

This is my fourth and final year as the Canada Branch Chair and I am so proud to have worked with such a dedicated, competent and resourceful team. I would sum up my time as Chair as having a team that was always 'Can Do'. The Canada Branch has continued to strengthen its local maritime community relationships, maintain our commitment to offer interesting educational speaker events and most importantly, seen steady growth of our membership numbers. I think we are well within range to achieve the goal of 100 Members by 2020 – and I believe that this has a lot to do with how we continue to show membership value to all of our Canada Branch members.

In the past five years, I would suggest that our most noteworthy success as a Branch, was to take our financial position from the red to the black. 2017/18 again saw a profitable year with a combined balance of more than \$60,000. The annual Dry Bulk & Commodities Conference is a major contributor to the branch's success and is now safely embedded as a main stay on the Canada Branch event calendar. Thank you to Gabriela Klongova, Karl Wang and Andrew Knapman for their strong fiscal leadership.

If the recent student numbers are any indication, the protracted depression of the shipping markets may now be impacting us. The Canada Branch offered November and May examinations in Montreal and Vancouver and for the first time in some years, we saw a decrease in student numbers. November 2017, Montreal saw 5 students write 8 exams and Vancouver saw 4 students write 6 exams and May 2018, Montreal saw 7 students write 11 exams and Vancouver saw 7 students write 9 exams. All summed up, the Canada Branch had a total of 23 students writing 34 exams. This is a 50% decrease in our student numbers from 2016/17; this trend is supported globally by a decreasing number of students. It would be my suggestion to direct more effort to our student population in the years to come.

That said, the Canada Branch Membership numbers have once again edged up. At the close of the 2017/18 membership year we count 48 Members, 27 Fellows, 17 Retired, 5 Life for a total of 97 Members. As I write, the Canada Branch has only 2 outstanding Membership subscriptions remain, which is unfortunate but this low number can only be attributed to the excellent detective skills of Eric Andersen (Life) on keeping this number to a minimum. Thanks to Daryl Raibl for the management of these numbers as Secretary.

The Membership Committee has recently completed a 'Pathway to Membership' protocol that provides clearer guidelines on criteria required to move from Member status to Fellow status. And following a campaign to communicate these guidelines, there was a marked increase in the number of applications for which several of our Canada Branch members have benefited from.

Head Office London continues to develop an educational working relationship with BIMCO and negotiations have centred on how the Institute and BIMCO can benefit from each other. Specifically, this would include making online courses for member's that improve access to learning content. Think: BIMCO technology and ICS examination and textbook content. And now with the key elements have been agreed, there is a project to look at a joint programme of study from which both organizations will work together to develop this platform.

Also of note, Head Office will be looking to move locations within central London which will significantly reduce costs and provide a larger office footprint that has classroom and conference space available. They