Of all the forces that fired the Canadian spirit and united the growing country from coast to coast, nothing rivalled the railway and public broadcasting. It’s only fitting that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/Radio Canada should fete its 50 years of bilingual radio and TV with a special VIA Rail-sponsored train tour from Vancouver to Halifax Sept. 6 – Oct. 5. The specially equipped train leaves Vancouver on Sept. 7 for an exciting month of live broadcasts, entertainment, interactive exhibits, and retrospective and memorabilia displays sure to provoke pride and nostalgia.

The birthday train makes 19 station stops enroute to Halifax, including Kamloops, Jasper, Edmonton, Biggar, Saskatoon, Melville, Winnipeg, Sioux Lookout, Capreol, Sudbury, Toronto, Windsor, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City, Campbellton, and Moncton. There will also be celebrations in Victoria, Calgary, Regina, Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Charlottetown, Fredericton, St. John’s and Iqaluit.

At each train stop the public is invited to hop aboard the CBC-TV/Radio-Canada Memories Museum Exhibit Car for a bilingual exhibit on the colourful history of the CBC and Radio Canada. Displays feature antique cameras and microphones, sports paraphernalia, costumes, sets, and props from five decades of popular kids’ shows, video highlights, historic photos, digital archives – and more!

Get up close and personal as the CBC-TV/Radio-Canada Studio Car broadcasts live programs, including CBC Newsworld Morning with Colleen Jones, Canada Now, Ce Soir, and others to be announced. After touring the mobile production facility car fitted with 55 TV monitors, test your nerves at being a news anchor and “broadcast” a news story on a mock set. Activity tents offer more interactive fun, from adding your brushstrokes to the mural travelling coast-to-coast, to meeting personalities from all realms of broadcasting, to exploring the set of Hockey Night in Canada.

While the CBC-TV/Radio-Canada 50th Anniversary VIA Rail Train rolls over the great Canadian landscape, TV cameras will roll in studios across the nation, producing specials and series devoted to comedy, documentary, retrospectives. Some of them are:

LANDED is an eight-part series shot in Yellowknife, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Fredericton, and Halifax, documenting the experiences of six new Canadian immigrants. (Premieres Sept. 12 at 8:00 p.m.)

LIFE & TIMES: Canada’s premier biography series presents CBC’s biggest stars and the programs that made them famous, from Don Messer’s first fiddle to Barbara Frum’s last interview. (Sept. 6 to Oct. 6)

INSIDE INFORMATION is a fascinating three-part series (premiering Sept. 17 at 8:00 p.m.) delving behind the scenes into the world of CBC news-gathering. Stories from the War Zone celebrates those brave
CBC-TV war correspondents who have brought their shattering stories – from Vietnam to Israel – into the nation’s living rooms.

Stories from the Hill traces the evolution of CBC’s political coverage (and ensuing tensions between media and government) – from the legendary Norman Depoe to CBC-TV’s current political dynamo, Julie Van Dusen. (Sept. 18 at 9:00 p.m.)

Stories from the Street documents the evolution of crime reporting. How far has the CBC come since the 1952 broadcast on Toronto’s notorious bank-robbing Boyd Gang? How do TV journalists flush out their quarry with ambush interviews, hidden cameras, and microphones? (Tune in Sept. 19 at 9:00 p.m.)

ONE ENCHANTED EVENING
Everybody loves bloopers. This delightful three-hour show celebrates the innocent days of live TV, when actors in suspense dramas answered telephones before they rang and dead bodies went on breathing long after they were gunned down! (Sept. 22 at 7 p.m.)

TUNING IN: FIFTY YEARS ON THE CBC is a five-part series blending history, reality, documentary, and humour to show how CBC-TV has shaped and reflected Canadian life since 1952. Host Rick Mercer talks to Canadians in popular spots, from donut shops to curling rinks, hockey arenas, and supermarkets – to find out how CBC-TV has touched the lives of Canadians. (Premieres Sept. 30 at 9:00 p.m.)

For up-to-date information and programming on CBC-TV/Radio-Canada’s 50th Anniversary VIA Rail Train see www.cbc.ca/tv50th or www.radio-canada.ca/50

Seniors, bring a friend for FREE!

Plan a weekend escape or go for a day excursion with a loved one. Until February 28, 2003, buy a seniors’ Economy class train ticket at full fare and your friend of any age travels free*. Call your travel agent or VIA Rail Canada for full details. You can also reserve online!

* Other conditions and blackout dates apply.