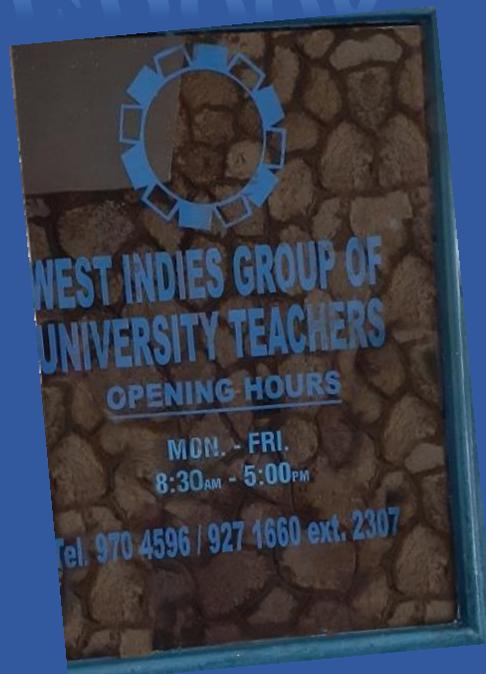




ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

EBook



Produced by the Public Relations & Publications Committee

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WIGUT (Jamaica) Annual General Meeting

Thursday, October 29, 2020

President's State of the Union Address

Colleagues, good day. If there is a way to summarize this past year, it might be: “Then Came COVID-19!” At the same time, though, it is always good to have a good team of persons who are up to any challenge that the prevailing situations present. And there were plenty to go around.

Much of the first nine months of the past year, that is, May 2019 to January 2020, could be considered ‘normal’. Our claim proposals for the triennium 2020-2023 were finalized, and things were happening as usual. And then came COVID-19. I had an infectious disease (ID) conference in Malaysia scheduled for February 2020, which was initially postponed (to September), then cancelled, because that side of the world was being impacted, and the ID specialists scheduled to participate in the meeting were being required by their countries to contribute to the developing threat.

In recognition of the seriousness of the impending situation, we wrote to the Principal (on your behalf), apprising him of the Union’s position, in March 2020. In that communiqué, we recognized the need for sacrifices by all parties concerned, and noted our primary responsibility to (a) our members, (b) the students of The UWI, (c) other categories of workers at the University, and (d) the people of Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. However, we emphasized that while there was the need for the Mona Campus to put in place measures for its employees to work remotely as much as possible and for teaching to take place online and by distance to the greatest extent possible, those arrangements were only temporary, and any change in the terms and conditions of service must be agreed after negotiations. This was against the background of evidences of the digital divide among our members, which would put some at a disadvantage, especially in relation to performance metrics. We emphasized that policy measures were needed urgently to address this. Our non-representation of adjuncts and temporary/associate academic staff came into sharp focus during the year, given that they don’t normally have any allocation for technological resources.

We highlighted several occupational health and safety concerns which would arise for members while working remotely and within the new normal, for those who would still be engaged on-campus for face-2-face activities. Chief among these were the responsibility of the management to provide a safe and comfortable working environment for the staff member in either case. In this regard, there has been agreement on leave arrangements for staff and an interim telecommuting arrangement in respect of COVID-19 – these provisions cover all three Unions. Most of the COVID-19-related items have now been documented and submitted to management.

Thanks to all of you that participated in the process of information gathering/data collection re income generation and ways to facilitate remote teaching and learning. I want to assure you, especially those in the Faculty of Humanities and Education who have taken on additional students/responsibilities, that your efforts have not gone unnoticed, and will not be in vain. In pursuance of this latter issue for facilitation of remote teaching/learning, there is a resolution that will be presented, I am advised, that will require your participation as we push forward for adequate provisions for working remotely.

In June 2020, we wrote to the heads of the three business units that employ staff represented by WIGUT (Jamaica), with respect to steps being contemplated in relation to laying off staff. I am pleased to report that no such activity has taken place, and the Union received confirmation that a process of consultation would occur prior to any such activity. Notwithstanding, the situation at the Centre for Hotel and Tourism Management (CHTM) became a central point of discussion within this period, as the University management took the decision to suspend operations at the CHTM for one year and make staff redundant. This process is still ongoing, as several hurdles have surfaced including which labour laws would apply, breach of contract termination notice, involvement of the Regional Headquarters, among others – all of which have been further complicated with the spike in COVID-19 cases in both Jamaica and The Bahamas.

Just last week, we had our initial negotiation meeting with the Mona Campus management, where we reiterated the proposals previously submitted, and as noted before, those specifically related to COVID-19. Just to advise you, there were two items from previous negotiations that remained unsettled:

- 1) **Payment to Section Coordinators:** This was agreed to, with WIGUT providing a list of departments within which section coordinators were carrying out administrative duties requiring allowances paid to heads of units
- 2) **Back pay for Professors:** UWI paid one year of backpay and attempted to have the GoJ agree to pay the rest. That has not happened but The UWI has an obligation to pay and needs to put in place a viable payment plan.

Last year, I told you that the Brereton report and recommendations as amended by Cobley and Williams, which were circulated in 2019, had become a central piece of contention for members who have been presented to the University Appointments Committee (UAC). We have raised the matter on several occasions with the Vice Chancellor. We have been reliably informed that there has been a ruling by the Visitor in support of its use in relation to a member whose application for promotion to Professor was turned down. Currently, we are studying the ruling and will advise you when those consultations have been completed.

What a year we have had!

As always, we could not have achieved anything without the collective efforts of the Executive and Management Committees for leading the charge in the activities of the Union – big up ‘oonoself’! – in particular to Dr. Anna Perkins and Dr. Patrick Anglin (Vice-Presidents), Miss Charmaine McKenzie (General Secretary), Dr. Adwoa Anuora (Assistant General Secretary), Ms. Anthia Muirhead (Asst. Gen Secy); Dr. Noel Morgan (Treasurer), Miss Hope Munroe (Assistant Treasurer); Special Secretaries and Section Representatives; Dr. Donna Minott Kates (co-opted member – i/c constitutional matters and elections), Professor Hubert Devonish (Chief Negotiator), Mr. Carl Pilgrim (Senior Industrial Relations Officer), Mr. Gavin Walters (IR Officer) and Miss Frances Richards (Administrator), thanks for your assistance throughout the year. In the same breath, I also commend those who have served on the various Union committees and University committees; as Section/Unit representatives, as representatives on the various Branches, and those dispersed in the UWI 12+2 countries.

It has been an honour to serve the Union in this capacity over the past year, and I look forward to what is ahead. We are confident that having gone through 2020 (so far), we are ready to take on 2021 and beyond! Thank you.

Professor Paul D. Brown

General Secretary's Report 2019/2020

It goes without saying that the year 2020 has been different from any other year in our lifetime. The circumstances we continue to face resulted in the Annual General Meeting of WIGUT (Jamaica), scheduled for April 2020, being postponed. In September of 2020, the Executive Committee voted to hold the meeting on October 29, 2020. This report covers the period May 2019 to April 2020, WIGUT's administrative year.

MEETINGS

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Jamaica in March 2020, Management, Executive, Grievance, Membership, Negotiation, Pension and Professional Development and Public Relations/Publications Committee meetings were scheduled and took place. With the arrival of COVID-19, members of the Management Committee became more involved in meetings as situations arose that required the Union's attention in order to protect the benefits and working conditions of members. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, most meetings of WIGUT Committees have been held virtually, via Zoom. Meetings held and attended over the period under review are shown in the table below.

WIGUT Committees	
Committee	Number of meetings
Executive	4
Management	7
Negotiations	3
Professional Development	3
Pension	6
Public Relations & Publications	7
UWI Committees	
Housing	6
Sabbatical	1
Security	3
Blue Book and Career Path	2
Hinds Committee (sub-committee of Career Path)	1

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The COVID-19 pandemic severely curtailed the activities of the Membership Committee. From May 2019 to April 2020 six (6) meetings were held, which were well supported by the team. Those who could not attend kept in contact via email.

The calendar of events was formulated as follows:

- 1) New Members activities
- 2) Christmas Party
- 3) Faculty Lyme
- 4) Fun Day
- 5) Annual General Meeting (AGM)

It was decided to once again invite Faculty representatives to attend the committee meetings at least once during the year to discuss any issue(s) they might have.

New Members

A total of 72 new members signed up for WIGUT dues deduction. Mr Pilgrim engaged with eligible members (non-paying) throughout the year. This was facilitated by the WIGUT Office being routinely informed of new hires.

Retirees

Recent retirees were invited to the Christmas Party as special guests. Some retirees continued their membership in the Union upon the annual payment of a fee.

Christmas Party

The 2019 WIGUT Christmas Party was held on Saturday, December 14, 2019 at the Senior Common Room. All reviews indicated satisfaction with the efforts made by the Committee in making it an enjoyable event. Four hundred and fifty-five (455) meal tickets were collected.

The 2020 date was tentatively set for December 12, 2020. However, it will not be possible to hold this event because of the restrictions on gatherings as outlined in the Government of Jamaica's protocols.

Faculty Lyme

New members were specially invited to a lyme hosted by members from the Open Campus (Open Learning Centre) on March 5, 2020. The aim was to promote camaraderie among members. Twelve new members attended and, based on feedback received, the function was a success.

Family Fun Day

This event was cancelled because of COVID-19.

AGM

The AGM and luncheon were postponed as a result of COVID-19. A Zoom meeting was held that obtained the views of the membership with regards to election. This was driven by the Executive.

NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

2020–2023 Negotiations

The period 5/2019-4/2020 was an off year in the three-year cycle of Negotiations, so no negotiations were held with the Mona Campus, Open Campus in Jamaica and The Bahamas, and the Vice Chancellery (Centre). However, a 24-point claim for the period 2020-2023 was submitted to the Principals of the Mona Campus and the Open Campus, and the Vice Chancellor in March 2020 with a view to starting the negotiations within three months of the expiration of the 2017-2020 Collective Agreement which ended in July 2020.

Salaries and Emoluments

All sub-bargaining units were expected to get an increase of 5% as of August 1, 2020, as agreed during the last triennium with the exception of the Open Campus UWI 12 +2 staff who were expected to get 3%.

Open Campus (UWI 12 + 2) and Mona in The Bahamas (CHTM & SCMR) collective agreements were signed off during the year.

Negotiations Committee Training

During the period under review the committee held three training sessions with the ultimate goal of preparing the next generation of WIGUT's negotiators.

Meetings on COVID-19 Pandemic

During the months of March and April 2020, the Mona Campus Management team and WIGUT (Jamaica) held meetings on the invitation of the Principal to discuss COVID-19 and its financial implications for the staffing compliment.

Blue Book and Career Path meetings

Two Blue Book and Career Path meetings were held over the period. At the December 2019 Blue Book meeting, the revisions to be made to Ordinance 8 were discussed. The University Counsel is to complete her report on the revisions and submit this to University Management and the Criteria/Procedure for Promotion to Senior Level III is also to be submitted to University Management. Members sought information and clarification on various aspects of the Data Protection Act and heard that the Terms of Reference for a Data Protection Officer had been prepared. The matter of contracts and the recruitment cycle were also discussed. The matter of tenure and crossing the Merit Bar was also aired and Management is to develop criteria for the 'mark of distinction', which is to be shared with the Unions. It was noted that crossing the merit bar is not a criterion for tenure. An HR Census is being undertaken by the University Registrar's office. This will show the number of people on staff on each campus. This number will include service contracts.

The Career Path meeting discussed the revision and standardization of contact hours across the campuses. Updates on the revised job descriptions for Financial Managers were heard as well as on a renewed Performance Management Framework. Proposed Guidelines for Annual Assessment and Promotions for Academic Staff & Senior Administrative and Professional were discussed as well as the Peer Review Committee for Librarians. The matter of the report on assessment of IT professionals was also raised and it was decided that this would be subjected to a final review at a meeting of the Hinds sub-committee.

The matter of Contract Officers was highlighted as needing to be addressed as it is in breach of a 1997 agreement on the subject.

The Hinds sub-committee met in February 2020 to review and discuss The UWI Career Framework document, formerly known as the “Fat Document”. This was the final meeting of this sub-committee, which was formed in 2014 to “make recommendations for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the guidance given to managers, current staff and future staff on the prospects for the career advancement for senior administrative staff and professional staff across the University”. The sub-committee made revisions to the competency framework aspect of the document, which was expected to move towards completion following this meeting.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

For the year in review, no grievances were brought to WIGUT’s attention. However, there were queries about contract provisions, benefits implementation and leave. Two cases of redundancy were positively resolved and the affected parties were re-deployed in October 2019.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Dr. Allister Hinds, Director of Human Resources, Mona Campus, Mr. Carl Pilgrim, and Mr. Gavin Walters assisted in planning and delivering a workshop to the Mona Librarians on the assessment process, the roles and function of the Library Assessing Committee, the purpose of the Career Path and Blue Book meetings, the peer review process, publication standards for librarians and promotion and tenure. This workshop was held on October 31, 2019.

The committee also organized The UWI Scholar Workshop Series, which promoted awareness of UWI Scholar and provided training for staff in creating scholarly profiles to enhance their academic visibility and showcase the research output of the Campus. More than 43 people participated in the workshops; three were held as open workshops for the general membership and one was customised for members at SALISES. Additional workshops were being planned for scheduled dates leading up to April 2020 but these had to be postponed due to the onset of COVID-19.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Following on the yearlong celebrations of the 60th anniversary of WIGUT (Jamaica) which began in October 2018, the PR&P committee focussed on increasing visibility by promoting and highlighting the work of the Union to internal and external constituents. A total of 7 meetings were held. The committee endeavoured to adhere to its Terms of Reference by focussing on producing the newsletters and the 60th anniversary edition of the ADZE magazine, as well as reporting both budgetary and logistics requirements to the leadership.

The committee also worked with other committees, especially the Membership Committee, to publicize WIGUT's activities.

WIGUT Newsletter and ADZE 60th Edition

At the start of this year the Committee redesigned the newsletter and produced 3 issues. The flyer for Scholarships and Bursaries was also redesigned in a bid to facilitate greater access and uptake by students. The ADZE magazine under the theme, "*Sixty Years of Advocacy*," is expected to be published in November.

The committee had other plans scheduled for the year 2019/2020. These were shelved as a result of COVID-19.

PENSION COMMITTEE

Four (4) Pension Committee Meetings were held and a fifth was cancelled due to the threat of COVID-19.

Three Pension Forum planning meetings were held; however, the activity was cancelled in view of the COVID-19 protocols. The proposed theme for the Forum was "***Healthy Body & Mind, Healthy Pension.***"

The Pension Chair wrote several letters to the Acting Bursar of the Mona Campus seeking information on matters of concern in relation to FSSU contributions. No responses were received. Queries were as follows:

1. Mona Bursary Schedule of Payments of FSSU Deductions to the Fund Manager for period August 2018 to July 2019.
2. Status of documents (Mona and Open Campus) to be completed and sent to the Administrator.
3. Number of WIGUT members not registered in FSSU scheme due to incomplete documentation.
4. Are salary monthly deductions being made for those in 3?
5. Update on status of transfers of Superannuation Funds for MONATS level staff promoted to WIGUT level.
6. The UWI Policy Statement on Supplementation for persons who prior to 2005 were contributing to the FSSU Scheme and were on 1-year or 2-year contract.
7. Update from the Trustee on other types of Investment Vehicles that can be offered by Fund Manager.
8. Update on replacement of ex-Euro Bond with better performing bond instrument.
9. Report on performance of Fund Manager versus targets.

The Terms of Reference for the Pension Committee were revised during the period under review.

A meeting of the Augmented Pension Committee was held on October 15, 2019. This meeting was attended by the President, Professor Paul Brown, the Pension Secretary, Ms. Kay Brown, and Messrs. Carl Pilgrim and Gavin Walters.

SABBATICAL COMMITTEE

The Sabbatical Committee met on June 28, 2019. Present were two representatives from WIGUT, two representatives from Management and the Secretary to the Committee.

1. The Committee discussed limiting the number of times a member can defer Sabbatical Leave, as well as placing a deadline by which members should submit requests for deferrals.
2. It was recognized that members had six weeks to confirm whether or not they were proceeding on Sabbatical Leave but there was no timeline by which a member had to submit a request for deferral having previously accepted the Leave. This led to members who were assigned as Proxies being disadvantaged as requests for deferrals were at times submitted too late, and as such the Proxies were unable to make arrangements to take advantage of these deferrals.
3. It was noted that the Administration and WIGUT needed to negotiate the issue of sabbatical deferrals.
4. One deferral was tabled at the meeting. It was reported that three were in the pipeline but these were not considered since they were not brought before the Committee.
5. The current Sabbatical Leave fund balance for Mona and Centre were not available. Decisions for Mona applications were taken based on the fund balance for the period ending May 31, 2018. Decisions for Centre applicants did not depend on the fund balance.
6. There were twenty-eight requests for Sabbatical Leave; twenty-six of the requests were from Mona and two were from Centre.
7. Length of service ranged from 7 years to 36 years 11 months for Mona applicants and 8 years to 15 years 4 months for applicants from the Centre.
8. Applications were considered on the assumption that the leave data provided by the Human Resources Management Division were accurate.
9. All applicants were deemed eligible and a recommendation was to be made to Appointments Committee for all the members to be awarded Sabbatical Leave.

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

1. **Health and Safety Manual:** The current manual was updated to include standard operating procedures related to the COVID-19 response. This updated manual was submitted and awaits sign off by the Principal/Campus Registrar.

2. **Smoking and Vaping:** the committee continues the work in this area with increased signage to enforce the “Smoke-free Campus” policy. This initiative has been impacted by the financial constraints secondary to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, senior managers are encouraged to enforce the policy in their respective departments/units.
3. **Full Time Ambulance Service:** a proposal for such a service was discussed at the committee level with the decision taken to bring the proposal to the Unions for further discussion and to solicit input from the constituents. This was not achieved as there was a delay in hosting an AGM due to the pandemic. The matter is to be further discussed but has been put on hold until the campus reopens.
4. **Indoor Air Quality Assessment** in various department/units. This includes mould assessment in the Administrative Annex where deep cleaning, remedial roof repairs and ventilation work were carried out.
5. **The UWI School of Nursing (UWISON)** has had extensive deep cleaning, roof repairs and other work done with additional work to be undertaken for completion in order to have the buildings reopened in a timely manner. The target deadline is November 2020.
6. **COVID Response:** The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the monthly meetings with postponement of meetings for the months of March and April.
7. **Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** the committee has recommended that the UWI community observe the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MoHW) COVID protocols and wear masks, observe physical distancing and practice hand hygiene. PPEs for certain staff members were procured by The UWI. These include gloves, surgical masks and face shield to be used by lab staff, nurses, nursing students and other frontline workers.
8. **Stray Dogs:** The committee continues to have reports of stray dogs on the Campus but not to the extent as previously reported. This may be due to the actions previously undertaken (such as traps) as well as the scaled down operations on the Campus particularly of the food establishments.

LOAN COMMITTEES

Mona Campus

For the period ending April 2020, the WIGUT Loans portfolio (Mona Campus) recorded a total fund balance of \$54,387,844.02 (2019: \$53,999,339.67). Of this \$19,238,662.93 (2019: \$13,681,275.52) was available for on-lending. The fixed deposit investments amounted to \$75,531,509.86 as at 30 April, 2020 (2019: \$73,219,425.35). Delinquency had risen to \$1,204,559.65 or 3.43% of the loaned portfolio (2019: \$1,029,116.97).

During the reporting period, we executed 76 loans across all three (3) categories: consumption, car and house. The consumption loans accounted for \$20,276,813.41; car loans of \$3,000,000. The committee had introduced improved features for the car and consumption loans (noted in the recent WIGUT newsletter) however loan uptake has been less than desirable. The EduComm management fees amounted to \$1,946,440.47 (2019: \$2,320,007.02) and re-insurance charges taken against the fund was \$157,130.83 (2019: \$187,287.84) during the reporting period.

Vice Chancellery (Centre)	
Total loans outstanding at April 2020:	\$
Consumption	2,825,889.42
House	541,900.54
	<u>\$3,367,789.96</u>
Fund balances at end of April 2020:	\$
Cash	4,731,689.32
Fixed deposits	12,507,467.81
Funds available for lending	<u>\$17,239,157.13</u>

Total new loans for the period – 12

SECURITY COMMITTEE

Meetings of the Security Committee have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Campus security machinery is challenged greater by the situation as the campus population is drastically reduced, giving rise to the need for greater security.

COVID-19-related Security Protocols

The campus was quick to put the following protocols in place after the close of the 2019/2020 academic year.

- All gates on the campus except the gate located next to the Post Office are closed at 7:00 p.m. One side of the gate next to the Post Office is closed at 7:00 p.m., to manage entrance and exit. Vehicles coming through that gate at night are logged in with the driver's name and vehicle license number.
- The Queen's Gate is closed on weekends and holidays. It is open on weekdays at 7:00 a.m.
- There are extra patrols particularly at night, both on the campus and in College Common.
- Since the beginning of the new academic year, there are approximately 1,000 students on the halls. These students are checked into the halls by a list at the security post at each hall and also checked out if they are leaving the hall for any purpose.
- The Office of the Director of Security has trained students as Courtesy Agents who are now posted at buildings to do temperature checks and sanitize the hands of people entering these buildings.
- Since many people are working from home, movement in office spaces is closely monitored.

BEFORE COVID-19 AND ONGOING

The year began very well with progress being made on the amendments to the Campus Security Act. Other key areas were also addressed:

- Changes were made to the assessment form for the private contracted security guards.
- The private contracted security company presented its strategic plan for the campus.
- Plans were made to procure more security cameras for the campus.
- Poor lighting across the Campus was being systematically addressed.
- A proposal was tabled for the construction of a fire station on the Campus.
- There were ongoing plans for people to be trained to deal with persons with mental health issues.
- Plans to roll out a "Smoke-Free Environment" campaign for the Campus.
- The cost of the Campus' taxi permits was increased.
- Signage on the Campus was under review.

The year 2020 has brought many security challenges and concerns. There is still concern over the ease with which people can access the Campus. There is also the concern of robberies within and immediately outside of the Campus. We all need to be more vigilant.

HOUSING COMMITTEE

Representatives on the Housing Committee expressed concern at the length of time taken to repair and move people into houses in College Common. In addition, concern has been expressed about the delay in garbage collection. Power outages resulted in significant inconvenience to residents in mid-2019, resulting in College Common being removed from the co-generation electricity supply and a return to the Jamaica Public Service supply of electricity.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

These other activities were also undertaken during the year 2019/2020.

CAR DUTY CONCESSION

Seventy-two (72) applications were successfully processed.

SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARIES

A cheque in the amount of \$2,100,000.00 was handed over to the Office of Student Financing on January 13, 2020 in relation to the WIGUT Scholarship and Student Bursaries for the 2019/2020 Academic Year.

Miss Joy Dickenson, a former long-standing member of WIGUT's Executive and former Treasurer, died in February 2020. Prior to her retirement Miss Dickenson was Manager of the Office of Student Financing and took a keen interest in student welfare matters. At its meeting of February 27, 2020, the Executive Committee agreed to name a bursary in Miss Dickenson's honour. This bursary is available to a final year student in any discipline who is in need of financial support and who meets the criteria set out by the Office of Student Financing.

DONATIONS

WIGUT purchased ten (10) tickets in support of Jamaica Red Cross' Annual Mother's Day Brunch, held on May 12, 2019 at the Girl Guide Headquarters, at a cost of \$18,000.00.

US\$5,000.00 donated to the Jamaica Red Cross on November 20, 2019 towards the hurricane Dorian relief fund for The Bahamas.

In addition, WIGUT purchased five (5) tickets in support of the St. Andrew High School for Girls PTA Retro Party on February 29, 2020 at a total cost of \$7,500.00.

WIGUT WELFARE FUND

During the period under review one contribution was made to a retired member who applied for and met the criteria for assistance from the Welfare Fund.

WIGUT SECRETARIAT

The staff complement in the WIGUT Office remained at 3, Miss Frances Richards, Mr. Carl Pilgrim and Mr. Gavin Walters.

I thank Miss Richards and Messrs, Pilgrim and Walters for the support they gave over the period under review, without which it would have been more difficult to serve the membership of the union.