

Bert was a patron of the Seattle Opera and of the Vancouver Symphony.

He loved history, politics and a good debate. He loved to share his knowledge through public speaking, from legal education, to addressing the haggis, to New Year's Day sermons. Many an enjoyable evening was spent on January 25 of each year at "Robbie Burns Dinners", particularly after Bert became involved with the Vancouver Robbie Burns Club (his mother was of Scottish heritage).

The church held a prominent place in his life, providing spiritual and social fulfillment. He served as an Elder at the West Vancouver Presbyterian Church.

Bert's 90th birthday was in November 2014. He planned his own party at the Capilano Golf Club and gave a great speech.

He was a "Thinking Man's Bon Vivant". Bert enjoyed great food, wine and conversation and could often be found, in the company of these three things, at the Vancouver Club or the Capilano Golf Club.

Bert was a true gentleman. He was a great lawyer. He was a wise counsellor. He was a teacher, a mentor and a friend to countless people around the globe.

Martin Palleson, Douglas Schmitt and Mr. Justice Paul Walker



Patricia Colleen Connor

On January 29th of this year, the Vancouver criminal bar lost one of our most esteemed lawyers—Patty Connor.

Patty was born January 20, 1950 in Weyburn, Saskatchewan. She moved when very young to Vancouver with her mother, her sister Jeannie, and her aunt. Graduating first from Sir Winston Churchill High School, then UBC Law in 1974, she was called to the bar the next year, in 1975.



There were very few female lawyers at that time. Most of those practising were relegated to non-adversarial roles and the others were viewed as curiosities. The old boys' network had real difficulty adjusting to the new reality. Patty, as part of the first substantial influx of females into the pro-

fession, experienced the resistance of those already practising, and of the clients they were servicing. In short, it was a very difficult time for new female lawyers, and there was considerable attrition.

Patty was bright and capable. She coped for a time as a young criminal lawyer, but became part of the attrition. To the surprise of all, and the consternation of many, she left the practice to join the federal Tax Department.

And then, after several years, she was suddenly back practising at the criminal bar. Patty now recognized that she had her doubters; she respected that. But she did not suppress her personality or abandon her femininity to become one of the old boys—she stood with them. Her intelligence, commanding gaze, and firm speech were the match of any adversary, and she was soon accepted as a worthy practitioner.

Over the next thirty-odd years she distinguished herself, and gained recognition as a respected senior member of the criminal bar.

Her client base included a full spectrum of human beings, ranging from committed professional criminals to life's inadequate losers. All were faithful to and respectful of her, accepting her sometimes severe, no-nonsense attitude.

She was a generous mentor to many young lawyers. Her mentoring was not for the faint-hearted, but she had all the time in the world for the task and her advice was always sound.

And her mentoring was not reserved for young lawyers. Former Chief Judge Carol Baird Ellan often looked to Patty for advice concerning issues between bench and bar, particularly where the Main Street courthouse was involved.

Other judges also appreciated Patty's contribution to court proceedings. Madam Justice Catherine Bruce recalls always looking forward to Patty's cases. Patty would begin proceedings with a respectful salutation, followed by a short joke or quip. And then Patty would get down to business, with no unnecessary confrontation or conflict.

This is not to say that the judges were unaware that there could be an intimidating side to Patty. That side could be seen particularly in the reaction of other lawyers dealing with her. And many of the judges and lawyers were friends of Patty who routinely experienced her jibes and salty language outside the courtroom.

One judge, a friend of hers, was perhaps too aware of her leisure time lapses into the downtown eastside argot. That judge, who was not known as a good listener, heard Patty complain during a bail hearing about his previous order detaining her client, which could not be varied. Patty said to him, "There is nothing that can be done. You're functus." The judge heard it quite

differently when Patty said, "You're functus." It occurred to him that he would have to speak to her at a later time, but fortunately he soon realized his error. They did speak at a later time, but only as well as their laughter permitted.

To the Crown, Patty was a formidable adversary, but always in the best sense. She would never take a mean advantage, and her word could always be relied upon. But if she thought Crown counsel was out of line, the gloves were off. Her reaction could range from speaking plainly to taking control of the courtroom. Patty was known on occasion to stride into a courtroom and begin calling her own cases where the Crown had resisted doing so.

Patty had an unusual relationship with the police, who of course were often witnesses in cases against her clients. None of the police relished the prospect of her cross-examination. But no lawyer had more good friends among the police officers, and this was over the course of her whole career.

Patty was a generous and faithful friend. Her many friends included not only those mentioned above, but also prosecutors, defence lawyers, and court staff. One such friend, a manager on the court staff, recalls Patty hearing about the manager's ongoing difficulty getting treatment for a serious medical situation. Patty, on her own initiative, forthwith made medical appointments with her own doctor and insisted that the court manager keep those appointments. When the manager attended the appointments, it was made clear that the doctor's staff were not prepared to ignore Patty's direction. The story has a happy ending—the medical problem was resolved, and our other friend is still with us.

Many of Patty's friends have kind and sometimes whimsical mementos by which to keep her freshly in memory. Former Chief Judge Baird Ellan once admired a necklace Patty was wearing. Patty took it off, and put the necklace on Judge Baird Ellan remarking, "Here, it looks better on you." Judge Baird Ellan says that the best part is that she can still smell Patty's perfume on the beads of the necklace. That will bring back memories for anyone who was ever in the same courtroom with Patty.

We always like court stories. There are many concerning Patty, but a favourite story concerns a trial Patty was conducting before Judge Francie Howard. As a police officer was giving Crown evidence, Patty was sitting writing notes at counsel table. Her cell phone rang. Patty removed the phone from her bag and silenced it. Proceedings resumed but the phone rang again, so Patty repeated the process. When it happened a third time, Patty took out the phone, tossed it on the floor, and then stomped on it until it was finally silent. Patty looked up and said to the court, "I'm sorry. That's the only way I know to turn these things off."

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.