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## Q & A with Penny Hazelton

**Q** First off, who was Marian Gould Gallagher?

**A** She was a lawyer and librarian who was head of the library here from 1944 until she retired in 1981: a little tiny lady with a white cap of hair who drove a huge convertible with the top always down, who played golf and poker. She was active in the American Bar Association and probably one of the best-known and best-loved people in our profession — not just because she was a terrific librarian, but also for her wonderful sense of humor and her skill as an after-dinner speaker. They named this law library after her, which is a very rare thing to have done for someone who was still living at the time.

**Q** And now I understand you have plans for a new law school building?

**A** Yes. We have a plan to be sent to the state legislature in January 1995 for a new building that will give the law school about 60,000 more square feet and place us back on the main campus rather than on the fringes, which is where we are now. If funded, we hope to break ground in 1996 and have a finished building by 1999. It will include a distributed network and carrels with full Internet/Ethernet connections so that a person with a PC or laptop (or whatever it is we end up with in five years) can sit down and plug into any database on the university's system. In other words, we will have full electronic capability, including e-mail and the ability to send and receive faxes. They are even talking about the possibility of this being wireless in the next few years. It will be a real switch for us to move from what is basically a very traditional library and law school to one that is very high tech.

**Q** I assume it will also affect your life as a professor of law.

**A** Yes. We are planning for classrooms with workstations where students can plug in their laptops and get computerized textbooks. The concept has a lot of merit, especially in the research area, which happens to be where I do a lot of teaching. You could teach a research class, for example, in which every student was online so you could walk them through an exercise on how to do something. It would incorporate the lab piece of a demo directly into the classroom setting.

**Q** How do RLG and RLIN fit into all this?

**A** We have been using RLIN in particular for CJK.<sup>1</sup> Our interest in RLG from the very beginning was to have access to a database where we could catalog and access our Asian materials in the vernacular. Actually, Bill McCloy, our comparative law librarian, is the real reason we joined. When he arrived about four years ago, none of our Chinese, Japanese, or Korean materials were in electronic form; the system we were using couldn't handle the scripts. His first task was to look into which system would be best for us, and he decided that RLIN and RLG had more to offer us.

**Q** But you've found more to RLG and RLIN than just CJK?

**A** Absolutely. We are interested in many of the projects that RLG is working on. Although we haven't used it much yet, we joined ShaRes<sup>2</sup> because philosophically I agree with what it is trying to do. As our users become more sophisticated, their need to get material requires us to go outside the immediate area of the Pacific Northwest. As we do more international law and comparative law work, as well as more interdisciplinary work, our resources really become stretched. We need to have access to the kinds of records that are on RLIN and the kinds of collections RLG members own.

**Q** In the field of law, you already have two major databases — LEXIS and WESTLAW. How does RLIN fit in with what they offer?

**A** For current materials, LEXIS and WESTLAW work fine. But we support faculty research and people who write, and many of their articles are historical in nature and require access to a wide variety of materials, which is where RLIN fits in. We have one person who just published a book on marine law, another on international law dealing with refugees and amnesty and human rights. Both books required huge numbers of items from other disciplines — more than we could ever satisfy from just the traditional law library collection. We have the advantage of a six-million-volume university library, but even it

can't supply everything. If we need legal materials that are outside the range of normal selecting for a law library our size — such as foreign materials, or museum materials, architectural materials, all of the older materials — we have to look at RLIN. No other database can compare.

**Q** What are the major issues for law libraries going to be over the next few years, and how can RLG help with them?

**A** Document delivery, the expansion of foreign collections, and the format of information — going from print to electronic format and making that transition as smooth as possible. This is not a change that happens overnight: one day you are a book library and the next you are totally electronic. All of us are in this transition mode at different places on the continuum, trying to figure out what the next step should be — whether to move into a particular technology or stay away from it. CD-ROM is a good example: trying to guess whether it will stand the test of time or whether the effort involved in getting into it will be wasted. Those kinds of issues are ones on which we need some guidance from RLG.

**Q** And how about the document delivery issue?

**A** As soon as you put an indexing database online so that your patrons can look at it and see a record, they immediately want a copy of the article. They don't want to go to five libraries to find it. They don't want to have to go to another database to find out its call number or where it is located — and then get over there and find out it's not on the shelf. People are not going to be patient, so finding fast and cost-effective solutions to document delivery is going to be crucial. The problem I see is the cost-shifting issue, which becomes very difficult to deal with. It is a different way of looking at how you spend your dollars. Instead of buying an item, perhaps you allocate a certain amount of money for people to get personal copies of it. How that will work and how we cope with it is going to be a tremendous challenge for us and one we need help with. We rely on people like those at RLG who are looking at these questions and trying to find some answers. We also must experiment with value-added cataloging.

**Q** What do you mean by "value-added cataloging"?

**A** We have cataloged books for years; and basically cataloging is for catalogers and librarians — to provide an inventory telling them that this book is different from that book. So, many of the rules that have been

established — field tagging and all that — have not been done from a user's point of view. Now we have online catalogs that are really sophisticated and allow you to search in a lot of different fields, the subject, author, etc., and do a lot of things that couldn't be done before. The difficulty arises when someone in my library is looking for a book on copyright, for example, and just wants one single book. Instead they come up with 250 titles. How does the person know which book is going to be the one he or she wants? Which is the major treatise that is kept up to date all the time? Someone who is not a sophisticated user in law, or any other specialty, is faced with evaluating the quality of the information just from a cataloging record. As librarians, we need to find some way to help evaluate the wealth of information patrons are getting. It is not that there isn't enough information out there or that people can't get at it. They get too much; and there is nothing to help them quantify it or let them know which item is the most valuable.

**Q** You also mentioned the expansion of international materials. Is the addition of the CURL<sup>3</sup> libraries to RLG of particular interest to the law libraries?

**A** We do have some faculty who work in areas of law that tend to be very common-law driven. Having access to the kinds of collections that they must have in the English and Irish libraries would be wonderful, and we probably have a lot of material in our law libraries that will be of interest to them. So I am very pleased to see them join. But for us, given our location, our real interest in foreign law is not in English law. We tend to look in the other direction towards Southeast Asia. If you had signed up the Japanese libraries, I would be shouting for joy!

**Q** Do you feel that RLG is responsive to the needs of the law libraries?

**A** Yes, I think so. RLG has a lot of different constituencies, and special interests are always hard to manage in the context of the whole, but I have never felt we are being ignored. It is my perception that the issues and areas that we feel need to be dealt with are looked at, and, as in any good business, they have to be looked at in the broader scope of things. If RLG can do a project, feels it's appropriate and has application to other disciplines, it has always been willing to take that project on. I have always found RLG to be very cooperative and have been very pleased with the services we have gotten. ■

1 RLIN's Chinese, Japanese, Korean script capability.

2 RLG members' shared resources program.

3 Consortium of University Research Libraries in the UK and Ireland.