the Christmas dinner. This year, we collected donations for Crossroads for Women. We raised \$1,120 and also a few gifts. In February, we held our annual card tournament. We plan to hold it again next year, but probably in the fall when the weather is nicer.

On April 9, we had a Lunch and Learn with the Honourable Louise Imbeault, Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick. Before her retirement, Louise was the Atlantic Director of Radio-Canada. Many were very happy to see her again. More than 50 people attended.



The Honourable Louise Imbeault

We submitted a request to the Honourable Louise Imbeault, and she agreed to present a certificate to our secretary, Ronald Cormier, to thank him for all his years of service to our association. Ronald has been a member since July 2000 and was our secretary for over 20 years.

We will have our AGM on May 28th and we hope to recruit some new members for our board of directors and also an editor to help us contribute to the regional newsletter, Maritime Station Break. This year, we will be holding our lobster dinner on June 18.

## Cape Breton Chapter Report by Wendy Martin

Members of the Cape Breton chapter were busy this spring with advocacy work on behalf of the Strengthen the CBC campaign. Joan Weeks led the efforts to hand out postcards and circulate petitions.

Several members volunteered their time to sit at the shopping mall on a couple of occasions to talk with the public and gather signatures. Joan said many people expressed their support for the CBC and gratitude for the pensioners’ efforts.

The chapter’s next meeting will be on June 4th at St. Alban’s Hall, Whitney Pier from 12 - 1:30 pm.



## Fredericton/Saint John Chapter Report

### by Mary Pat Schutta



Three Fredericton/Saint John chapter members at the AGM: Elaine Bateman, Connell Smith and Christine Morris.

Our Fredericton/Saint John gatherings are always a highlight and since our membership is in two locations, we alternate between the two communities.

This year we decided to try new venues, which has added an element of discovery. In the late fall we met at 12 Neighbours in Fredericton, and learned about an innovative effort to help people find permanent housing.

At the end of May we will be meeting in Rothesay, at Villa Madonna, a retreat situated on the Kennebecasis River. It offers a spacious meeting area as well as a network of wooded walking trails on a large property.

Under the leadership of co-president Connell Smith the chapter formed an advocacy committee to raise awareness about the importance of the CBC to Canadians. They created a Facebook page (Let's Protect the CBC in New Brunswick) that counts 560 members, solicited videos of support from prominent community members, and distributed "CBC/Radio-Canada, Canada's Voice" postcards at several venues during the recent federal election campaign.

And last, but not least, our chapter continues to grow, adding six new members in 2024, for a total of 47.

## PEI Chapter Report

### By Kathy Large

A small Advocacy committee was formed to "Stand Up for CBC PEI" during the recent federal election. Past-president Ian Petrie chaired the group which included myself, Pat Martel and Barbi MacPherson. We decided to focus our efforts on making as many Island voters we could contact aware of the impact of their vote on future public broadcasting services in PEI.

Ian spoke to people at two Island farmers markets and handed out information about what programs would be lost if the CBC is "defunded". Barbi and I attended an all-candidates forum in Charlottetown and handed out information at the door. We also created conversation by posting daily to a Facebook group. Pat Martel interviewed all twenty of the candidates in PEI ridings and posted their comments on his Facebook page PEI Good News Only which has 64k followers and on our page as well. We did have some followers who were not CBC supporters but most of the 500+ followers we built up support CBC.

Our members gathered for a Christmas party in Charlottetown in early December. We welcomed seven new members to our chapter this year. Our annual general meeting and social will be held at the Brackley Community Centre on June 20th.



Hélène Branch was recognized at the AGM for her 4 years as French newsletter editor.

## New Members

**Bernice Arsenault** - NB - Surviving spouse  
**Mary-Jo Bennett** - NS - Creative Director - TV, Radio and online in Toronto  
**Rolande Basque** - NB - Surviving spouse  
**Michael Camp** - NB - Reporter, News reader, Network Producer in NB  
**Marcel Cantin** - NB - Transmitter technician  
**Serge Clavet** - NB - Cameraman  
**Maurice Doiron** - NB - Transmitter technician  
**Leonard Drake** - PE - Supervising technician  
**Mary Dubois** - NS - Surviving spouse of Roger Dubois  
**Sara Fraser** - PE - TV reporter and host and digital news journalist  
**Kevin Harvey** - NS - Cameraman - Local and National news  
**Edwin Elwood Hunter** - NB - Cameraman - Fredericton  
**Jean Laroche** - NS - Legislature reporter TV and Radio news  
**Francois Lejeune** - NB - Video Journalist  
**Heather McGrath** - PE - Communications for CBC PEI  
**Eva O'Hanley** - PE - studio director, technician and co-producer on Mainstreet  
**Bruce Rennie** - NS - Local and National host - News and Sports  
**James Swenson** - NS - News Editor - Toronto

**Mike Trenchard** - NS - Technical Supervisor - CBC Nova Scotia  
**Angela Walker** - PE - news editor/presenter  
**Pam Warren** - NS - surviving spouse of Gordie Warren  
**Eric Woolliscroft** - NS - cameraperson - for Local and National news, Olympics  
**Kevin Yarr** - PE - digital news journalist

## Deceased Members

**Laura Bennet** - NS - surviving spouse of Jim Bennet  
**Shirley Blue** - NB - NB - Director of Radio, Edmonton, AB  
**Romeo Boudreau** - NB - video editor  
**Robert Conrad** - NS - Sales Nova Scotia  
**Roger Dubois** - NS - Cameraman, Corner Brook  
**Rose Jenkins** - NS - surviving spouse  
**Donald Langis** - NB - Senior Editor - Radio Canada - Moncton Chapter Pres., National VP and National President  
**Peter Loucks** - NS - Dir. of Radio and TV producer in Halifax  
**Andy Moir** - NS - Exec. of Nova Scotia News  
**Paul Scott** - NS - Switcher CBC Halifax  
**Doris Walker** - NS - surviving spouse of Doug Walker  
**Kelvin Wallace** - NS

# How to Connect with your Association

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