A Young Commonwealth

Report on Commonwealth Day 2015 Celebrations in the Cayman Islands
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Introduction

Commonwealth Day celebrations for 2015 in the Cayman Islands took three forms – a Church Service, a Youth Parliament and the Schools’ celebrations and Essay Competition. The theme for this year’s celebrations was “A Young Commonwealth”.

These activities were coordinated by the Cayman Islands Branches of the Royal Commonwealth Society and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Church Service

A poster was designed to create awareness of and encourage participation in the service. It was distributed via various media. The church service was held at St. George’s Anglican Church on Sunday, March 8, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

Uniformed groups and schools attended the service, and participated in a colourful display of the flags of the Commonwealth member countries. Citizens of Commonwealth member countries who are resident in the Cayman Islands were especially invited to attend the service.

Governor, HE Helen Kilpatrick; Deputy Governor, the Hon. Franz Manderson; Premier, the Hon. Alden McLaughlin; Minister of Finance, the Hon. Marco Archer; and Minister of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs, the Hon. Tara Rivers, were among the dignitaries who attended. Her Excellency, the Governor, read the Message from Her Majesty the Queen.
The sermon was delivered by the Rev. Tara Tyme-Campbell – Minister of the John Gray United Church, West Bay. She noted the theme for this year’s celebrations – A Young Commonwealth – and the fact that people 25 years and younger accounted for more than 50 per cent of the population of the 53 Commonwealth member nations. She commended the Commonwealth for investing in young people.

Rev. Tyme-Campbell urged the older members of the congregation to focus on developing the capacity and potential of young people, who are valuable and precious to the development of any society. “Teach them about God and the things of God”, she implored. In turn, she advised the young people present to set an example in their speech, life and purity. She admonished them to be outstanding in their look, their walk and their speech, and to listen to people who mean them well and want to see them succeed. “Be on your guard, and develop a relationship with God”, she advised.

Musical selections were provided by the Choir of the University College of the Cayman Islands (UCCI), the UCCI ensemble and the violin ensemble from the primary schools. There was a Garden Reception immediately after the service, during which the UCCI Steel Band entertained the guests. The collection taken during the service was donated to the group to assist with tuning their pans.
Cayman Islands Youth Parliament

On Monday, March 9 – Commonwealth Day – high school students met in the Legislative Assembly for the annual Cayman Islands Youth Parliament.

This year, they debated two motions – one dealing with an amendment to the Sunday Trading Law to allow more Sunday trading, and the other dealt with a mentoring programme in the public high schools.

The Welcome to the opening of the Youth Parliament by Premier the Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA. He said, “I am pleased to see that 25 students from Government and private high schools, including Cayman Brac, have worked together to ensure the success of this day and have gathered to engage in important, lesson-teaching discourse”.

He added that, “The Commonwealth mission is to empower, engage and create value so that young women and men can contribute to the economic, social and cultural advancement of their families and countries as well as their own fulfilment. It's a mission I wholeheartedly support.”
The annual youth parliament debates are organized by the Cayman Islands Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and give high school students the opportunity to act as members of the Legislative Assembly for a day.

Photograph credits for Youth Parliament Debates: Jewel Levy, Cayman Compass.

The debates were carried live on Radio Cayman and CIGTV. The video can be accessed at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0XUhYxDO3I

A report on the local TV news can be accessed at the below link:

Schools’ Celebrations and Essay Competition

A Circular was sent to the Principals of all schools on February 9, inviting them to mount exhibitions and activities for Commonwealth Day, and to encourage their students to participate in the essay competition.

Schools shared in morning assemblies, viewed schools’ exhibitions, and held flag parades, or held story-telling sessions with students dressing up as their counterparts from other countries of the Commonwealth.

The flyer for the Church Service was also sent to the Principals on March 4 as a reminder of the event, and to encourage the schools’ participation.
Media Coverage

Good cooperation was received from the local media in publicising these events. A news release highlighting the upcoming celebrations was disseminated to the media on February 27.

This information was subsequently carried in a variety of media – print, radio, television and the Internet. A telephone interview about the activities was conducted with Radio Cayman on March 4.

The Message from Her Majesty the Queen and the Secretary General’s Affirmation were sent to the media under embargo on March 4. These messages were carried in the print media and also broadcast.

In addition, media members covered the commemorative events for their media houses.
THURSDAY, MARCH 5

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:
Professional First Impressions clothing drive through March 22 to collect gently used formal wear, including shoes and accessories such as handbags, belts and fashion jewelry, coats needed to help women enter or rejoin the business world. Clothing drive organized through the Camper Island Chris Center and the Family Resource Center for more information, or to make a donation or arrange clothing collection, call Cayman NewsService at 949-6564 or go to youtubecom/kem/professionalfootballpres.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

FISH FRY: Pledge during Lent until March 27. Chair: Pamela Lawrence. Dontations $2.00. Church Hall will carry out. Item includes beans, rice, soup, bread, coleslaw and dessert.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

COMMUNITY HEALTH DAY: Service 9 a.m. at George Town Anglican Church, followed by garden revitalization. All are invited, especially residents and visitors from Commonwealth countries.

FISH AND DOG JOLL: Dog owners are invited to enjoin their pets for the third annual Fishing Derby at Humane Society Station for a spin at the annual CAMF K9 Fish, Fun and Dog Jog. Registration, $25, includes entry费, Water, K9 shade and oxygen tanks. All ages welcome.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY: Free assessment clinic and occupational therapy for persons with mental health and intellectual challenges. Elizabethan Room, George Town. Hospital. 10 a.m. to noon.

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

GOLF SCRAMBLE: 9th annual planned event at of the other member associations.

POISON: All are invited to join artists and performers who share their work during an open mic night of poetry and readings. Share your own work or listen to others. 7:30 p.m. Book & Books.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

DRUM CIRCLE: Professional drummers of the Aruba Percussion Ensemble jam at George Town. 7 p.m. All are invited to jam or just enjoy the show.

ARTS: Arts and crafts sale in George Town. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Contact Cayman Islands Arts Council for more information.

CAYMAN ARTS MARKET: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cayman Islands Arts Council in George Town. Contact Cayman Islands Arts Council for more information.

FARMERS MARKET: 9 a.m. to noon. Cayman Islands Arts Council in George Town. Contact Cayman Islands Arts Council for more information.

CAMERON SISTER: Adult beverages painting course today and tomorrow offered through National Gallery. Contact education@nationalgallery.ky or go to nationalgallery.ky.
Commonwealth Day to focus on youth
04 March, 2015

This year’s Commonwealth Day celebration, observed on March 9, will focus on the youth of Cayman.

This year’s theme of Commonwealth Day, which is celebrated worldwide on the second Monday in March, is “A Young Commonwealth.”

To kick-start events in Cayman, a Commonwealth Day Service will be held at Saint George’s Anglican Church on Sunday at 4 p.m. All are invited, particularly nationals of Commonwealth countries who are resident in or visiting the Cayman Islands.

At the church, uniformed groups and schools will participate in a display of flags representing various countries in the Commonwealth. The University College of the Cayman Islands choir, the International College of the Cayman Islands ensemble, and a violin ensemble from local primary schools will perform.

There will be a garden reception after the service.

On Monday, schools will participate in morning assemblies, view exhibitions, and take part in piano competitions. Students will dress at their favorite Commonwealth countries.

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Conclusion

There was active and enthusiastic involvement of young people in the activities to mark Commonwealth Day 2015. These activities received support from the parents and guardians of these young people, as well as from the media and the general public.

The foregoing illustrate another year of success in the celebration of Commonwealth Day in the Cayman Islands. This level of interest from various quarters ensures that a young Commonwealth will be a sustainable Commonwealth.

I have already expressed my appreciation to all concerned for their assistance in the execution of the programme of celebrations.

J L Hurlston
Honorary Representative
The Royal Commonwealth Society
Cayman Islands Branch