



## **RAIL HEROES: 2004**

### **Ron Lawless**

Ron Lawless led the team that introduced domestic and, later, international containerization to CN and its freight customers, and successfully prepared the railway for privatization in the mid-nineties.

Today, intermodal transport is the North American railroad industry's biggest single commodity, and its' fastest growing traffic segment. Lawless, whose career spanned 52 years, remains active in the community as President and Chairman of the Board of the Montreal not-for-profit Old Brewery Mission -- which has been caring for the community's destitute since 1889.

He is past-president of VIA Rail Canada and of Bishop's University, and is a Governor Emeritus of Concordia University.

### **Sir John A. Macdonald**

As Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald's contributions to the creation of the Dominion of Canada have been well-documented. While instrumental in bringing about Confederation, it was his dream of linking the new nation of Canada from sea to sea with a transcontinental railway that made him a key historical figure in the development of the Canadian Pacific Railway ("CPR").

Born in Glasgow, Scotland in 1815, Macdonald came to Kingston in 1820 with his parents. After studying law, he opened a law office in Kingston when he was only 19 years old. He became involved in public life as well at an early age, and eventually became involved with provincial politics. He later helped form the Liberal-Conservative party, which was the forerunner of today's Conservative party.

After the creation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, Macdonald became involved with the promotion and building of railways—essential then to nation building. Macdonald knew that a railway would be critical to unite the vast nation, and ensure its future economic development.

The Intercolonial Railway between Quebec City and Halifax was created during his first term, and the dream that would become the CPR would also begin to take shape. As an inducement for British Columbia to join Confederation, Macdonald offered to connect the west coast and Quebec with a railway within 10 years. As a result, British Columbia joined Confederation in 1871.

Although set back by the "Pacific Scandal" in 1873, Macdonald rebounded after spending five years in opposition, and was re-elected in 1878. It was during this second term in office that completion of the CPR took place.

Starting in 1880 with the awarding of a construction contract, Macdonald worked through political instability, the Riel Rebellion, and almost impossible financial odds to see the eventual completion of the CPR in November 1885. He remained Prime Minister until his death on June



6, 1891. He was knighted for his efforts in nation building—which included the construction of the Great Railway!