

Opening of Session January 2017

Mr Heywood, it is of course a great pleasure for all of us to welcome the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress to the opening of the session today. His presence confirms the right of the Lord Mayor to preside over proceedings here and from the centre seat which only the Lord Mayor occupies.

It is already evident that Andrew Parmley's will be a remarkable and special Mayoralty, not only because of Andrew and Wendy's personal qualities but because they bring a wealth of experience in the fields of education and the arts to a role which is more often occupied by a lawyer, banker or accountant. There is already a distinctive flavour about this Mayoral year. Andrew is for example a member of the Apprenticeship Delivery Board which aims to produce 3 million apprenticeships over the life of this Parliament, thus

providing a significant and much needed source of opportunity for young people. In December, when we were occupied with the Old Bailey Bake Off and Great Ormond Street Hospital, Andrew and Wendy were supporting an initiative by Crisis, the homelessness charity. In March, he will be playing the organ in St Paul's Cathedral at a concert with the London Symphony Orchestra in aid of the Lord Mayor's charitable appeal.

These occasions when we gather together many of the people who work at the Old Bailey will I hope be seen and used not as formal occasions to be endured but as opportunities to inform, challenge and celebrate. It is always appropriate to acknowledge the part that particular people play in achieving what we do. Sometimes, they are not with us to hear it said.

As I have observed many times before, we are particularly dependent here upon the excellence of the legal profession and it is on some of them that I wish to focus, but they are representative of the whole.

I have already referred at the conclusion of a valedictory hearing to the untimely passing in August 2016 of David Howker, and paid our tribute to him. I want to take the opportunity to mention this morning, at this the Central Criminal Court, a number of others who practised with distinction and whose memory is held dear.

John Jones Queen's Counsel died last year at the age of just 48. He was married with 2 children. He made an enormous contribution to international criminal trials. His death reminds us of the pressures that come with the advocate's role and the scale of the demands it makes.

Ian Glen Queen's Counsel died at the age of 65, leaving a wife and 2 sons. He practised very successfully from your chambers Mr Heywood. In court and out, he was engaging and kind and larger than life in every way.

Kate Mallinson died peacefully but unexpectedly in early August. She was fearless, independent and loyal and her sister Elizabeth arranged a beautiful memorial service for her in the Temple Church which I was fortunate to attend. Kate would say that her age was of no possible relevance, but she was far too young.

On the 13th September 2016, David Batcup died at the age of 64, having been struck by a motor vehicle. At the Bar I was in many cases with David. He was simply a delight to be with, hugely popular and held in great regard. He leaves a wife Janet and a daughter Rebecca.

Jonathan Turner Queen's Counsel died on the 14th September 2016 at the age of 65 after a long illness. He was warm and generous, with a fine Lancashire voice and easily moved to a glass of beer. David Perry used to refer to him as the Wise Man of Wigan. His memorial event was held, appropriately, at the Edgar Wallace tavern.

On the 19th December, Brian Higgs Queen's Counsel died at the age of 86. He had been the head of your chambers Mr Heywood for 28 years until 2009 when he retired from practice at the Bar. Jonathan follows in his father's footsteps.

And on the 20th December, Ian Paton died in a fire at the age of 66. I remember once mistaking him for Michael Mansfield. It is not for me to say which of them should have been more offended. I will only say that Ian was very good about it. He

was a defining member of QEB Hollis Whiteman Chambers and our thoughts are with his family too.

At the end of an earlier era, Edward Marjoribanks, a barrister and Member of Parliament and the first biographer of Marshall Hall, wrote these lines about departing advocates at this court:

Fold the worn gown, and let the wig be laid
into its battered box. Their use is done forever. Now the final
cause is won. The long term closes, the last speech is made,
no jury will any more by their eloquence be swayed.

As it happens, Marjoribanks was to die by his own hand at the age of 32.

In our time, Mr Heywood, each of those I have mentioned was a fine barrister. It is right that that is acknowledged on

an occasion like this. We count ourselves fortunate to have known them all.