



COMITÉ MARITIME INTERNATIONAL

PRESIDENT

12 July 2017

Presidents of NMLAs

Dear President

William Birch Reynardson C.B.E.

I am sad to report that William Birch Reynardson ("**Bill**", as he was known to everybody) passed away at the weekend.

Bill was a member Honoris Causa of the CMI, a Vice President of the CMI, from 1978 to 1995 and had been Senior Partner of Thos. R Miller from 1981 to 1988. In addition he had been the Secretary/Treasurer of the BMLA for a number of years.

Bill Birch Reynardson was born in 1923 and was educated at Eton and Christchurch College Oxford. He served in North Africa and Italy during the Second World War and was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1952. In 1960 he joined Thos. R Miller and ultimately became Chairman. In 1995 he was awarded a CBE for services in the unification of international maritime law and in 2000 was made a Doctor of International Maritime Law by IMLI, in Malta.

That brief history does not give a sufficient insight into the manner in which he influenced the CMI and maritime lawyers generally. Bill, and his wife Nik, (who he married in 1950 but who passed away 20 years ago), attended many CMI events over a long period of time.

I have not had time to ascertain when he first started attending CMI events but from the list of attendees to the New York Conference in 1965 we know he was there and it is likely he had attended many earlier meetings. I know he attended the CMI Sydney Conference in 1994 and the CMI Centenary Conference in 1997. He was directly involved in a lot of the work the CMI accomplished during those years. We know from the record of the 1965 Conference that he was very involved in the Maritime Liens and Mortgages work at that time. Indeed, in his blog one of his former partners at Thos. R Miller, Herry Lawford, refers to Bill getting together with "Lord Diplock in his kitchen and drafted what became the Civil Liability Convention on which most international Oil Pollution compensation law has been based since 1970."

On a personal note I know that it was Bill's encouragement of the CMI to hold its 1994 Conference in Sydney, at the time of the Paris Conference in 1990, that ensured that that Conference took place. My wife also has an abiding memory of participating in some horse riding with him during the course of a US MLA Conference in Hawaii many years ago and we both recall being entertained at his lovely home with his family for Sunday lunch. In addition to all his other

STUART HETHERINGTON C/O COLIN BIGGERS & PAISLEY,

TEL: +61 2 8281 4477 E-MAIL: stuart.hetherington@cbp.com.au FAX: +61 2 8281 4567

REGISTERED OFFICE CMI, AISBL: Ernest Van Dijckkaai 8, B-2000 Antwerp, Belgium

Enterprise n° 0867 385 381

www.comitemaritime.org

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activities, Bill was Chairman of the South Oxfordshire Hunt in 1966 and the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire in 1974.

To his son Tom, who is of course the Chair of the International Working Group on Unmanned Ships and a Trustee, and Treasurer, of the CMI Charitable Trust, and to all his family I offer the condolences of the CMI and thanks for the contributions of Bill (and Tom) to the work of the CMI over a long period of time. Bill will be long remembered for his style, charm, humour and grace which was experienced by all who came into contact with him.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Hetherington', written in a cursive style.

Stuart Hetherington