



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY  
Wellington Branch

## COMMONWEALTH DAY 2015 REPORT FROM WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

The fanfares have been sounded, the flags paraded, hymns sung, prayers said, affirmations made and to celebrate the Commonwealth Day theme 2015 "Young Commonwealth" - new generation, new ideas, one was both privileged and inspired to hear statements from three absolutely outstanding young NZ leaders at this evenings Observance.

Darryl Stevens

RCS Pacific Regional Coordinator

posted on facebook Commonwealth Day evening 9 March 2015

The National Observance of Commonwealth Day was held in the Wellington Cathedral of St Paul in the presence of Their Excellencies the Governor-General and Lady Janine Mateparae. The Government was represented by the Hon Christopher Finlayson, Attorney General, the Opposition by Andrew Little, Leader of the Opposition, Hon Annette King, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (NZ Branch) was represented by Paul Foster-Bell MP and the City of Wellington by Her Worship the Mayor, Celia Wade-Brown. Sir Christopher Geidt, Private Secretary to The Queen was present as were the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, the High Commissioner for Canada together with other Commonwealth High Commissioners and their representatives, the Chief of Defence Force and representatives of Service Chiefs.

Key youth speakers were:

Tabby Beasley, NZ recipient of The Queen's Young Leader Award

Aaron Hape, inaugural winner of the Minister of Youth Affairs Leadership Award 2014, NZ members of the selection panel for The Queen's Young Leader Award and member of the 33Fifty leadership programme 2014.

Tim Logan, 2014 winner of the Prime Minister's Future Scientist Prize from Darfield High School in Canterbury.

The Queen's Message was delivered by HE The Governor-General. The Attorney-General delivered a statement on the significance of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Manga Carta to today's Commonwealth and world.

Music was provided by the Choir of the Wellington Cathedral of St Paul (Michael Stewart, Director) and Tanvi Thomas of the Natraj School of Dance performed an Indian classical dance.

The Faith readers for the Jewish, Islam, Buddhist and Hindu faiths were given by youth representatives. 53 secondary school students from across the region paraded the flags of the Commonwealth while the Commonwealth Flag was paraded by a Squadron Air Training Corps flag party. All up some 65 young people participated in the service in addition to secondary school students, Commonwealth Youth NZ and the Successive Generation Initiative making up a significant component of the congregation.

The Observance was followed by a Government reception at Parliament hosted by the Hon Tim Groser, Minister of Trade.

Commonwealth Day in Wellington had begun with a Flag Raising Ceremony by the Scouts in partnership with Wellington City Council which saw the Commonwealth Flag flying in the City for the first time.

## **IMAGES OF THE DAY**



The raising of the Commonwealth Flag on Wellington's waterfront.



Secondary school students parading the flags at the commencement of the Ovservance



HE The Governor-General delivers The Queen's Message    Tim Logan 2014 winner of the Prime Minister's Future Scientist Prize

Commonwealth Day Reception in the Banquet Hall, Parliament





Commonwealth Youth NZ and Successive General Initiative representatives



Tanvi Thomas, Natraj School of Dance



Tably Besley (centre) Queen's Young Leader Award recipient



Lady Susan Satyanand, wife of the Chair of the Commonwealth Foundation (Sir Anand was in London for Commonwealth Day)



Aaron Hape, CYNZ Executive Director, Dr Bevan Martin CYNZ Board and Darryl Stevens Chair CYNZ Board & RCS Pacific Regional Coordinator