Isle of Man Branch

Report of the Chairman of the Branch Executive Committee
for the period January 2016 to December 2016

Introduction
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.

2. The year 2016 saw many important anniversaries in the Island’s constitutional history. It saw the anniversary of 10 years of voting at the age of 16, 60 years of the revived Right to seek Redress for Grievance on Tynwald Day and 135 years since Tynwald became the first national legislature to give women the vote. It was also the 100th anniversary of Emergency Promulgation and the 150th anniversary of Popular Elections.

3. 2016 was also General Election year in the Isle of Man and saw the retirement of Mrs Clare Christian as President of Tynwald. The Hon Steve Rodan MLC was elected as President of Tynwald and therefore _ex officio_ a Joint President of the CPA’s Isle of Man Branch. Mr Geoff Corkish MLC, Mrs Ann Corlett MHK, Mr Tim Crookall MLC, Mr Bill Malarkey MHK and Mr Bill Shimmins MHK (Ordinary Members) and Mrs Clare Christian (Associate Member) were proposed, seconded and elected to the Branch Executive Committee. I am honoured to have been re-elected as Chairman, albeit now as a Joint President.

4. Following Mrs Christian’s retirement, the Isle of Man Branch was asked to nominate a woman parliamentarian to sit on the BIMR CWP Steering Committee; Mrs Ann Corlett MHK was nominated by the Branch Executive Committee.

Farewells
5. In August 2016, former Member of the House of Keys, Mr Martyn Quayle, passed away. Mr Quayle was an active member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and will be missed by his former colleagues.

6. The 2016 General Election saw the departure of many CPA members.
   - Mr Phil Gawne represented the Isle of Man at a number of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association events including regional conferences in Belfast and
Gibraltar, a study visit to the Scottish Parliament and the Plenary Conference in Kenya in 2010.

- Mr Zac Hall attended two Commonwealth Parliamentary Association study visits: London in 2012 and Dublin in 2014.

- Mr Jon Joughin attended the regional conference in Jersey in 2016.


- Mr David Quirk’s parliamentary work included two CPA study visits to London and Edinburgh in 2007, as well Regional Conferences in Guernsey in 2009 and here in the Isle of Man in 2010.

- Mr Richard Ronan was a member of the Branch Executive Committee and attended study visits in London, Edinburgh and Dublin, along with the Regional Conference in Cardiff in 2014.


- Mr Leonard Singer was an active member of the Isle of Man Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; he attended study visits to London, Brussels, Bermuda and Edinburgh, as well as Plenary Conferences in Namibia, Nigeria and South Africa.

**On-Island activities in 2016**

7. In April 2016 we were visited by an officer of the States of Jersey, Caro Tomlinson, who works as part of the Scrutiny Office in support of Jersey’s Public Accounts Committee. She found her visit extremely useful and said she was impressed by the professionalism and hard work of the people she met in the Isle of Man.

8. Later in April we welcomed from the Scottish Parliament Sir Paul Grice, Chief Executive, and Tracey White, Head of Chamber and Reporting. Against a background of imminent elections in Scotland and a prospect of increased powers being transferred to Holyrood, notably in matters of taxation, Sir Paul said: “In this we can learn from the Isle of Man as it enjoys greater fiscal autonomy, so is some considerable way ahead of us. Scotland’s moving in that direction, though, so to have been fortunate enough to observe economic business being debated was particularly absorbing.”

9. Our relationship with the legislatures of Kenya continued to deepen and in May we were pleased to welcome a delegation from the Constitutional Implementation Oversight Committee of the National Assembly of Kenya, our fourth visiting delegation from Kenya since 2011. The delegation attended presentations from Isle of Man Government officials in the Department of Economic Development and the
Attorney General’s Chambers. The focus of their visit was our legislative programme, governance-related issues, and administrative practices. Delegation leader and Committee Vice-Chairman the Hon Richard Moitalel ole Kenta MP reported that their week-long study visit to Tynwald had been a valuable learning experience.

10. By chance our delegation from Kenya had the opportunity also to meet a visitor from the Falkland Islands. Cherie Clifford, Deputy Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Falkland Islands, said: “I was most impressed by the Chamber and Information Service, especially the Tynwald website, which provides such a wealth of up-to-the-minute information. That level of immediacy may not be possible to achieve in our Legislative Assembly, given that we are three in number with limited resources, but it is certainly something to which we aspire.”

11. In July at Tynwald Day, the honoured guests this year included the following fellow parliamentarians from neighbouring CPA branches:

- Ms Deidre Brock MP, Member of Parliament for Edinburgh North and Leith
- Senator Ian Gorst, Chief Minister of Jersey
- Rt Hon. Lindsay Hoyle MP, Member of Parliament for Chorley
- Mr David Morris MP, Member of Parliament for Morecambe and Lunesdale
- Ms Caitriona Ruane MLA, Principal Deputy Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly

12. Later in July the annual sitting of Junior Tynwald took place and we welcomed a visitor, Mr Jordan Linden, the former Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament. 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. The Outstanding Participant Award went to Matthew Unsworth (Castle Rushen High School).

13. In September two officers from the Parliament of Sierra Leone’s Department of Official Reports completed a two-week secondment to Tynwald’s Hansard team. The study visit by editor of debate Musa Foullah and stenographer Patience Brown-Dawson, was sponsored by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), established to help to strengthen parliamentary democracy in developing countries, and came after a workshop and needs assessment session was delivered to the Parliament of Sierra Leone’s Department of Official Reports by the Clerk of Tynwald Roger Phillips and WFD’s programme officer for Africa Charlotte Egan.

14. September also saw the first of a number of visits planned from the regional parliament of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in north western Pakistan. The British Council had been working on capacity building with the UK and Scottish Parliaments and decided to get in touch with Tynwald as well. The plan is for all 124 members of the
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly to visit the Isle of Man and Scotland in ten groups of about 12 over the course of 18 months.

15. In November 2016 the President of Tynwald and I were delighted to meet with Australia’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, The Honourable Alexander Downer, who was visiting the Lieutenant Governor Sir Richard Gozney.

Off-Island activities in 2016

16. The Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) is held every two years. In January 2016 the President of Tynwald, the Hon Clare Christian, represented the Isle of Man at the 23rd Conference held in Kota Kinabalu, capital of the state of Sabah, Malaysia. Madam President joined 187 delegates from 43 Commonwealth countries for the conference. A special plenary discussion on ‘The Low Citizen Confidence in Parliamentary Institutions – How Can Commonwealth Parliaments Build Trust in Legislatures?’ was presented by Associate Professor Dr Haidar Dziyauddin from MARA University, Malaysia.

17. Within the British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR), Madam President served as a member of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians’ Steering Committee. In that capacity she attended the Conference of the BIMR CWP held in Guernsey in February. The conference was also attended by Mrs Kate Beecroft MHK. The theme of the conference was ‘Influencing Policies and Legislation for the Empowerment of Women’. Issues discussed in plenary sessions included gender budgeting, health and social care (including unpaid care) and employment policies (including pensions, working hours and maternity benefits).

18. Alexander Price and Nicholas Hawkes were selected by the Isle of Man Branch Executive Committee to attend the Youth Observance of Commonwealth Day in March 2016. The theme “An Inclusive Commonwealth” resonated with our representatives as they had the opportunity to attend this annual event with more than 1,000 other young people from across the Commonwealth.

19. In May the 46th BIMR Conference was held in Jersey. The conference took the general title ‘Parliaments and public engagement’. The recently appointed Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr Akbar Khan, attended the conference, his first in his role as Secretary-General. Tynwald delegates included Geoffrey Boot MHK and Jon Joughin MHK both of whom had been elected for the first time at by-elections in 2015, and Bill Malarkey MHK who had been elected at a by-election in 2015 but had also served from 2006 to 2011. Head of delegation was Hon Tim Crookall MLC. After attending the workshops, and acting as rapporteur for some, the delegates reported back at the CPA Isle of Man branch meeting. All reaffirmed the value of the CPA BIMR conference in discussing issues affecting all parliaments and in sharing possible solutions.

20. In June 2016 the Hon Clare Christian MLC attended the opening by her Majesty the Queen of the fifth National Assembly for Wales.
21. In July 2016 the Hon Steve Rodan SHK attended the opening by her Majesty the Queen of the fifth session of the Scottish Parliament. Having been elected President of Tynwald on 19th July 2016, it was as the Hon Steve Rodan MLC that he attended the celebrations in Gibraltar on Gibraltar Day which is celebrated annually on 10th September. The day commemorates Gibraltar’s first sovereignty referendum of 1967 when Gibraltarian voters were asked whether they wished to pass under Spanish sovereignty, or remain under British sovereignty with institutions of self-government.

22. In November 21-year-old Nicholas Hawkes from Onchan attended the 8th Commonwealth Youth Parliament in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Mr Hawkes joined more than 50 other young people from the Commonwealth participating in the event.

23. The 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was held in London in December 2016 and was attended by Ms Julie Edge MHL and Mr Tim Crookall MLC.

Conclusion

24. I remain firmly of the view that the small proportion of the “Legislature” vote which is spent on CPA work is money well spent.

25. It is 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 continued to provide many opportunities for this and our new members have been keen to partake in all areas.

26. 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.

27. 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.

28. 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.

The Hon Juan Watterson SHK
March 2017
**THE ISLE OF MAN BRANCH OF THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION**

**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD 1st January to 31st December 2016**

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<th>Receipts &amp; Payments Account for 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016</th>
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<td><strong>Closing Balance</strong></td>
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<th>Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2016</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cash at Bank</strong></td>
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I have audited the receipts and payments account for the period from 1 March to 31 December 2016 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 2016.

Honorary Treasurer  
Mrs J Corkish

Honorary Auditor  
Mr S Hind FCCA

**Note**

The amount of £1,180 subscriptions has been received into The Isle of Man Government General Charges Account 12638773.