

PAM OON

TRIBUTE

By Lynne Townley



At the end of 2015, it was with great sadness that the AWB said goodbye to our past chair and cherished friend, Pam Oon. Pam had had a serious illness for a number of years, but she courageously continued working and spent her time being concerned for the welfare of others and making sure that those around her were happy.

Anyone who met Pam couldn't fail but to be touched by her innate sense of optimism and joy. She brought happiness wherever she went and that was no mean achievement at the criminal bar.

We all met to remember Pam at the chapel of her home-from-home, Snaresbrook Crown Court. Her husband, Mike, recalled how they had

met at Bar School - and gone on to have the happiest of marriages - and two beautiful children, our dear friends - Alex and Robert. Mike fondly remembered how Pam was descended from a line of strong female lawyers in Malaysia. All true trail-blazers and before their time. A tradition which Pam continued in her own legal career in London. Mike commented how the sun seemed to come out every time Pam entered a room. And those of us who had the honour and privilege of knowing Pam agree with that sentiment whole-heartedly.

I first met Pam when I was a pupil in her chambers. Those were stuffier days at the Bar. But Pam was one of the few who came down to the pupils' room and made friends with us and gave us progress reports on the social calendars of the then very young Alex and Robert, which were filled with a whirl of parties and the other social events beloved by the under 10s. I next met Pam at Snaresbrook when I was in a management position at the CPS. She came into court to cheer me on. Afterwards she reported that she was very impressed that I had maintained perfect posture while addressing the judge, not slouching for a second. We both fell into fits of laughter and that is how I personally remember Pam, you simply couldn't be sad in her presence.

Pam also revived the AWB when it was ailing and she is responsible for turning it into the vibrant and successful organisation that it is today.

On a more serious note Pam gave support in many ways to many people. In fact the extent of her generosity will never be known because she took pains to ensure that her many acts of kindness and generosity went under the radar. That is true charity and perhaps sums up Pam's character better than anything else.

As District Judge Sue Williams commented at the memorial service, 'Pam was an Easter person'. She was that and so much more. I speak

for the AWB and the Bar as a whole when I say that I am just fortunate to have met her. She lives on in her beautiful children and, of course, in all our memories. And as the AWB flourishes and continues to help new members of our profession, those who weren't fortunate enough to have met Pam, will remember her legacy with gratitude.

Goodbye Pam from all your dear friends at the AWB, we remember always with love and fondness.

