

[Page 90 - Part One of a Two-Part Story: We Worked for General Instruments](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 49](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1988/8/1

there. I went down to Albert's Tavern, and I sat down and got loaded. I was there for about two hours, and the personnel manager landed at the tavern looking for me. "Come back." I said, "No, I'm not going back." He said--the fellow I had a fight with, Sam-- he said, "Sam said to take you back, 'And if you have to give him a little raise, give it to him to get him back.'" And he told me this. He was a Cape Bretoner. See, this is how you work with a Cape Bretoner. You tell him the truth'. I went in, and I sat down with him. (Sam) said, "Are you coming back?" I said, "Yeah. Give us some more money." "No," he said. And I was half in the bag then, full of beer. I said, "Well, shove the job. I don't need it. It's not worrying me." "Okay," he said, "we'll give you \$10." I said, "\$25 more a week." He said, "Okay." Marie Duguid (Was there a union from the very beginning at General Instruments?) Yes-. And it was Local 1818 (International Brotherhood of Electrical Wprkers) from New Glasgow. And we were just a sub-unit off of it--Unit 2. Isobel Cooper came along this day, and she said to me, "Would you do us a favour?" I said, "What's that?" "Would you take shop steward?" I had a bit of union experience because I had a milkman that was interested in unions. And he always had his toast and tea with me--he was from Sydney. And he came in and he talked union for about an hour, and when he had a big union problem, he talked for two h6urs. And I kind of knew a bit about union, and I took shop steward. (How often did the union meet here, have its own meetings?) At first about every 3 or 4 months. Then we started having once a month. (And what was the purpose of the meetings?) Just more or less, to know if anybody had any problems, to bring them there. Although we didn't get good repre? sentation at the meetings. Never did. We didn't get any good representation because --everybody, when they had a problem, brought it to their shop stewards. We had one in each area.of the plant. But getting back to--I was shop steward. Then they had an election. And I didn't run for office. And this guy, he took presi? dent. And he didn't like it. He kept in it for about 2 or 3 months, I think. I took vice-president. He said, "I can't put up with those women. They're crazy"--he thought the women were too nitpicky--every? body had a complaint. He said, "Would you take over president?" I said, "Okay. But we'll call a meeting and have an election." We called the meeting, and nobody ran against me. (And how long did you remain president?) -Right till the day it closed. for Liiac he j.exi. were Luo nj-tpicky .-'; r-very- thing. They had to do too many tuners an hour, and they had to do this, and--just complained for no reason. No reason to com? plain. And maybe trying to keep the atten? dance up. Attendance was poor at the start. Come, say, '69, '70, you had a good work force there. But '67, '68, and part of '69 --no, you didn't. They'd work for 10 weeks --this was another thing you had to watch very closely. They'd work 10 weeks--leave. After maybe 20 or 30 weeks--they'd get un? employment- -they 'd be back. If they were a good worker, you'd take them back. Some did that as high as 2 or 3 times. (What were some of the other things the girls complained about?) Well, maybe run- BAY SEAFOODS LIMITED ===== Your Seafood House = LIVE & COOKED LOBSTERS FRESH & SALT FISH - BONELESS COD



YEAR ROUND • WE WILL SHIP ANY WHERE • 849-1422 849-1423 After 5 p.m.:
849-2388 P. O. Box 346 Harbour Street GLACE BAY, NOVA SCOTIA Don Kerr
Insurance Agency Ltd. 17 Commercial Street P.O. Box 370 COMPLETE INSURANCE
REQUIREMENTS Phone 849-7882 GLACE BAY B1A5V4