



CPA Activities: The Canadian Scene

Fifty-First CPA Regional Conference, Alberta

Speaker **Gene Zwozdesky** welcomed approximately 80 legislators and observers for the 51st CPA Regional Conference held in Edmonton from July 14-20, 2013. Delegations came from every Canadian jurisdiction except British Columbia and Manitoba whose legislatures were still in session. Among the special

guests were **Martin Penn**, MNA from the British Virgin Islands, **Michael Poley**, Speaker of the Tasmania Legislature and **Charnit Singh Atwai**, Speaker of the Punjab Legislature. Representing the Secretary General of the CPA was **Meenaksi Dhar**, Assistant Director of Programs with the CPA Secretariat in London.

The first business session, Chaired by Speaker **David Laxton** (Yukon) dealt with

Trends and Developments in Private Members' Business. The presenters were **Lisa MacLeod** (Ontario) **Mary-Anne Jablonski** (Alberta) and **Russ Hiebert MP**.

Immediately following the first session **William Mitchell**, a Program Assistant with the Alberta Legislature gave delegates a special presentation on the history of Alberta entitled "Oil Battles, Prosperity



Delegates to the 51st Canadian Regional Conference,
Edmonton, July 2013

Certificates and Disallowed Legislation.

Two business sessions dealt with Technology and the Impact of New Media. The first, Chaired by Speaker **Carolyn Bertram** (Prince Edward Island) featured presentations by **Blair Armitage**, Principal Clerk, Communications with the Senate of Canada and **Jeannine Richard** (Québec) who filled in for the scheduled speaker **François Ouimet** (Québec) who had to cancel due to family reasons. The other paper on social media was given by Professor **Steve Patten** of the University of Alberta. The Chair for this session was Speaker **Dale Graham** of New Brunswick.

Professor **Brenda O'Neill** of the University of Calgary spoke on the topic of Women's Representation in Provincial Legislatures. The session was chaired by **Pearl Calahasen** (Alberta).

Hunter Tootoo, Speaker of the Nunavut Legislature, chaired a panel discussion on Making Members' Expenses Public with **George Rogers** (Alberta), **Andrew Younger** (Nova Scotia) and **Jane Groenewegan** (Northwest Territories)

The Director of the Institute for Public Economics at the University of Alberta, **Robert Ascah**, gave a presentation on Labour Market Trends: Planning for Tomorrow's Workforce. The session was chaired by **Warren Steinley** (Saskatchewan)

The final session looked at New Members' Expectations and Requirements for Their Role as Parliamentarians. The chair was **Wade Verge** (Newfoundland and Labrador) and the panellists were Hal Perry (Prince Edward Island), **Blake Pedersen** (Alberta) and **Victoria Jurgens** (Saskatchewan)

During the course of the week delegates were treated to many examples of Alberta hospitality including an opening reception at Fantasyland Hotel in the West Edmonton Mall, a lunch at the McKay Avenue School and dinners at Northlands Park and at Fort Edmonton Park.

One day was set aside for optional tours which offered the choice of a walking tour of Old Strathcona, a canoe trip on the Saskatchewan River, a visit to the Reynolds Alberta Museum or a visit to Fort McMurray with a tour of the Alberta oil sands.

Delegates thanked Speaker Zwozdesky and his dedicated staff for their efforts in organizing the very successful conference. Next year the 52nd CPA Regional Conference will take place in New Brunswick.

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Meeting

The Canadian Section of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians held their annual meeting in Edmonton immediately before the 51st CPA Conference. Members of the Steering Committee (one legislator from each jurisdiction) met on July 14 to discuss business of the CWP for the coming year.

The following day the Chair of the Steering Committee, **Myrna Dreidger** of Manitoba presented her report to the annual meeting. It was followed by three sessions. The first was by Premier **Alison Redford** who spoke about the issue of gender and politics. The second presentation was by **Leslie Scorgie** author of the bestselling book *Rich by Thirty: A Young Adult's Guide to Financial Services*. The final speaker was **Margaret Bateman**, co-founder and CEO of Calder Bateman which handles a wide variety

of public policy consulting in Alberta

All the presentations focused on the main objective of the CWP continued to encourage more young women to enter political life and to provide them with practical help in running for elected office.

Tenth Canadian Parliamentary Seminar

From June 2-8, 2013 the Federal Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association hosted a seminar, Strengthening Democracy and the Role of Parliamentarians: Challenges and Solutions, for 21 delegates from around the Commonwealth. The host of the Seminar was **Joe Preston**, Chairman of the Canadian Branch.

Branches represented included Gambia, Lesotho, Namibia, Northern Cape, Seychelles, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Jersey, Scotland, Bermuda, British Virgin Island, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, India and Kiribati. The Australian states of Victoria and South Australia as well as Canadian branches from Alberta and Yukon were also represented. The following sessions were held over the course of the six day seminar.

Overview of the Role and Operation of the Canadian Parliament

- **Mark Audcent**, Law Clerk of the Senate
- **Marc Bosc**, Deputy Clerk of the House of Commons

The Commonwealth and the Role of the CPA

- **Andrew Imlach**, Director of Communication and Research, CPA Secretariat Headquarters

The Canadian Political Scene

- Senator **Joan Fraser**
- **Russ Hiebert** MP



**Delegates to the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Meeting
Edmonton, July 2013**

Parliamentary Committees: What Works and What Doesn't

- Senator **Raynell Andreychuk**
- **Joe Preston** MP

Financing Elections

- Senator **David P. Smith**

How an M.P.'s Office Works

- **Bev Shipley** MP
- **Brian Masse** MP

Democracy, Human Rights and Development

- **Chris Alexander** MP and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence

Have the Media taken over the Representational Job of Parliamentarians?

- Senator **Jim Munson**
- **Chris Cobb**, *Ottawa Citizen* and Vice President of the Commonwealth Journalists Association

Engaging Citizens: Resources and Tools

- **Ed Holder** MP
- **Dr. Carolyn Bennett** MP

Connecting with Constituents: Representing Pluralistic Constituencies

- **Rathika Sitsabaiesan** MP
- **Devinder Shory**, MP

Influencing Governments and Regulating Influence: Parliament and Lobbyists

- **Don Boudria**, (former Minister and M.P.), Senior Counsellor, Hill & Knowlton Canada

Due to the hectic atmosphere at the end of a parliamentary session some last minute adjustments to the programme had to be made. For example a session on the Role of Party Caucus was given by Senator Andreychuk instead of the scheduled presenters who were unable to leave the House during a vote.

The final session was devoted to topics suggested by delegates. These included:

Terry Stephens, South Australia, Committee Chairs

Sebastien Pillay Seychelles, Parliament and the budget process

Paul S. Koqo, Lesotho, Public Account Committees

Kagisho David Molusi (Northern Cape) Strengthening Constituency Offices

Kenneth Bascome (Bermuda) Gaming, Fixed Term Elections, Restorative Justice

Richard Parchment (Jamaica) Corruption in Parliament, Gender

and diversity in Parliament

Fazilatun Nasa Bappy (Bangladesh) Democracy and Good Governance in Bangladesh

Steven Herbert, Victoria, Australia, The use of Private Members Bills.

Lesaoana Peete, Lesotho, the Senate,

Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Pakistan, Democracy and Parliament in Pakistan

Shehan Asaka Semasinghe, Sri Lanka, Lack of Confidence in Representatives.

Visiting delegates had an opportunity to attend Question Period in the House

and Senate and take a guided tour of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. They also attended social functions including a reception hosted by **Susan Truppe**, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women and Federal Representative for the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians. There was a luncheon hosted by the Speaker of the Senate and the Speaker of the House and a farewell dinner hosted by the Canadian Branch of the CPA,

The seminar illustrated once again the usefulness of dialogue with legislators from around the Commonwealth.



**Delegates to the 10th Canadian Parliamentary Seminar
Ottawa, June 2013**

New Speaker in British Columbia

Following the May 14, 2013 provincial election **Linda Reid** was elected Speaker of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly when it met on June 25, 2013.

Ms. Reid was first elected in 1991 to represent the riding of Richmond East and was re-elected in 1996, 2001, 2005, 2009 and 2013. She is currently the longest consistently serving Member of the Legislative Assembly.

A graduate of the University of British Columbia with an education degree she earned a Master of Arts from UBC specializing in education, exceptional learners, language acquisition and public administration. Before her election to the Legislative



Speaker Linda Reid

Assembly, Ms. Reid worked as a language therapist, teacher and school administrator for the Richmond School district.

She was the B.C. Chair for the Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind and a Director of the Garden City Hospice Society. She has been active in the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, the Asia-Pacific Business Association, and the Canadian Council for Exceptional Children and the Family Court Committee of Richmond. She was a founding member of the Richmond Chinatown Lions Club and was Chair of the British Columbia Youth Parliament Board from 1986 to 1991.

Ms Reid was appointed Minister of State of State for Early Childhood Development on June 5, 2001 and Minister of State for Childcare in 2005. She was appointed Deputy Speaker in June 2009 and held that position until her election as Speaker. She replaced **Bill Barisoff** who did not run in the last election.