

Patty had a sometimes stormy, but always very close, relationship with her wonderful sister and fellow barrister, Jean Connor, Q.C. Though they were close in age as in other things, Patty was slightly the elder. She took great pleasure in mentioning, from time to time, that "most people think I'm the younger sister, you know." Sadly, Jeannie lost her long fight with illness on December 2, 2014, and that loss was a terrible blow to Patty. It is some consolation to think they were not parted long.

We at the criminal bar will miss our friend. After a hesitant start to her career, she came to exemplify our aspirations. Shakespeare admonished, "Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends." Patty lived those words, and did it very well.

The Honourable Judge William Kitchen, Marie Louise Ahrens  
and Mark Perry



## Jack Talstra

Jacob Talstra, known to all as "Jack", was born on March 10, 1946 in the small village of Paesens, Friesland, located in the northern reaches of the Netherlands. His family immigrated to British Columbia in 1949, first living in Houston, then in Telkwa and finally settling in Terrace in 1953.



Jack's family operated a small potato farm and flower stand in Terrace for many years. From those humble beginnings Jack completed his undergraduate degree and graduated from UBC law school in 1973. He returned to Terrace to article with Cecil Pratt. Following articles he opened his own law practice, Talstra and Company, where he remained for the next 40 years.

In 1978 David A. Warner, Q.C., joined Jack and the following year I joined the firm. Since that time, many young lawyers have come and gone from Talstra and Company, and all of us benefited from Jack's presence and leadership. Jack started his career in typical small town fashion, accepting any and all work that came through the front door. He spent time in Provincial Court handling criminal, family and civil files. Over the years he spent less time in court and more time in his growing solicitor's practice.

Shortly after his return to Terrace from UBC law school, Jack met Hilda at a social function in Smithers. Hilda was part of a young group of teachers who met regularly at the Romilly home in Smithers. Jack used to love telling the story that just when the party got going around 9 pm, Selwyn would announce that he was going to retire for the evening because he had to get up very early in the morning to work on the many files at his office. Selwyn also knew that once a Smithers party got started it never ended.

Although Jack enjoyed the practice of law, his real love was the world of politics. At Jack's funeral, his brother told the story that when Jack was a youngster his mother commented that one day he would be the Prime Minister of Canada. Jack did not make it to Ottawa, but many regarded Jack as the "Prime Minister of Terrace". In 1979 Jack became a councillor for the City of Terrace and remained in that position until he was elected as mayor in 1985. He remained in the position of mayor until 2008 and in so doing became one of the longest serving mayors in British Columbia. During those years he also served on numerous city committees as well as the board of directors of the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine. He served the City of Terrace for 29 years.

Jack also entered the federal arena, running as the Federal Liberal candidate in the election of 1983. Political history buffs will recall that Iona Campagnola won the Skeena riding for the Liberals in 1974. She lost to the NDP and Jim Fulton in 1979. Jack also lost to Jim Fulton.

Dave Warner best describes Jack's approach to law and politics, as follows:

Jack's law practice, and his attitude to all conflict, politics, and life in general, were marked by an attitude of conciliation, respect for the other side's views, and striving to seek out common ground and resolution of differences, rather than arguing or fighting to the bitter end. Other lawyers working with him, or against him, on files, always appreciated his approach, his gentlemanly conduct, his sense of fairness and his willingness to compromise to get the job done with minimal difficulty for all. I think those attributes were also very important contributors to his success in politics, and to the fact that he was re-elected as mayor so many times.

On one occasion, following a difficult trial in which he was successful, Jack commented to opposing counsel that his secret to success was to "underwhelm" the opposition. Jack took all of the usual difficulties and struggles of a busy small town law practice in stride. He never lost his temper and remained calm no matter what crisis was at hand.

As an aside, one can only wonder what our world would look like if everyone in law and politics took Jack's approach to life.

Jack loved the outdoors. He enjoyed hiking, biking, walking his dog Brooks, watching hockey games and especially spending time with his

beautiful grandchildren. He never stopped promoting the wonders of the Terrace region and lived long enough to see some of the economic benefits of his vision for the Northwest.

Jack died on December 5, 2014, following a lengthy struggle with cancer. He bore the struggle in the same way he lived his life, with patience, a sense of humor, a strong faith and a positive attitude. He continued coming to his office every day until he was hospitalized for the last time shortly before his passing.

Jack left his wife Hilda, his five grown children (Michael, Amanda, Christina, Nathania, and Daniel), and nine grandchildren.

Jack made an extraordinary contribution to his community. He also had many close friends among the leaders of the First Nations communities in the Terrace region. He will be missed by his family, colleagues, clients, church community, and many friends.

Edmond de Walle



## Susan Brandreth-Gibbs

Susan Brandreth-Gibbs was born in Vancouver on January 3, 1953 and grew up in Ladner, B.C. She was part of a family that loved the outdoors, was devoted to conservation and had an inbred love of nature. She graduated from Delta Secondary School in 1971 and was the recipient of a Bachelor of Science in Zoology at UBC in 1977. She obtained her LL.B. from the UBC Faculty of Law in May 1979.



She had a mercurial legal career. She was called to the bar of British Columbia in 1980 and after only nine years in practice became District Registrar and then a year later was made a Master of the Supreme Court of British Columbia. She was a Master until 2004 when ill health forced her resignation.

Susan was the small package that big things come in. She maintained that she was over five feet tall but most people really doubted it. She was a friend and confidante to those with whom she worked and she was always avail-