

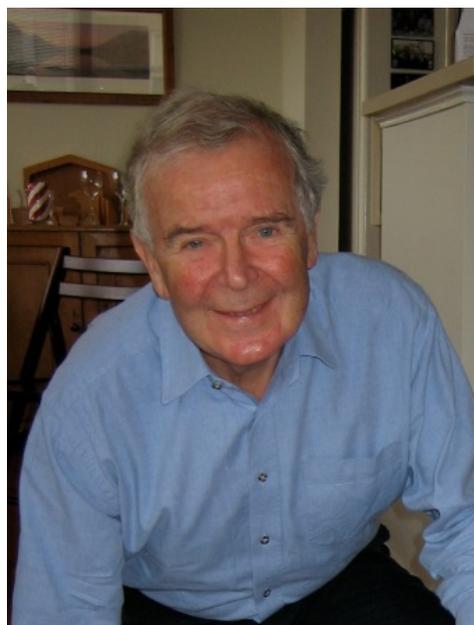
Dr Richard Fennelly Fawcett, 1936–2014

President of TPDF: 1991–1993; President of CIPA: 1995–1996

Dick Fawcett was born to a father who, while working as a research chemist for ICI, was one of the inventors of polyethylene. School friends remember Dick as a popular boy who enjoyed sport which he played in his own individual style. For example, when batting, he had a theory that one was in much more danger of being bowled out or lbw if you moved your legs. His remained firmly planted to the ground and stayed there. It was remarkable how well he did using this unique method.

After leaving school he went to Oxford to read chemistry. Friends recall that he had an absolutely first class mind with a genuine intellectual curiosity and a great ability to master and retain facts across a considerable range of subjects. Many a midnight discussion demonstrated these gifts.

His first jobs were at BP and Wyeth, but he only stayed there a short while before moving to J. A. Kemp & Co., where he qualified and stayed for some 14 years. Dick's task was to convert English translations of the client's home country patent applications into patent applications with appropriate claims for use in various countries in the Anglophone world, and to file and prosecute these applications, a task of enormous labour intensity when looked at from today's PCT and EPC perspectives. Dick had prodigious energy, being one



of the first to arrive in the morning and the last to leave in the evening. Even so, he found plenty of time to spend with friends, and amongst other things was a founder member of the Gray's Inn Eccentrics, a group of IP professionals who met to play squash and golf and to socialise. But by the beginning of the 1970s, it seemed as though Dick's first love, that of industrial practice, was his true love, and he moved to ICI's Plant Protection Division at Jealott's Hill.

Up until Dick's arrival, the patents group at Jealott's Hill had been rather inbred, but Dick brought a breath of fresh air, a new professional approach, and lots of skills and knowledge. His colleagues appreciated his cheerful robust style, his determination and his kind heart. It was at ICI that Dick became involved in what he regarded as the formative experience of his professional career, the notorious "herbicide wars" between ICI, Dow, Ciba-Geigy and

Ishihara. The class of compounds including "Fusillade[®]" herbicide was invented almost simultaneously by these companies, with patent applications being filed literally within days of each other. Oppositions, interferences and multi-jurisdictional litigation followed. Dick threw himself into this melee and, in the words of one colleague, "worked his socks off with exceptional success".

Dick left ICI in 1985 to take up a position at BP, becoming Head of Patents in 1989. Almost immediately after joining BP, Dick became embroiled in a major UK patent infringement action. His considerable litigation experience proved to be a godsend to the firm, ensuring that it was ultimately successful in defending the action. As it turned out, this was to be the first of a number of such disputes in the US, UK, France, Germany and Korea during the late 80s and early 90s as the various commodity chemicals manufacturers sought first to create patent thickets and then to assert them against each other. This was often complex and stressful work requiring not only a sound knowledge of the law but also

strong project management skills and the ability to handle the not always reasonable expectations of senior management. Throughout, Dick was in his element, demonstrating great energy, commanding personal respect amongst his peers and forging many new friendships which he was to carry forward into later life.

But Dick was not simply a litigator; he also cared passionately about the people who worked for him. Throughout what was a period of great change in BP, when he was required to juggle conflicting requirements of manpower, budgets and politics, Dick was a formidable champion of his people's interests. He was particularly committed to staff training, ensuring that people were given enough time to prepare properly for the examinations and that continuing development was put on a sound footing.

Despite the intense pressure within BP, Dick found time to make major contributions in the world of patents outside BP, becoming president of the IP Federation (then TMPDF) in 1991 and president of CIPA in 1995, ultimately becoming a leading light in the profession. He became well-known in international patent circles and travelled extensively representing such bodies as CIPA, the IP Federation and the ICC (International Chamber of Commerce). He worked closely with the IPO on policy matters, and he was a member of UK Government delegations on numerous occasions. He was influential in all the major patent policy issues of the last 30 years.

Dick retired from BP in 1996. His work on patent policy continued unabated, and he continued to be in demand for international meetings and conferences, and to travel extensively. He acted for many years as a consultant to the US law firm of Finnegan Henderson, advising on European patent matters, and to solicitors Bird & Bird, keeping them up to date on policy matters concerning patents.

Dick had a wide range of interests in his personal life, including opera, art, history, and sport. He met Anne, Social Secretary to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, in 1975, and they married the following year. Their son Richard is a solicitor. When Richard and his American wife Robin presented Dick with grandsons Henry and James, Dick turned, rather to his own surprise, into a doting grandfather. He was so proud of his family, and they gave him huge pleasure.

Dick was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in August last year, and died nine months later. To the end, he retained his positivity, stressing what a good life he had had. He will be remembered as a person who contributed much to the world, always enthusiastic, inspiring others, and wearing his great learning lightly. Those who knew him personally will miss him as a kind, extrovert and engaging friend with a great sense of humour, who was loyal to his friends and made great efforts to keep in touch throughout his life. Those who worked with him professionally will remember his sharp mind, clear, strong views, and dedication to the task in hand.

Compiled by Sue Scott from contributions from many of Dick's family, friends and colleagues