

## **ROBIN AP CYNAN 1959 – 2015**

Robin ap Cynan was his own man who lived his life on his own terms. Contemporaries at Oxford University remember him as Robin Jones and it is said that he changed his name to honour his grandfather who had been an arch-druid, a Presbyterian minister, a poet and a dramatist and who had invited the Queen to attend the National Eisteddfod on the only occasion she has been to it. Cynan was clearly a flamboyant character to whom Robin looked up. Robin was a flamboyant character to whom his fellow council members looked up.

In her sad message informing the Law Society Council of Robin's death, Denise Lester mentioned that Robin loved the Law Society. That is undoubtedly true. He devoted an immense amount of time and energy to the Law Society over the past quarter century. He travelled all over England, and especially Wales, for Law Society and local law society functions. He represented 4 local law societies on council (Herefordshire, Breconshire and Radnorshire; Mid Wales; Shropshire; and Worcestershire) and his constituency, the Welsh Marches, covers a vast area of land in England and Wales. At his death he was a member of LAPB and he was a former member of the Membership Board. He served on committees as diverse as Family Law, Wales and the Wine committee, to name but three. I don't think it's possible to list all the committees and working parties he served on.

Robin was also an active member of the Associated Law Societies of Wales, before that body fell dormant 4 years ago and he and I planned to try to re-launch it this autumn. Robin worked tirelessly with Carolyn Kirby and Peter Davies in the aftermath of the creation of the National Assembly for Wales trying to educate solicitors both in Wales and England that it was important that they understood that the law in Wales was going to diverge from that in England, in significant ways. Although this message still has to be fully understood, Robin and the others delivered it tirelessly. Robin chaired both the Law Society's Welsh Affairs Working Party and the Wales committee. He attended the Law Society's annual lecture at the National Eisteddfod in August every year.

In addition to his work for Wales, Robin was an enthusiastic proponent and advocate for mediation, particularly in his area of specialism, which was family law. He spent years on various committees, outside the Law Society as well as within it, working to promote mediation and its benefits. And he created and ran his own business, too.

Robin was fluent in Welsh, as well as English. He wrote poetry and recited one of his or Cynan's poems at the beginning of every meeting of the Wales committee which he chaired. Robin had his own style of dressing, whether it be his dinner jacket, his fez or his preference for a jacket and tie

to a suit for council meetings. He loved his music. He loved his motorbikes. He loved his wine and he loved to dine. He will be greatly missed as a patron of the Potted Pig, an establishment in Cardiff which is so exclusive one has to make an appointment to book a reservation.

Robin had his own manner of speaking and expressing himself. His contributions to council debates could seem whimsical but they were thoughtful and constructive and offered an alternative perspective to the discussion. Robin was a good, decent, principled, generous and kind man who worked hard to make life better - for his country, his profession, his colleagues and his clients. Since he had been so active for so many years, he also knew a lot of people and they liked and respected him. This is why his sudden death has caused such grief amongst so many in the legal world.

It is said of eccentrics that the mould was thrown away when they were born. Robin threw away his own mould. The Law Society council will be lucky to have another Robin ap Cynan. Thank you Robin for all you have done for the Law Society, the solicitors' profession, for mediation and for Wales. We salute you.

David Dixon

President, Cardiff & District Law Society 2015-16 and Member of the Council of the Law Society

*This obituary appeared originally on the website of the Cardiff and District Law Society ([www.cardifflaw.org](http://www.cardifflaw.org))*