



CPA Activities: The Canadian Scene

Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The 45th CPA Regional Conference was held in Winnipeg from July 23-29, 2007. Approximately 80 delegates from every Canadian legislature except Ontario were in attendance. Among the special guests were Dr. **William Shija**, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, **Edna Moyle**, Speaker of the Cayman Islands, and two members of the British House of Commons, **Michael Connarty** and **Greg Knight**. A number of provincial and territorial Speakers were also in attendance including **Ken Kowalski** (Alberta),

Bill Barisoff, (British Columbia), **Eugene McGinley** (New Brunswick) **Harvey Hodder** (Newfoundland and Labrador), **Paul Delorey** (Northwest Territories), **Cecil Clarke** (Nova Scotia) **Kathleen Casey** (Prince Edward Island) **Myron Kowalsky** (Saskatchewan) and **Ted Staffen** (Yukon). The Conference was hosted by the Speaker of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, **George Hickes**.

Following the official opening Secretary General Shija gave a presentation on the work of the Commonwealth Parliamentary

Association. The first business session, chaired by Speaker Delorey, featured a presentation by **Erin Selby** MLA of Manitoba on Dealing with the Media. As a former journalist and a newly elected MLA she was able to give delegates an in depth view of how news rooms work and some valuable tips to facilitate dealing with the media.

The second session, chaired by **Don Toth** MLA (Saskatchewan), consisted of a presentation by **Hunter Tootoo** MLA of Nunavut who described the Reporting Relationship between the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut and its independent officers. He also pointed out a number of unique features of the consensus style government that is used in Canada's newest territory.

The third session, chaired by **Myrna Driedger** MLA (Manitoba) featured Professor **David Docherty** of Sir Wilfrid Laurier University. He presented some findings from an ongoing research project on Members of Parliament Who Cross the Floor.

The fourth session chaired by **Mary Anne Jablonski** MLA (Alberta) featured a presentation by **Grahman Steele** MLA of Nova Scotia. He spoke about an important but frequently misunderstood topic – the *sub judice* convention in a paper entitled Reconciling Free Speech and Fair Trials: What to do when a matter is Before the Courts.



Speaker George Hickes at the opening of the 45th Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The fifth session chaired by Speaker Hodder, featured a presentation by **Geoffrey Kelley** MNA. He outlined a recent initiative by the Quebec National Assembly, Creation of a Special Research Chair on Parliamentary Government and Democracy.

The sixth session, chaired by Speaker Hickee, was presented by **Jenny Kwan** MLA of British Columbia. She spoke on Seeing Beyond the Political Horizon: Standards of Care in the Inner City.

The seventh session, chaired by **Bonnie Korzenowski** (Manitoba) featured a presentation on Women and Politics by **Jennifer Howard** MLA of Manitoba.

The final session on Youth Voter and Political Apathy was chaired by Speaker Staffen. It consisted of a presentation by Dr. **Kim Peers** on the University of Manitoba and a panel of university students.

The conference included a number of social events designed to give delegates an opportunity to sample Manitoba society and hospitality. These included a reception hosted by the Lieutenant Governor, **John Harvard**; a dinner and Red River cruise on a paddlewheel boat, dinner at the Manitoba Museum with entertainment provided by the Aboriginal Walking Woof Hoop Dancer, the French Canadian folk singing group La Bardasse and the Rozmai Ukrainian Dance Company. Among optional excursions offered to delegates were a Prairie Grassland and Bison Herd tour, a visit to the Mennonite Heritage Village, a round of golf at The Meadows or a morning of fishing on the Red River.

The Conference concluded with a traditional Manitoba Social and Dinner including entertainment and a silent auction. Proceeds from the auction will go to support research into fighting breast cancer.



Charlotte L'Écuyer (r) Chair and Stephanie Bond (Secretary) of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians – Canadian Region during the Conference in Winnipeg

Delegates were unanimous in their congratulations to Speaker Hickee and the legislative staff led by **Patricia Chaychuk**, for hosting such a successful conference. Next year the Regional Conference will be held in Nova Scotia.



Meeting of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians

Following a precedent established last year in Ottawa the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians held a one day Conference immediately preceding the opening of the Canadian Regional Conference. About two dozen female legislators from Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Yukon and the federal Parliament attended as did **Edna Moyle**, Speaker of the

Cayman Islands. The Conference was chaired by **Charlotte L'Écuyer**, Chair of the CWP.

There were three presentations. The first was by **Susan Thompson**, former Mayor on Winnipeg who spoke on Beyond the Glass Ceiling – an Independent's Perspective. The session was chaired by **Sandy Lee** MLA of the Northwest Territories.

The next session was on First Nations Women in Leadership: Challenges and Opportunities. The presenters were Chief **Betsy Kennedy** from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs First Nations Women's Committee and **Keely Ten Fingers**, a Policy Analyst specialising in Women's Issues. The session was chaired by **Myrna Dreidger**, MLA of Manitoba.

The topic for the third session was Adjusting to Parliamentary Life and featured a presentation by **Myrna Phillips**, former Speaker of the Manitoba Legislature. This session was chaired by **Carolyn Bolivar-Getson** MHA of Nova Scotia.

At the closing session a number of suggestions were considered for inclusion in the 2008 conference scheduled for Nova Scotia.



New Speaker in Prince Edward Island

The New Speaker of the Prince Edward Island Legislative Assembly is **Kathleen Casey**. She was elected on July 6, 2007.

Ms. Casey was born in New Waterford, Nova Scotia, where she received her early education, graduating from Breton Education Center in 1980. In 1984, she graduated from St. Francis Xavier University with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education. She became an Islander by choice in 1986 when she was hired by the Community of



Hon. Kathleen Casey, MLA

West Royalty to be their Recreation Director, and in 1995 became the Superintendent of Parks for the City of Charlottetown. In 1997, Ms. Casey was elected to Charlottetown City Council and then re elected in 2000, where she served until 2003.

Active in her community, Ms. Casey is the Past-chair of the United Way of P.E.I. Campaign. In 2004, she was appointed by **Paul Martin** to the Prime Minister's External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities. Ms. Casey has also served on the Board of Directors of the Confederation Centre of the Arts, as well as the Four Neighbourhoods Community Health Centre. She is also a volunteer with the Charlottetown Minor Hockey Association and Holy Redeemer Parish.

When not serving in an elected or volunteer role, Ms Casey laces on her skates and takes to the ice as a member of the Charlottetown Hockey Mommas. This is a group of moms who raise money for initiatives to fight breast cancer on Prince Edward Island.