

Luella Hennessey-Donovan, Oral History Interview—JFK#2, 9/25/1991
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Hennessey-Donovan was a Kennedy family nurse (1935-1963) and founder of the Kennedy-Donovan Center, Inc., a service organization for Massachusetts residents with developmental disabilities. In this interview, she discusses living in England with the Kennedy family while Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr. was ambassador to that country; attending the birth of all but one of Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.'s grandchildren; John F. and Robert F. Kennedy's assassinations; and founding the Kennedy-Donovan Center; among other issues.

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Oral History Interview

Of

Luella Hennessey-Donovan

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Luella Hennessey-Donovan—JFK #2

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Second of Two Oral History Interviews

with

Luella Hennessey-Donovan

September 25, 1991
Walpole, Massachusetts

By Edward Martin

For the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library

MARTIN: This is an interview with Luella Hennessey Donovan at her home in Newpond Village in Walpole, Massachusetts, and the date is September 25th, 1991. Now Luella, just tell me, how did you ever get into the initial contact with the Kennedy family? Were you a registered nurse at the time?

DONOVAN: Yes, Ed. I had just been out of training a very short while, and I had been on a long, difficult case. And I asked the office to take me off call so that I could sleep, and probably spend the money that I earned during that time.

MARTIN: Was this in Boston?

DONOVAN: Yes, at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in Brighton where I trained. Well, around noon time the office called me and said a little girl was coming up from the Cape by the name of Patricia Kennedy [Patricia Kennedy Lawford], and was going to be done for an emergency appendix, and they couldn't get anybody to come in. So I said, well, I still remembered my vow to the nursing profession to take care of the sick, so I said yes, I'd be in. And I had been up all the night before with my other patient. So I went in, and it was Patricia; she had a bad appendix.

And she stayed two weeks, and during this time, Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy] had been at a camp, and he got pneumonia. So he was brought in. So the two of them had three nurses, round the clock. And so in a few days the doctor said that they could plan to take one nurse home with them to Hyannisport for a couple of weeks. So the two of them were telephoning back and forth, and say, well, "Let's exchange nurses for an hour to decide who to take home." So, out of the six nurses, they chose me; I still don't know why!

And so I went home with them, and they both got along very well. And in two weeks the doctor came down from Boston to see Pat, and he said, "Well now, Miss Hennessey, you can go along home. Patricia is very well," and so forth.

So Mrs. Kennedy [Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy] came to me, and said she would like—this was around the middle, or the last of July—and she would like to have me stay until they returned to Bronxville, because I just seemed to fit in, if they needed a crew on one of the sailboats, or the governess wanted to have a little time off from Rosemary [Rosemary Kennedy], I would fit in there. Or I would drive them down to a movie, the youngsters down to a movie, to the town, or something. So I just did everything, so Mrs. Kennedy said I fit in so very well, would I stay until they went back to Bronxville? And because in those days the hospital was not air conditioned—no place was air conditioned—and it was so beautiful at the Cape, I thought I was rather fortunate to be invited to stay until they went back to Bronxville. So I did, until the middle of September.

MARTIN: And did you back to Saint Elizabeth's after that?

DONOVAN: Then I went back to Saint Elizabeth's. And the following February, Mrs. Kennedy was up saying goodbye to her mother and father [Mary H. Fitzgerald [John F. "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald] before she went to England with the family, and she came down with appendix, appendicitis, too. So she was rushed to the hospital, to Saint Elizabeth's, and her doctor called me and said that she would not be operated on unless I was there! And I said, "Well, I'm on another case," and it's very unethical to report off one to go to another one. And so I said, "I will go in to see her, and I'll visit her, but I can't report off a case."

So within an hour he called me again, and he had talked to my patient, and she said that she thought that it was her duty to her country to give me up, to take care of the wife of the American Ambassador to Great Britain. So I reported off the case, and I went with Mrs. Kennedy, and everything was fine. And so the first time that Mr. Kennedy [Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.] came up to see her that night, he said to me, "Walk up the elevator with me, please." And I did, and so he said, "We would like to have you come to England with us for about six weeks, until we get settled and everything, and we know what we're doing over there with the children, and so forth." Teddy [Edward Moore Kennedy] was just—had turned 7.

My brother-in-law is a doctor, and I had been living in town. So I called him, and I said, "Well, what do you think about me going to England with the Kennedy family for six weeks?" And he said, "Lu, do you know where Mr. Kennedy is staying tonight?" And I said, "Well, they always stay at the Ritz." And he said, "Well, you better call him before he changes his mind."

MARTIN: [Laughs] So he really supported the idea, very much.

DONOVAN: Therefore, it was—Mrs. Kennedy went south down to Palm Beach for two weeks, and during that time I got ready to go abroad. She sent me a little note, and it said, “Do you understand the art of packing?” And I wondered why she did that. But I certainly learned in London, when we went to the south of France, or went to Switzerland for winter sports, there would be forty-five and fifty trunks and boxes packed for eleven, twelve of us to move. So I knew then what she meant: “Do you understand the art of packing?”

MARTIN: [Laughs] Amazing! But how long were you over there? Did you stay until the war broke out?

DONOVAN: Mm-hm. We went over in March, in '37, was it? And we came back a year from the next October, after the war had broken out. We were in the south of France, in Cannes, when England declared war, and Mr. Kennedy said we could not go back to the embassy. G. Pierpont Morgan [John Pierpont Morgan, Jr.] offered Mr. Kennedy his country estate, and so we all went down there, until we came home.

MARTIN: Now when you returned here, you still were part of the Kennedy operation, or did you go back to...

DONOVAN: No. When we were there—of course, no matter where I am, I always feel that a woman should have a little fun, and go out, and have a little company, a male companion. And so wherever I was, I, through Mr. Kennedy or somebody from the family, I happened to meet men that I would go out to dinner or to a show with. And I was seeing this English man quite steadily over there, and when we went to Morgan's estate, Mr. Kennedy called me and said that we were going to leave on such a day for America. We were going to leave on the last boat, that we were going to pick up all the Americans from France and Spain and everywhere. This was the last call for any American.

And so I said that I would like to stay there on account of my friend, that we expected to get married. And so he said it was going to be a long, hard war, and eggs were going to be rationed to one a month. And he gave me quite a bleak picture of the future there, but I still thought that love would take care of everything. So then he said, “Well, I'll tell you, you come back with us, and when you land in New York, you can do whatever you want. You can wait for the boat to turn around, and come right back again, or you can stay in America. But Mrs. Kennedy and I feel that we brought you over single, and we'll return you to America single.”

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: So I did as he did, the same as all his children do. I wouldn't dare argue with him. So I made arrangements, and I came back with the

family. And I was so glad; I knew he was right, because when I arrived in New York, I knew this was my home, and I had no idea of going back again.

MARTIN: And you had no regrets?

DONOVAN: No.

MARTIN: Whatever happened to the young man? Did you ever follow through?

DONOVAN: He was killed in the war. He was a pilot.

MARTIN: Did you correspond with him? I was just curious.

DONOVAN: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

MARTIN: Isn't that....

DONOVAN: So it all happened very, very....

MARTIN: Amazing. So now you're back here, and the Kennedys are back. What's the next connection? Did you resume nursing over at Saint Elizabeth's?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes. I went back again, but this time I was more interested in public health, and the retarded. When I was over there, Mrs. Kennedy mentioned to me—and this stayed in my mind for many years—that in America, and also in Britain, there was no education for retarded children, and that when Rosemary got five, six, seven years old, she had to send her to a private school, a boarding school, where she stayed all week and only came home weekends. And she said that it was one of her big regrets that Rosemary did not have the fun of being brought up in a large family. She only had it on weekends. And that something should be done in America for the early education of retarded children.

So that stayed in my mind for many years, and as you know, many years later I started the Kennedy-Donovan Center for Retarded Children. I started with four children in one classroom, and today we have twenty locations of the Kennedy-Donovan Center, and about two hundred and seventy-five employees, and a budget of almost six million dollars. And it started from just four children, two in staff, and myself. But it started with the impetus of Rose Kennedy saying there should be education for the retarded.

I started the center in 1969, and the Law 766 was passed in 1973, and implemented in 1975. So I was six years ahead of the public school system here. And when they started, many of them asked me for my programs, because they didn't know where to start. So it all came out of just one sentence from Rose Kennedy.

MARTIN: What an extraordinary legacy to leave behind! But I want to get back

now to, chronologically, to your association with the Kennedys. After you came back from England, and you, like all of us, went through World War Two here in America. But were you part of the Kennedy family then? The young children had grown up and what...

DONOVAN: Well, you see, Teddy wasn't even ten yet.

MARTIN: No.

DONOVAN: He was probably about nine, nine years old, and Bobby probably eleven or twelve. And in Bronxville, when we arrived, I still...

MARTIN: You went to Bronxville?

DONOVAN: Pardon?

MARTIN: You went to Bronxville with them?

DONOVAN: I went to Bronxville for about three months.

MARTIN: Okay. Was this during the war?

DONOVAN: Yes.

MARTIN: Okay.

DONOVAN: And they all got settled in school, and so forth. And there really wasn't any need of me staying. I'm not one to just stay on, so I wanted to be active and doing things, and seeing that I was needed, and doing something constructive. And so I mentioned to Mrs. Kennedy there really wasn't any need of me staying, and she said, you know, "We'd love to have you stay, but if you want to continue on." So I came home, and then went into private nursing again.

MARTIN: That's during the war, and its conclusion? And then your next contact was some time in the...

DONOVAN: Then it seemed as if my brother-in-law's nurse was very ill with leukemia, and so he asked me if I would come in and be his office nurse until he got somebody else. So I was living with my sister and him, with the O'Toole family. And so I stayed there for a year as his nurse, until he got another nurse that would take her place. So he was quite upset about the nurse having leukemia, and she had been with him for a long time, so it was hard to bring somebody in. But I knew the routine there.

So then there was an opening in Walpole for a visiting nurse, and so this is what I always wanted to do. So I applied, and I got it. The girl, the nurse that was head nurse then,

she had been in the service, and some strange tropical disease had come back on her. And within six months of when I was there, she had to leave and be hospitalized, and finally she passed away. But then I took over, and I was the head nurse there for fourteen years, and I just loved public health nursing, and going into the homes, and taking care of people in their ordinary habitat there.

And in fact, I made an arrangement with the Police Department that if these people happened to call me during the night, if they were very ill, needed an injection, or if they were near to passing out of this world, to call me; I'd be ready for them to come up. So the police would come and get me, and then I would call them when I was ready to come home. So I just—my heart was in it. I just loved the work! And I did a lot of this work, and I guess I endeared myself to the townspeople here. So I'm glad to be back in Walpole again.

MARTIN: But the Kennedys still remembered their Luella?

DONOVAN: Yes, and during all this time, they were growing up, but always keeping in touch. Whenever Jack [John F. Kennedy] would travel, or Joe [Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr.]—any of them would travel abroad, they always sent me a card. And Pat and Eunice [Eunice Kennedy Shriver], they were young then, but when they would take a trip to Paris or London, or someplace in Europe, they would always send me cards. So we were always in touch. And then, of course, it wasn't very long, time went on, and Bobby was going to get married.

So you see, in London, Bobby and Teddy were the only ones that lived at the embassy. Joe and Jack traveled to different embassies in Europe. And Rosemary was at boarding school. And Pat and Eunice and Jean [Jean Kennedy Smith] were at Roehampton Boarding School for Girls. So nobody was there excepting Ted and Bobby during the week, but everybody came home the weekend. And so a weekend was really like a field day, just a gala celebration. But I got to know Teddy and Bobby much better than any of the others, because they were at home all the time.

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: And so when Bobby was going to get married, of course, he had me. I went to the wedding. It was the first one of many, and a beautiful wedding! And of course, then, when Ethel [Ethel Skakel Kennedy] was going to have her first child, Kathleen [Kathleen Kennedy Townsend], he had to—they wanted me to go down. And this is quite [laughs]—this shows the compassion, especially of Bobby. I always remember this. He called me and said, "Ethel has gone to the hospital, and the doctor is kind of worried." So he said, "Will you come right down? Will you fly right down?"

Well, I have flown a lot, but I don't like to fly, and especially alone. So I said to Bobby, "Well, I can't go down alone," and he said, "Why?" I said, "I don't like to fly alone." So he said, "I'll call you back. I'll get the flight number, and what you're gonna do." And he said, "And if you're in there, I'll fly up and get you, and then bring you down, and fly back with you," which he did. I went into the airport, and right at the gate, just a few minutes before, his plane came in. And he came over, and we met, and then we went down to the gate

that I was going to, that we were going to leave, and we flew back. So that's how much he thought of his wife, Ethel, having her first baby, that he flew up to get me to fly down because I wouldn't fly alone!

MARTIN: [Laughs] That's very interesting. Now, that was Kathleen?

DONOVAN: Mm.

MARTIN: And then you were there for the next?

DONOVAN: I was there for all her children, eleven of them. In New York, in Boston, and Washington, wherever she was having them. And that particular baby, I would make arrangements, and I would make arrangements way ahead of time. And the position that I held at the Visiting Nurse, I had four weeks vacation, which every visiting nurse does. And so in June, I would call all the Kennedys—this is in later years—to see if they were going to have a baby for the rest of the year, so that I could, when I had to take my vacation, I would take my vacation.

This was for nineteen years, I took my four weeks vacation with a particular Kennedy that was having a baby. I didn't have a week's vacation, myself, in all that time. But I considered it really almost like a—well, I love nursing anyway, and I love maternity nursing, and babies, and children.

MARTIN: In other words, you planned your vacations around their pregnancies?

DONOVAN: Yes. So there never was more than two the rest of that year, so I could go, like, for ten days with each one.

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: And so I didn't—but that was more of a vacation. It was almost like a seminar for me, because they had such interesting visitors, and their husband and I would be in, and they would be talking about so many things, that I had just barely touched the headlines of the paper, and they would go into it in depth. And I—I just felt so much, I would much rather that than just go to the seashore and loll around in the sand for a week.

MARTIN: Now how long would you stay with each?

DONOVAN: Well, I'd always go in with them, and it was—I think that they thought I was a good omen for a healthy baby. Nobody would ever think of having a baby without me there!

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: And...

MARTIN: That goes for the Smiths as well as the—And then of course, when Teddy got married...

DONOVAN: Yeah, and Jackie [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy].

MARTIN: And Jackie.

DONOVAN: And Joan [Joan Bennett Kennedy]—all of them. The only one I missed was Christopher Lawford. And I didn't go up to the coast; I had the virus at that time, and I just couldn't go. So, and he was the first child, first baby of Pat. So she said, "Don't let it happen again!"

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: So I went out for the other three.

MARTIN: And John and Caroline [John F. Kennedy, Jr.; Caroline Bouvier Kennedy], too?

DONOVAN: Yeah, yeah, and the baby that did not survive [Patrick Bouvier Kennedy], down at Otis Air Base. I was with her then. So, it was rather interesting down at Otis Air Base. Jackie wanted me to—the death of that baby affected her very badly. Jackie and I got along very well. All the Kennedys and I did. And she wanted me to go to the White House and stay with her for the winter. And so I said, "Well, your husband has sent me to Boston College for two years to learn, to take some subjects in retardation, so that I can start something going for young children, a school or something."

And so, pretty soon the President came in to take her home, and Jackie said to him that she didn't know what I was going to do. She wanted me to come to the White House for the winter, and he was sending me to Boston College. So what was I going to do? And he said to me, "There are ninety-six thousand R.N.'s (registered nurses) in this country. And I think ninety-five thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine would jump at the chance to go to the White House for the winter!"

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: And I said, "But you see, Jack, that is the difference between the other nurses and me, and that's why you want me."

MARTIN: [Laughs] So your decision was...

DONOVAN: So I said to him, "I'll go home with Jackie for one month, until Boston College starts. And at that time, I'll assure you then, if Jackie still

wants me to go, yes, I'll go. But I'm sure after having my company for a whole month, she will be so fine, I won't be needed." So that was the bargain.

After we got to Squaw Island, Jackie's sister...

MARTIN: Lee [Lee Bouvier Radziwill]?

DONOVAN: Lee came over to spend some time with her. And they were talking about a trip that they were going to take. Mr. Onassis [Aristotle Onassis] had asked Lee and a few of her friends to go on a cruise in the *Christina*, and then asked her to bring Jackie along. So in talking about that, and getting ready for it, and so forth, I think it just buoyed her up so, that after the month was over, I said to her, "Shall I plan for the White House, or shall I plan to go back to Boston College?" She said, "Well I think I feel so good now that I'm going to go on the cruise." So I said to the President, "What did I tell you?" [Laughs] "After being with me over a month, she will be so peppy, she'll be feeling so well, she won't want me in the White House!" So, I went to Boston College.

All those little things, it wasn't just all business, just giving pills or treatment or something. It was the relationship that I established with each one of them. They understood that no story was ever carried to anybody else. Sometimes during labor, one of them would say to me, "Did So-and-so suffer as much? Did they have such a hard time?"

MARTIN: Yeah.

DONOVAN: And I would always answer, "Now, if I told you, you'd know that I would tell the next one how you behaved."

MARTIN: Sure, sure.

DONOVAN: So they knew they didn't want anybody—so there were never any stories carried, and I think that they trusted me and knew that that was one of my strong points, that no story was ever carried. And I think that if a lot of people adopted that attitude, that whatever is told to you, you don't have to say to anybody, "Now, don't mention this to anybody." But in your own good sense, you know whether you should repeat it or not.

MARTIN: Sure. True. It makes sense. You were at Boston College, Luella, at the time of the assassination?

DONOVAN: Yes, yes. Well, it seemed as if everybody was milling in the corridors and just fussing. You know, just so excited! And I wondered what it was. And the Registrar came and sought me out, and asked me to go to her office. And then she told me. And so she said, "You can stay here for a while, or you can leave, whichever you want." And I said, "I think I want to go home."

So when I got home, there was a call from the White House that they would like to have me, the family would like to have me come down and stay there during the time that the

President would be brought home. And so I called them right back and asked them to make arrangements for me on such a plane. And at the airport they really treated me like a V.I.P. Arrangements had been made, and I was in the first class, traveling first class. And when we arrived in Washington, the pilot came back and told me that somebody would be there from the White House to meet me, because I didn't know how to take a cab up to the White House.

And so when we were all coming off the plane, I noticed way down at the foot of the stairs was a gentleman with a long cloak—coat—on, and a blue hat, with “The White House” across the front of it, and “The White House” on the lapel of his coat. And I knew he was for me. But everybody kept saying, I could hear everyone go, “Oh, I wonder who is on the plane that they came from the White House? I wonder who?” And looking around, turning around, and saying, “Well, I wonder who it is?” So I went over to him, and I said, “Are you looking for Luella Hennessey? I am she.” He said, “Follow me.” And so, we went. Then I could hear the crowd say, “Oh, is that who it was?” They didn't still know my name, but they knew that somebody was being met.

So I stayed at the White House with Jackie and the children, in their private compartment, until the day before Thanksgiving. They were all going, all the family were going down to the Cape to have Thanksgiving at the Cape, which they always did. And so I went home. They invited me to go down with them, but I said, “No, I'll go home and have Thanksgiving with my family.” So, I have always—I love the Kennedy family next to my own family. They're always my second family, and they've treated me like a member of the family. As Mrs. Kennedy said to me when I arrived down there, “Miss Hennessey, you're always with us, whether it's in joy or sorrow.”

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: And I always want to be, because they have given me advantages and privileges that I never, never could have gotten myself. And I'll always be indebted to them. And they will always be my very best friends.

MARTIN: Also on Bobby, Luella, just to carry it out a little further, you know, you were so close to Ethel and Robert. And then, when he got into that national campaign, you were back up here in Walpole, I assume?

DONOVAN: Mm.

MARTIN: But were you called in then, on the night he got shot?

DONOVAN: Oh, yes. Ted called me about six o'clock in the morning, and said that the night before, Bobby had been shot, and would I come right out to L.A.? That he would make arrangements for me, on the plane. And he gave me the—they're so, the Kennedy's are so business-like. He had already the time the plane was leaving, and who to report to at the airport, and gave me everything, run right down. And so I said, “Yes, I will.” So I packed my uniforms to go out, because he wanted me to take care of Bobby. So I went in there, and they really treated me as a V.I.P. And all the

time, going on the flight out to L.A., the pilot or the copilot came back about every half hour, had been in touch with the hospital, and told me the condition of Bobby. [Telephone call; interruption]

MARTIN: So, the pilot kept coming back?

DONOVAN: Yes, and telling me. So when we arrived there, I—evidently they didn't know how this—who did this shooting, or the assassination, and they were very—they wanted to protect anybody with the Kennedy family. So when we arrived there, the airport police escorted me to a car, a waiting car, and then there was a car in front and in back with L.A. Police in it, because they didn't know whether somebody would be after me, if I was going to see Bobby. So then when we arrived at the hospital, they made an archway, you know, two rows. And I walked between the officers, and then two escorted me up to Ethel's room, because they didn't know who would be waiting in the line. But, they took all precautions, because I was going to go and be with the Kennedys; they wanted to protect me. So, I wasn't a bit afraid! The Kennedys always look out for you.

MARTIN: Did you go in to see Bobby in his final hours?

DONOVAN: When I got there, I went to see Ethel, because he was still in the operating room. And then he was brought down to the recovery room, so we all went into the recovery room, all the family. And I thought it was so nice—what was the doctor's name, here in Boston, that operated on him?

MARTIN: From the Baptist?

DONOVAN: What?

MARTIN: New England Baptist, was it?

DONOVAN: Yeah. I forget. He was a renowned brain surgeon all over the country—a very gentle man, but a big man. And when they were bringing Bobby into the recovery room, he stopped by to see Ethel, and I was with Ethel. And Ethel was saying her rosary, saying the rosary. And he said, "Mrs. Kennedy, please don't ask while you're saying the rosary that your husband will live, because if he does, he will be the same as his father. His vision will be impaired, his speech. He won't be the man that you know. So don't pray that he will live." And she said, "Thank you, Doctor," and didn't shed a tear, but kept on praying. So then, we put her on a stretcher, because you see, she was already pregnant, two months. And as Teddy said, "If anything ever happened to this baby, that's the only thing that you have of Bobby's." And so we went, we pushed her into the recovery room and put the stretcher right next to the bed, and put his hand over, and Ethel held his hand. And after a few minutes, she said, "I think we better say the rosary." Great faith in the rosary. And she said the beginning of it, and everybody answered it.

MARTIN: Was the family around the—in the recovery room?

DONOVAN: Mm-hm, Teddy and Joan, and Eunice and Pat, and Jean and Jackie, and all of us, yeah.

MARTIN: And he died the following day, I think?

DONOVAN: Yeah. See, I got out there about six, I guess, and he died around midnight. So, it was—I was next to the man, the technician, who was running the brain wave machine, and I could see the spikes when they were getting lower and lower. And then there were none. And all went over and kissed him goodbye. And I went in with Ethel, alone.

MARTIN: That baby was—which baby?

DONOVAN: Rory [Rory Kennedy].

MARTIN: Rory, yeah.

DONOVAN: Yeah, yeah.

MARTIN: You came home with the family, back to...

DONOVAN: I came up to New York.

MARTIN: To New York?

DONOVAN: The obstetrician that Patricia, that Pat Lawford had when she was out there, he offered to come on the train—on the plane, rather—with Ethel, in case something happened.

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: So there was—he sat with me, so I can't help shedding a tear here, because this was so moving. So she had a doctor and a nurse right there, and he had all his instruments in a little bag, in case anything happened. And we kept a strict eye on Ethel. So when we got to New York, I went up in the hotel with Ethel, and stayed with her there, until, I think, Pat and Jean, or somebody, was going to stay with her at night. And they knew down the corridor, where I was. But I thought that she should be with her family, too, instead of just with a nurse, even though I was close with them. And I said, "If anything happens, I'm right here and the doctor is across the way." So, she is a strong personality. And she came right through it all.

MARTIN: Yeah, then they formed the funeral train that went from New York.

DONOVAN: Yeah, yeah.

MARTIN: Were you on the train? Did you go on the train?

DONOVAN: I went with her, on the train, with the doctor! [Laughs] We all went—we traveled together. He was a fine, fine gentleman. And Teddy, God bless him, stayed in the rear of the car. They had it partitioned off, and the casket he was going to be buried in. See, we were driving down from New York to Washington, you know, for the burial. And Teddy was up there all of the time, just sat beside the casket. And Joe [Joseph Patrick Kennedy, II], and Bobby, young Bobby [Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.], went along, too, up and down the...

MARTIN: The aisle?

DONOVAN: Yeah. And thanked everybody for coming, and so forth. And it was amazing, when we were going through the countryside, I suppose, down—well, on the way to Washington.

MARTIN: Through New Jersey and Delaware?

DONOVAN: Yeah. There would be—it would be going through the country, the real country, and the engineer would slow the train down, because he could see a group of people up there, with some flowers, hand-picked flowers from the field there. And they were standing by the railroad, and just waving, and blessing themselves. And so he'd slow down, so in the back, in the last car there, it was draped with black. And the people, maybe there'd be twenty or twenty-five, with shawls over their heads, would see it. They're throwing flowers at the train, just showed how much they loved him, yeah. Yeah, it really was. And so, to let me in on all the happenings of...

[End of Tape 1, Side A; Begin Tape 1, Side B]

...I guess I learned again how very close a family can be, or that family, for their brothers and sisters. Which, even though they were married and so forth, they still had the closeness, as if they were just children. They never grew away from being a brother and sister. And I think it's still true, that Teddy and Jean and Eunice and Pat are just as close now as if they were ten years old.

MARTIN: There was another occasion, but the results were certainly much more fortunate and happy, and that was the accident that the Senator got into...

DONOVAN: Oh, yeah.

MARTIN: ...in the plane. And I had a role in that, because I was up there at the

time, but I can remember the first call that went out was for Luella to come up to Cooley Dickinson Hospital. Do you remember that?

DONOVAN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And of course, as long as this was Ted, I had to get there all the faster.

MARTIN: Oh, I know!

DONOVAN: So, I was happy to go up, because I didn't want anybody else taking care of him but me.

MARTIN: Yeah.

DONOVAN: Because I wanted to be sure that the best was given to him. And I thought I could give the best, because I—Teddy was just such a little boy, just turned seven. When I had first met him, he was only five—five years old at the Cape, when I went home with Patricia and Bobby, from the hospital. He was only five, and a cute, smart, smiling, happy little fellow! And I guess it was almost like a surrogate mother or something. I didn't want anything, and I thought that I could give him the best care. So I was very happy to go up there. And he did have two orderlies come from...

MARTIN: Several weeks at Cooley Dickinson, then he was transferred back down to the New England Baptist.

DONOVAN: Yeah, I rode behind the ambulance in the car—he had an ambulance—to be sure they didn't go too fast! [Laughs] And jounce his spine! So then he was at the New England Baptist for...

MARTIN: Up until perhaps early December?

DONOVAN: Yeah. So this was my last year at Boston College, and so I gave up during the summer to take care of him. But then when the fall came again, there was a conflict: Should I return? Should I take care of Teddy, or should I return to Boston College? And I talked it over with him, and he said, "Well, too bad to break it up," my school year, but he said, "You have to come over every single week to see me. And we'll check on the nurse that's sent over." So he had these two orderlies that were very good, from what hospital?

MARTIN: The Reed, Army General, yes.

DONOVAN: Yeah, and they were very good. And so I felt satisfied.

MARTIN: Yeah! [Laughs]

DONOVAN: Yeah, so I went over to see him all the time. So, when he was going to be discharged, I said, “Well Ted, I’ll come over and go to the airport with you.” So I went over, and I went to the airport, and saw him on the plane to go down to Florida. So it seems if my mission was finished there.

MARTIN: Yes, yes.

DONOVAN: So I finished my course at Boston College, and then my courses were finished the next February. So everybody seemed to be...

MARTIN: How many times was your course at the school interrupted? It seems like it was periodically, yeah.

DONOVAN: Yeah. But you see, then, Ed, nobody knew anything about retardation. There wasn’t any courses specific about retardation. There were ninety nurses in my class, and I was the only one that had an interest in retardation. You know, it was public health, and maternity, or the elderly, or orthopedics, or obstetrics, or something like that. But I was the only one, out of ninety nurses, that was interested in retardation. So therefore, I had to almost—I had to make up my own course.

MARTIN: Oh, I see, yeah.

DONOVAN: Because they didn’t know anything about it So, yeah, I took pediatrics, and tried to apply the pediatrics of, say, the program that you’d have for a six month old baby, apply it to the retarded of a year old.

MARTIN: Oh, I see.

DONOVAN: See, that they were that far behind. I had to try to balance it myself, see. Because—it’s interesting, Ed. I—again, this is from Mr. Kennedy. He always thought you have to do so much ground work before you really start a project. So part of my ground work was I wrote to all the nursing schools—I got it from the Public Health Department—in the state. And I sent them out a questionnaire: “What do you—how many hours do you spend with your students on retardation? Do you include it in pediatrics, public health, maternity, neurology? What do you include it in? And, how much time do you spend with your students?”

None just specific for retardation. They included some in delivery, so that the head won’t be injured, the brain. And they just include it in the education of the young, but they’re not just of that high in age, the age group. I sent a questionnaire to all the medical schools in the state and asked the same questions.

MARTIN: Is that right? Yeah.

DONOVAN: Yeah, and they said that the entire subject of mental retardation was included in an afternoon’s visit to Fernald School [Walter E. Fernald

State School].

MARTIN: Can you imagine?

DONOVAN: So then I found I had to start at the very beginning. Nobody knew anything about retardation! So I got all kinds of pamphlets and wrote to the—there's an association, Association of Mental Deficiency. And they called them—not mentally retarded. What did they call it? Anyways, not very nice names, they called the children. And I read, and read, and read, for six months, just to see how I would start a program. What kind of a program? How do you start a program for—I said to Eunice, "I want to start at eighteen months old."

Because I had been doing—when I got through Boston College, I went to work up at Wrentham State School. There was a project that the State Department was sponsoring. You see, Mental Health and Public Health never agreed, never got along. And so they wanted to have a public health nurse work in the Department of Mental Health to see if she could bring it together. So they funded one position, and this was for a nurse to go out, a public health nurse—which I got my degree in—to go out into the community where there were retarded children in the family, and go out and visit the family, and start programs in the family. So I applied for that position. I think only two or three did. [Laughs] But anyways, I got the position. And so, just how do you start a program that's never been? Well, anyway...

MARTIN: You were breaking new ground, completely.

DONOVAN: Yeah. So I got the admission list at Wrentham State School of three hundred waiting to get into the school. Three hundred. Which would take about five years. So I took that list and went to the ones that had been on there longest, and went to visit them. And this extended from Southborough and Northborough up there, to Sudbury, to Dorchester, to Hingham—all that. I had over—the first year, I had fifty on my list to visit, to interview the family and see what the biggest trouble was, and would they think of having, sending the child to a school, if I had one there? Or if I came up to see them once a month?

And they all said, "No, my child is five years old; my family is falling apart. My husband wants a divorce. The children are failing in school because there's so much commotion here. No, I just want my child admitted to Wrentham State School. That's all. I don't want any programs." So after two years, I sent [laughs]—I sent a message back to public health and mental health, and said, "This will never work. Here are my statistics," and I quoted different people, the mothers, what they said. And I said they don't want it. What you have to do is to have a program very early.

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: So that they're not overloaded. Oh, the kids, the youngsters would be chewing the rug, and swinging on the curtains, and oh! I remember

one bit the tail off the cat when the cat was sleeping! And the cat went howling around, and oh! And I just happened to go in at that time. So how could a mother have that around, with other children?

So I said, "You have to start them early, at eighteen months." And they agreed, and I went in, and so forth. But they didn't have any money for that. So then I asked Eunice if the Foundation [Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation] would fund it. And it was three weeks before the readers were going to come and read the proposals for the money they were going to give next year. This was around in December. So I thought, "Well, gee, I'll have to get going." I didn't know anything about writing a proposal, but I wrote it as I thought it should be, and I presented it. I sent it down.

And the readers were coming around the tenth or fifteenth of January, six of them, to read all the proposals, to see which one they would fund. So it just happened that Joan and Teddy, they were, and the family, were out in Vail, Colorado, skiing. And Joan always had very bad trouble with strep throats, and she had one out there. So anyway, the doctor said, "You should have your tonsils out. You must have them; it'll only repeat."

So she called me from there, and asked me if I would meet her at Lenox Hill Hospital at such a date, because she was going to have her tonsils out. So I went down to Lenox Hill, and she had her tonsils out, and everything just turned out fine. So when she was leaving the hospital, Teddy said to me, "Lulu, I wish I could just show you" ... [Interruption]

MARTIN: So you talked to Ted about going, about Joan and her tonsils, and at that point he was asking you what he could possibly do for his Lulu?

DONOVAN: Mm-hm.

MARTIN: And what did you tell him?

DONOVAN: I said, "You know, Ted, the readers are coming down next week to read all the grants, and then there's a meeting of the board of trustees. And I think the thing that you could do for me is to see that the check mark is put in the right place, who's going to get the funding for their proposal." And he laughed and he said, "Lulu, you don't have to worry about that! You have the grant already."

MARTIN: [Laughs] That's great! So you got the grant?

DONOVAN: Yeah.

MARTIN: Yeah. You know, just going back a little ways, Luella, tell me a little bit more about the father. You know, he suffered that stroke shortly after President Kennedy was in office. It was in December of that year, I believe it was, 1961...

DONOVAN: The following year.

MARTIN: The following year, 1961. What are your recollections about that

occasion?

DONOVAN: Well, I had come home from work, and the President had called me. And I was quite surprised that the President would be calling Lulu! [Laughter] So he said that his father had had a stroke, and he would like to have me come down, that I would know his wishes better than a strange nurse. He would have nurses round the clock, but they also wanted to have me there to not really supervise, but so that he would know one of the nurses. So I said certainly I would go down.

So I got a plane and went down, and stayed at—he was at Saint Mary’s Hospital, and I used to work at Saint Mary’s Hospital in Palm Beach, so I knew all the nuns and the nurses there, and all. And so I had a room there. The Superior gave me a room, so that they could come in or call me during the night, you know, if he was upset and so forth.

But I must say, during that time, Jackie was just marvelous to her father-in-law. Oh, she was—and he was very fond of Jackie. But sometimes he would be so irritable because he couldn’t talk, that she could just go in and talk to him, and say, “Grandpa,” you know, “It’s Jackie, and we’re going to stay here with you,” and all. And she could calm him down in five minutes, more than anybody else could. Whether it was the President, or Bobby—nobody. Nobody could do it like she could.

MARTIN: She had a special relationship with him?

DONOVAN: Mm-hm. And she, that’s her way. Sometimes she would come in, down at the Cape, late. We would be sitting at the dinner table, and you know Mr. Kennedy! You’d march in [laughs], single file, five minutes before it was served. You had to be in the living room, and then when the bell would ring, everybody would go in. Jackie could come in two or three minutes late, and he would not say anything! He would just say, “Hello, Jackie.” And she’d come in, and go over and kiss Grandpa and Grandma, and sit down, and everything was just fine.

[Telephone call; Interruption]

This is another thing about Mr. Kennedy. You see, he was such a dynamic man, to just not be able to talk, or move—of course, one side was paralyzed now—that...

MARTIN: Was his mind clear? I understand, people have told me that, you know, he could understand, he just couldn’t communicate.

DONOVAN: Mm-hm, mm-hm. The cloth was just there. No, he couldn’t talk!

MARTIN: No.

DONOVAN: He couldn’t speak. And of course, that frustrated him terribly! You know, it was just garbled, and he knew he was just garbling. And then he’d—oh, it was very frustrating.

The night before Christmas, or Christmas night, we had dinner at—who was that man, just north of Ocean Boulevard, just a little towards the town from Kennedy’s estate? He gave his house to Jack while Jack was down with his father. And so we all went there for dinner. [Laughs] See, they always included me. You know, just it was so great, so democratic with them.

So anyways, a call came in while we were eating, and evidently they said it was the hospital, and to speak with Jackie. So Jackie excused herself, and then she came back and she said, “I’m going over with Grandpa.” And she had on an emerald green velvet lounge suit. Beautiful! Oh, and her color and her hair! She was—oh, she was beautiful! In that dress. And she went, put on her fur coat, and went over, and saw Grandpa. We finished dinner, and I guess everything. We left before she got back. She stayed over there.

I guess he was just, you know, just on edge. But she could just ease him down like nobody else, not even Jack could. And she was very faithful to him, and she’d go anytime that anyone called her. Mm-hm, yeah. Jackie was a real lady, and did everything that she could for Mr. Kennedy.

MARTIN: You knew the Ambassador prior to his stroke. What would you say, Luella, was the quality you most remember about him?

DONOVAN: I think that you’d have to say he was so fair. Lots of times, important people sort of color it one way or the other, however they want it. But it seems as if he always looked on both sides, on your side, and he seemed to balance it. He was so fair, and he saw both sides.

While I was in London, my brother’s little boy got burned when the gardener was burning the brush around the place, and he died about in three weeks. And he was only five years old; it was a tragic thing. And so, some of the children were playing, and they were chasing him, and they pushed him into the fire. You know, just tagged him, like that. It was awful—their only child. And so my brother called me, and so I said to Mr. Kennedy, “Well, I want to go home and be with my brother.” And so he said, “It will take,”—see, there weren’t planes then. And he said, “It’ll take you five days to go over,” and the little fellow, it was when he died, and I thought I should come home, because I’d call my brother a lot.

And so he said, “They won’t keep a child that long.” And he said, “And I don’t know when the next boat is leaving.” And so he said, “Why don’t you call him up, and have a nice, long talk with him?” And then he said, “Mrs. Kennedy wants to see you.” I went in to see her, and she took me by the hand, and she said, “Let’s go for a walk over in Hyde Park, just the two of us.” It was the most wonderful thing that the two of them could do for me. So she took—and she let me talk, and she asked me questions. And we walked around there for about two hours, around Hyde Park. And I said, “Well, I think I want to go back now.” I called my brother and said I wasn’t coming back, and I had a nice talk with him, a long talk, about fifteen minutes.

He had so much compassion for somebody! But still, he wouldn’t let that overrule his good judgment.

MARTIN: Yeah.

DONOVAN: He was such a fair man. One time, when I was taking care of Ethel at Saint Elizabeth's, he went into the New England Baptist with some trouble. So he called me and asked me if I would come over and take care of him. [Laughs] That's kind of a hard thing to do! So I said, "Well, I'll stop in to see you this afternoon, because I'm going in and register at Boston College for some evening courses."

So anyways, I stopped in to see him. And he said, "Why are you going in for evening courses?" And I said, "Just because I have to work. I have to support myself, and I have no tuition money. So this is easier, to take the class two nights a week, and you know, a subject one semester, and then another semester, one during the summer." See, I built up about fifty credits in going to school, Boston College, nights, over seven years, see. So, you know, it didn't come easy. So that's why I only had to go two years to get my degree, because I had built up all these others.

So anyways, he said, "Well, you go in and register full time, and I'll take care of everything." [Laughs] I said to him, "Oh, I can't do that!" and he said, "Why not?" He was great for education. I said, "I'm not smart enough!" [Laughs] I couldn't take four or five subjects, you know, and pass. I'd been out of training twenty years. I can dabble in it one subject at a time.

And so anyways, then he said would I go in and take care of him? He was going to be in the hospital for a while. And I said, "Well, you know, it would be awfully hard to leave Ethel and Bobby with their child." And I said, "I will stop in to see you." "But," I said, "I couldn't give up one case for another. You know, that isn't ethical, even for you, Mr. Kennedy."

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: "I have to be ethical as a nurse."

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: He said, "I understand, Luella." He said, "Good for you." So, it's sticking by what I thought was right, see. Yeah, people can say anything they want about any of the Kennedys, but to me, every one of them has been tops. Tops, yeah.

MARTIN: You've seen them all grow up. This is perhaps an unfair question, but do you really have a special, favorite one?

DONOVAN: Well, you know, they always ask me that, all the kids. You know, especially if I'm alone with them. You know, "Who's your favorite?" You know, "I've always done this for you, and this and that, and so forth." And especially Pat. Pat would say, "I'm the one that introduced you to the family," see.

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: And so I say, I always say, “my favorite one is the one I’m with at the time.” And Jack used to say, “Look at her. She’s a politician already!” [Laughs]

MARTIN: But there’s no question, though, that Ted Kennedy is somebody that...

DONOVAN: Well you know, when we were over in London, Joe and Jack used to—they teased Teddy. See, he was only seven, and they were like twenty-one, twenty-two. And, “Oh yeah, wouldn’t you think Teddy could do this?” Or, “Let’s see if you can do this, Teddy,” you know, whatever it was, and so forth. [Laughs] “Miss Hennessey is just coddling him [unintelligible]” or something like that. And so, then I used to say, “No, you can’t do that to my Edward. He’s my Edward.” And they always used to say, “Oh, no! He’s Miss Hennessey’s ‘my Edward.’ Oh, you’re ‘my Edward.’” And they’d tease him so!

So much so that at my—I think it was my seventieth or eightieth birthday, he sent me a wire, and I have it framed over here. And he signed it: “Your Edward.” Whatever he sends me, he always signs it “Your Edward.”

MARTIN: [Laughs] Isn’t that great, yeah.

DONOVAN: Yeah. I used to think if I ever had a son, I’d want him to be like Teddy. He was the most loveable, concerned person. I’ll just tell you one thing, one time. I used to go down to, the chauffeur would drive the two boys to school, the Sloane Street School, which was a private boys school in London. But it was so beautiful in the afternoon in the fall, or in the spring time, I used to walk down—it was about a mile—and get them, and walk back with them, see. And maybe stop and get an ice cream soda, or one of them would get a haircut, or stop at the Brampton Street Oratory, because Bobby used to like to go in there. You know, just walk home instead of the chauffeur bringing them home.

And so the fog, you know, comes in very suddenly and very thick in London. And so we started from the school, and we got about halfway home, and actually you can see it almost like a piece of cloth, just rolling right in, and right down the street, right down the sidewalk. Oh, thick, green, like pea soup, almost. And so when we were half way home, gosh, it really got very bad! And so Teddy said to me, “I have to be careful that you don’t fall, you don’t trip.” You know, from the edge of the sidewalk, when he was going into a house or something, you’d have to drop down, and then go up on the sidewalk again. And he was so particular for me.

So anyways, he said to Bobby, “If you stay here with her, I’ll go out to the bobby,” you know, the policeman there. [Laughs] “Come on, take Miss Hennessey across the little way there!” So he could see his way over, and asked the policeman to come over, and he sure did! And he took my hand [laughs] on the sidewalk, so concerned! So concerned, yeah. You know, there are so many loveable things about him, yeah.

One time we were talking about the future, Teddy and I. And I said to him, “Well, you know, when you get big and you go to Harvard, and you’re playing in the school yard

there, and you'll be probably be living in the [unintelligible] there." I said, "I probably will have a third floor, walk-up, cold water flat, just looking over the Harvard Yard. And you know, it'll be nice for me. You can tell my room, Ted, because I'll have a geranium in the window, so you can tell that that's my room." And I said, "I'll be looking down and watching you play and practicing football or something. And don't forget to turn around and wave to me sometime up there."

MARTIN: [Laughs]

DONOVAN: He felt so bad! He went down crying to his father, and he said, "Miss Hennessey is to live on the third floor, and there won't be any heat!" And he said, "She'll have a geranium," and he told him everything. And he said, "Gee Daddy, can't we do something for her?" [Laughs] Mr. Kennedy called me up. He said, "Teddy is down here crying." [Laughs]

MARTIN: [Laughs] Amazing!

DONOVAN: Yeah. So that's how soft-hearted he was, see. Yeah, yeah. So Mr. Kennedy told him that he'd arrange that I wouldn't be up on the third floor, walk-up, cold water flat! [Laughs] But you know, I didn't want him to think that everybody, you know, is as well-off as him, and that when you get old, you do—now if he ever saw where I'm living! [Laughs] It isn't in a cold water flat, either!

MARTIN: You know, Rose Kennedy was a hundred and one this past July.

DONOVAN: Yeah, yeah.

MARTIN: You know.

DONOVAN: I went down to see her.

MARTIN: Did you, yeah?

DONOVAN: Well, Ted called me and asked me why I didn't go down to—you know, the dedication of that little rose?

MARTIN: Oh, yes!

DONOVAN: And I said, "Well gee, Ted, I can't drive." I'm almost eighty-six. I'll be eighty-six next month. And I said, "I can't drive down to Hyannis and back." So he said, "Oh, why didn't you tell me?" He said, "Now let me see. Wait a minute." And he [unintelligible] He said, "On August fifth, Monday, at nine o'clock, my driver will call for you, and drive you down to see my mother. And I want to see you. And take you right back. We'll have a little lunch." He came, drove me down, yeah.

You know, gosh! The nicest—I couldn't ask for a son or anybody to be as thoughtful to me as what he had. And I had quite a talk with him. And I said to him, I said, "You know, Ted, we won't get into it, but there's been a lot of negative things about the family. And I want to do something about all the positive things that they have done, for me and for all the retarded. They really started on account of my center, and then Eunice, started the retarded!" Really, there's something there. Even there's one acting now. You know, there's a program with a little mongoloid kid?

MARTIN: Yes.

DONOVAN: Yeah, so I said, "Look at how they have come along. Before there wasn't any education, nothing for them. Put them in the attic, you know, lock them into a room." And I said, "It's your family, and I want to let people know what you have done." So he said, "Thank you, Lulu." Yeah, and I said, "Well, you don't mind if I do that, and tell some other nice things?" And he said, "When you get things lined up," he said, "I'll send somebody up." I think it will be a good thing, don't you?

MARTIN: Yes, very good, very good.

DONOVAN: But of course, I'm no writer. I can talk! [Laughs] But, they're very close to me, every one of them. And like when Eunice had her operations and you know, they found out her difficulty and all, I saw her through, I went right with her, and so forth. And I was the one that recognized it, when she was operated on, that her pressure was very, very low. None of the other nurses—the doctor said, "We'll just watch it." And I said, "Watch it? What do you mean?" And he said, "Well, it's pretty low; we'll watch her closely." And I said, "Doctor, you mean watch her die, don't you?" I said, "She can't go—it can't go down much lower than this." It was down to fifty-five, something like that.

So I said, "No." So then I called Dr. Heffernan, and he just flew over! And he got an endocrinologist from Harvard to come over, and she was diagnosed the same as with Jack: Addison's. So, you know, if you let that go down without taking medication to raise the blood pressure. So, the intern never came in to see Eunice again. So I said, "Watch her die? No." Lifted up the phone, called Dr. Heffernan. And he knew her, too. See, I got that from Mr. Kennedy. If you know you're right, fight for it!

MARTIN: Absolutely!

DONOVAN: And I knew I was right. You know, sometimes it doesn't make too much difference. But always be fair, and fair to your patients, the patients. I've done an awful lot of talking, Ed! [Laughs]

MARTIN: Well, that's good. I would imagine, when you reach a hundred, and I'm sure you will, do you believe that the Kennedys will still be calling on Lulu to help out? I'm sure they will.

DONOVAN: You know, Ed, I was telling Ted that in five years, fifty-five of the population of America will be over sixty-five. Now he's on the Committee for the Elderly.

MARTIN: Yes.

DONOVAN: I feel that, just like in staffing the Kennedy-Donovan Center for the Retarded Children, that you have to start way ahead. Now I feel that something, some plans or something, should be, you know, in process now, for five years. Because fifty-five percent of the population! So what are you going to do with them all? We have to support them; you can't let them die in the street.

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: And there'll be so many, many more of them! Because, and especially, you know, the telephone company and all these big companies, are, you know, giving them early retirements, and so forth?

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: And that won't be very much when everybody—fifty-five percent, over half of the population, will be over sixty-five. So I think that things now should be, plans should be laid of what you're going to do. Now, I was saying this to Ted, that possibly, not as elegant as it is here. I couldn't do it. You see, the reason that I can do, that I could come here—my sister was going to come with me, to live here. My sister Alison died a year after my other sister did. And I said, "You assume half of the purchase price, and I assume half of it." So she's paying half of it down, which I could never, never. I paid a hundred and seventy-one for this, but they're up to two twenty now. So, I only had to pay, like, eighty-five or eighty-six thousand, see?

MARTIN: Sure.

DONOVAN: And I haven't sold my other one, so they said when I sold it, and my sister sold her house, you know, her attorney, that then I can pay it, see. So you know, on my own, I could never live like this, see. And then with my sister's family helping me out with Sister Luella's part of it, see, that I can manage it then.

But I'm wondering if something like this could be made on a smaller scale, like one room instead of an apartment, see. See, one room and a bath, or something like that, and then, to house all the elderly here. There's a hundred and sixty units here, see, and a lot of them are husband and wife. So there must be two hundred and fifty people here anyways. So see what you could do on a smaller scale, for two hundred and fifty people, in a place like this, and then in the next town, something like that. Because something has to be done. And then, it's going to be so expensive, and nobody knows what to do, and they have to draw a plan. Now

is the time to do it, see. And I think I'd love to—well, I think that we ought to be going down to lunch.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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