

pronouncements, drama and pageantry. The law in all its solemnity, with ermine, crazy horsehair big wigs, colourful sashes, arcane language and honorific titles; the church with its colourful processions, the embroidered cloaks, the floating incense, the Gregorian chants and polyphonic hymns, the whispered prayers in celestial Gothic buildings, plaster saints on pedestals, oils, candles, indulgences, intrigue; and the theatre where his heart thrilled and fluttered with the athletic music of Wagner, the echo of drums, the shrill of horns, marches, bloody battles, and tragic deaths. He loved the world of the stage, the universe created by Shakespeare, Puccini, Verdi. His life was full of art and music, of comedy and tragedy, full of colour and characters from the streets and from every age, full of the mystery and fascination, of grandiose religion and of exclusive

brotherhoods. Not a minute to waste; not a moment of boredom; not a bit of regret; not a tear of bitterness.

A life full of pleasant smiles and laughter; honest, trustworthy, polite, generous. A man for all seasons. A Byzantine man. A Renaissance man. A truly Christian man.

He wanted to please everyone – and it proved impossible. Some needy people actively pursued him, cruelly playing on his innate generosity and good nature, exploiting his overpowering desire to be loved. He was never his own man – he belonged to everyone. The Genesians had a claim on him – as did St John’s University College, and the knights of Malta, the knights of St Lazarus, and the knights of St John. And many members of the AA. He belonged to his two daughters, Philippa and Johanne, children of his first

wife, Noelene Bell. He shared his busy life with his beloved Brenda – with Bridie his ever-attentive step-daughter and her husband Gavan. Many people loved him and had a claim on him. Even his canine companion, Fergus, demanded his attention.

But above all, he was possessed by his generous, ever forgiving God. He was God’s child. He knew he was treasured inside God’s jewellery box. He was God’s little creation. And he belonged to God. Finally, his admiring friends and loving family entrusted Brian into the warm arms of his smiling, prodigal father. Life is short. We are here for almost no time at all. For Brian, it was indeed a good life – many are proud to have shared part of it with him. He was a good man. His friends are comforted that he found his life satisfying. All are so pleased that his life was ‘great’. Now, he rests in peace.

## Mark Gerard McFadden (1957-2008)



Mark McFadden, a barrister since 2004 and member of Frederick Jordan chambers, died on Thursday, 5 June 2008. Mark’s sudden death came as a terrible shock to his friends and colleagues at the Bar. He was 51 years old and fondly regarded as a very engaging,

grounded and thoughtful person. We will sadly miss him.

Conversation with Mark quickly revealed his deep affection for his family – his beloved wife Cath; his four young adult children Matthew, Naomi, Cushla and Jack, who seemed tirelessly to generate achievements for their father to recount; and his mother Colleen. He loved the outdoors, especially a holiday on the coast or a camping trip, and a good run or a surf down at Cronulla.

Mark’s first career was in education. He held a Grad Dip Ed (Syd Tchrs Coll), BA and MEd (Syd) and PhD (CSturt). During the 1980s he was a high school English teacher. In the 1990s he was a teacher and academic at Charles Sturt University. His doctorate concerned techniques for re-engaging and educating disadvantaged and alienated young people. From 1998 to 2001 he was professor and head of that university’s School of Education. He later became a director of

St Stanislaus College, the high school his sons had attended.

In 2003 Mark graduated in law from the University of Sydney, with first class honours. His adventurous decision to come to the Bar almost immediately was well executed. He was a meticulous, dedicated and reliable barrister. His developing practice included regular work in professional negligence, property law and charitable trusts. He often spent long days at hospitals around Sydney, appointed to represent patients whose mental health was being assessed, a brief both demanding and rewarding for a man of his patience and humanity.

A requiem mass for Mark was held on 12 June 2008 at St Aloysius in Cronulla, followed by a huge farewell from his family and friends from the Shire and beyond.

**Richard Lancaster**