

two years (in 1969–70).¹ When she “retired” from the University of Washington Law Library, she took up another career in law librarianship, becoming a firm librarian for many years. No retirement of knitting and ladies’ lunches for Viola!

¶4 I first met Viola when she joined the AALL Executive Board in the late sixties, while I was secretary of the Board. I was impressed by her acumen, her direct approach to issues, and also her humanity. My most vivid memory of the last occurred on the morning following the close of the 1970 Annual Meeting. Bill Stern had finished his term as president by presiding at the banquet the night before. By morning he had collapsed. It was Viola, along with Babe Russo, AALL’s longtime administrative secretary, who tenderly but firmly took care of him, brought him to the post-convention Board meeting, and helped him until arrangements were made for him to fly back to Los Angeles. Two years later Viola herself was president. She always told me that she took my year to be president, for I was going off the Board after five years as secretary and she thought I should have then moved up to president. I could not do it then because we were in the middle of building construction at Villanova and I did not have time to be AALL president as well. As I told Viola then and ever since, “My time will come” and it did four years later.

¶5 Viola loved to travel and explore the world. With her children, she trekked in Nepal—twice when she was more than eighty years old. She also loves kites, taking me during one of my visits to Seattle to see her favorite open meadow for flying kites.

¶6 So it is my pleasure to honor a great lady, a great human being.

Penny A. Hazelton*

The Legend of Mrs. Bird

¶1 While I had the privilege to learn my craft from Mrs. Gallagher at the University of Washington in the 1976 law librarianship class, I completely missed working with Mrs. Bird! By 1975, Mrs. Bird had retired from the University of Washington Law School Library, had been hired back to manage the move into the “new” law school building, Condon Hall, on NE Campus Parkway, and had started her second or third career as a law firm librarian at a large Seattle law firm. When I came back to Seattle as the law librarian of the University of Washington ten years later in 1985, Mrs. Bird was still on the move in law firm libraries in Seattle! Her retirement from these jobs shortly thereafter meant I had missed her again.

1. *Editor’s Note:* As of this writing, in addition to Bird and Stern, two other nondirectors have served as AALL president: Margaret Maes Axtmann, Assistant Director for Collections and Technical Services, University of Minnesota Law Library, 1999–2000; and Carol Avery Nicholson, Assistant Director for Bibliographic and Collection Resources, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Law Library, 2002–03.

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Viola Bird and Penny Hazelton, May 4, 2001.

¶2 Finally, in the late 1990s, I had the privilege of working with her on an important project. I remember her high standards, her willingness to listen to others, her ability to make hard decisions, her direct personality, her gracious manner that made you feel included, and her deep gratitude for her life and its rich experiences. Finally I knew why everyone used her name with reverence and awe. She was completely unwilling to accept anything less than the best possible effort.

Dan F. Henke*

¶1 When I entered the law library profession in 1955 at the University of Washington, I came to know Viola Bird as a kind and helpful student advisor in her role as assistant director. She was *Library* and Marian Gallagher, the director, was *Law*.

¶2 In corporate terminology, while Gallagher was the CEO, Bird was the chief operating officer who kept the library functioning. Unknowingly, for me Bird became the prototype for the three associates who guided and assisted me—Herta Prager at the New Jersey Bureau of Law & Legislative Reference, Jacqueline Bartells at Berkeley and Hastings, and Gail Winson at Hastings—from 1956 to 1991. As in the Armed Forces, they did most of the work and I received most of the credit. Because they were hard workers and possessed superior intelligence, only the “glass ceiling” delayed their rapid progress. At times they had cause for complaint as I assigned a variety of projects to their care, but such assignments served to broaden their qualifications.

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