

The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same

Based on an interview of Ed McGolrick conducted by Alissa N. Hudson in June 1999

In 1961 Ed McGolrick hung his shingle on an office in Yorkshire and began the practice of law in Prince William County. He didn't know anyone, didn't have any business and began looking for the local Bar Association to get connected. The President of the Bar Association at that time was Judge W. Hill Brown, and he'd been the President for as long as he could remember, not because the Bar Association met regularly, but because he remembered attending a meeting – some time ago—where they elected him President. In the early 60's there were only about eleven attorneys licensed to practice law in the 31st circuit, so one might argue that an organization designed to address their needs and concerns wasn't necessary. Ed McGolrick thought it was very necessary and began an active campaign to create the PWC Bar Association in a form much like it exists today. He also served as president for two consecutive terms, in 1968 and 1969.

McGolrick felt the Bar Association should meet regularly, hold elections, and provide forums, both formal and informal, for communicating with and between its members. He felt the Bar could provide a voice for the membership to the judiciary and the legislature on issues important to the daily practice of law. He felt there should be programs to educate the members, a law library to provide access to resource materials and he felt the Bar could provide business development opportunities for its members. *Most important*, he felt the members of the local Bar Association should take pride in themselves and in their jurisdiction, and should promote each other when opportunities arose. It was during McGolrick's Presidency that the Office of the County Attorney was established. The Bar Association contacted the County Board of Supervisors, requesting the opportunity to conduct interviews and present qualified candidates for this new position, resulting in the hiring of Floyd Bagley as the first County Attorney.

The size of the legal community in the 31st circuit has grown significantly. We now have 399 licensed attorneys in Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park with 72% of them receiving their license in 1980 or later. The PWC Bar Association enjoys a membership of 293 attorneys and judges, or 73% of those licensed to practice in the area. Our goals and concerns have not changed significantly in the past 38 years and we acknowledge and appreciate the volunteer efforts of the founding members of the Association, and the positive impact they had in its early days. Members are encouraged to contact any Officer or Director with thoughts or suggestions regarding the PWC Bar and how it can continue to serve the needs of its growing membership.