



“The last hurrah”

Dear friends and clients, past, present and future,

As you may or may not know, after a very long and happy career in clerking, I will be taking retirement at the end of April.

Time has flown by – I have been a clerk since August 1972 for over half a century, 48 years in these chambers, and for the first 2.5 years was on the ground floor of 13 Old Square – now part of Maitland Chambers. I have been privy to the modernisation of the bar, and contributed to the millennial merger from which Serle Court was made, bringing together barristers and clerking teams from the commercial set, One Hare Court, based in the Temple and the leading chancery set that had been on the first floor at 13 Old Square in Lincoln's Inn. Over the years, chambers have grown from a humble 11 barristers (with only one QC), to the current level of 75 members, including 28 silks.

I am taking this opportunity to reach out to friends and colleagues, to express my sincere gratitude, and to look back on what has been a fulfilling and exciting career. I have clerked some of the judicial greats,



Steve Whitaker and Terry Buck featured in Serle Court's 'Chambers News' Winter 1998/1999

including Lord Briggs JSC and the late Sir Gavin Lightman QC, and later on became clerk (and still am) to Sir Gavin Lightman's son, Daniel Lightman KC. The fortuitous familiarity that grows during the clerk-to-barrister relationship is underrated and I will be forever thankful for the friendships that the role has engineered.

I took over the sole role of Head Clerk at Serle Court in 2008 (when Terry Buck retired – I had the privilege of working with Terry for 36 years, 20 years as joint senior clerks, before he retired). I have had principal responsibility for all aspects of the clerking and practice management function at Serle Court.

I have seen chambers through a period of concentrated growth, and I am astounded by the quality of barristers that we are seeing come through the door to this day. I will be extremely sorry not to walk into 6 New Square and sit in the wooden clad clerks' room from May, but I will be sure to see chambers left in very safe hands, and prospering more than ever, with Kathryn Purkis, Nick Hockney and Dan Wheeler navigating, and continuing the success of what I will always consider to be a warm and congenial organisation.

I am biased, but Serle Court is the best set of chambers you could work for. The ethos is one of camaraderie from top to bottom. I could not have worked beside a better bunch of barristers, clerks and staff if I tried. I must have been blessed to work amongst such talented and nice people. I will be leaving behind some very close friends, nigh on family.

It has been a pleasure, and I wish you all the best in the future.



Steve Whitaker
April, 2023