



Isle of Man Branch

Report of the Chairman of the Branch Executive Committee for the period January 2014 to December 2014

1. The aims of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association are to promote knowledge of the constitutional, legislative, economic, social and cultural aspects of parliamentary democracy. It does this among other things by arranging Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences, and other conferences, seminars, meetings and study groups; and by promoting visits between Members of the Branches of the Association.

On-Island activities in 2014

2. Early in 2014 we welcomed Ms Chrystal Robinson, Clerk to the Cabinet in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Ms Robinson was in the Island on a two-week secondment with the Chief Secretary's Office to gain practical minute-taking and writing experience.
3. In March the annual Commonwealth Day Dinner was held for the second time in the Barrool Suite, Legislative Buildings. Entertainment was provided by Mera Royle (harp). The guest speaker was Chairman of the House of Commons Select Committee on International Development, Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Bruce MP. An invitation was extended to the United Nations Association and others who might find Sir Malcolm's address of interest and it was good to share our evening with non-parliamentarians for the first time.
4. In April we were pleased to host a four-day study visit for Ms Collette Langlois, the acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Northwest Territories, Canada. Ms Langlois attended a training programme arranged by the Office of the Clerk of Tynwald during which she studied the parliamentary procedures and administrative functions of Tynwald and observed the Hansard voice recognition system in operation.
5. In July at Tynwald Day, the honoured guests this year included the following fellow parliamentarians from neighbouring CPA branches:
 - The Right Honourable Chris Grayling MP – Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice
 - Mr Chris Kelly MP – MP for Dudley South
 - Mrs Eleanor Laing MP – Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, MP for Epping Forest
 - The Right Honourable Tricia Marwick MSP – Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, MSP for Mid Fife and Glenrothes

- Mr Sean Rogers MLA – Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly for South Down

6. Later in July the annual sitting of Junior Tynwald took place. Organised by the Branch in association with the Department of Education and Children the sitting saw Year 12 students from the Island's five state secondary schools assume the roles of Members of the House of Keys and the Legislative Council to debate matters of concern. This year the first time the sitting of Junior Tynwald was recorded and a Hansard transcript made. Additionally a student, Sinead Allen, served as acting Lord Bishop and led the Court in prayers. In a further innovation, an Outstanding Participant Award was introduced this year, the first recipient of which was Robert Leece. Presenting the award Madam President praised the St Ninian's High School student for his accomplished responses and informed comments on government policy.

Off-Island activities in 2014

7. In March Sara-Jayne Dodge, 20, from Douglas and Charlie Shimmins, 18, from Glen Vine, joined around 1000 other young people at the celebrations, which were held in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen, as Head of the Commonwealth. The proceedings provided opportunities for the pair to witness discussions on the Commonwealth and the CPA by UK and visiting parliamentarians, participate in the Observance Day service in Westminster Abbey, and attend a reception hosted by the Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamallesh Sharma at Marlborough House, headquarters of the Commonwealth Secretariat.
8. Also in March Mrs Beecroft attended the inaugural meeting of the BIMR Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians group in Edinburgh. The theme of the conference was *Enhancing the Participation of Women in Politics*. The conference provided an opportunity for women parliamentarians from across the BIMR and further afield to discuss issues of mutual interest that fall within the remit of the newly established BIMR CWP Group. Discussions were structured around the following topics:
 - BIMR women parliamentarians: strengths and weaknesses;
 - The Commonwealth Charter – What can BIMR CWP do to promote gender equality and equity in the work of the CPA BIMR region and across the Association?
 - Pre-selection and post-election challenges and opportunities; and
 - The media representation of women in politics.
9. In May Messrs Cannan, Coleman, Ronan and Thomas attended the annual BIMR conference which this year was held in Cardiff. The theme for the conference was *Equality of Access to Democracy*, which looked in particular at Women in Public Life, Bilingualism and the Role of Official Languages in Parliament and Engagement of Young Citizens in the Democratic Process. The conference report, which can be found on the National Assembly of Wales website, shows the Isle of Man delegation taking a full part in the proceedings. For example, Mr Cannan acted as rapporteur for a discussion on *The case for youth parliaments – what influence do they have in informing public opinion?*

10. In October Mr Cretney and I attended the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Cameroon. Mr Cretney chaired a session on the value of education. I was a presenter on the subject of protecting the vulnerable, where I was able to report on the Isle of Man's experience of introducing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
11. In November I attended the Commonwealth Youth Parliament in South Africa as a mentor, accompanying the Isle of Man's youth parliamentarian Mr Julyan Davey, and delivering a talk on the use of Oral Questions in parliament.

Conclusion

12. I remain firmly of the view that the small proportion of the "Legislature" vote which is spent on CPA work is money well spent. (We continue to account separately for the money collected through your subscriptions and these are the accounts which accompany this report.)
13. It is also important to note that the CPA presents one of few opportunities for training for elected members. Since becoming Chairman of the BEC in 2011, I have been keen to focus the Branch's spending on the education of members, as well as the traditional activities of Regional and Plenary Conferences. I am a strong believer in providing training and equipping people for the task that lies ahead. I believe that the CPA has stepped up in this respect, and I am glad that we have recently begun participating in an e-mentoring scheme with other jurisdictions.
14. Although the Isle of Man is not a sovereign state, we do have our own international identity. Tynwald is very much a part of this and the CPA Isle of Man Branch can make a practical contribution developing contacts across our main trading partners and raising the Island's profile on the international stage. Maintaining links between Tynwald and the legislatures of the surrounding jurisdictions in particular is an important part of ensuring that the voice of the Isle of Man is heard by opinion formers and policy makers throughout the British Isles.
15. Meanwhile it is an essential function of any legislature to be open and transparent. Our work in explaining the work of Tynwald to the young and to the wider community in the Island contributes to the good governance of the Island as a whole, and enables our unique parliamentary heritage to be appreciated by all.
16. It remains my aim as your Chairman to optimise the value we obtain from these opportunities and I shall continue to do so in the future.

Hon Juan Watterson MHK
March 2014

**THE ISLE OF MAN BRANCH OF THE
COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD
1st January to 31 December 2014**

<u>Receipts & Payments Account</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Opening Bank Balance		3,694
Debtor Repaid		150
Opening Assets		3,844
<i>Receipts</i>		
Subscriptions Collected	146	
Bank Interest	2	
Other receipts	230	
<i>Total Receipts</i>	<u>378</u>	
<i>Payments</i>		
Payments made during accounting period	409	
<i>Total Payments</i>	<u>409</u>	
Excess of payments over receipts		(31)
Closing Bank Balances		<u>3,813</u>

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2014

<u>Cash at Bank</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Deposit Account		2,313
Current Account		1,500
Total Assets		<u>3,813</u>

<u>Subscriptions analysis</u>	<u>£</u>
Prepaid subscriptions brought forward	(625)
Subscriptions due	295
Prepaid subscriptions carried forward	476
Subscriptions collected	<u>146</u>

I have audited the receipts and payments account for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2014 and in my opinion it is an accurate and true statement of the affairs of the Isle of Man Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at 31 December 2014

E. M. Lambden

Honorary Treasurer
Marie Lambden ACIS



Honorary Auditor
Mr C Randall FCCA