

MAIN LINE NEWSLETTER

CNPA Southwestern Ontario Council C7

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For meeting information and upcoming events,

See Pg 8.

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CN Pensions and Benefits Administration

1-800-361-0739

Pensioners' Web Portal:

cnbenefits.hroffice.com

It will allow you to access relevant pension information, update your address and banking information.

On your first visit, you will need to register. You will then be able to access the portal using your CN PIN (login ID) and the password you create.

If you require assistance with registering or logging in, please call Pensioners' Help Line 1-800-361-0739

CNPA National Web Site: www.cnpensioners.org

CNPA English Facebook Pg: www.facebook.com/cn.pensioners.9/ CNPA French

Facebook Pg: www.facebook.com/cnpa.french.3/

Important

When a pensioner/surviving spouse moves or dies,

CN Pension and Benefits Administration needs to be advised immediately by calling

1-800-361-0739.

As well you immediately let your local council,

Louise Bayer, Membership,
519-438-2433,
lbayer2022@gmail.com, know as well.



CENTENARIANS CELEBRATE THEIR 100TH BIRTHDAYS

George Lawrance

September 24, 2024 Stratford, Ontario. George has been living in his home for 74 years, his wife passing away 2 years ago, his son Brian Lawrance now lives with his father. George worked in the Drafting Department and as a Boiler Maker, until the CNR Shops in Stratford closed. He then went to work at Cooper- Bessmer until they closed in 1986. Presentation was made by Council C7 VP Ken Roberts.



Stratford Shops

When Charles Hayes took over as President in 1896, he kicked off a series of modernizations across the entire network. Grand Trunk targeted their two largest shops, Stratford and the one in Battle Creek, Michigan. The new shops took shape at Stratford around the existing locomotive shops, and other buildings were torn down and replaced. One new building was a Tender Shop which opened in 1903, and in 1909 the new Motive Power Shops were completed. Charles Hayes himself was present for the opening ceremonies. Further expansions took place through the 1910s. The locomotive shops alone took up 185,000 square feet in their final form. Electric cranes could lift the largest locomotives in the Grand Trunk fleet. Staff on-site could conduct complete rebuilds of even the worst locomotives. The shops continued to employ thousands with solid Union positions, and often these jobs were generational, with three generations of workers being in the employ of the railroad. When Canadian National took over in 1923, they gained the largest motive power shops in Canada staffed by a highly-skilled workforce. The shops could even support the new Northern type locomotives starting to roll out of the Montreal Locomotive Works and even outstripped the expanded Spadina Yards in Toronto. Workers here would join other Unionized workers in the Stratford General Strike of 1931. By the post-war era, Canadian National had started the long process of diesel-electric as their primary motive power and large shops like Stratford were no longer needed. Through the second half of the 1950s, the shops slowly shut down, and among their final tasks were preparing several Northern locomotives for service as tourist trains. The shops closed in 1964.



Percy Campbell

December 21st, 2024 London, Ontario.

A family celebration was held for Percy's 100th Birthday in London. Working in Southwestern Ontario as a Station Agent in Strathroy and then in the London Dispatching office in the Hot Box office monitoring the chart recording of all train traffic covered in that dispatching area. Presentation of the CN/CNPA birthday award was made by Ken Roberts VP London C7 Council.



Happy New Year & Good Health for 2025.

As we start a new year, your Executive would like to do something different for our meetings.

We now have a larger membership and area to cover, to reconnect with as many members as possible. We will be holding meetings throughout this enlarged district. The locations and dates of meetings/events can be found on page 8 of the newsletter. The newsletters throughout the year will list the upcoming events as the year progresses. Put the dates on your calendar and plan on coming out to these events and reconnect with others

Our first gathering will be our Spring Luncheon, March 20th at Richards Memorial United Church in London. Then we will be in Komoka at the Hill Side Restaurant on April 24th for lunch with members. The third gathering will be in Sarnia on June 4th for breakfast with the members in the Sarnia area. That does not stop a member from our council from attending all the gathering and luncheons that we have planned.

We are looking to travel to Windsor as well, no date or time has been set as yet. We are looking for members in the Windsor area to help us find a location. Members there are encouraged to contact a member of the executive with suggestions of possible locations in Windsor. There will be a fall meeting this year to have the Election of Executive Officers to manage the affairs of this council, at present there is a vacant position of an Alternate Delegate to the OPC to be filled. The OPC meetings are held via a virtual ZOOM meeting on the Internet.

The date, time and place of this meeting will be in our next Newsletter.

And finally, a Christmas Luncheon is planned for December 11th at Richards Memorial United Church in London again this year and will be listed in the next two newsletters.

Do not forget to keep your mailing and e-mail address up to date, with CN Pension and Benefits Administration 1-800-361-0739 and with Louise Bayer at 519-438-2433 or lbayer2022@gmail.com

Hope To See You This Year



David presents a cheque from CN in recognition of his volunteer service to Kelly Gee, Exercise Program Coordinator for the Victorian Order of Nurses.



CN Railroaders 
in the Community

Energizing seniors through fitness and fun

Retiree **David Dougherty** decided to be active in his community of Elora, ON, and is doing just that – as an Exercise Leader for seniors. About 8 hours a week, David can be found teaching stretching and balance exercises to seniors at three nursing homes and one seniors' condo. "The Smart Exercise Program" is offered free of charge by the Victorian Order of Nurses, a 127-year-old organization that provides home and community support services. "75% of participants have mobility issues and sit in chairs for the 30-minute program. I put on Jim Reeves' greatest hits and they love it!" says David, who worked as a Rail Traffic Controller in Toronto for 35 years before retiring in 2000.

For about nine years after leaving CN, David drove a shuttle bus ferrying travelers from Guelph, ON, to Pearson International Airport. He later drove a school bus for 9 years, a job he greatly enjoyed before it was cut short due to Covid. The move into leading fitness programs for seniors came by chance. "I had been doing classes at my church and someone asked if I would like to do something similar for the VON," recalls David. "So, I signed up for a 2-day course on how to work with seniors and it took off from there. 90% of my community service today is spent on these exercise sessions as well as volunteering as a member of my condo board."

David has no plans of slowing down. "What's not to love?" asks David, who has been nominated for the Lady Ishbel Aberdeen Award, the VON's top honour, for his service. "I am 79-years old and this gets me out of my La-Z-Boy."

I meet lovely people in the community who look forward to my visits. They continuously pat me on the back because they feel invigorated after exercise and cheer as I come into a room. They treat me like a rock star!" CN recently issued a cheque for \$2,250 to the VON Chapter in Wellington County in recognition of David's volunteer hours under the Railroaders in the Community Program. "A fellow dispatcher told me about the program. He and his wife planted trees for just a few hours and his organization received a cheque from CN for their volunteer time. It's an amazing program that directly benefits charities. The VON serves so many people in need in our communities across Canada and CN's funds will help support their good work. I am very happy about that."



2024 Christmas Dinner at Richards Memorial Church London

A Turkey dinner was served complete with cake and ice cream. Door prizes and a gift exchange added to the festive spirit.



Did you Know

The five-day, 40-hour work week was established on June 1, 1951, as a result of an arbitration award following an eight-day strike by employees of the two major Canadian railways in August 1950.



"For the 50th Year CNPA celebration Council C7 purchased lapel pins for the occasion. These will be distributed at the meetings and Luncheons. Come out to these events and receive a pin."



Presentation made to the Komoka Railway Museum December 19, 2024.

Secretary/Treasurer Rick Dixon and Vice President Ken Roberts made a \$500 donation to the Komoka Railway Museum we also donated to the museum, a copy of the CN Book 100 Years of Building a Legacy Together



Dan Oatman Komoka Railway Museum:

On behalf of the museum, we would like to inquire if any of the retirees would like to volunteer to assist in the restoration of our Central Vermont/Grand Trunk Caboose. We would need individuals with knowledge of painting, painting logos etc. as well as assistance in the interior restoration as well. In addition, if anyone would like to assist in the fund raising for the restoration project, we would welcome their participation. I would be pleased to meet with a representative from your association to discuss details and answer any questions that there might be. The museum can be contacted one of the following ways:

My telephone number: 226-973-5202

Museum email address: station-master@komokarailmuseum.ca

Yours truly,

Dan Oatman
Dan Oatman
President,
Komoka Railway Museum



CN Sarnia Yard

Sarnia is Canada’s the second largest chemicals cluster in Canada. The Sarnia-Lambton Petrochemical & Refining Complex has grown to include three refineries and more than 35 interconnected chemical facilities. In 1959, CNR invested \$5,000,000 into expanding the yard in anticipation of DuPont of Canada’s new plant for the manufacture of Sclair polyethylene resin.

The expansion facilitated the sorting of eastbound cars from the United States. This made it possible to make up trains bound at Sarnia instead of at a London or other classifying yards. The yard expansion included roadway overpasses. Sarnia yard is the largest flat switching yard in the Great Lakes District. The Sarnia Yard is divided into 2 zones. The first zone is A-Yard which consists of approximately 47 tracks running from east to west. It is primarily used for assembling and disassembling trains and for classifying traffic. All movements within A-Yard, including those on the main track and at the entry and exit to the yard, are controlled by the yard. CN Sarnia Rail Yard has a car capacity of 1,600 cars and a normal daily working capacity of approximately 1,100 cars. The Sarnia yard is about 2 miles east of the east porthole of the Sarnia-Port Huron tunnel. The second zone in Sarnia Yard is C-Yard, which is a separate switching yard located west of A-Yard. Sarnia’s 2.2-mile-long C Yard is the support yard for the city’s chemical manufacturers—it can store more than 1000 tank cars at a time, and over 7000 cars pass through the yard weekly. C-Yard consists of approximately 30 tracks also running from east to west. The C-Yard also assists with classification of freight traffic. This is also the landing point for the industrial spur lines.

Viral Media Face Book

Letter to the Editor

Why participate in your pensioners' association?

Often, I am tempted to share my thoughts with a letter to the editor. Seldom do I follow through, but this is an exception!

Last year, following an appeal in this newsletter, I decided to volunteer with our pensioners' association. Probably because no one else stepped up, I was voted in as an Alternate Delegate to the Ontario Provincial Association.

Since my retirement in 1997 I have always been a member of the CNPA, but for a lot of reasons, never did more than read the newsletters. Oh, I attended a couple of luncheon meetings after I moved to London in 2007 - mostly because I was invited by a couple of people with whom I had worked while in Montreal.

Why did I not get involved? Well I was keeping busy doing other things. We had started spending winters in Florida and I volunteered in our homeowners' association. Then in summer, we were busy visiting family both in the Maritimes and western Canada. There always seemed to be something else to do whenever there was a meeting...

As we get older, most of us seem to prefer getting less involved in many things. But let me give you a couple of reasons why you should seriously consider participating in activities of the Southwestern Ontario Council of the CN Pensioners' Association.

1. Research concludes that as you get older, social activities provide health benefits. Getting together with former workmates, trading "war stories", and maybe "bitching" about stuff that irritates you is a social activity. Your council provides a great opportunity to do that - it even subsidizes a part of the luncheon cost!
2. While for the most part, our pensions are fixed, CNPA plays a role on your behalf. One of your fellow association members is co-chair of the CN Pension Committee. This provides us an opportunity to have a say in the annual top-up that is based on the investment returns of our Pension Fund.

3. The CNPA, not CN, is the body that has responsibility for the contract covering our extended health benefits. The Health Committee negotiates with Blue Cross in regards to what is covered as well as the related fees. (I didn't know that until I got more involved...)

The meetings give you an opportunity to address these important reasons, plus you get lunch! Yes, you will get the same updates as you see in your newsletters, but hearing in person and having the chance to comment or ask questions is so much better!

Make an effort to join us at the next luncheon - meet old associates and make new ones. Suggest how we can make the meetings more interesting...

Bob Gallant

Assistive Technology Made Easy: Exploring the AccessATCanada Navigation Portal

- Matching the right assistive technology with the right users can be challenging, making it difficult to understand which technologies, services and supports may be right for you.
- Existing research highlights the potential benefits of a vast range of assistive technology, but highlights the need to carefully weigh individual needs, goals, and preferences when selecting and adopting these technologies.
- The AccessATCanada navigation portal provides users with customizable search options tailored to individual needs to identify assistive technology funding and service programs in Canada

Imagine needing assistive technology to improve daily life but being overwhelmed by countless programs, devices, and eligibility rules. Navigating this maze to find the right support shouldn't be so challenging—which is where an intuitive, all-in-one portal comes in, simplifying the search for life-changing resources.

The **Navigation Portal** (funded by AGE-WELL) is a comprehensive tool for exploring assistive technology funding and service programs across Canada. Users can personalize their search by jurisdiction (province, territory, national-level programs), assistive technology category (e.g., mobility, communication, sensory), program type (e.g., government, charity), and eligibility criteria, including age, specific conditions (like dementia or hearing loss), and unique population groups (e.g., veterans, refugees). Each program listing details covered devices and services, enabling users to quickly evaluate a program's suitability before accessing more information through provided links.

The first step to getting the right assistive technology, services, and support designed to meet your needs starts with the Navigation Portal. <https://www.accessassistivetech.ca/>

Did you Know Via has luggage size restriction

Example: Escape Class

1 Personal Item must fit under seat in front of you.

Max. Size : 43 x 33 x 15 cm

1 Carry on item

Max size: 64 x 41x 30 cm Max. weight 23 kg

1 additional carry-on item

Fee: \$25.00 + tax per direction

Max. size: 76 x 48 x 30 cm

Max. weight: 23 kg.

All class of travel have luggage size restrictions and charges more information can be found on VIA web site:

<https://www.viarail.ca/en/plan/baggage>

CNPA Council C7 Membership

2025 Meeting & Event Schedule

red is for information only

January to May 2025

**March 20th Spring Luncheon & Meeting
Richards Memorial Church**

April 07th OPC Meeting

April 10th Executive Meeting

**April 24th Meeting Hillside Restaurant
Komoka**

May 15th Executive Meeting

May 21st Pension Meeting Montreal

**Dec. 11th Christmas Luncheon & Meeting
Richards Memorial Church**

Dec. 1st OPC Meeting

**March 20th Spring Luncheon Richards Memorial
Church** 360 Edgeworth Ave, London, ON N5W 5C4

To be Served Roast Beef dinner and pies for dessert

Contact Louise Bayer before March 10th,2025 - RSVP

April 24th Meeting Hillside Restaurant Komoka
26 Kilworth Park Dr, Komoka, ON N0L 1R0

Contact Louise Bayer before April 9th,2025 - RSVP

Please contact Louise at 519-438-2433.

From the Desk of Louise Bayer

I hope everyone had a good Christmas and New Years and are looking forward to spring and warm weather.

A reminder to all our Local Paid members only: your 2025 Membership dues of \$12.00 are due Jan. 1, 2025. If you have not already sent your 2025 dues, please mail them now to: Louise Bayer, 693 Brant St., London, Ontario N5Y 3M9.


If you want to send \$24.00 for two years dues that would save you postage and a check next year, etc. and both of us work. The check must be made payable to the CN Pensioners Association. If you are not sure if you are classified as "Local Paid." Please contact Louise at 519-438-2433.

To All members: it is very important if you move, get a new phone number, address or new email address. then you let me know of same so I can keep our database updated. I wish you all the best for 2025

We hope more of you will come out to our meetings in 2025 to socialize and provide your input.

Louise Bayer
Membership

Current obituaries



Wankli Irene Edith	2024-09-01
Holmes Donald E	2024-09-16
Payson Elgin	2024-09-18
Gatt Connie	2024-09-26
Dewar Mary E	2024-10-03
Turford Edwin	2024-10-06
Goodman Catherine	2024-10-07
Nicoll Gordon	2024-10-07
Sirey Dan A	2024-10-07
Bebee Mark M	2024-10-09
Kocher June P.	2024-10-14
Gunning Edward M	2024-10-16
Patterson Raymond T	2024-10-25
Forbes Gwendolyn	2024-11-08
Bossence Bruce	2024-11-09
Devlin James A	2024-11-19
Veenstra Gloria	2024-11-27