

His Honour Judge Patrick David Curran QC

2nd March 1948 to 16th March 2021

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Patrick was a larger-than-life character in so many ways. With a loud, infectious laugh and the broadest of smiles, his sheer joie de vivre was immensely attractive to all who met him. His smile occasionally got him into trouble and, on one memorable occasion, he was told by a High Court Judge to “take that f.....g grin off your face”. Patrick had a mischievous streak typified by the occasion when he and his best friend Bruce Houlder (CB QC DL) were appearing opposite each other in the House of Lords. During the lunch interval Patrick slipped a photograph into Bruce’s papers of an actress they both admired wearing nothing other than a strategically placed python. Bruce discovered the photograph shortly after he had got to his feet to address their Lordships.

Generous to a fault and highly sociable, the camaraderie of the Bar was Patrick’s natural habitat. He had an endless fund of amusing anecdotes for every occasion and could recite swathes of Shakespeare and poetry faultlessly. Patrick was an avid reader with an encyclopaedic knowledge of a wide range of subjects. With an endearing sense of old-fashioned courtesy and chivalry, Patrick was scrupulously polite and rarely spoke ill of anyone. He lived by a very clear moral code and could not abide any form of injustice; always speaking up for anyone he considered to have been treated unfairly. Patrick could be tough when required

but also had immense compassion. Recently when Patrick was admitted to hospital his neighbouring patient admitted to having been to prison. Patrick reassured him by saying that good people had gone to prison. He was described by one friend as a “God-pleasing man”.

Patrick had a gregarious, sociable, inclusive nature and was a natural conversationalist. Invariably he made a beeline for people standing alone at any social event and engaged them in conversation. Many years ago, as part of the American Bar Association’s trip to London, he spotted a couple from Hawaii standing alone outside the organised event at the Tower of London. That evening they joined him and Anne for dinner; Bill and Marela Crockett have remained friends ever since.



With Anne and Bill and Marela Crockett

As a child, Patrick opened the door of his home to a visiting priest and showed him into the drawing room. When his mother arrived to welcome the priest, she was surprised to find him sitting, rather nonplussed, with a glass of whiskey in one hand and a jam sandwich in the other. Patrick would often inform his wife, Anne, that he had invited visiting members of the Bar and/or members of the judiciary to dinner on a weekday as he loved to welcome those who were away from home. Patrick had the ability to turn anything good into a celebration and relished impromptu gatherings with family, friends and much-loved neighbours. Love of food and good wine were evident to all those who dined with him and he kept a terrific cellar. As a man born in Wales (albeit of Irish descent and educated in England) Patrick was a passionate supporter of Cardiff RFC and the Welsh rugby team and could regularly be found (and heard) cheering them on at the top of his voice from the stands along with his sons. It was a great pleasure for Patrick to see his eldest son, Edmund, marry Claire at Fonmon Castle in the Vale of Glamorgan preceded by a rousing rendition of *Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer* at the church.

Patrick David Curran was born on the 2nd March 1948, the fourth of five children of David Alban Curran and Noreen Curran (née Cliffe). David Curran was a director of Edward Curran Engineering, a large

engineering company which, during the war, employed thousands of people including a young Shirley Bassey.

In 1975 Patrick met Anne (née Pathy) at court when she was an articled clerk. They married eight months later in the heat of the summer of 1976 and would have celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary this year. Anne became a solicitor and, with Patrick's encouragement, a tribunal judge. She became the Regional Tribunal Judge (SSCS) for Wales & SW England until her retirement in 2019.



Patrick and Anne at Cardiff Castle on their wedding day in June 1976

Patrick was educated by the Rosminian Order at De La Salle School, Cardiff and then at Grace Dieu Manor and Ratcliffe College in Leicestershire, where he was Captain of Boats and Head Prefect in his final year in 1966. Patrick has maintained his connection with the school via the Old Ratcliffian Association and by visiting his second cousin, Father William Curran, who taught him history and is currently living in Surrey with other members of the Order well known to and admired by Patrick.

Patrick became a member of the National Youth Theatre under the directorship of Michael Croft from 1965 to 1969, and appeared in several productions with notable alumni such as Helen Mirren, Timothy Dalton, John Nightingale, John Shrapnel, Richard Hampton and many others. Patrick took the lead role in *Coriolanus* in 1969 and toured with the play to Germany, preceded by *Julius Caesar* in 1968. Recently

Patrick re-established contact with Richard Hampton and they enjoyed convivial lunches whilst reminiscing about their experiences with the NYT. It was at the NYT that Patrick met Bruce Houlder who was best man at his wedding to Anne. Bruce has remained a lifelong close friend together with his wonderful wife, Stella, and their two daughters.

junges forum '69 

National Youth Theatre - Great Britain
Director Michael Croft

CORIOLAN

von William Shakespeare
In englischer Sprache

Inszenierung: Geoffrey Reeves
Clive Emsley
Bühnenbild: Christopher Lawrence

Premiere: Montag, 8. September 1969, 19.00 Uhr
Haus der Ruhrfestspiele

PERSONEN

Cominius, römischer Consul und General	Mark Irvine
Cajus Martius, später mit dem Beinamen Coriolan	Pat Curran
Titus Lartius	Martin Smith
Menenius Agrippa, ein Patrizier	Bruce Houlder
Junius Brutus	Bob Thompson
Sicinius Velutus	Allan Swift
Zwei römische Soldaten	Stephen Harris
	Jonathan Roteray
Zwei Römer	Ray Faulkner
	Keith Anderson
Gerichtsdienner	Stephen Harris
Zwei römische Senatoren	Allan Halliday
	Philip Clark
Zwei Senatsdiener	Ray Smith
	Mark Powell
Tullus Aufidius, Feldherr der Volcker	Neil Phillips
Drei Offiziere des Aufidius	Jeremy Hancock
	John Lynch
	Julian Child
Drei volkische Ratsherren	John Hodgson
	Simon Surtess
	Philip Arrowsmith
Zwei volkische Wachsoldaten	Marilyn Kitson
	George Bentley
Drei Diener des Aufidius	Bernard Clifford
	Philip Wilde
	Tony White
Volumnia, Mutter Coriolans	Joan Rees
Virgilia, Frau Coriolans	Gill Barber
Valeria, Freundin der Virgilia	Francis Waugh
Der kleine Martius, Coriolans Sohn	Martin Randall
Kammerfrau der Volumnia	Ruth Parsons
Eine römische Prostituierte	Briget Oakley



Patrick (L) with Bruce Houlder (foreground) in *Coriolanus*



Kneeling before Helen Mirren in a rehearsal of *Antony and Cleopatra*

Before Patrick went up to Oxford, he took a position as a housemaster at St Richard's Preparatory School in Bromyard where he threw himself into teaching and directing theatrical productions including a production of *Richard II* at the Malvern Festival Theatre. Patrick maintained his connection with the school by using it as the location for his Discovery Drama Courses. The week-long courses for children aged 12 to 18, which took place during the school holidays from 1971 to 1981, were a tremendous success. He had the benefit of contacts from the NYT and was able to call on the services of the late Ian

McKay, a former fight director at the Royal Shakespeare Company, whose classes on fighting technique were a firm favourite with the children.

Patrick went up to The Queen's College, Oxford in 1967 to read Law. He remembers meeting a bearded Bill Clinton as they had a mutual friend in common, the late Frank Aller. Patrick pursued a wide range of interests whilst at Queen's including directing the production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* for the Queen's College Eaglesfield Players. Gyles Brandreth expressed a keen interest in a role and played the Sea Captain, friend to Viola, played by Michele Brown who subsequently became his wife. Patrick's extra-curricular interests may have had some bearing on the fact that one of his friends at Queen's recalled how Patrick discovered with indignation, the day before his Finals, that the Library closed at lunchtime! Patrick was strongly influenced by two of his tutors, a young John Mummery and also John Kaye. He maintained a lifelong and close friendship with John Mummery and was instrumental in organising a "Conversazione" at Queen's to commemorate John's retirement as a Lord Justice of Appeal in 2014. During his time at Oxford Patrick made many friends with whom he has maintained regular contact, in particular meeting up for the annual "Fiends" lunch usually held at the RAC Club in Pall Mall. Whilst at Queen's Patrick continued his interest in rowing and was captain of the Queen's College Men's 1st VIII.



Queen's College 1st VIII - Patrick centre with his good friend Mike Minchin to his right, one of the "Fiends"

Patrick maintained a close association with Queen's via the alumni association and attended numerous events with Anne including trips to Madrid and Rome. He loved to visit Oxford with his family and friends, celebrating key milestones at Queen's including his 60th birthday and 40th wedding anniversary. He remained a passionate supporter of the dark blues and took great delight in any notable performances and victories against their light blue rivals in the boat race and on the rugby field.



L. to R back row: Patrick Harrington QC, HHJ Mark Furness, The Rt. Hon. Lord Christopher Pitchford QC, Malcolm Bishop QC, Gregory Bull QC, Andrew Green, John Jenkins QC, Patrick, Jim Tillyard QC, Peter Griffiths QC
L. to R front row: Bob Roberts (dec'd), HHJ Tom Crowther QC, HHJ David Glyn Morgan QC (dec'd), HHJ David Morris, HHJ William Gaskell

Patrick was called to the Bar in 1972 and joined Gray's Inn, becoming a Bencher in 2005. He had great affection for the Inn and attended meetings and social events whenever he was able. Patrick particularly enjoyed Guest Nights, taking great pleasure in sharing the splendour of the Inn with his guests. He completed his pupillage at Farrar's Building, Temple, where he was fortunate to be a pupil first to John Leighton Williams and then to John Mummery. After pupillage, Patrick returned to Cardiff and joined the chambers of David Glyn Morgan QC at 55 Park Place (now at No. 30) where he established a busy practice in civil and criminal law. Patrick's colleagues in chambers were an unusually sociable set where everyone was a friend; social events with wives and families were commonplace. The friendships made in those early days have lasted until his death. In the mid 80's Patrick wrote a pantomime which was performed by members of chambers and their children in the theatre of the Welsh College of Music and Drama. The hilarious performances of those involved are remembered to this day.

Patrick was admitted to the Bar of Ireland in 1993. He was appointed an Assistant Recorder from 1988 – 1992; Assistant Commissioner Parliamentary Boundary from 1994 – 2007; Legal Member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales from 1995 – 2008; Legal Assessor GMC from 2002 – 2007; Recorder from 1992 – 2007; a Circuit Judge from 2007 and also sat as a Deputy High Court Judge mainly in the Administrative Court until his retirement. Following his retirement, Patrick continued to sit as a Deputy Circuit Judge and became a member of the Worshipful Company of Arbitrators. Patrick finished where he had started when he accepted a door tenancy at Farrar's Building at the invitation of the Head of Chambers, his close friend Patrick Harrington QC.



Patrick and his family on the day he took Silk in 1995

Having taken Silk in 1995, Patrick left Cardiff and joined the chambers of the late Edmund Lawson QC at 9-12 Bell Yard, London. He prosecuted and defended many high-profile murder and corruption cases but, more importantly, he embraced life at chambers and made a new set of friends whose company he enjoyed particularly when cases settled early.

In 1993/4 Patrick began work on a book for personal injury practitioners entitled *Personal Injury Pleadings*, the first edition of which was published by Sweet & Maxwell in 1995. It proved to be successful and the publication of the 6th edition in 2019 was celebrated by a party at Gray's Inn generously hosted by Patrick Harrington QC and Farrar's. Patrick was also the Consultant Editor since 2004 of *Personal Injuries and Quantum Reports*; (contrib.) - *Criminal Law and Forensic Psychiatry* 1995; (ed. and contrib.) - *Personal Injury Handbook* 1997; (contrib.) *Clinical Litigation*, 2003 and contrib. *Criminal Law Review*.



Some of Patrick's publications

For several years Patrick had been working on a book about Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford who was impeached and executed for treason in the reign of Charles I. Patrick undertook extensive research and read widely around the subject. His interest lay in the legal process used to bring about Wentworth's downfall and the role played by those responsible in order to mask their own misdemeanours. He was incensed by what he saw as a gross miscarriage of justice and he admired the dignity demonstrated by Wentworth during his ordeal. He was particularly interested in the fact that meetings of the conspirators took place in Warwick Court and other buildings near Gray's Inn. It was a sad disappointment to Patrick to realise that his state of health meant that he was unlikely to have sufficient time to edit the material he had written ready for publication.

Patrick travelled to China in 2004 as one of a five-member EU delegation for the most recent phase of the EU-CHINA Legal and Judicial Co-Operation Programme, his account of which was published in Counsel magazine in July 2004. He was impressed by the Chinese procurators' knowledge of UK institutions, procedures and substantive law and their candour in admitting deficiencies in their legal system. The trip to China was followed by a visit to Bangladesh a few years later facilitated by the British Council. Patrick was delighted that Bruce Houlder was also attending and, inevitably, whenever Patrick and Bruce got together they would find themselves entangled in one or more amusing situation. In 2007 Patrick addressed a conference on Criminal Law in Rome at the invitation of Professor Vania Cirese who he had met on the visit to China.



Patrick and Bruce Houlder on the occasion of Patrick's 70th birthday

Whilst in London, Patrick lived at Ashley Gardens in the shadow of Westminster Cathedral where his youngest son, Benedict, was a chorister under the direction of James O'Donnell and then Martin Baker,

both of whom remain friends. He became a governor of the choir school for several years. He and Anne joined the choir on tours of the United States and Brazil. The 2001 autumn tour to the United States was in danger of cancellation, following the atrocity on the 11th September. Late at night in Patrick's flat, he and the Chairman of Governors, the late Sir Martin Morland (obit. Times 4.7.2020), managed to track down Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor to a trattoria in Rome, explained the situation and obtained the Cardinal's agreement that the tour should go ahead. As the choir flew over the still-smoking Ground Zero in New York, they sang Rimsky-Korsakov's *Our Father* at the captain's request. Despite the air of tragedy surrounding New York, the tour was universally welcomed and a huge success. More recently Patrick was deeply concerned by the changes to the boarding arrangements at the choir school. He believed that they would jeopardise the high standards fostered by the Masters of Music Martin Baker, James O'Donnell and those who preceded them.

Patrick joined the Athenaeum and enjoyed hosting friends for lunch or dinner and attending the many varied social events and dinners organised by the Club. One of the last events he and Anne attended was a Talk Dinner with Andrew Graham-Dixon's colourful insights on Caravaggio; the perfect combination of art, food and wine in the magnificent setting of the club.

Living a bachelor life during the working week, life in London enabled Patrick to indulge his love of the theatre. He would see as many plays as possible, more than once if they passed muster or leaving at the interval if they did not. He became a friend of Tate Britain, The Royal Academy and the National Gallery so that he and Anne could enjoy the many wonderful exhibitions on offer, one of the last before lockdown being the exquisite paintings of the Spanish artist Sorolla. He and Anne were members of the Contemporary Art Society for Wales and collected Welsh art.

Patrick became a surprisingly adept and discerning shopper. He knew all the best shoe shops, parfumeurs and chocolatiers. One of his favourite shopping streets was Elizabeth Street in Belgravia and also the Chelsea environs where he would buy wildly extravagant presents for Anne and the children. His outings often led to hilarious accounts of his experiences; for instance at Rigby & Peller when he was unsure of the size of a particular undergarment he wished to buy for Anne. Patrick resisted the manager's invitation to size up the young lady assistants, instead making a wild but fairly accurate guess.

Patrick had a deep commitment to his Roman Catholic faith. A week before his death he was deeply honoured to receive the Last Sacrament from George Stack, Archbishop of Cardiff, who Patrick had known from his time as Administrator of Westminster Cathedral and who he regarded as a friend. Patrick always preferred the Latin Mass (he was a member of the Latin Mass Society) and despaired at some of the changes wrought by the Second Vatican Council, which he regarded as diminishing the beauty of the liturgy. He and Anne regularly attended the Latin Masses at the Oratory of St. Philip Neri at St Alban-on-the-Moors, Cardiff. Patrick was due to be admitted to the Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem but was unable to attend the investiture in December because of his health. Patrick had a particular dislike for what he regarded as "soppy" modern hymns preferring instead the music of composers such as Tallis,

Byrd, Palestrina, Victoria and Guerrero. He and Anne were members of the Thomas More Society and were regular attendees at the Red Mass held at Westminster Cathedral to mark the commencement of the legal year. The Mass was usually followed by lunch at The Athenaeum to which he invariably invited former colleagues and friends.

In the mid 1980s Patrick and Anne found an ancient property high in the Tramuntana mountain range of South-West Mallorca. With his friend, the late Christopher Pitchford QC (Lord Justice Pitchford), they bought the property for family holidays. Patrick and Anne became the sole owners a few years later and spent as much time as possible on the island with their children, making life-long friendships along the way. One such friend is Padre Tomeu Catalá, the charismatic village priest, who invited Patrick and Anne to spend time with him at *Projecte Home*, the successful drug rehabilitation project which is Padre Tomeu's inspiration and the main focus of his work. In 2008 Patrick and Anne celebrated the marriage of their eldest daughter, Rachel, to Tim in the village church with Padre Tomeu and Fr. William Curran concelebrating the marriage. Much of the first edition of *Personal Injury Pleadings* was written and proof read on the terrace of the house overlooking the mountains.



At work on the terrace of Finca Conques in 1992

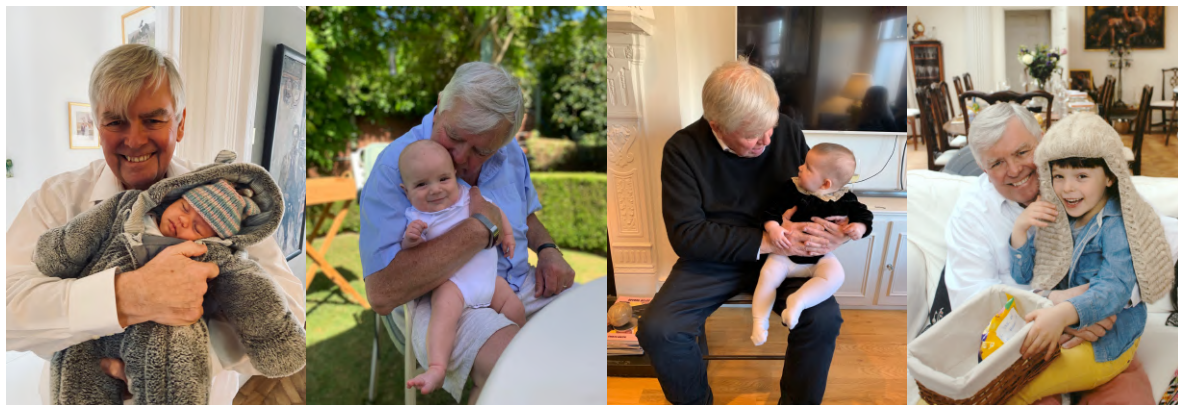
Patrick took the greatest delight and pride in his children's achievements. He loved the many fun-filled and rumbustious parties with the extended family, neighbours and friends which took place whenever there was a family gathering. His eldest daughter, Rachel (41), is a marketing consultant and founder of HospoDemo; Edmund (39) is Brand Lead at England Rugby; Benedict (32) is Head of Streaming & International Strategy at Decca Records, and Kate (29) is an Equestrian Area Sales Manager. Patrick was delighted to welcome into the family and embrace Tim, Rachel's husband, Claire, Edmund's wife and Tom, Kate's husband. Patrick's last year was blighted by his diagnosis of cancer and the consequences of

Covid, the worst of which was the inability to see his adored children and four grandchildren. Despite some dark days he remained a stoic to the end and never lost his sense of humour. Patrick was surrounded by his family in his last moments and the closing bars of Westminster Cathedral Choir singing Stanford's *Magnificat* under the direction of his dear friend, James O'Donnell.



Summer 2019 L to R – Claire, Edmund, Benedict, Xavi, Anne, Kate, Tom, Patrick, Rachel & Tim

Patrick is survived by his four children and four grandchildren Xavier (Xavi), Lucia (Lulu), Elowyn (Wynny) and Hugo. He is also survived by his older sister Dame Deirdre Hine, former Chief Medical Officer for Wales, and her two sons; his older brother John, a specialist insurance broker and his son; and his younger sister, Sarah, a psychologist and her three children. His older brother Denis predeceased him leaving a son and daughter.



"Poppa" with Elowyn, Hugo, Lulu and Xavi.

We have lost a wonderful, dear man and although a bright light has been extinguished in our lives, his influence runs deeply through each of us. May he rest in peace.

