

Remarks by Chief Justice Deborah E. Fry
On the passing of John Cochrane Sweetland B.Sc. LL.B. Q.C.
Retired Member of the Bar
Court of Appeal, Duckworth St., St. John's, NL
September 14, 2018

I would like to take a moment at the beginning of this sitting of the Court of Appeal to recognize the passing of a retired senior member of the Bar, **John Cochrane Sweetland B.Sc. LL.B. Q.C.**, who passed away on September 9, 2018. John Sweetland Q.C. was born on September 5, 1937.

His parents, Ruban and Lily Sweetland (Rideout), and his two brothers, Rev. Bruce Sweetland and Fred Sweetland, predeceased him. His daughters, Ashley and Kristen, brought him great joy and Kirsten and her partner, Fred French, enhanced his life tremendously by providing him with two grandsons, Reed and Miles French. He provided them with his greatest gifts, the special love of a grandfather and his time and participation in life adventures and experiences with them. He is remembered fondly by his sister, Brenda (Les Cantwell), and special nephew, Barry Sweetland, who became his hunting and fishing buddy.

John Sweetland had a very interesting career which started when he earned a Bachelor of Science degree from St. Xavier University in Nova Scotia. He then spent a number of years working in banking and in architecture with Sir Christopher Barlow. He then attended the University of New Brunswick and graduated in 1972 with his law degree. He was called to the Newfoundland Bar on April 9, 1973 where he was entered on the Barrister's Roll as # 346.

He spent his early career as a Magistrate on Bell Island before returning to his home town of Corner Brook to open a private practice.

John Cochrane Sweetland was appointed as Queen's Counsel on June 8, 2005 and, at that time, he was described as operating a general law practice in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, at Sweetland and Burrige. He was then the Vice-Chair of the Labour Relations Board and taught business law at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. Mr. Sweetland had also held positions as a senior partner at Sweetland, Martin and Ozon and the Department of Development and Tourism, Western Regional Office.

He was described by a friend as "one of the most caring, down to earth and thoughtful gentleman I had ever met. Everybody and everything in his life was beautiful especially his daughters, Ashley and Kristen, and then his two buddies, Reed & Miles, that he bragged about and loved passionately."

Michael Monaghan Q.C., now deceased, a well-known Corner Brook lawyer was a great friend of John Cochrane Sweetland, who apparently earned the nickname "Johnny Cochrane". His son, Tom Monaghan, paid tribute to John Sweetland when he said "My dad often remarked to me about how great it was playing golf with John due to his patience and calm demeanor.

‘Give one back to the golf course Monaghan!’ was one of his lines when my old man would spray a ball into the woods. What a wonderful playing partner he was to my dad.”

After he retired, his family noted that he spent a number of years living on the banks of his beloved Humber River and enjoying his passions for fishing, hunting and wood fires, from which the songs of the Three Tenors could be heard up and down the river. In 2013, he moved to St. John’s to be closer to his daughters but his love for nature saw him spending his final years in Chamberlains with a view of the ocean.

On behalf of my colleagues at the Court of Appeal, I wish to extend our sincere condolences to the family on their loss of John Cochrane Sweetland Q.C.