Happy Birthday, Mrs. Bird!

from the Gallagher Law Library Staff
November 9, 1970

Mrs. Justin McCarty
4934 Purdue Avenue N.E.
Seattle, Washington 98105

Dear Esther:

Please forgive me for taking so abominably long to sending you the enclosure. I do not have any excuse beyond letting it get buried along with some other things in my briefcase.

To do it properly even now, I should wait until I can find the PEO Record I once had in the briefcase with it, for the purpose of checking form of names. After calling two or three PEOs who should have been at home and weren't, and knowing that if it did not go today it could not go until next Monday, I guessed at form and shall be hoping that you or the editors of the Record can take care of mistakes.

The letters of the chapter may be wrong, too, since I do not want to ask Viola, could not reach you, and found that Betsy Turman has not said it out loud to herself for so long that she's not entirely sure.

I hope you have a high-class eraser and that you will feel free to edit.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Marian G. Gallagher

MGG: hb

Enclosure
Viola A. Bird, Washington B.Y. (Mrs. Win W.) is serving as Vice-
President/President-Elect of the American Association of Law Libraries,
and will begin her term as President in July of 1971. The fifteen hundred
or more professional law librarians who make up her constituency are con-
centrated in the United States and Canada, with a scattering of members
overseas; their responsibilities for library service extend to all branches
of the legal profession, in practice, in government and in law schools.

Viola earned her B.A. from Lawrence College and when her daughters
were grown she added a law degree and a Master of Law Librarianship degree,
both from the University of Washington. Since 1953 she has served as Chief
Assistant Law Librarian at the University of Washington Law School Library,
where she became locally indispensable early in her career as the Editor
of the Current Index to Legal Periodicals. Her national image is impres-
sive. She has been a frequent participant on professional programs and has
held numerous committee memberships in the American Association of Law Li-
braries. She has raised money and encouraged contributions for scholar-
ships, acted as a columnist for the Law Library Journal, authored the
standard Order Manual in use in many law libraries, and has served on the
Association's Executive Board since 1968.

Her election to the A.A.L.L. presidency-elect is an honor, but
hers will not be an honorary office. She will have heavy additional duties.
Those who know her best, her professor-husband Win, her daughters Betsy
Turman and Marilyn Valentine

and her coworkers at the University of Washington, know that she will not
allow this to dilute the quality of the things she does so well.
Mrs. Viola A. Bird, '53, Assistant Law Librarian, has been elected over a slate of three other candidates to a three-year term on the Executive Board of the American Association of Law Libraries, and took office at the annual meeting in Philadelphia in early July. Mrs. Bird is well known to Washington Alumni as the editor of the Current Index to Legal Periodicals, as legal research instructor to both law students and lawyers, and as the versatile production manager for most of the Law Library's services to readers. The thousand or more professional law librarians who make up her constituency are concentrated in the United States and Canada, with a scattering of memberships overseas. A few of them are familiar with her Current Index, although in the absence of by-line identification there is a suspicion that the Law School's mimeograph machine has earned more credit than she, and of course most of them have had no opportunity to observe at first hand the other elements contributing to her local indispensability.

Her national image is impressive, nevertheless. She has been a frequent participant on professional programs and has held numerous committee memberships in the Association. She has raised money and encouraged contributions for scholarships, and has done more than any other member to convert the Association's scholarship program into an efficient operation. She has been a part of the editorial committee for the quarterly Law Library Journal, and for many years (until succeeded by another alumna and Assistant Law Librarian, Elizabeth Roe Wilkins, '38) she authored a regular column in the Journal aimed at the continuing education of the profession.

Membership on the American Association of Law Libraries Executive Board is an honor, but not an honorary membership. Mrs. Bird will have heavy additional duties. We think that she will not allow this to become noticeable to those who have found her locally indispensable.

    " " " 53: 134-146. May 1960
    " " " 53: 216-228. Aug. 1960
    " " " 53: 507-512. Nov. 1960
    " " " 54: Feb. 1961 (issue not received) 2/27/61
April 9, 1976

Mrs. Charles V. Riche
5644 Chamblee Dunwoody
Atlanta, Georgia
30338

Dear Joanie:

I thought you would like to see the news about a couple of your old library-type friends. We never hear from Mark Baer, except through the newspaper, but Earl has returned to law librarianship and we now can keep better track of him.

Knowing Viola's very thoughtful way of writing people notes, I have to suppose that she has told you that Win died about a month ago, after having been very, very ill for about four months. One of the many things I do not do as well as Viola is keep in touch through letters, but in this case I feel terribly embarrassed that I did not write you immediately. During Win's illness, Viola spent all of her waking hours with him and the strain must have been greater than any of us can imagine. Now, she outwardly is doing well and all of the law library staff who knew her before she retired see her occasionally. She never was much of a complainer.

I hope your health continues to improve.

Sincerely yours,

Marian G. Gallagher
Law Librarian

MDG:vm

Enclosure
May 11, 1981

MEMO TO: Dr. Peter Hiatt

FROM: Marian Gallagher

We don't know whether you ever burst into song during presentation awards, or not, but in case you do, you might like to have the lyrics that Reba Turnquist prepared for Viola Bird's 1973 retirement. The air: Bye Bye Blackbird.

She's packed up all her cares and woes,
There she goes,
Flying low.
Bye, bye, Ms. Bird.

No more desk,
Doors to lock,
Mail to sort,
Heads to knock.
Bye, bye, Ms. Bird.

She won't be here to answer all those questions, moot,
To scrub the sink and t.p. di-is-tri-bute.
Without her word of what to do
We'll just have to muddle through.
Ms. Bird, bye, bye.
Vi-di, bye, bye.

MGG: viii
May 11, 1981

Dr. Peter Hiatt  
School of Librarianship  
FM-30

Dear Peter:

First, thank you very much for collecting that beautiful certificate for me. I am honored to have you as a stand in. I am also rather overwhelmingly contrite about not having made it to the meeting, and I hope the membership didn't get the idea that I do not appreciate the magnitude of the honor. As the crow flies, Ellensburg is fairly easy to reach; but even crows, I think, would have started sooner than I could manage it.

Ralph Teague asked me to send you a few notes about Viola Bird of the kind that do not appear on her resume.

When she graduated from the School of Librarianship there were few librarians in the United States who had both librarianship and legal training. (I can't give you a figure. I found the January 1957 note that said the AALL Placement Committee had collected statistics showing that among 114 law school librarians, only 29 had both degrees.) She had won the Worden Medal, even though she had been a part-time student and had the additional handicap of taking some of her courses over at the Law School, so that the faculty and other students would see a little less of her. She was a very desirable candidate, and we could not have afforded her salary at what she was worth, but the law library was fortunate in the fact that her husband was an established (and famous) teacher in the Speech Department, so she worked in our law library for 20 years, as the top assistant. She retired in 1973, when her husband retired.

Saying that she was the chief assistant does not do justice to her activities. She was personnel director, chief planner, super reference librarian, trouble shooter, hatchet man, and problem solver. The first time she and Win took a European vacation, the law school faculty took it very hard. I never have forgotten the sight of the
professor who came charging out of the elevator headed for Viola's office with his problem in memorandum form in his hand. When he said "Where is Mrs. Bird?" and I said: "She has gone to Europe," he uttered a strangled cry and clutched his head.

After her retirement, she returned to help us plan and execute the move of the law school and its library from Condon Hall in the Quad to Condon Hall on Campus Parkway. She was supervisor at the new building. We had hired a crew of muscular youngsters for her to supervise. She did, but she outworked them at the same time. All of that killing job she did as a volunteer.

When she went to Canada in the fall of 1974 under contract to Her Majesty the Queen, her mission was to travel all over Canada including those parts that are frozen solid in the winter, surveying law libraries, and she did not finish until the following April. As I remember, she took two days off at Thanksgiving and maybe a week at Christmas, and her husband Win, who had to learn to cook, was very supportive throughout it all. The Canadian Association of Law Libraries assigned a young and vigorous law librarian to travel with her through snow and ice, but they had to come up with a new one every week, because she wore them out. As the resume will have told you, she now is an honorary member of the Canadian Association of Law Libraries.

The position she now holds she took in the fall of 1976, following the death of her husband. It's with the firm of Preston, Thorgrimson, Ellis, and Holman, and she began work in a "temporary" part-time position as their first professional law librarian and organizer. They did not know what a professional law librarian could do for them, but they do now, and she has become indispensable at the law firm, just as she was indispensable and institutional at the law school.

In 1978 the alumni of the law librarianship program, gathered at their traditional annual breakfast meeting at the American Association of Law Libraries convention, voted her their "unflappable" award. They've never given it to anyone else, so it's unique. It also is very descriptive. She sometimes becomes irritated at inept drivers on the city streets (not on the freeway, she merely goes around those) but otherwise her boiling point is discernible only under the highest provocation. She suffers fools gladly, as long as they are not lazy, undependable or dishonest.

Do you remember the scholarship fund that we divided between the School of Librarianship's Loan Fund and the Law Librarianship Loan Fund? That Fund would not have existed except for Viola. She raised
almost $5,000 among her publisher friends to get it started. This in
spite of the fact that she hates so much asking for money that she used
to liken herself to the salesman who said "Nobody home, I hope, I hope,
I hope."

She and her husband discovered the adventure of foreign travel,
and since his death she has continued to travel to places that those of
us who are not, like Viola, indestructible, would be afraid to attempt.
Two years ago, having seen Russia from several different angles, she
tried Mongolia, rode the Trans-Siberian Railway, slept in yurts, and
drank yak milk. Her older daughter did go with her to Mongolia, but
last year she took her vacation in China as a fearless onesome. There
was a tour, and Viola never has had any trouble making friends in small
or large groups. She also made friends with the Chinese. At least one
from the University of Peking has called upon landing in San Francisco,
asking for directions about what to do next. This year she is one of
the very limited number of tourists whom the Tibetan government will
allow to vacation in Tibet. (Peter, I think it's 300 tourists per year
that Tibet allows in; Betty Wilkins thinks it's 600. You may have to
ask Viola.)

She is generous with her time and has done more good, quietly,
for other people than anyone else we know. She is indescribable, and
I blame my rambling on that. Maybe you won't have time to read this
far, but I know you can't use it all anyway, so I do not edit.

Sincerely yours,

Marian G. Gallagher
Law Librarian

MEG:vm
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Alumni Association of the University of Washington School of Librarianship proudly has selected Viola Avis Bird as its most Distinguished Alumna for 1981. The award will be presented by the Director of the School of Librarianship, Dr. Peter Hiatt, during the Associations' annual awards ceremonies (5:30 - 8:00 p.m.), May 15, 1981 at the University of Washington Faculty Club. Friends and colleagues are cordially invited to attend.

Ms. Bird holds a B.A. degree in political science from Lawrence College (1927) and the J.D. from the University of Washington Law School (1950). Upon completing the law degree, she continued her education with the Masters of Law Librarianship from the University of Washington School of Librarianship (1953).

For twenty years (1953-1973) Ms. Bird served as Assistant Librarian in the library of the University of Washington Law School where she also instructed courses in legal bibliography. Active in the profession, Ms. Bird has served on the Executive Board and as President of the American Association of Law Libraries (1968-1972). She also has been a member of the editorial staff for the A.A.L.L.'s Law Library Journal.

Upon retiring from academic librarianship, Ms. Bird effectively launched a second career. As a private consultant in 1974, she conducted a survey of law library resources for the Canadian government's Department of Justice. Currently she serves as law librarian for the law firm of Preston, Thorgrimson, Ellis and Holman (Seattle) where she has been since 1976.

An avid traveller, Viola Bird has made several trips in recent years to East Asia, including the People's Republic of China. Presently, she is planning a trip to Tibet during the summer of 1981.

The School of Librarianship Alumni Association is honored to add the name of Viola Avis Bird, in 1981, to its list of most Distinguished Alumni.
May 26, 1981

Ms. Viola Bird
Librarian
Preston-Thorgrimson Law Firm
5233 Pullman Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98105

Dear Viola:

I cannot begin to tell you what a very special personal and professional honor it was for me to be allowed to present the University of Washington's School of Librarianship Alumni Association Distinguished Alumnus Award to you last week.

As you are aware, I am particularly proud of the impressive list of recipients of that award since it was first given in 1961. Your nomination, and then final choice, as the 1981 recipient is, to me, particularly apt. Only a few librarians so completely encompass the human and professional trait that make librarianship the very special profession that it is. You are one of those few, and I am grateful that this is so.

Viola, I thought your comments, particularly directed at the students and fledgling professionals, were just splendid. It is so difficult to combine sincerity with commitment in the clear, yet straightforward manner that you did in your acceptance remarks.

I'm not sure what our next occasion together will be. But I sure look forward to it!

Most sincerely,

[Signature]

Peter Watt
Director

PH:cs

bcc: Ralph Teague, Past President
     School of Librarianship Alumni Association
     Marian Gallagher, Librarian
     Law School Library
May 9, 1984

MEMO TO: Sue Schroeter-Stokes
Development Director

FROM: Betty Wilkins
Law Librarian

Your memo of April 18, 1984 to the Directors of the Washington Law School Foundation asked for suggestions regarding guests to be honored on that evening. I propose that VIOLA A. BIRD be so honored. The following are a few of the numerous reasons I believe Viola should be honored:

1. Graduate LLB, UW School of Law 1950 (entered in 1928).
2. Graduate Master of Law Librarianship, UW School of Librarianship 1953.
4. Performed 20 years of dedicated service to the Library and to the Law School faculty serving as mail sorter/reference person/personnel director/hand holder.
5. Viola and her late husband, Win W. Bird, an Associate Professor in the UW Speech Department, were long time benefactors of the University Department of Development.
6. Viola has been and/is a member of the President's Club.
7. She is a past president of the American Association of Law Libraries and Distinguished Alumna in 1981 of the UW School of Library and Information Science.
8. Without her help we never would have been able to move into this building. Working as a volunteer she organized the collection in old Condon and labeled the shelved in new Condon, while handling the two crews of about 20 students.
each, one in each building as the books were loaded on book
trucks, transported by University trucks and delivered to
the new building and hence to the marked shelf for their
final home. It was a monumental task to which she gave
of herself so willingly.

9. In December 1983 she retired from serving as Law Librarian
at Preston, Thorgrimson law firm, after a second career of
eight years. She shows her caring for our institution now
by volunteering four hours of her time per week to file
looseleaf services.

ERW:vm

Update: 3/27/85

Viola's retirement was short lived. Since December she has returned
to Preston, Thorgrimson to help plan their move to the new Century Towers(?).
She has substituted for librarians on maternity leave at other law firms and
presently works at least 2 days per week at law firms and 2 days per week at
the King County Law Library.

The Bird's had two daughters and 5 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.
Viola manages to take one extensive trip each year. She has been to
Russia several times, twice to the Republic of China, twice to Tibet as well as
the usual places of Europe, Australia, New Zealand, The Philippines, Hong Kong,
Japan, Mexico, etc.

Her hobby is calligraphy.

Viola Bird's picture/appear in the latest issue of the ABA Journal, 71:25,
April, 1985 in LawScope: Double Duty, an article concerning dual degreed librarians
in law firms.
Double duty

Librarians work at the law

Some law firm librarians are offering their expertise not only as librarians but also as lawyers.

“We’re a small minority, but we’re growing,” said Catherine Pennington, former head librarian for three years at Johnson and Swanson in Dallas, who holds degrees in law and library science.

A 1983 survey of 52 law firms by the American Association of Law Libraries in Chicago found eight librarians holding degrees in both subjects, said David Thomas, chairman of the association’s Statistics Committee and law professor and law library director at Brigham Young University’s J. Reuben Clark Law School. He believes the true number is higher now.

As law firms’ research needs become greater, efficient libraries are a necessity, says Roy Mersky, chairman of the Library Committee of the American Bar Association’s Section of Economics of Law Practice and a law professor at the University of Texas in Austin. Librarians who are knowledgeable about library science and the law often can meet law firms’ needs better, he said.

A ‘handy’ degree

Pennington agrees. “As practice becomes more sophisticated, with far more complex legal questions, a law degree can come in handy,” she said. She works extensively with the computerized databases such as LEXIS and Westlaw.

In 1972, when the 60-member firm of Steptoe and Johnson in Washington, D.C., wanted to develop a research library to parallel the firm’s anticipated growth, it called on Stephen Margeton, who holds a law degree from George Washington University and a masters of library science degree from Catholic University. “They wanted someone who was a good information manager and also with a breadth of knowledge in the legal area,” Margeton said. Today the firm has nearly 200 lawyers and a 45,000-volume research library.

Lawyer-librarians say their tasks are primarily administrative, with responsibilities ranging from managing the collection to coordinating research. “Often it’s subtle,” Margeton said, who worked at the Law Library of Congress before joining the firm. “I don’t know where the librarian in me leaves off and the lawyer starts.” He is not a licensed lawyer.

‘Part of my education’

The idea of a double-duty librarian goes back 25 years at O’Melveny and Myers in Los Angeles. One held the job for 20 years, then took another administrative post in the firm. Mary Ruth Storer took over five years ago. In evaluating material to order or steering lawyers to research, “I’m able to understand the different practice areas because it’s been part of my education,” she said.

Viola Bird, 80, left retirement to assist in the library at Preston, Thorogood, Ellis and Holman in Seattle. She was associate law librarian for 20 years at University of Washington Library before retiring in 1973, has law and library science degrees from the university. “I don’t know that it makes me a better law librarian, but I know what I’m researching,” Bird said.

Some librarians practice for their firms. Jane Rubens, who went to Fordham University School of Law at night while working as research librarian at Coudert Brothers in New York City, took over the firm’s small immigration practice when a partner retired. “There’s a greater pull on my time, and it generates pressure, but I enjoy it,” said Rubens, a licensed lawyer, who spends one-third of her time in practice. Eleven-hour days are the norm, she added.

Narly all of academic law libraries have librarians with law degrees, said William Jepson, executive director of the American Association of Law Libraries. Such staffing is recommended for ABA-accredited schools. As firms expand their libraries, these persons will have another career option, Jepson said.

Salaries in law firms are often higher than in academic libraries. Pennington, who worked at Southern Methodist University’s law library in Dallas for a year after getting degrees at Brigham Young, said her salary doubled when she went to Johnson and Swanson. She recently joined Johnson and Higgins, an insurance and benefits firm in New York City, as coordinator of information services. Some persons get salaries commensurate with those of associates, and others, such as Rubens and Margeton, are considered associates, Mersky said.

Lawyers say their firms benefit from the dual experience. “You can buy five different texts on product liability, and may not need them,” said Gordon Krischer, the partner responsible for the library at O’Melveny and Myers. “Having that legal background may make it easier to screen.”

Research time is charged as billable hours, said Monroe Leigh, the partner at Steptoe and Johnson who hired Margeton. A firm’s productivity and profitability is also enhanced because research can be done quickly, he added.

—Faye A. Silas

Margeton: Where does the librarian in me leave off and the lawyer start?
VIOLA BIRD TO EXECUTIVE BOARD

Mrs. Viola A. Bird, '53, Assistant Law Librarian, has been elected over a slate of three other candidates to a three-year term on the Executive Board of the American Association of Law Libraries, and took office at the annual meeting in Philadelphia in early July. Mrs. Bird is well known to Washington Alumni as the editor of the Current Index to Legal Periodicals, as legal research instructor to both law students and lawyers, and as the versatile production manager for most of the Law Library's services to readers. The thousand or more professional law librarians who makes up her constituency are concentrated in the United States and Canada, with a scattering of memberships overseas. A few of them are familiar with her Current Index, although in the absence of by-line identification there is a suspicion that the Law School's mimeograph machine has earned more credit than she, and of course most of them have no opportunity to observe at first hand the other elements contributing to her local indispensability.

Her national image is impressive, nevertheless. She has been a frequent participant on professional programs and has held numerous committee memberships in the Association. She has raised money and encouraged contributions for scholarships, and has done more than any other member to convert the Association's scholarship program into an efficient operation. She has been a part of the editorial committee for the quarterly Law Library Journal, and for many years (until succeeded by another alumna and Assistant Law Librarian, Elizabeth Roe Wilkins, '38) she authored a regular column in the Journal aimed at the continuing education of the profession.

Membership on the American Association of Law Librarian Executive Board is an honor, but not an honorary membership. Mrs. Bird will have heavy additional duties. We think that she will not allow this to become noticeable to those who have found her locally indispensable.

The Law Library Staff gave away a suitcase the other day, and held a going-away event which represented sharp escalation of the customary cup of tea in the Peppermint Lounge and presentation of keychains to graduating staff members. Patrick Emmet Kehoe, '66 (his father is Adlone "Bitts" Kehoe, '38), was awarded the University's Master of Law Librarianship degree in June, and became Assistant Law Librarian at the University of Houston on August 1. The Law Librarian with whom he will work is Al Coco, who earned the Washington M.L.L. in 1962 and was waved off with the tea and keychain, not having attained the 11-year seniority which was Pat's. Beginning work as a junior in high school, Pat moved steadily from energetic book-mover to law student assistant to professional reference librarian; his professional skill and wide knowledge of the Law Library's operations cannot be easily replaced.

One of the Houston inducements for Pat was the opportunity to participate in the organization of library service in the first stage of the proposed five-unit, 2500-student law school. The central administrative and research library unit, and the first of five satellite school units, are under construction and will be ready for occupancy within a few months.

Larry Wenger, '67, another holder of the Law Library staff keychain, has been awarded the American Association of Law Libraries' Sid Hill memorial scholarship, in the amount of $1,500, toward financing of his librarianship studies. Following graduation and the bar exam he became an assistant in the Harvard Law Library, and is enrolled as a part-time student at Simmons School of Librarianship. The Washington law librarianship alumni chapter at Harvard includes also Earl Borgeson, the Law Librarian (U.W. M.L.L., '50) and Assistant Law Librarian Ron Cherry (U.W. M.L.L. '67).

THIRD ANNUAL LAW ALUMNI DAY

"The borders of the legal profession's domain have become blurred and new demands on the law are producing further tensions which must be resolved if the law is to maintain its position as a profession within the full meaning of the term." In these words, Professor of Denver Law School Dean Robert B. Yegge capsulized his views on the subject "The Practice of Law in the Seventies: What Choices Do We Face?" (Continued on Page 20)
TO VIOLA

You are my inspiration! Your energy level has always put me to shame, and your outlook on living and never-ending learning is a model for me.

I will always remember how you welcomed me when I was a 'green' librarian, and how you stayed involved in our fine profession even when retired and enjoying your many travels.

If I am lucky enough to follow in your path, my life is just beginning at midlife!

Happy Centennial!

Barbara Holt
As a newcomer to the Gallagher Law Library in the early summer of 1991, I was very used to be told to do unusual things by Reba Turnquist, my new supervisor. I was feeling my way through my new job and the new people around me. Everything was new, new state, new university, and new ways to do old things. One day I was told by Reba to watch for Mrs. Bird. OK! I figured this could be unusual request number 25 or so. I was to watch for Mrs. Bird. After a few inquiries, I found Mrs. Bird was a retired librarian who had worked at the Gallagher Law Library and was coming in to pick up some Husky tickets from Reba. It also turned out that I was to meet one of the most impressive, gracious, and interesting persons I had ever met.

When Mrs. Bird arrived Reba was not at her desk. The first thing I noticed about Mrs. Bird was that she had an elegant bearing and did not look anywhere near her age, whatever it was at that time. She had a ready smile and when it was directed at me, I felt this was someone I would love to have worked with. After introducing ourselves and starting a small conversation, I knew she was special and after all these years I know I was right. Our initial meeting was brief. Reba arrived back at her desk and Mrs. Bird got her Husky tickets from Reba. Mrs. Bird stayed around long enough to talk to some of her old staff, and was on her way, living her busy retired life.

I couldn’t wait to ask Reba about Mrs. Bird. She told me that Mrs. Bird was Mrs. Gallagher’s “Chief Assistant”. She earned her JD at UW in 1950 and her MLL at UW in 1953. She worked a full twenty years at the Law Library, and retired in 1973. She then worked at a law firm which became Preston Gates & Ellis and retired again in 1986. She was President of AALL and Editor of CILP. This was quite a career for one person.

During my eleven years at the Law Library, Mrs. Bird showed up a few times a year to visit with the staff and pick up her Husky tickets. I was thrilled to become one of the people she stopped by to visit. On one visit Mrs. Bird was accompanied by her daughter. We did not have to be introduced. I could see the resemblances immediately. All at once I thought how lucky it would be to have Mrs. Bird’s as a Mother. What a great role model and a genuinely nice person all in one package.

I retired from Gallagher in 2002 and miss all the great people I worked with and met over my time at the Law Library, none more than my once or twice a year visitor, Mrs. Bird.
Dear Viola:

Happy 100th Birthday, Vi. Although Bill and I have known you for many years, I'll be forever grateful that we became better acquainted 20 years ago. It was then that I realized that you are a person who makes things happen. You were the inspiration for my doing the Marian Gould Gallagher Library Oral History. That project, of course, led to the oral history for the law school.

I'll never forget our 1985 conversation in the sanctuary following services at the Methodist Temple. My Mother had just moved to Seattle and was looking for a church home. She eventually chose to attend a church closer to her condo, but each week she joined "The Quilters" at the Temple where a devoted group talked and ate, all the time earning money for the Temple with their exquisite quilting. You welcomed my mother so warmly that day, leaving an imprint on her retirement years in her new community.

Following is the introduction to the interview you and I did for the Library history:

"A chance meeting with Mrs. Bird in August of 1985 prompted this library history. She told me that since her retirement from the University in 1973 she had worked part-time for large law firm libraries, taking occasional breaks for traveling. I thought that anyone so in love with her field must be part of an interesting story, and I began my search.

"Mrs. Bird did finally retire—for good this time, she says—in July 1986 at the age of 81, just in time to make her third trip to Nepal. (While there, incidentally, her bus encountered a rock slide and Mrs. Bird walked the final four miles from Tibet into Nepal.)

"Our interview [on March 6, 1986] was held at my dining room table late one afternoon on a Thursday—her only day off—following her hair appointment and just before she dashed off to the ballet."

In addition to your librarianship skills revealed in the interview, it was evident that your gift for dealing with people, your humility, your friendships with other librarians and your sense of humor helped set the tone for the outstanding reputation the library enjoys.

It is a privilege to know you, Vi. Best wishes.

Mary Ann Andersen
May 11, 2005

Dear Vi,

These birthdays with zeros always get attention; those with two zeros get a lot of attention! Congratulations. I'll be thinking of you on your 100th as I celebrate my 60th.

My year at the U/W is filled with many memories and almost all of them happy ones. I remember sitting in Suzzallo during a winter term and seeing a spot of sunshine outside and running outside to sit in it while it lasted. I remember sailboats tooting their horns on a Saturday morning to get the drawbridge to open and then again in the evening when they came back in.

One of my fondest memories is of the move to the new (at least to me) building. You were in charge of the move and naturally everything was very well organized. We worked in teams moving the books off the shelves of the old library. It seems like, Dennis Hyatt and I were a team much of the time. The work was repetitive to say the least and the two of us were constantly seeing how we could liven things up and, of course, be more efficient. Carrying an armful of books down those long aisles seemed like such a waste. So, we experimented with various schemes involving one of us handing the books off to the other standing at the end of the aisle. But of course the aisles were long so to avoid too much walking we determined how many books we could pick up and gently toss to the other without them falling to the floor. We didn't use this method often but on occasion to break things up. Of course, we must have done it often enough to catch your attention which brought that method to an end.

In my second job out of school I was in charge of moving the University of Oklahoma law library to its new building. Your example of organization stood me well. Long before the move I knew the location of every book in the old library and where it was to go in the new one. Everything was labeled and the teams trained. Fortunately, I had better staff than you did or at least I never caught anyone using the Hyatt/Hoover technique. The only thing thrown during that move was a telephone thrown by a faculty member upset that the book he had to have that instant was on a truck between the two buildings. Luckily, he missed me. Those faculty lead such difficult lives some times. If only they knew....

While I haven't made it to Tibet yet, I do still follow your example in leading a full life with lots of travel. We spent the holidays in Australia and New Zealand and head for the Galapagos in July. In the meantime I keep busy with volunteer work including a nature preserve and two library boards.

All the best on this special occasion and many, many more.

Best,

Jim Hoover
Dear Viola,

Best wishes on your centennial birthday and throughout this milestone year!

It was good fortune to have become acquainted with you at the beginning of my professional life while you had recently started your second (post-retirement) career.

Mrs. G. introduced us in 1979, when I was in the M.L.L. program, nearing graduation. You took this newbie under your wing at Preston, Thorgrimson, then a 30 attorney firm. After a couple days of orientation and being introduced around, I was on my own while you went traveling to some exotic destination for 6 weeks.

We each survived our experiences then – and your ongoing desire to continue to perform engaging work and to travel the world post-retirement #1 has been a wonderful inspiration. Many wish for the stamina, health & positive attitude to just get out and do what one wants, but not so many actually do just that. Kudos to you for your independent spirit!! That’s true liberation!

Best wishes for many, many more happy and healthy years to inspire us all as to what a well-lived life can be!

Love,

Marie Emerson

May 5, 2005

dear viola, you are an inspiration. very best wishes to you. albert brecht.
May 14, 2005

Congratulations to a very special person.............

You have positively changed the lives of many, many librarians and we all have wondrous memories of learning from you at the University of Washington. Thank you. --Sally Wise

May 10, 2005

It was an honor and a treat to be students of Viola’s at the University of Washington. She put a human tone on the University and we always felt we had a place where we were welcome.

The landscape of the library has changed over the years, yet everything important that she taught us and symbolized as a professional is still true. We learned the importance of identifying and meeting the, usually unarticulated, needs of the patron; the accuracy, reliability, and organization of information; and, mostly, the joy of librarianship.

I hope I have carried forward these ideals in my career.

Denny Haythorn, MLL 1976
June 2, 2005

I recall Mrs. Bird gracing the library with her visits off and on while I worked there years back. She stopped by my desk once when I first joined, inquired about me, and after that informal chat, Mrs. Bird, while passing by the work area, always greeted me with warmth and a smile assuring familiarity. She had retired before I joined.

I am privileged to have worked in such a unique place, which prospered under the leadership of Mrs. Marian Gallagher, Mrs. Viola Bird, Mrs. Betty Wilkins, and continues to prosper under Mrs. Penny Hazelton. People like these contribute to the lives of those who worked for and with them - an education one doesn’t receive in the classroom, and support and inspiration that is not available in every workplace. They may not know the positive impact they have had on the lives of those who once were in their team.

Please convey my best wishes and a Happy Centennial Birthday to Mrs. Bird. Many thanks.

Sincerely,

M. Owais Jafrey
Librarian
Skagit Valley College, Whidbey Island Campus

June 2, 2005

Dear Viola,

I have been reading the wonderful tributes to your professional achievements and your mentorship of so many prominent law librarians and regret that I did not have the benefit of your tutelage! You have certainly made your mark on our profession! Congratulations on these well-deserved accolades on the occasion of your 100th birthday! Enjoy the day and the rave reviews of a meaningful life!

Fondly,

Virginia Kelsh
Law Librarian and Professor
University of San Francisco
Zief Law Library
June 2, 2005

What a lucky day it was, when as a junior at University of Washington I wondered into the law library and got hired by you! I gained a job and a second family. I remember helping prepare for the 1973 AALL meeting in Seattle, and how fun it was to be part of the gang. I remember being amazed at the travel logs contained in your Christmas letters describing your trips to Tibet or South America. It has been comforting, fun, and always interesting. I’m forever grateful you adopted me into your family.

--Marianne Sidorski Alcorn

with Betty Wilkins and Marian Gould Gallagher
(photo from Marianne Alcorn)

June 3, 2005

Penny,

I send my very best wishes to Mrs. Bird on this momentous occasion. My time at the UW Law Library was while she was a law firm librarian, so I didn’t really know her until we would meet each year at the UW Alumni Breakfast at the AALL Annual Meeting. I enjoyed talking with her each year; she always seemed very interested in how I was and what I was doing. I treasure the note of congratulations she sent me when I was elected to the AALL Executive Board in 1999; it was so kind of her to take note of that event in my life.

I hope that the celebration Saturday is most special and full of joy!

Maryruth Storer
Orange County Public Law Library

Just as a warm, nice oven reminds me of mother and home, so, too, will hot chocolate and Oreo cookies continue to mean just football evenings with Dr. Bird.

Thanks for letting me pinch hit for you during your Canadian stay.

--Reba

P.S. Forgot to mention Cindy, our chaperone.
Visla -
Happier to see you town
and what a wonderful
opportunity - to wish you
a happy 100th! I
remember so well your visits
to The law school at the
library while I was an M-
faculd. Best wishes for
the second 100s.

John Haley
Mrs. Bird's Baseball Star

dedicated to Viola Bird, as part of The 2004 "Gallagher Stars" Sampler quilt

9" block

A cut 4 3 1/2"
B cut 4 2" square & flip on A
C cut 1 4 1/4" quartered
D cut 2 4 1/4" quartered
E cut 1 4 1/4" quartered
F cut 1 3 1/2"

Viola,
You are the thread that connects all the pieces. Thanks for touching our lives in so many positive ways. Love, Peggy Jarett
Dear Mrs. Bird,

Inevitably, there comes a moment during my yearly binding and mending presentations for the Law Librarianship Interns when one of them asks the obvious question, "So...how did you get this job?" I dutifully trot out the tale of how I was living in a rented log cabin on Whidbey Island, furnished with nothing more than the two chaise lounges the kindly retired couple next door had given me when they realized I had only my sleeping bag to sit on. Subsisting on a baked potato and a can of soup a day, the allure of my island idyll was quickly losing the romantic charm it had once possessed when I found it after fleeing northward from LA following my college graduation.

And then I saw "The Ad." The UW was advertising an opening for a position with the catchy come-on, "Can you read and write English, and are you good with your hands?" Not exactly setting the bar too high, were they? I inquired, and discovered that the job was for a bookbinder/book mender in the Law Library. With my freshly-minted BA in Art and my portfolio of jewelry photos under my arm, I proceeded to bluff ("lie" has such a harsh sound to it, don't you think?) my way through my initial interview with Betty Wilkins. It eventually dawned on me that the Law Library was just about as desperate to fill the long-languishing position as I was to get it. After conferring with you, Betty agreed to accept my offer to return the next day and work an eight-hour shift gratis, at the end of which I would produce a bound volume and a mended volume for your hoped-for approval. Which is exactly what transpired, to my utter and lasting amazement.

I can only imagine the conversations you and Betty (and at some point, Mrs. G) must have had concerning taking a chance on me. Needless to say, I'm eternally grateful that you did. Thirty-three years later, I still feel a true sense of pride when I tell the interns that I'm one of only a handful of staff members left who had the great privilege and pleasure of working here when the legendary trio of Gallagher, Bird and Wilkins ran the show. I trust you will not take offense in learning that I affectionately refer to the three of you as the Great Old Broads. An enduring tradition was established by the tone and spirit and the very nature of how you each approached your work, and your relationships with your fellow workers. The intelligence, warmth, wit, civility and fairness present in the daily give-and-take of the library back then continue to this day. It is a legacy you are largely responsible for creating and nurturing, and its value cannot be overstated.

Personally, I have treasured the many kindnesses you've shown me over the years. Your graciousness, inquisitiveness and robust embrace of life have never waned. Your periodic visits are always a joy; may they continue for many, many more years.

With love and admiration,

Craig Morley
Dear Viola,

Wow! One hundred birthdays is very, very impressive. But what truly impresses me is not the number of birthdays you’ve celebrated but the depth and breadth of your adventures, your professional contributions, your volunteer work, your insatiable appetite for learning, and your sense of humor!

Thanks for sharing everything from the Gallagher Reunion in Victoria to the University District Street Fair to the first LLOPS teleconference to volunteer work at Highline to digital photos from AALL to chats at the Burke. It is always a pleasure to see you and catch up.

You amaze me. Here’s to your happiness and good health!

--Mary A. Hotchkiss
Through the eyes of the law library over the years...

at her desk

with Betty Wilkins in the early 1970’s

with Jacque Jurkins and Diana Priestly at the law librarianship alumni reception, July 1994 in the Gallagher Law Library Reading Room
Retiring from the UW Law Library
September 1973

with Win

with Marian Gould Gallagher

with Maxine Dowd and Eleanore Barrows

with Julie Taugher and Vickie Northington
50th Anniversary of the University of Washington Law Librarianship Program
April 1991

with Al Brecht in Victoria, BC

with Mary Hubert, Vickie Moor, Jose Abeyta, and Muriel Quick (back), at the reception in the Faculty Library in Condon Hall

with Jacquelyn Jurkins in Victoria, BC
Groundbreaking for William H. Gates Hall
May 2001

with Professor Harry Cross and daughter, Marilyn

with Bill McCloy and Muriel Quick

AALL luncheon in Seattle, July 2003
former students honor their mentor