



## New Brunswick Human Rights Commission

**Alanna Palmer**

**A New Brunswick human rights hero**

My hero is Gordon Fairweather. He was the Member of Parliament for Queens County at a time that my grandparents were living in Havana Cuba. They had stayed after the revolution because they were pro-Castro and, “Oh, it’s just another coup and we’ll get rid of a corrupt president.” And then, when things turned unhappy for them—ugly for them—and their packages were being censored and letters from children—from us—were being censored, we appealed to our Member of Parliament for help to get my grandfather, who was the sole remaining person there, out of the country. It took many years and a lot of intervention on his part to help get the release of my grandfather. And he went on to become—Gordon Fairweather did—the first commissioner at the Human Rights Commission, and he went on to work with the Immigration and Refugee Board. He had a personal connection to me that he never knew about. We honoured him at the 35th anniversary of the Commission with a Pioneer Award. So he’s the one I admire the most, I think, in the long line of New Brunswickers who have been instrumental—I mean, from Humphrey, Kinsella and so on, and Louis Robichaud with the Equal Opportunity Act. Gordon Fairweather ranks very high in my own personal story.