



City of Cambridge

R-43.

IN CITY COUNCIL

December 6, 1999

VICE MAYOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
MAYOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR RUSSELL
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

- WHEREAS: This City Council was deeply saddened at learning of the death of Harriet (Ford) Griswold on November 23, 1999; and
- WHEREAS: Harriet was a graduate from Stanford University and earned a master's degree in Library Science at Columbia University; and
- WHEREAS: In 1939 Harriet lost the use of her legs to polio; and
- WHEREAS: Harriet was successful in lobbying to make public buildings more accessible to people with disabilities; and
- WHEREAS: Harriet, a Librarian, married Erwin Griswold; and
- WHEREAS: Harriet was also instrumental in making Chicago's O'Hare Airport, National Art Gallery in Washington DC and several hotels accessible to persons with disabilities; and
- WHEREAS: Harriet's passing will leave a void in the lives of all her surviving family, her daughter Hope Murrow; her son William E. Griswold; her sister Alice Hatto; her five grandchildren and three great grandchildren; and
- WHEREAS: Harriet will be sorely missed by all she touched and loved; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED: That this City Council go on record extending its deepest sympathy to the family of Harriet Griswold at this time of such personal loss; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the Griswold family on behalf of the entire City Council.

In City Council December 6, 1999.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

UMA
1st
all

R43 ✓

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WHEREAS: HARriet's passing will leave a void in the lives of all ~~his~~ her surviving family, her daughter Hope Morrow, a son William E. Griswold, her sister Alice Hatto, 5 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren

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UMA

12/1/99 @ 2:30pm.

U

✓ Helen Kent ✓

Griswold, Margaret Ford ✓

✓ Yasmine E. LeGathis

Medeiros, Frank ✓

Kelley, Ellen A. ✓

McLoughlin Alice M. ✓

aries

Harriet Griswold, 94, librarian who lobbied for disabled people

By Tom Long
GLOBE STAFF

Harriet (Ford) Griswold, whose battle with polio led her to lobby to make public buildings more accessible to people with disabilities, died Nov. 23 in the Winchester Nursing Center. She was 94.

Mrs. Griswold was born in California. She graduated from Stanford University and earned a master's degree in library science at Columbia University.

She was a librarian in Los Angeles prior to her marriage in 1931 to Erwin Griswold, who became dean of Harvard Law School and solicitor general of the United States from 1967 to 1973.

Mrs. Griswold lost the use of her legs to polio in 1939 and was forced to get around on leg braces and crutches for the rest of her life. Her first set of leg braces was made by the same craftsman at Children's Hospital in Boston who made President Roosevelt's braces.

"You really have to be born again as a little child," Mrs. Griswold said in a lecture she delivered to the Mass. Association of Occupational Therapists on April 5, 1951. "You have to learn to walk, to dress yourself, to go to the bathroom by yourself. It's harder to do when you're grown. You are more afraid. You have farther to fall than a child."

She said she lost her "paralyzing fear of falling" when she fell down and found out "I could get up off the floor."

She said her training as a librarian was a help when she was hospitalized for 20 months and used the time to compile a reading list for children that was published in a national magazine. "The check," she said, "did wonders for my morale."

In a story published in the Boston Post on Nov. 18, 1951, she said, "I inched back to normal life through weekly story hours in the basement of the Belmont Public Library. My first group, aged 5 to 11, numbered 40. All were wide-eyed eager listeners. The next story hour found 96 children packing the room and their storyteller close to sentimental tears at the success of her project."

She was a former resident of Belmont, where she drove around town in a specially designed car. She lectured widely and did much to publicize the needs of people with disabilities. She was ~~not~~ committed



HARRIET GRISWOLD

to making public buildings accessible. "You might just as well hang a sign on most public buildings: Handicapped not wanted," she said in 1967. "A flight of steps with no handrail serves the same purpose."

Mrs. Griswold was instrumental in making Chicago's O'Hare Airport, the National Art Gallery in Washington, D.C., and several hotels in the District of Columbia accessible to people in wheelchairs.

In news accounts, she was described as "indomitable," "plucky," and "personable."

"There is a ring to her voice which sounds as if life has handed her nothing but bouquets," her friend, Dorothy Mason Fuller, a trustee of Radcliffe College, said in the summer, 1980 issue of the Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority newsletter. "She puts you at ease by her manner, which seems to say, 'Don't let it (polio) bother you, it doesn't bother me.' Her lively interest in people makes you forget her handicap, and you realize that whatever is wrong with her legs has not affected her mind and her heart. She makes one proud to belong to the human race."

She leaves a daughter, Hope Murrow of Cambridge; a son, William E. of Centerville; a sister, Alice Hatto of Lake Forest, Calif.; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at 10:30 a.m. Saturday in Bigelow Chapel in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.



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12-537R
Resolution # 43

Resolution on the death of Harriet
Griswold.

**Vice Mayor Galluccio,
Councillor Triantafillou and
entire membership**

In City Council December 6, 1999

ORDER ADOPTED