



## *CPA Activities: The Canadian Scene*

### **The Forty-fourth Canadian Regional Conference**

The 44th Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was held in Gatineau and Ottawa from July 8 to 14, 2006. The Conference included the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Canadian Region who met on July 9 and

10 on the theme of “Transition and Balance”. Their Conference consisted of three sessions with presentations by **Sue Barnes** MP on The Transition from Government to Opposition; by **Marion Dewar** former Mayor of Ottawa and MP on Transition from Town Hall to the House of Commons and by **Suzanne Tremblay** former MP on Maintain-

ing Balance throughout a Political Career.

The CWP delegates also considered and approved a constitution and a budget to be presented to the Canadian Regional Council later in the week.

The Regional Conference started on July 11 with approximately 100 delegates from all federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions.



Before the Regional Council Meeting several members visited the Canadian Museum of Civilisation to see the exhibit about Canada's first Maple Leaf flag. (l-r) Speakers Peter Kilabuk, Michael Malley, Harvey Hodder, Ken Kowalski, Michael Brown, Bill Barisoff, Gregory J. Deighan, P. Myron Kowalsky, Ted Staffen, Paul Delorey, and Deputy Speaker Wayne Gaudet

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Delegates were welcomed to the National Capital by **Russ Hiebert** MP, Chair of the Canadian Branch of CPA. The other speakers during the official opening were **Noël A. Kinsella**, Speaker of the Senate of Canada, **Charlotte L'Écuyer**, MNA, Chair of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Canadian Region, and **Denis Marshall**, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

The theme of the first business session was "Electoral Reform" with presentations by **Harry Bloy**, Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, **David McKenna** and **Richard Brown**, Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island and Mme L'Écuyer and **Martin Lemay** of the Quebec National Assembly.

The second business session was a panel on the Western Hemisphere Travel initiative with three Ontario MLAs, **Ted Arnott**, **Bruce Crozier**, and **Michael Prue**. The topic for the third session was the "Communications Plan of the Québec National Assembly" and featured a presentation by Quebec Speaker **Michel Bissonnet**.

The theme of the fourth session was "Challenges of Women in Canadian Politics: Responsibilities of Political Parties, Legislators and the Public" The presenters were: Sue Barnes, MP, **Olive Crane** MLA, Prince Edward Island, **Nicole Demers**, MP, **Judy Junor** MLA, Saskatchewan and Mme L'Écuyer MNA, Quebec.

The theme of the fifth session was "Politics and Family Balance" with

a presentation by **John Betts**, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick. The sixth session was on Privacy in the Age of Technology – the Need to Protect Personal Information. The speaker was **Mavis Taillieu**, MLA Manitoba.

The seventh session consisted of a film by CTV journalist **Lisa Laflamme** entitled, "Outside the Wire". It dealt with the Canadian mission in Afghanistan. The ensuing discussion was moderated by Senator **Raynell Andreychuk**. The eighth and final business session consisted of a presentation on "Making Government Accountable" by **John Baird**, President of the Treasury Board of Canada.

Aside from the business sessions delegates and observers were treated to a number of other events including a reception and dinner hosted by Speaker Kinsella in the Parliament Buildings and a reception and dinner hosted by Speaker **Peter Milliken** at the Canadian War Museum. There was also an excursion by boat to Montebello and a visit to Manoir Papineau National Historic Site and to Parc Oméga. The farewell dinner was hosted by **Gord Brown**, MP, Acting Chair of the Canadian Branch CPA.

### **Regional Council Meeting**

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On July 13, 2006 the Canadian Regional Council held its annual meeting to consider the business of the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

The meeting was chaired by Speaker **George Hickes** of Manitoba since Manitoba will be hosting the Regional Conference next year. Other Speakers in attendance were: **Ken Kowalski**, (Alberta), **Bill Barisoff** (British Columbia), **Michael Malley** (New Brunswick), **Harvey Hodder** (Newfoundland and Labrador), **Paul Delorey** (Northwest Territories), **Peter Kilabuk** (Nunavut), **Michael Brown** (Ontario), **Gregory Deighan** (Prince Edward Island), **Michel Bissonnet** (Quebec), **Myron Kowalsky** (Saskatchewan) and **Ted Staffen** (Yukon). Also in attendance were Deputy Speaker **Wayne Gaudet** of Nova Scotia, Sue Barnes, Gord Brown, and Charlotte L'Écuyer.

The main item on the agenda was consideration of the constitution and budget of the newly formed Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Canadian Section. After discussion it was agreed to amend the rules of the Canadian Region to add the CWP and to provide funds in the budget for its activities.

Sites for several future meetings and conferences were confirmed including the next Council meeting which will be held in Winnipeg in July 2007. Finally the Council considered a request by the Parliamentary Centre to nominate a representative to the Board of Directors of the Centre and Speaker Kowalski of Alberta agreed to serve in this capacity.