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MARIAN GALLAGHER

The LAW LIBRARIAN: MARIAN GALLAGHER

George Schatzki*

Being a relatively new kid on the block, I am not sure I am an appropriate person to write about Marian Gallagher. After all, you—the attorneys, the librarians, the faculty and students (past and present)—have interacted with her for so long. What can I relate about her that you don't already know?

For many years, before I considered joining the faculty here, the name of Marian Gallagher was well known to me. Not being in the book business myself, I was limited in my knowledge, but I did know she “produced” an incredible number of talented librarians and she had devised and distributed the well-known Current Index to Legal Periodicals. My mind's eye image of the unmet but already recognizable Gallagher was quite formidable. Imagine my surprise and delight when I encountered the soft-spoken person with the twinkling eyes, the smiling face, and the kindest manner. *This* was the redoubtable Marian Gallagher! Given a modicum of common sense, I should have realized that it was some sort of deception, but—like everyone else—I was and am taken in.

In truth, there was accuracy in both my preconceived vision of Marian and the first impressions upon meeting her. She is funny and happy; she is warm and sensitive; and she is a bright, thorough, efficient person who gets her job done brilliantly.

Funny? When you meet her, she sizes you up to determine whether you are one of those people who like to laugh. If you pass, she tells outrageous stories. On the other hand, if laughing is not your long suit, she believes you need some cheering up and sets about to do it. Her eyes exude humor. Her tone, her choice of words, her memory for the humorous and the bizarre combine to liven up everyone around her. She has told me that she loves to talk on the telephone with people who make her laugh. Not one to shirk a challenge, I always make the effort. Since Marian graciously and happily laughs easily, I am always a success; *I* feel better for it. Thus, she weaves her magic. She brings out of us our own desire to be joyous, to be laughing, to love our lives. How she retains the energy, the high spirit, and the resolve to keep all of us in good humor is a secret she, among very few people in this world, has.

Serious? Competent? Efficient? Talented? The answer is all of the above! Marian Gallagher is not a household name for nothing. In the face

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of all odds, she has created, directed, and managed a great law library. Consider the obstacles. Seattle is not in the mainstream for academics or for librarians. Demands and complaints from faculty, students, staff, administration, the practicing bar, and who knows whom else, make the head law librarian's job a pressure cooker. Moreover, the powers that be decided a very long time ago that Marian would have to make hosts of loaves and fishes out of one of each; that is, she could have little—or no—money to buy books. *Voilà*, miracles do happen! All of her constituencies agree: they are satisfied. They are even delighted! The library is pleasant, cooperative, well organized; and the collection still gets the job done.

In addition to running a library superbly, Marian has created an Index which is used nationally, has put together and taught in a program that has placed budding law librarians around the world, and is a member of many committees throughout the state and nation. Doing all of this exceptionally well has combined with the reputation of her law library to make her *the* law librarian. There simply is no competition for that accolade.

Over the years, one knows she must have stepped on toes, out-argued and out-foxed a number of worthy persons, to achieve her purposes. That kind of success takes ideas, determination, patience, a thick skin, articulateness, and a keen sense of what can be done and when. Marian has these qualities. A recent, albeit small, example involves private donations to support the library. Over the years, people have given money to the University or the School's Foundation, some of that private support having as its purpose partial relief of the library's sad economic plight. For reasons not clear to me, much of the old bookkeeping was snafued. In the past year, the books have finally been put into good order. Throughout the confusing years, Marian held her peace. When the accounting began to straighten out, Marian let it be known she had kept complete records of gifts made to the library. As a result, money that the library had "lost" was recaptured for the appropriate purpose. What impressed me most was her patience in waiting and her good judgment in telling what she knew at a time when the telling would be effective.

Warm? Considerate? Sensitive to others? One must be all of those things if she is to accomplish what Marian has and still have everyone pleased. One of my mentors told me many years ago, "If you haven't made someone angry with you each day, you're not doing your job." Marian proves my mentor wrong. So far as I know, no one ever was angry with her, yet she did her job better than anyone else. To have done so well over so many years, she could not have done it with mirrors. No doubt, her humor and the high spirits to which she elevated people played a role. So, too, did her incredible competence that usually proved her

right. These two qualities standing alone, however, do not explain fully her success. A third has been at least as essential. Her compassion and concern for others burns so brightly and clearly, no one can be angry with her. She cares too much for each of us. As a result, we have responded by working our best to help her. Not too long ago, someone told me Marian believed I had done something that had hurt her. Feeling distraught, I went to see Marian. In no time at all, *she* was consoling *me*!

Anyone who has been a boss, an innovator, a leader, a national figure and power, must have made enemies and spawned jealousies. There can be no doubt about it. Yet, Marian defies all such axiomatic thinking.

As I contemplate her retirement, another axiom taunts and haunts me: "Everyone can be replaced." If Marian can be replaced, there is no question the axiom is absolutely true. But, what if she is irreplaceable? It is of such stuff that nightmares are made. On the other hand, I consider myself lucky to have crossed paths with her, and all of us are thankful beyond words that she gave so much to make the School a better place. We shall do our best to build on the magnificent foundation she has given us and to learn from the model she has been for these many years.