

'Digby was proof being a solicitor can be good fun'

E YORKS: Tributes are paid to 'charming' judge

IN SHORT

The legal profession has paid tribute to a "charming" judge who has died.

More than 100 people attended the service for deputy district judge Jonathan Digby Bates.

BY NICKY HARLEY
Court Reporter

n.harley@mailnewsmedia.co.uk

MORE than 100 members of Hull's legal profession have paid tribute to a respected judge and solicitor who has died.

A eulogy was held at Hull Combined Court Centre for deputy district judge Jonathan Digby Bates, known as Digby, who died last Thursday, aged 57.

Mr Bates, of Hessle, sat at the court for 13 years and was also a former partner at Ivesons Solicitors.

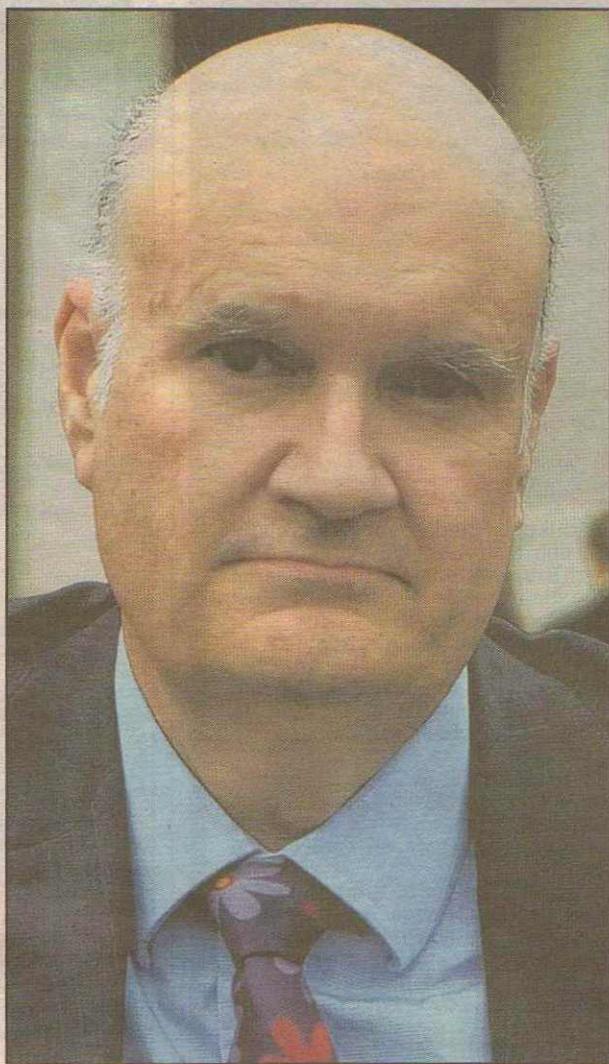
The courtroom was packed with lawyers, barristers, judges and court staff as his colleagues paid a moving tribute to the man they described as a "charming eccentric" who was often seen in Whitefriargate dressed in his large hat, overcoat and with a handkerchief in his breast pocket.

Judge John Dowse said: "The tribute itself is reflected by the numbers in this court.

"He was a devoted, hands-on father always home for bath and bedtimes no matter how busy he was at work.

"He was a very familiar figure around Hull.

"His wife Carol described his dress sense as 'natty', others 'mildly eccentric', with his trademark hat and



WELL RESPECTED: Deputy district judge Jonathan Digby Bates, known as Digby, died, aged 57.

long overcoat. He would always greet you with 'What oh'.

"He was the best district judge we never had.

"He had many friends and will be missed by them.

"Whitefriargate will be the poorer without him.

"The profession will be

poorer without him and the judiciary has suffered a great loss."

Mr Bates died of pancreatic cancer following a 20-month battle, throughout which he continued to work as a solicitor and judge.

Peter Duffus, of Hull Incorporated Law Society,

said: "He was a good lawyer and a good ambassador for the profession.

"He will be remembered for his sense of fun. He was proof that being a solicitor can be fun."

Mr Bates was born on the Isle of Wight before his parents moved to Brompton,

The profession will be poorer without him ... it has suffered a great loss

Judge John Dowse

near Scarborough, and then to Hessle.

He was educated at Beverley Grammar School and went to Newcastle University.

He joined Ivesons Solicitors as a trainee in 1977, was admitted to the roll of solicitors in January 1980 and later became a partner.

He married Carol, a family barrister, in 1980.

His firm joined with Pepperells Solicitors prior to his retirement last August.

He became a deputy district judge in February 1996, sitting at Hull Combined Court Centre and across Yorkshire and last sat at the court on December 22 last year.

Mr Bates was president of Hull Law Society in 2007 and 2008.

He was also a mason, president of Beverley Grammar Old Boys in 2009, a member of the Round Table and 41 Club.

He leaves Carol, son Alex and daughter Holly.

Links

Pepperells Solicitors
www.pepperells.com
Law Society
www.lawsociety.org.uk