



Paul Joseph Macdonald

February 22, 2026

PAUL JOSEPH MACDONALD

April 27th, 1946 – February 22nd, 2026

Paul, a beloved son, brother, uncle, community leader, and friend, passed away on February 22nd, 2026 from heart and kidney complications. Born in Montréal, Quebec, he lived a life centred on justice, solidarity, and human rights. A pioneer of the gay liberation movement in Canada, Paul organized the first lesbian and gay rights demonstration on Parliament Hill in August 1971. A founding member of *The Body Politic*, the country's first significant gay publication, Paul was unflinching in his efforts to dismantle homophobia at a time of open hostility toward the gay community. Forever engaged with the political issues of the day, he was also wonderful company - a raconteur who enjoyed the finer things in life: a long lunch, a chinwag with friends at local haunts on Church Street or at the 519, or a Puccini opera enjoyed from the cheap seats.

A graduate of the University of Waterloo, Paul worked in the audio industry and spent most of his career at Bay Bloor Radio in Toronto. In his later years, Paul was active in the congregation of St. Matthias, and cherished his time with his 'prime timers' crew, remaining deeply embedded in the community he had long served.

Paul proudly embraced his Québécois heritage and always felt at home in la belle province. His family will forever remember him as a fixture at réveillon dinners, arriving with his much-revered oyster soup and regaling everyone with stories of his travels – whether his days as a traveling salesman, his stint as a schoolteacher in England, or from his many sojourns around the globe. His encyclopedic-like knowledge ranged from the confit de canard on a dinner menu in the south of France to the intricacies of Japan's train signal system.

Paul was predeceased by his parents, Renée and Frank MacDonald. He will be greatly missed by his sisters Nancy Baines, Christine Biggar, Teresa Fielding, his P.E.I cousins (The Stewarts), as well as his many nieces and nephews. He also leaves behind a wide circle of friends in Toronto and around the world. At Paul's request, there will be no funeral; a celebration of life will be held in Toronto, to be announced at a later date. Donations in Paul's memory can be made to

Egale Canada <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/egale/> the

Rainbow Railroad <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/rainbow-railroad/>

or

Parish of St. Matthias (Bellwoods) <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/132071168RR0001-st-matthias-church/>

Tribute Wall

PD

“ I was deeply saddened to learn of Paul's passing. I met Paul in 2008, and we remained friends for many years. Although I lived in Ottawa and Paul lived in Toronto, distance never prevented us from maintaining our friendship. We visited one another when we could and shared many good conversations and memories over the years.

Paul was a kind, warm, and caring friend whose friendship meant a great deal to me. I will always remember his smile, his generosity, and the genuine interest he took in the people around him. I am grateful for the years of friendship we shared and for the memories that will remain with me. Paul touched many lives, including mine, and he will be greatly missed.

My sincere condolences to Paul's family and loved ones.

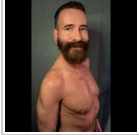
Rest in peace, my friend.

Prince Dagher - June 08 at 08:33 PM

ST

“ Photograph and memory (jim croche) u tube. Rest un peace my friend. James f. White Stevens at.choum

stevens - April 22 at 06:21 PM



“ It is with great sorrow that I heard of Paul's death, and I send my sincere condolences to his family and other friends--his chosen family. I met Paul when I moved to Canada in 1979 to work at the same audio manufacturing company in Toronto as the chief engineer. We immediately became close friends, and as a pioneer of LGBTQ rights, he taught me an immense amount about how we see ourselves and how best to organize and fight. We worked together on audio during the day, and on gay rights at night. Paul had an immense impact on gay rights in Canada, including being an important part of establishing a potent and professional publication that guided countless people in their shared struggle, "The Body Politic," which I would rush out to get as soon as each issue was published. He introduced me to experienced and knowledgeable civil rights leaders with whom I was fortunate to work. When the Toronto police raided the gay bathhouses, which were largely attended by closeted men, many in marriages, we were heavily involved in the group, "The Right to Privacy Committee," that would lead the fight to pay for their legal defenses to exonerate them. These leaders taught us how to use civil disobedience to press for change, which did come after we repeatedly shut down major intersections and streets in protest. The education and training he provided did not end with LGBTQ rights. While I was relatively politically active in college, Paul supercharged my interest in geopolitics, beginning with my following his lead in taking a shortwave radio to hear the BBC from anywhere in the world. I always enjoyed his company tremendously when I had the opportunity to visit Toronto through the years. There were never enough visits.

I do not have the date of the attached photo, but for some reason, it was taken in my lab in Toronto, so it was taken while I lived there.



Kevin Roderick - March 03 at 08:12 PM



“ I don't remember the first time I met Paul, but no doubt it was at a demo or meeting, around the time of the founding of *The Body Politic*. My photos of the time show him in marches, always holding a banner or placard. Peter and I left Toronto in 1991, but when Facebook became a "thing", we re-connected with him. This photo shows him in October, 2011, with his "Lambda-limo" in the parking lot of Tim Hortons in Perth, ON. We had met with him there for the first time since leaving Toronto, and we spent over 2 hours over coffee catching up on things. But he had places to go and people to meet, so he drove away, on his way to Ottawa. Rest in peace and power, Paul !



Charles Dobie - March 01 at 08:34 PM

HB

“ I met Paul at the first meeting of the collective of *The Body Politic*, the gay liberation newspaper. He wore a beret and military coat and looked intimidatingly radical. But before long I realized what a gentle, sweet guy he was. He nursed an impossible crush for Herb Spiers who had written the *We Demand* document for the first Gay March on Ottawa, in which Paul had taken part. In later years, I would see Paul at Bay-Bloor Radio and sometimes buy stereo equipment from him. Sad to see our cadre of early liberationists being winnowed. Rest in power, Paul!

Hugh Brewster - February 28 at 01:12 PM

MJ

“ A great friend of mine. Very shocked to hear about this. He’s been on my mind lately. Everything said about him here is so true. I was planning on visiting him, but life got in the way. We had great convos about the history of the LGBT community, and many other things. Many great outings at Pride and to see shows in the theatre and whatnot. It’s all very sad. I’ll always remember him though as someone who stood for what they knew was right no matter what.

Mohammed Jalloh - February 28 at 12:41 PM

LK

“ I met Paul in 1973 when I came to Toronto from Ohio with a friend. We stayed in touch after that visit, developing a fast friendship. Beginning in the 80s we made annual trips to each other’s home for 30 years. I count him as one of the best friends I have had. I talked with him in January, and as many times before, he told me he was not afraid of dying. I will miss my good friend. May he rest in peace.
Larry Klingler

Larry Klingler - February 24 at 09:18 PM

JM

“ I have visited Paul several times over the years. He was such a gracious host each and every time. Over the years we visited Montreal and Quebec City and of course Toronto. I am so sorry for the loss of Paul.

Jon Miller - February 24 at 08:15 PM

AR

Paul and I would discuss the Saturday opera on CBCFM when we met Friday for Fish&Salad.

He seemed an expert on every subject and was interested in everything.

They will be so sad when the Fish&Salad place finds out that Paul won't have his usual there tomorrow.

They yelled out well-wishing greetings of 'GET BETTER PAUL!' over my phone while he was at St Mike's.

It was a wonderful gesture and it made Paul happy to hear from the server that he would be holding his order for him.

I knew him from Bay -Bloor Radio days where he told me he kept in touch with the store for decades.

He hooked me on \$10 Pralines and Creme from Baskin&Robbins, when the 31st of the month came.

We'll live in your honour Paul.

Alex Ross - February 26 at 08:20 PM

FR

Paul was churchwarden at St Matthias' Bellwoods parish when I was interim priest there. He was a huge support to me and we kept in touch after I left the parish, occasionally meeting for a drink (or two) and chat at his favorite bar on Church Street. A true gentleman and a trail-blazer for gay rights and for the dignity and worth of all people. May he rest in peace and rise with Christ in glory.

Fr Rob Ross - February 27 at 11:37 AM