

Robert, or Bob, as we knew him in Chambers, was a highly valued member of Tax Chambers, Lincoln's Inn. He was someone who quietly, without any fuss, got on with his practice but was always there to offer advice and encouragement to other members of Chambers.

Bob had been in our Chambers for over 40 years, representing a very considerable contribution to its life and success. For that, we are all grateful. He will be very much missed.

Perhaps his most striking characteristic was his utter tenacity. He was not one to be brow-beaten by any judge, no matter how grand.

He was not just a lawyer. His knowledge and love of history enabled him to make cultured and interesting contributions to conversations.

I particularly admired his strength and independence of character, which was definitely of the old school. My favourite story was one he himself told about being burgled. He phoned the police, who told him they had no resources to attend to the matter. So he told the police that he had shot one of the intruders. A squad car was despatched in no time. Apparently, while the police had no resources to protect honest citizens against thieving scum, they had no lack of resources to protect thieving scum against the consequences of their actions. When the police arrived and found no corpse, they said to Robert: "You lied to us." "Yes", said Robert, "just as you lied to me in saying you had no resources."

Bob was a good companion. One of my fondest recollections of him is the day we unexpectedly found ourselves stranded on the island of Jersey with no particular work to do. So, together with Valerie McWilliams, we took to exploring the island and its very advanced zoo. Bob was the most delightful company.

Bob was an Anglican. Bob kept the faith. Bob ran with patience the race that is set before us. Bob fought the good fight and finished the course.

Stephen Brandon who, of all the present members of our Chambers, had known Bob the longest, is unfortunately not able to be with us today, as he is out of the country. He writes:

"He fought against that terrible disease with great courage, patience and strength. Despite the pain and the ferocious treatments he underwent, he maintained his practice, which, even towards the end, still represented that of a successful practitioner, which showed the loyalty he attracted from his clients."

Bob and his ending bring to my mind those marvellous words in the Book of The Wisdom of Solomon:

"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.

2 In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery,

3 And their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace."

Robert Venables Q.C. – 22.4.12