



CPA Activities: The Canadian Scene

Forty First Canadian Regional Conference

New Brunswick was the site of the 2002 Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. It brought together some 90 legislators and observers from every federal, provincial and territorial assembly. The Conference was opened by the Lieutenant-Governor, **Marilyn Trenholme Counsell**.

The host of the Conference was Speaker **Bev Harrison** of New Brunswick. Other speakers in attendance included **Lloyd Snow** (Newfoundland and Labrador), **Murray Scott** (NS), **Mildrid Dover** (PEI), **Gary Carr** (ON), **Myron Kowalski** (SK), **Ken Kowalsky** (AB), **Kevin O'Brien** (NT), **Dennis Schneider** (YK) and **Tony Whitford** (NWT).

Special guests included **Derek Conway**, MP and **John Robertson** MP from the House of Commons in the United Kingdom and **Andrew Imlach**, Director of Information Services with the CPA Secretariat in London.

The business agenda featured nine topics. **Suzanne Tremblay**, MP led off a lively discussion of the relationship between the executive and the legislative branches.

The process by which party leaders are chosen was the subject of another session. The lead speaker was **Harry Van Mulligan** of Saskatchewan.

A session on Members' Remuneration offered those in attendance an opportunity to reflect upon changes

made recently in the approach to members' salaries and pensions. **Ted Arnott** of Ontario and **Ray Danyluk** of Alberta were the lead speakers on this issue.

The prospects for electoral reform were examined in another session which featured **James Bagnall** of Prince Edward Island and **Jeannie Lea** a former MLA and presently on the Board of the Institute of Island Studies in Prince Edward Island.

Several policy matters were also considered by the delegates. **Russell Williams** of Quebec led a discussion of the Role of Government in the Control and Marketing of Gambling. Another Quebec MNA, **David Payne**, presented a paper on Interprovincial Trade. **Sarmite Bulte**, MP and **Mel Knight** (AB) looked at the issue of Canadian-American relations since September 11. **Jim DeWolfe** of Nova

Scotia spoke on Nova Scotia's smoke free legislation.

Aside from the business sessions there were numerous opportunities to sample New Brunswick hospitality including a dinner hosted by the Lieutenant Governor, a visit to Kings Landing Historical Settlement, and a tour of La Dune de Bouctouche. For many the highlight of the week was the visit to the *Pays de la Sagouine* where delegates were treated to an afternoon of Acadian theatre, music, and guided tours. This included a performance by Senator **Viola Léger** who in her career as an actress has been bringing *La Sagouine* to life for 30 years.

The renowned novelist and playwright **Antonine Maillet**, creator of *La Sagouine*, joined the delegates for a traditional lobster supper following the performance.



The Speaker of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly, **Bev Harrison** (left), and **Claude Williams**, MLA (Kent South) with Senator **Viola Léger** who played the role of *La Sagouine* and **Antonine Maillet** (right) creator of *La Sagouine*.