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INTERVIEW WITH ALICE FITZGERALD AND PATRICIA HAGAN

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Interviewer

Stephen Knott

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Knott: Thank you for being with us today, Pat Hagan and Alice Fitzgerald. We’re in Alice’s home in Cambridge.

Fitzgerald: It’s our pleasure to have you here because you’re great.

Knott: Thanks. I think the best place to start is to just ask you both how you first came to know Senator Kennedy and what your first interaction with him was. Alice, do you want to start and tell us your background?

Fitzgerald: Sure. I didn’t know who Senator Kennedy was. But I loved Jack [John F.] Kennedy, and he was already in office. I said to my dad, “I wish I could do something to help President Kennedy.” So he said, “Why don’t you go and volunteer to work for his kid brother?” And I said, “Who’s his kid brother?” Then I asked, “Where do I start? What do I do?” So he said, “You know what, your uncle Tony [?] works with Ted [Edward] Reed, who went to school with Ted Kennedy. Why don’t you give them a call, and tell about Ted Reed?” So we said, “Okay.”

It ended up that my cousin Joanne—Basteri, then—and I took the Bowdoin Street apartment before the headquarters were open. It was on Easter Saturday. I forget his secretary’s name, it goes back so far. She had little sandwiches for us, and we’re saying, “Oh God, we’re in the President’s apartment and we’re eating tuna fish sandwiches.” It was exciting. We were in there maybe for about a half an hour talking, and she said, “I’ll talk to Mr. Kennedy and we’ll be in touch.” They called maybe the following Monday and opened the headquarters on Tremont Street. That’s where the whole thing started. I loved it, loved it!

We didn’t get to meet him then, but the first thing that week we were upstairs in a closet someplace, stuffing envelopes. He walked in and I was eating a Hershey bar, and of course, he saw the Hershey bar and said, “Can’t do it, can’t do it. I swore I was going to lose some weight.” So that’s how the whole thing started, and it went on from there. When I was on Tremont Street in my office, I worked for the Fireman’s Fund American right across the street. So we’d go from Tremont Street down to my building on Boylston Street and back and forth. And it was tedious, because I don’t think we ever had a dinner for six months [laughing]. It was fun. Pat, you could tell your story.
Hagan: Well, I’ve always loved politics. It goes way back, because my uncle was mayor of Somerville in the ’30s. He ran for county commissioner later on, and I worked for him. He ran for Rep in Milton, which he didn’t win, but I’ve always liked politics. I was at the Boston gardens when President Kennedy came—the night before he was elected President—

Knott: Oh yes, sure.

Hagan: I think I had a hoarse voice for a week after that from all my screaming. That was just so exciting. I did a little work, but not that much, for President Kennedy, because I was that much younger. My first voting was for Senator Kennedy. And I was almost the same as Alice starting out. I worked a few times up at the apartment, but I basically used to go in after work three or four nights a week, into the Tremont Street office in 1962. We did all kinds of things, typing and phone work, stuffing envelopes, plus I worked at the different teas with Joan [Bennett] Kennedy.

Knott: You did?

Hagan: Yes, and Sally Fitzgerald and many other people. I went to Lowell, Lawrence, Andover, all kinds of different towns, and that was really fun. And down the road—I think that was later on—there was one at the Continental Hotel in Cambridge. It was in ’62, and our mothers were there, and you’ll see in the albums, we have a picture of Rose Kennedy because she used to go to most all of them, too. That’s basically how I started in ’62 and worked at all the campaigns ever since. I was at the debate in South Boston.

Knott: You were there when [Edward] McCormack said, “If your name was Edward Moore, your candidacy would be in trouble.”

Hagan: The worst thing he ever said. Not that he would have won anyway—

Knott: Right. Why did that work against him, do you think? It just came off as too harsh?

Hagan: I think so. But you know what, he could have said back, “Well, if you hadn’t been McCormack—your uncle is the Speaker of the House.” So you know, they both had different things, but—

Fitzgerald: It was the way he said it.

Hagan: I think it was just a real dig.

Fitzgerald: Sure it was.

Hagan: And it was the worst thing he ever said. He more or less admitted it afterwards.

Knott: Did either of you know McCormack at all prior to this?

Hagan: Not really. His headquarters was right next door to Senator Kennedy in the first campaign.
Knott: That must have been interesting.

Hagan: [laughing] Very! And that’s when we met the first time and we’ve stayed friends for 43 years, Gerard Doherty and Marilyn Doherty and Don Dowd and Barbara [Souliotis]—

Fitzgerald: Bobby Fitzgerald [Fitzgerald].

Hagan: Bobby Fitzgerald, we worked a lot with him.

Knott: Was Gerard Doherty essentially the campaign manager, or—

Hagan: Yes, he was. He was the Senator’s first campaign manager, and then he became the Chairman of the Democratic Party in Massachusetts. I believe it was January of ’63.

Knott: Do you recall in that ’62 campaign the extent that you would be interacting with voters? Did they have any concerns about Senator Kennedy? What I’m getting at essentially is he was 30 years old, he was very young, and he had limited political experience. Did you pick that up at all? Or were people just simply excited that the President’s brother was running for Senate?

Fitzgerald: I don’t think I picked much of that up, but what did happen was we were making phone calls one night, almost at the end of the campaign. A lady on a telephone is crying her head off and saying, “He’s sending my son—my son’s going to war.” This was the Cuban missile crisis. We knew nothing about it, and we were making telephone calls. I said, “Lady, what are you talking about?” “The President’s sending my son”—I got off the phone and I said, “Cut the phones, because we’re going to be getting these calls.” We weren’t aware that people knew this was happening because we’d been at headquarters all day. What do we know?

Knott: So the Reserves were being called up.

Fitzgerald: Yes. “My kid’s going to war.” And I said, ‘Oh, my God.’ We didn’t know what was going to happen to Teddy if Jack’s sending men to war—of course we all know how that worked out. But we were saying, “What is this lady talking about, my son’s going to war?” That was scary because we were just kids then and who knew what war was?

Hagan: That was very exciting, especially being the President’s brother. Wasn’t that an exciting campaign? And if I remember right, the election night was at the Bradford Hotel—I’m almost positive.

Fitzgerald: Every single night I’d be getting home at eleven o’clock. You’d take a shower, go to bed, wake up the next morning, go to work. We did it, and we did everything. We never questioned. “Fill out these papers and stuff those envelopes—”

Hagan: We also got signatures.

Knott: Going around getting signatures? Yes.
Fitzgerald: A lot of telephone calls.

Knott: Was Joan Kennedy active in this campaign, in ’62?

Fitzgerald: She was. We loved Joan. We really did.

Hagan: Then I was at the convention, also, up in Springfield. I happened to be in the room when McCormack was conceding. I have pictures of the Senator and Joan watching the TV when McCormack was conceding.

Fitzgerald: I wasn’t there.

Hagan: I went up with a couple of friends, my cousin and another girl. And she made Kennedy hats and everything.

Knott: Was politics more fun back then, do you think?

Hagan: Oh yes, no question.

Knott: What do you think was a little different about it that made it more fun than perhaps it is today?

Fitzgerald: The people.

Hagan: I think people were loyal way back then. I don’t think there’s now that much loyalty around. Do you think so?

Fitzgerald: No, not at all.

Hagan: I think we were maybe more honest then.

Fitzgerald: And caring, I think.

Knott: Do you have any ideas as to what might have changed things? Why people are less loyal, less—it’s a tough question.

Hagan: Well, it seems like the younger generation is just not that interested in politics as a whole, I think. Do you agree with me?

Fitzgerald: Mainly, yes. Absolutely.

Hagan: They just don’t care—that’s how I look at it. I go by my own cousins.

Knott: They’re cynical about politics.
Fitzgerald: Yes, they’re very cynical. Absolutely. But we had a great young group, and we all got along so well. We loved what we were doing and I think that’s what makes a difference, too. If you’re just going out there looking for a job or whatever—none of us needed a job, nor did we want one. But we felt that we were helping in some way. If you did ten envelopes in a day you’d say, well, there were ten more people who were going to hear about Ted Kennedy. You’d be exhausted, but you’d sit and write ten more because if you thought those would help him, then you could reach ten more people. They’d say, “Wow, I sent out 100 today, now that’s 100 more votes for Teddy.” That’s just the way we talked. It was never negative; it was always positive.

Knott: Well, that’s a good point. So it wasn’t the negative politics that you see today.

Fitzgerald: No, not that you see today. It’s tough today.

Hagan: And then we worked at the Parker House with Tom White on the big dinner for the President, the armory dinner, October 19, 1963. Gerard Doherty was Chairman of the Democratic Party.

Knott: That was quite a night. Edward Kennedy was there.

Hagan: Oh, yes. The President was in one room and the Senator was in another room with Gerard Doherty at a head table. And we were hostesses, it was just very exciting. When the President came in they played “Hail to the Chief.” It was just unbelievable.

Fitzgerald: When the President came in, I was in the middle of the armory. The Secret Service asked me that day if I would put a flower in Jack Kennedy’s lapel. I said, “I can’t do that—”

Knott: What do you mean you couldn’t? Why couldn’t you do that?

Fitzgerald: I was so scared!

Knott: You’d be nervous?

Fitzgerald: I was nervous! Oh, my God! I was nervous. But a couple of days before that we were at headquarters and Gerry Doherty said, “Alice, are you going to be around today?” And I said yes. He said, “Well, see this envelope? Hold it. If you sit down, sit on it. No matter what you do, make sure that you have that envelope.” You don’t ask Gerry Doherty questions, so I said, “Okay.” Later on in the afternoon he said to me, “Alice, have you still got that envelope?” I said yes. He said, “We have a meeting.” I said, “With whom?” He said, “The Secret Service.” I said, “For what? Why do we need the Secret Service?” So we went in. It was a sketch of where each Secret Service person was going to be sitting inside the armory.

The President was killed a month later. I often thought, Here I was sitting there a whole day with this thing in my hands. It felt good because it felt like they trusted me. Oh God. But then, like Pat said, we’re in the armory and the Secret Service is there and we’re hearing, “He’s on Tremont Street, he’s on Boylston Street. The President’s pulling up to the front of the building.” All by myself, with the Secret Service here. In they come. I had never seen Jack Kennedy face-to-face.
And Kenny O’Donnell and all these guys are here, and Jack’s here, and this man’s coming toward me and I’m saying, “Oh, my God. Oh, my God, it’s the President of the United States.”

And then I looked and he had a flower in his lapel. And I said, “What am I going to do?” So I just backed up. Well, he saw me he knew what happened, and he came over. To this day, I’ll never know what that man said to me [laughing]. I got so nervous—those days we’d color our shoes and we’d have white gloves on and pink pocketbooks and stuff. I was so nervous. The color came off the pocketbook right onto my gloves. Oh, what a night that was.

**Knott:** Did you shake his hand? Or did you—

**Fitzgerald:** Oh, yes. He held out his hand. I shook his hand, but—

**Knott:** I wonder if the color from your glove got onto his—[laughing]

**Fitzgerald:** I was so scared. What did he say?

**Hagan:** He walked in and went over to Zita Quigley. She worked up at the state committee with Gerry Doherty. And her brother, I remember him as plain as day saying, “How is your brother, John?” He was the head of the Soldiers’ Home in Chelsea, John Quigley, for a long time.

**Knott:** Okay. So he had a good memory for names.

**Fitzgerald:** Oh I’d say he did. He had to, because she had this big smile on her face.

**Hagan:** A friend of my family, Frank McDermott, was the head of the Secret Service then, in Boston, and I remember seeing him at the Armory.

**Knott:** Oh, sure. Did Ted Kennedy speak at that event, do you recall?

**Fitzgerald:** Yes, he did.

**Knott:** Did he introduce his brother, or any—I don’t want to push you. I know it’s a long time ago.

**Fitzgerald:** You’re not pushing, but I know he spoke because he was a United States Senator. But eventually the President sat in the big ballroom. Then the President said that somebody told him there was an annex, and he said, “We’ll move in. I’ll have my coffee in the other room.” He wanted to make sure that every person in that building saw him. I’ve got big articles on that, if you need anything, when—

**Hagan:** It was very exciting.

**Knott:** I can imagine, yes.

**Fitzgerald:** And it raised the most money ever.
Knott: Is that right?

Fitzgerald: Yes, the most money ever.

Knott: It was a fundraiser for the Democratic party? Or for Ted Kennedy’s—

Hagan: A salute to President Kennedy—

Knott: It might have been for—

Hagan: I think it was the state committee. Howard Fitzpatrick was the caterer at that time. Have you ever heard that name?

Knott: It sounds familiar.

Fitzgerald: Paul Kirk worked for him, that’s how Paul Kirk started.

Hagan: No, that was Paul Donahue.

Fitzgerald: I beg your pardon? Yes.

Knott: So what about 1964 when the Senator had to run again two years later after already winning—

Hagan: I was in Springfield, at the convention, when the plane crashed.

Knott: Were you there after the plane crash?

Hagan: Yes, I was in the convention hall.

Fitzgerald: We were all in the convention hall, and Marilyn Doherty, myself, Alice Powers, and Michael Kelly were sitting together. We were looking down, and all of a sudden I saw Bobby Fitzgerald go up to the microphone and talk to some guy. And I said, “Man, what the heck is Bobby Fitzgerald doing there?” Well, you know what he was doing there. He told him that the plane crashed—but we didn’t know it then. Bobby came up to us upstairs and said, “Don’t ask me any questions, just follow me out the door.” We got out the door and he said, “The Senator’s plane crashed.” We said, “Oh, my God.” We were shocked, and at that point we thought Joan was in the plane, too. And she wasn’t, but we thought she was.

They drove us to Cooley Dickinson Hospital and we were there all night long. We went back to Marilyn and Gerry’s house. We were up there for three days going back and forth. We never saw Teddy, but we were going back and forth to the hospital to check it out. Don Dowd and Gene Dellea knew that Joannie wasn’t in the plane. They went to the motel or wherever she was, and she was sitting there watching the news come over.
Knott: So she found out from the television?

Fitzgerald: Yes. It was terrible. It was terrible.

Hagan: Then in 1964 I went to Atlantic City to the national convention. I was a hostess at that reception that Robert Kennedy and Jackie Kennedy [Onassis] were at. People gave a 16-minute ovation, I remember, to Robert Kennedy. We went out and—some people couldn’t get into the convention hall, so there were thousands and thousands of people outside. He went out on the balcony, and you really would have thought, because it wasn’t that long after the President was killed, you’d have thought the Pope had stepped out on the balcony. You never heard such cheering. I’m not kidding. It was unbelievable. That was an exciting time to be down at the convention. And of course Gerry Doherty was chairman, so that worked out well.

Knott: Chairman of the Massachusetts delegation?

Hagan: Yes. The Democratic Party. So that was an interesting time.

Knott: What were the differences? I know you know Edward Kennedy best of all of the brothers. Did either of you know Robert Kennedy particularly well, or—

Hagan: I don’t feel like I knew him well at all. I met him a few times.

Knott: Did you notice any differences between the two brothers, between Bobby and Ted? If you feel you can’t answer that question, that’s fine.

Fitzgerald: No, they’re very different.

Knott: Do you mind talking about that, Alice?

Fitzgerald: Bobby was the kind of low-key type. There is something about Bobby that—they always say Kennedys never cry. Bobby called the office one day and asked the people who went through the letters after Jack died to pick out the ones written by children. We worked on that for weeks. One day we got a call that Robert was having a tea for a few people at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel at four o’clock. So could you come? Alice Powers and I were so nervous. We sat on the park bench until it rang four o’clock, and then we went into the hotel. It’s unbelievable. The things we’ve done—anyway, we went in and we were like this [gestures], white gloves, the whole thing, you know.

We got upstairs and Bobby was there and Teddy was there. And Pat Twohig who worked for Bobby, and maybe about 15 of us. Teddy brought Bobby around and introduced us to him and Bobby got in the middle of the circle and started talking about his brother, with the tears coming down his face. And you know how we always hear, “Kennedys don’t cry.” Even though he was tough, he did have his soft spots.

I told Michael [Kennedy] one day—Michael and I spent a day campaigning when Teddy was running for President, and Tom Oliphant followed us all day long. We were talking about
different things and Tom was asking his questions and said something about Bobby, and I said, “Michael, I just want to tell you a story—they always say Kennedys don’t cry.” And I told him that story about his dad.

Hagan: And he started crying, probably.

Fitzgerald: Well, he didn’t start crying, but he said, “Really?” And I said, “Yes, really.” I said, “Your dad—Kennedys do cry.”

Knott: What year was that, Alice? What year would that Ritz-Carlton reception have been? Do you have any sense?

Fitzgerald: Oh boy. It was—Bobby was still here, so, I don’t know.

Knott: That’s okay. Mid-sixties, probably.

Fitzgerald: It would have to be mid-sixties, yes. He cried. They couldn’t believe seeing tears coming down Bobby’s face.

Knott: In the ’64 campaign when Ted Kennedy was hospitalized for a good part of it, after the airplane crash, did Joan Kennedy pick up a lot of the campaign?

Fitzgerald: A lot of it.

Hagan: She was campaigning almost every day. I would say, pretty much so. Wouldn’t you say?

Fitzgerald: Yes. I had a goal that I had to write for the committee office paper—I had to send it to Eddie Martin so he could check it out and make sure it was okay. But they sent me over to the hospital and Teddy was still in the Stryker frame, and Joannie was there. She was there every day.

Hagan: When he got out of the hospital a whole group of us went over. I don’t know how many were there—a couple hundred.

Knott: To sort of cheer him on?

Hagan: Yes. It seems to me it was December, a very cold day. He was there a long time, I know that.

Fitzgerald: Yes, it was a long time.

Knott: I’m told he’s still in pain from that, from the back—

Hagan: I don’t think he’s ever not in pain.
Fitzgerald: There were some days he could barely walk. Actually, what we do now is if he has a speech to make and he’s in a crowd, we always make sure that he has something to lean on. He’s in agony sometimes. They say there’s nothing worse than back pain.

Hagan: But he never complained.

Knott: Yes. Right. Now, in later campaigns—quite often Senator Kennedy had opponents who were not particularly recognizable names. So I don’t want to walk you through every single Senatorial campaign, since some of them probably aren’t all that memorable, but I guess I will ask you if you can recall from 1970, when he ran for re-election, which was about a year after the Chappaquiddick incident. Was there concern over the effect of that? Do you recall voters giving you any grief about that particular incident?

Hagan: He did get some grief. I wouldn’t say it was a lot a lot, but—

Fitzgerald: [Josiah] Spaulding—

Hagan: He ran against Spaulding.


Hagan: Right.

Fitzgerald: Yes, I remember a few times they’d just hang up the phone. If there was any grief they’d just, when you said, “This is Senator’s Kennedy’s office calling—” Bang. They didn’t out-and-out, you know. But they knew we worked for him, so they might be talking among themselves and not say anything to us, especially like neighbors and things. I didn’t get any grief from my neighbors, I know that.

Knott: When that incident occurred and then he spoke to the people of Massachusetts and basically asked them for—if I remember correctly—their support—

Fitzgerald: Forgiveness.

Knott: —or forgiveness. And I guess the telegrams, the letters, came pouring in. That sort of indicated to him that he didn’t need to resign. I’ve asked this to other people and I don’t know if you are familiar with this or not. Do you think he ever seriously considered resigning after Chappaquiddick?

Hagan: I don’t, but I don’t know whether—personally. Do you?

Fitzgerald: No, I don’t think so.

Knott: It doesn’t strike me that it was in his character to—that he would probably want to keep going ahead.
Fitzgerald: There may have been people pushing him to resign.

Hagan: I met this girl a couple a couple of weeks ago in Arlington and she said to me she had seen the Senator that morning on *Sunday Morning*, on TV. She said, “What are we going to do when he’s gone?” Because he’s done just so much in 43 years, it’s unbelievable.

Knott: He’s become an institution.

Hagan: He really has.

Fitzgerald: Did you tell about the incident with your cousin, when he needed medication?

Hagan: No. I was going to get that later, but I can do it now. A cousin of mine named James Hagan, actually it was my cousin’s son. My cousin, like 40 years ago, had Hodgkin’s disease but he got over it. Well, this was back in, say, ’96. He was down in Texas at a hospital because he had Hodgkin’s disease. He was only like 31 years old, and what happened was the drug that they were taking was stopped by the FDA [Food and Drug Administration]—not just for my cousin, maybe about 20 other people.

So I contacted Senator Kennedy in his office and he contacted the head of the Food and Drug Administration, and they got the drug going again. And it actually helped out, as I say, about 20 people. And the end result, you know, it was a great thing. I mean, he ended up dying in ’97, but he probably extended his life at least another year and a half. So that was a big thing. You know, so many different things that the Senator has done.

Knott: We keep hearing this, yes.

Hagan: Lots of people don’t know.

Knott: Right.

Hagan: It was a wonderful thing, what he did. He helped out like 20 different people, with this drug, contacting the FDA.

Fitzgerald: There was another incident where in my office we got a call about five o’clock on a Friday night from my cousin Joanne who put in for adoption of a little girl in Colombia. She had already adopted a son and this was like three years later. She wanted to adopt this little girl. They were waiting to go get the child. And she wasn’t coming, wasn’t coming. My cousin would be calling the Catholic charities and they said, “Something’s wrong. We think that they’re selling the children, and they’re not going to be there for you.” Okay? So this is Friday night.

At six o’clock I call the Senator’s office and I got Mary Frackleton. And I said, “Mary, I have a cousin on the other line. She’s sobbing.” I told the whole story where they’re waiting but they think that the people over there are selling the children. I said, “Can the Senator find out or can he do anything?” She said, “Give me your cousin’s telephone number.” And the next Saturday—that was a Friday night—Saturday or Sunday they got a call from the Senator’s office saying,
“Be on a plane. You can pick up your child on Wednesday.” And it was Friday night to Wednesday, he got that child over here.

Knott: Wow.

Fitzgerald: My cousin now is dead but the daughter that she got from over there is going to college over in Honolulu. So that’s just another story. And these people weren’t Kennedy people, I’ll tell you that. They were Republicans. I think they switched.

Hagan: They better have switched. [laughter]

Fitzgerald: Those are just a few things. The Paula Hadley thing, maybe Barbara talked to you about Paula Hadley?

Knott: No, I don’t think so.

Hagan: Do you remember her?

Knott: The name all of a sudden rings a—

Fitzgerald: She was a fundraiser.

Knott: Yes, okay.

Fitzgerald: She was a fundraiser, and then she went to work for the Senator at his house down in Washington. She took care of the kids. There were problems there. And she got cancer, bad, bad, bad. But he’d be out in the car someplace with Jack Crimmins—

Fitzgerald: They’d pick up the phone and say, “Hey, Paula, put your turban on because we’re going for a ride,” or up in a plane. He was doing this all the time to her.

Hagan: She developed cancer, and the Senator was marvelous to her.

Knott: Oh, I see. He would take her out.

Hagan: Oh, yes. And he’d go by and visit her mother.

Fitzgerald: She was taking care of the house. “We’re hopping on a plane. We’re doing this, we’re doing that,” just to get her out of the house. She’d suffered terribly. And we lost her. But those are just little—

Knott: Well, we’ve heard these endless acts of generosity on his part. We keep hearing this all the time when we interview people.

Hagan: And I think the truth of it is sometimes he probably doesn’t want to have it told, you know?
Knott: Yes, I think that’s right.

Hagan: He likes doing things for people and not really getting the credit for it.

Knott: How much of your loyalty to Senator Kennedy, and also the people that you know who are loyal to him, is somehow related to the fact that the Kennedys broke the religious barrier as far as John Kennedy being the first Catholic President? Historians often talk about this, how important that was. Was that a factor in your lives at all? The fact that these were people who broke some barriers that had been in place?

Hagan: I don’t think it affected us with Senator Kennedy that much. I don’t feel like it was a big factor in my life exactly.

Fitzgerald: That wasn’t a factor in my life exactly. It wasn’t that he was a Catholic.

Hagan: It was a wonderful thing because he was the first Catholic President.

Fitzgerald: I mean, it was great that he was Catholic but—but I don’t know, you know? That’s a good question. If he were not, would we be as cuckoo about them as we have—[laughing] I mean, we gave up our lives for those guys.

Knott: Well, that’s why I’m asking. I know that you did devote your lives.

Fitzgerald: I never thought about it.

Hagan: Well, it was a lot of work but we had a lot of fun, too.

Fitzgerald: Oh, yes!

Knott: Somebody who is reading this interview 100 years from now may want to know why the Kennedys inspired such loyalty, why you would give up, as you just said, your lives for them, in a sense. Granted, you had a lot of fun, but what was your motive for being so devoted to Ted Kennedy and perhaps the Kennedys at large?

Hagan: Well, I think it started with President Kennedy coming from Massachusetts. You felt like you were related to them almost. You know what I mean? They were just very exciting times.

Knott: So it made you feel proud to be from Massachusetts at that time, and he was from Massachusetts.

Hagan: Right. I would say that that had a lot to do with it.

Fitzgerald: And my father had a lot to do with it all, too.
**Hagan:** So did my mother and father. I mean, everybody just loved President Kennedy.

**Fitzgerald:** I mean, “You’ve got to do something to help Jack Kennedy.” “Well, what can I do?”

**Knott:** Do you think the fact that Jack Kennedy broke that religious barrier might have had more importance to your parents than to you? Is that possible? I don’t want to put words in your mouth, but—

**Hagan:** It might have had a little bit to do with it, yes.

**Fitzgerald:** Yes.

**Hagan:** I would say it probably had. I think though, just because he came from Massachusetts you had to be with him, whether he was Catholic or not.

**Fitzgerald:** But he was a Democrat.

**Hagan:** And a Democrat. Whether he was Catholic or not.

**Fitzgerald:** If he were a Republican it would have been a whole other thing.

**Hagan:** It was just such exciting times, it really was. And you know how he used to have the debates and stuff on TV. And then we were at the national convention in ’76 in New York.

**Knott:** In New York? Okay.

**Hagan:** And then in 1980—

**Knott:** Yes, let’s talk about 1980 when he ran for President.

**Hagan:** Both Alice and I were on the finance committee with Bobby Fitzgerald. Gerard Doherty was head of Chicago, and we went out to Chicago for ten days. Marched in the St. Patrick’s Day parade.

**Knott:** What was that like?

**Hagan:** Well, we had eggs thrown at us.

**Knott:** That’s what I thought.

**Hagan:** It was bad. It was pouring rain.

**Knott:** Why did he get such a cold reception? That should have been his town.

**Fitzgerald:** In all these years, that was the worst reception we ever got, anywhere. They’d be standing on corners. Actually, Gerry didn’t want us to march in the parade.
Knott: Didn’t want you to march?

Fitzgerald: We marched in the parade. We held the Kennedy flag. Maryellen Lyons was down there, too.

Hagan: And Michael Kelly.

Knott: They threw things at you and your signs?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Hagan: I remember we had eggs thrown at us. [laughing]

Knott: I’m glad you can laugh about it.

Fitzgerald: It was scary.

Hagan: Twenty-four years later you can laugh. At the time it wasn’t very funny.

Fitzgerald: It was miserable then. It was a miserable, miserable campaign. Everything was negative, everything. In Chicago, the night of the count, the Mayor, Jane Byrne—

Knott: Jane Byrne?

Fitzgerald: Yes. She and Gerry, and Maryellen, Pat, and I went to headquarters. We were the only five people there.

Knott: Really?

Fitzgerald: The only five people there.

Hagan: And then late at night I remember going to the Ritz—was that the same night? Gerry took everybody to the Ritz at eleven o’clock at night for something to eat.

Fitzgerald: To cheer us up. We had a couple of drinks because we needed them.

Knott: Do you have any sense of what happened? What went wrong?

Fitzgerald: I think it was the Chappaquiddick thing.

Knott: It was Chappaquiddick?

Fitzgerald: Oh, yes.
Hagan: And then I think a lot of people felt he shouldn’t have run against President [Jimmy] Carter.

Knott: An incumbent Democrat?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Hagan: Yes. I think that had a lot to do with it, too.

Fitzgerald: And I worked my can off for Jimmy Carter.

Knott: In ’76?

Fitzgerald: I worked 11 states for Jimmy Carter. He was one of the finest men I’ve ever met. But the people he had around him were—I came home from the mid-term conference in Kansas City and I had his sign. My father said, “What are you going to do with that?” And I said, “I’m going to put it on the side of the house.” He said, “Who the hell is Jimmy Carter?” Tip [Thomas] O’Neill asked me that one day, too. We were up to his office.

Knott: “Who the hell is Jimmy Carter?”

Fitzgerald: Yes. “Who the hell is Jimmy Carter?” But another time Tip O’Neill said to me, “Jimmy Carter was the brightest President I ever worked under.” But that’s getting away from the Kennedys.

Knott: That’s okay.

Fitzgerald: But the midterm conference was exciting. I came home from there saying, “Jimmy Carter’s going to be President of the United States.”

Hagan: I was working at the State House at the time, and he was having a meeting down at the Parker House. People said, “Do you want to go down—” I think it was Anna Buckley, the senator from Brockton, who said, “Do you want to come down?” It was like, do you want to go down to see Jimmy Carter—he was Governor then. And it was just about 12-15 people around a table in one of the rooms. But it was very interesting to hear him talking. Then they invited him back to the State House. Some Rep was having a party and Jimmy Carter—I mean, nobody even wanted to shake hands with him.

Knott: Of course I know you both remember the big event, the Kennedy Library dedication. President Carter came.

Hagan: That was one of the best—oh!

Fitzgerald: I have all kinds of stuff on that in those books.

Hagan: That was great.
Fitzgerald: We worked for weeks on the dedication.

Hagan: Remember the beautiful day? October 19.

Knott: Perfect day.

Fitzgerald: Nineteen seventy-nine.

Knott: Seventy-nine, yes. Late October in Boston it can go either way. It can be awful.

Hagan: It was perfect.

Fitzgerald: Have you spoken to Steve Smith?

Knott: Yes.

Fitzgerald: Oh, my God! I used to bypass my lunch at the office. I’d leave at 4:00, and walk down to headquarters. We did that for weeks and weeks.

Hagan: Yes, we worked out at, it was the U Mass office on Stuart Street then.

Knott: Oh yes, I was there one day.

Hagan: And once we got stuck in the elevator.

Knott: I started October first. But I remember I had to go down to Stuart Street one day for something, I don’t remember why—

Fitzgerald: Oh boy, that was a wonderful day. Steve Smith walks in one afternoon. I don’t remember whatever it was we were doing, and he said, “What’s the count?”

Knott: The “count,” meaning—

Fitzgerald: The count being how many people have answered and how many people are coming? We just sat there and looked down. He said, “I’ll be back in an hour.”

Knott: Counting is fascinating.

Fitzgerald: I was sitting there counting and not a smile on his face. “I’ll be back in an hour.” I said, “Oh, my God.”

Knott: Was it a close call, do you know, as far as making that opening on time? In terms of getting everything in place by October 20?

Fitzgerald: In terms of getting the building in place?
Knott: All of it. My impression was that it was a close call.

Fitzgerald: I’d say it was tight, yes.

Hagan: But, boy, wasn’t that a wonderful day?

Knott: That was a great day.

Hagan: It really was.

Fitzgerald: I sat Tom Brokaw down, and this one down, and that one down, and—

Hagan: And Angie Dickinson—I remember her being there.

Fitzgerald: Yes, she was everywhere.

Hagan: Remember Joe [Joseph Patrick II] Kennedy spoke?

Fitzgerald: Oh please, don’t even talk about it—[laughing]

Hagan: He talked about Jimmy Carter.

Knott: He sort of blasted Jimmy Carter, if I remember right.

Fitzgerald: Oh, he blasted him, he blasted him.

Knott: And then a few weeks later Senator Kennedy announced that he was running for President at Faneuil Hall.

Hagan: Yes, Faneuil Hall, we were there.

Fitzgerald: That was hard on me.

Hagan: I’m sure you were there, too.

Knott: I was in the crowd, yes. Why was it hard on you?

Fitzgerald: Because I had worked for Jimmy Carter.

Knott: Of course.

Fitzgerald: And I liked him so much. But I loved Teddy. That was really tough. I got some flak on that, too, from some people.

Knott: Yes. Well, it was a clear choice for you. There was no hesitation.
Fitzgerald: Well, yes. Yes. Thank God.

Knott: So, you said you both went to Chicago; you both went to Illinois. Did you go anywhere else during that 1980 campaign?

Hagan: We were all over Massachusetts. New Hampshire, we were up there a lot. We worked with Maria Shriver, Sydney Lawford, Kara Kennedy, so we got to know them. And then Alice and I were invited to Sydney Lawford’s wedding down at Our Lady of Victory Church in Centerville. Then we went to the party at the compound. And of course the Senator always gave—I don’t know to every single niece and nephew—but he used to give the fireworks display as a gift. And it was very exciting, being there, wasn’t it?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Hagan: Peter Lawford, of course, walked her down the aisle. It was really something.

Knott: Did you go to the convention in 1980 when Senator Kennedy conceded?

Hagan: Oh, yes.

Fitzgerald: I was a delegate.

Hagan: I was just going to mention that you were a delegate.

Knott: He gave that very powerful speech.

Fitzgerald: Yes, he did. That was exciting times, it was a hot, hot, hot July, right.

Hagan: Oh yes, both conventions, ’76 and ’80, in New York City. Of course everywhere you go in, it was air-conditioned, but still when you walk down the street—

Fitzgerald: There were so many people. Gerry Doherty and I used to walk down together and that was exciting, too, just to be there. You know, in some ways he was probably better off not being President of the United States.

Hagan: Better with so many nuts out there.

Knott: Yes, as far as his own safety. Yes.

Fitzgerald: And it’s the safety of the kids and stuff.

Knott: A lot of Kennedy people were so angry, in a sense, at Jimmy Carter. The story is that some of them sat on their hands or maybe even tacitly supported [Ronald] Reagan. Is there anything to that? Did you know any Kennedy people who were so turned off by Jimmy Carter that they basically just abandoned—?
Hagan: I didn’t personally know anybody—

Fitzgerald: I didn’t.

Hagan: I mean, the people that we knew might have done it, but they didn’t tell us.

Fitzgerald: Sometimes I don’t think they were as mad at Jimmy Carter as they were at the people he had around him. I feel that they really did him in.

Hagan: That happens a lot in campaigns.

Fitzgerald: I know.

Hagan: Of course, we went to many clambakes at the compound. We helped out.

Knott: Would these be campaign-related events, or just—

Hagan: Yes, well, fundraisers. We worked at the different houses and helped there, yes.

Knott: Senator Kennedy abandoned—I think in the mid-eighties he made some announcement, basically saying that he probably would not be running for President again and that he was going to devote his attention to the Senate. I’m going to ask you a question that may be difficult, because you’re going to have to engage in some conjecture, but do you think that in some ways he’s more comfortable having given up that quest for the Presidency, and that, in fact, he’s very comfortable being a Senator?

Hagan: I would say definitely.

Fitzgerald: Me, too. I don’t think there’s any question. I’m glad he wasn’t the President of the United States.

Hagan: I think he loves the Senate, I really do. And he’s just done so much—education, everything. Healthcare. I would say he’s very comfortable with it, wouldn’t you?

Fitzgerald: What?

Hagan: Being a Senator.

Fitzgerald: Absolutely.

Hagan: And not running again for President. And we get to see him.

Knott: Yes, right.
Fitzgerald: We’d never get to see him if he’d been President. God works in funny ways I guess.

Knott: Yes he does.

Fitzgerald: I said to Don Dowd one day—this is when he was fooling around and all that kind of stuff—“If he’d ever really put his mind to it, he’d be the best Senator ever.” I always felt that way. I still do. He’s great.

Hagan: One campaign that was tough was ’94.

Knott: Yes, I want to talk about ’94.

Hagan: Mitt Romney’s campaign.

Fitzgerald: Yes, that was a tough campaign.

Knott: Why was it tough? Why, for the first time now, when he’s been in office—he would have been there for almost 32 years. What happened?

Hagan: Well, Mitt Romney was well known. His father was in the Senate, and—

Fitzgerald: And the Olympics.

Knott: The Olympics in Utah.

Fitzgerald: The Olympic thing, yes. It probably made a difference. I worked out of Gerry Doherty’s office for about six weeks on the campaign making telephone calls or taking telephone calls. That wasn’t a happy campaign.

Hagan: And a lot of the campaigns he didn’t have a strong person running against him. This may be one of the first who was really strong. That last month he really campaigned day and night. We all did.

Fitzgerald: Oh, yes!

Knott: You did?

Hagan: I would say.

Fitzgerald: Yes, we were nervous.

Knott: You were nervous about it?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Knott: Were you both picking up bad vibes, so to speak?
Fitzgerald: It wasn’t bad vibes, not—

Hagan: It was a close campaign.

Fitzgerald: It was close! We knew that this guy was a multimillionaire just like the Kennedys were, and he was spending a lot of money. He had a lot of people working for him and he had a lot going for him, that’s for damned sure.

Hagan: And he also was a good-looking guy.

Knott: Yes.

Fitzgerald: And he was a Republican.

Hagan: I know. But that seems to play a role in a lot of these campaigns, especially with the ladies.

Knott: The looks, the appearance, yes.

Hagan: Don’t you agree?

Knott: Yes, I think that’s true. I know my mother’s that way. [laughing] To what extent do you think the Willie Smith trial—did that feed into some of the problems from ’94?

Hagan: I would say it probably did. Wouldn’t you?

Fitzgerald: Yes, because he’s—

Hagan: That was a horrible thing.

Fitzgerald: He’s a Kennedy, and when a Kennedy does something wrong, it’s the whole family. That was the tough thing.

Knott: Right. He got married to Vicki [Reggie Kennedy] in ’92, I believe. Was Vicki a real plus for him in that ’94 campaign?

Hagan: Absolutely. I’d say so, definitely. Everybody likes Vicki very much. I’m not saying people didn’t like Joan either.

Fitzgerald: We loved Joan, we really did. At times it’s tough on Joannie, but we like her a lot.

Hagan: But I think Vicki was a big asset, definitely, and still is.

Fitzgerald: Oh definitely. She’s nice.
Knott: She’s very much behind this project. She’s extremely interested in this project. In fact, she’s on the advisory board for the oral history project. So she’s very active.

Fitzgerald: Yes, she does a good job.

Hagan: Now, this is the same school where the Senator went to law school?

Knott: Yes, it’s the University of Virginia.

Hagan: And they have a law school, right?

Knott: Yes, there’s a law school, a business school, and a medical school.

Hagan: Richmond University has a law school, too, right?

Knott: Yes, I believe so. But we’re a better school. [laughing]

Fitzgerald: Of course!

Hagan: I know some people who went to Richmond just recently.

Knott: I don’t mean to criticize—I’ll take that back.

Hagan: We went to the Senator’s swearing in down in Washington, in 2000. That was nice.

Fitzgerald: That was fun. Yes, that’s a very—

Hagan: Well, we really just went down for the day. We left from here. I picked you up about five o’clock, and left from Providence. Then we met Barbara Souliotis. Did we meet her on the plane, or in Baltimore? We had a car pick us up. Was she on the same plane as us?

Fitzgerald: Yes, she was on the same plane.

Hagan: She came from Manchester, if I remember right.

Knott: Oh okay. Barbara Souliotis.

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Hagan: And that was interesting.

Fitzgerald: A lot of the family was there—the kids.

Knott: I imagine you know his children fairly well? You’ve gotten to know them over the years?

Hagan: Oh, yes.
Fitzgerald: Oh, yes. Though not recently, because now they’re off and married. But I wonder how Kara is.

Knott: Was she ill?

Fitzgerald: She had cancer. Oh, you didn’t know that?

Knott: Well, now that you mention it, I heard it.

Fitzgerald: And Teddy, too.

Hagan: One time I went to Washington, back in ’64, for the Democratic Women’s—the Senator had everybody over for breakfast at his Georgetown house, about 100 people. I love to eat, but there was one day I was so excited, I stayed out in the yard playing with the kids. That’s young Teddy and Kara.

Knott: Oh, my God. Wow.

Hagan: Yes. And poor Joannie talked to us from the balcony because she was expecting another child. But then she lost that baby.

Knott: Is that right?

Hagan: Yes, I remember that. It was back in ’64.

Knott: Sorry. There’s a picture of a young Pat with a young Ted Kennedy. And so that’s Kara and Teddy, Jr., right?

Hagan: Yes.

Knott: Boy, they’re young.

Hagan: Aren’t they cute though?

Fitzgerald: If you sat and looked at all these albums we’d be here forever. [laughing] You’re welcome to go through any of the albums.

Knott: Have we missed things while we’re moving chronologically here? I don’t want to skip over something. Pat, I see you’ve got some extensive notes there. So I just want to make sure—

Hagan: Oh, just a few notes. I needed to write them all up.

Fitzgerald: I went to the christening of the aircraft carrier.

Knott: The John F. Kennedy?
Fitzgerald: Yes. Teddy sent us down. We flew down on the Air Force plane with some of his staff and his aunts and uncles. I never spent another day like that in my life. I picked up the plane in Boston. We get down there and there’s a bus waiting for us. We get on the bus, it took us right to the aircraft carrier. We’re walking up the plank, and all the sailors on the boat are on either side of us saluting as we walk up. Jackie meets us up on top with Caroline [Kennedy Schlossberg] who’s about this big, and they’re pouring tea for us when we get up there.

Suddenly they say, “Okay, back up.” And we get on this elevator that took us to the top of the aircraft carrier. Went through the whole ceremony, took us back down, put us on a boat, took us over to an island. As we’re going over to the island, the Blue Angels flew over, and the wake from the Blue Angels splashed onto the boat. Bobby Fitz’s mother was sitting on this side; she got drenched. [laughing]

But a more exciting day I have never had. It was absolutely unbelievable. I’m on this Army aircraft plane and all this stuff.

Knott: That’s great. Was that down in Newport, Virginia?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Hagan: I didn’t know if you wanted to talk about that. We did extensive work with Congressman Joe Kennedy.

Knott: Right. I had forgotten about that. I’m sorry. Yes, let’s talk a little bit about that.

Fitzgerald: We worked our buns off.

Hagan: Every single campaign we really did a lot. I had about 45 or 50 people at my house for coffee. When he first was going to announce, he called both of us—

Knott: When was that, Pat?

Hagan: It was ’86.

Knott: He first ran in ’86?

Hagan: Yes. I had the party in February ’86. But December of ’85 he called both Alice and me in the office. I think I was at lunch when he first called, and everybody was so—“Joe Kennedy called you.” See, I asked to see him, he was with the oil company—

Knott: Citizens Energy.

Hagan: Yes, and he worked out of Bowdoin Street.

Knott: Right.
Hagan: So where I worked at the State House I used to see him for coffee all the time in the coffee shop. And so it was kind of nice. Before it came on the news, he told us that he was going to be running. And of course, we were very excited. We went to his swearing-in in January of ’87, down in Washington, then we went to his mother’s house. But we’re here to talk about Senator Kennedy.

Knott: I had forgotten how active you both were in that.

Hagan: [showing photograph] See, that’s at my house, and that’s my mother and father.

Fitzgerald: And I had him at my house, too.

Knott: There’s Justine O’Donnell.

Hagan: Oh yes. She’s not well at all. She’s got Alzheimer’s bad. Alice and I took her out to lunch. It’s got to be two years ago now. But I feel bad. Everybody seems to have lost contact, but I know she’s not doing well, which is sad. She was such a smart lady.

Knott: She was.

Hagan: I loved listening to her stories. I could hear them over and over.

Knott: [more pictures] That’s great.

Hagan: We won’t look at them all.

Knott: She looks familiar, but I—

Hagan: Let me see. That’s a friend of mine, Eileen Heavey, from Milton. She helped out somewhat on the campaign. She used to come to all—she still does—to the library parties. When did you leave the library?

Knott: I left the library right about this time of year in 1985. But then I went to the Library Foundation for a while, downtown—Mark Roosevelt, Kary Wilson and a few others.

Hagan: Oh yes. We worked with Kary Wilson last summer at the Senator’s office for the convention, the [Boston] Pops night and everything.

Knott: Where is she now, Kary Wilson?

Hagan: Wasn’t that Kary Wilson that we worked with? I’m positive that was her name. You know, that nice girl.

Fitzgerald: Yes, I know who you’re talking about.
Hagan: I think she’s a consultant, her own business kind of thing.

Knott: If you ever see her again, tell her I said hi.

Fitzgerald: [looking at pictures] These are just the picnic type things.

Knott: Oh, yes.

Fitzgerald: You could go on and on and on with him.

Hagan: And then we did do some work, not extensive, for Patrick Kennedy. We would do a fundraiser at Pier 4. One night I went down to the compound with Marilyn and Gerry Doherty. I think Justine came, too. But that was a fundraiser.

Fitzgerald: We did with Kara, too. Kara was very involved in Joe’s campaign.

Knott: In Joe’s campaign?


Fitzgerald: I’m sorry, Kerry.

Hagan: I think you’re thinking of Kerry.

Fitzgerald: Yes. [looking at photos] These are just—

Hagan: Tons and tons of pictures.

Knott: Do you think he’ll go back into politics?

Hagan: It’s hard to say. Personally, I would say no. But with the Kennedys you never know. Anything can happen.

Fitzgerald: Who are you talking about?

Knott: Joe.

Fitzgerald: That’s the big question in Massachusetts—

Hagan: I see him down at church all the time, down at Centerville when I’m down there. I didn’t him see the last couple of Sundays when I was down. But that was unusual.

Knott: What is he doing? Is he with Citizens Energy again?

Hagan: Yes. He’s doing well.
Fitzgerald: He’s been on TV a few times.

Knott: That’s the Senator, right?

Fitzgerald: Yes, the whole damn family.

Knott: We’re looking at photographs of Joseph Kennedy. Joseph Kennedy II, I believe, is his correct name.

Fitzgerald: Yes, right.

Knott: Is that Bobby Orr?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Hagan: He’s in Arlington at the Sons of Italy, campaigning with Joe one day. I love Bobby Orr.

Fitzgerald: That was fun.

Knott: There’s Joe wearing a goalie outfit. There’s Michael.

Hagan: Oh yes.

Fitzgerald: We worked a lot with Michael.

Knott: So Bobby Orr campaigned for Joe.

Hagan: Yes.

Fitzgerald: Who didn’t? I mean, really. Who didn’t?

Hagan: We went to Michael Kennedy’s wake and funeral. Really sad.

Knott: Yes.

Fitzgerald: That was a horror.

Knott: Is that Bill Walton?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Hagan: You’re very good at knowing all these people.

Knott: Well, I know the sports people.
Hagan: [looking at pictures] That’s in the very first campaign, up in Springfield at the convention.

Knott: Who were these—?

Hagan: That’s me, believe it or not. That was my cousin and another girl, and Pat McMahon.

Knott: I thought you were one of the Kennedy sisters, actually.

Hagan: Oh, my God, no. Well, I shouldn’t say it like that. That’s when he was watching the TV when McCormack was conceding. Let’s see, there’s Rose Kennedy.

Knott: So you were in the room when McCormack conceded.

Hagan: And Joan.

Knott: Yes. Boy, Joan was very attractive, huh?

Hagan: They were one of the best-looking couples, as you can imagine.

Knott: Yes.

Hagan: They really were. Look how young he is there. You’re talking a long time ago.

Fitzgerald: John Culver.

Knott: I thought that was John Culver. Unbelievable.

Hagan: That was John Culver, and this is Larry Laughlin. He worked at the office for a while. Here’s Joe Gargan. There’s Jean Kennedy Smith. That’s Judge [Francis] Morrissey, Steve.

Knott: That’s Francis Morrissey?

Hagan: Yes.

Knott: That’s the famous Francis Morrissey, okay.

Hagan: And that’s Bobby Fitzgerald. I think that—

Knott: Where would this have been, Pat?

Hagan: I think that was the Bunker Hill Parade in Charlestown. Either that or the St. Patrick’s Day, but I think it was Bunker Hill, seeing that this was the beginning.

Knott: Yes.


Hagan: That’s Jack Crimmins.

Knott: Okay. That’s the first time I’ve ever seen a picture of him.

Hagan: Oh, he was a great guy.

Knott: Who’s this?

Hagan: That’s Ed Wright. He was a good friend of the Senator’s.

Knott: Poor Chris has to write all these names down, so the transcriber knows who we’re talking about. Who is—

Hagan: That’s Eddie McCormack—

Knott: That’s what I thought.

Hagan: Speaker McCormack.


Hagan: Then all the volunteers signed it and he put it in the window.

Knott: Okay.

Hagan: That’s Jamie Auchincloss, Jackie Kennedy’s half brother. He worked at the campaign office. I’m pretty sure that was young Teddy when he was home there.

Knott: Is that down at the Cape?

Hagan: Yes.

Knott: That’s a neat picture.

Hagan: See? It was the Revere Hotel. I was right. Just thought you’d want to see a few of the—

Knott: Thank you very much.

Hagan: You can’t possibly look at them all.

Fitzgerald: That was the dedication of the library. What a day. If you want to bother looking at this stuff.

Knott: Yes, I would like to see those, actually. I don’t really have any—oh man!

Fitzgerald: You could start from back here if you want.
Knott: Okay. President Carter with JFK, Jr. and—

Fitzgerald: Notice, not with Joe Kennedy.

Knott: Yes. I didn’t realize Rosalynn Carter was there that day.

Fitzgerald: Yes, she was. It’s a wonder she didn’t slap him, because she would.

Knott: She would?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Knott: There’s Dave Powers with Eunice Kennedy Shriver.

Hagan: It brings back so many memories.

Knott: Boy, it sure does. Dave Powers and Billy Sutton.

Fitzgerald: Can you believe it?

Knott: Oh my God, what a great photo.

Fitzgerald: “Oh my God” is right.

Hagan: It is great.

Knott: I didn’t think they got along all that well. Wow.

Hagan: I think in the end they did.

Knott: They did?

Fitzgerald: Yes. They smartened up.


Fitzgerald: Scoop Jackson—I don’t remember that either.

Knott: Well, he’s there, standing in the parking lot. I think that’s Angie Dickinson. Or am I incorrect on that? Who is this blonde lady?

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Knott: [Robert] Sargent Shriver.
**Fitzgerald:** What a handsome man he was.

**Knott:** Yes. Jimmy Carter with his arm around a young Patrick Kennedy.

**Hagan:** Right here.

**Knott:** Oh, my God. I remember those. The patch?

**Fitzgerald:** Oh, yes.

**Knott:** There’s Joe delivering his impassioned speech.

**Fitzgerald:** Erased. This is part of my family, that’s—

**Knott:** Okay. Justine O’Donnell with Dave Powers. There’s Dan Fenn. We interviewed Dan Fenn a few nights ago.

**Fitzgerald:** Did you? Oh, great!

**Knott:** Yes.

**Fitzgerald:** That’s one of the Dunfeys. We’ve—

**Hagan:** I bet he had a lot of good stories. One of the Dunfeys just died. I think it was Bob Dunfey.

**Fitzgerald:** Really?

**Hagan:** Somebody told me they saw it in the paper.

**Fitzgerald:** A month or two ago.

**Knott:** And this is 1980 campaign material.

**Fitzgerald:** We weren’t able to find anything in there. It got to a point we were just—there was a Chinese restaurant in—

**Knott:** “New England Chinese Committee, Kennedy for President.”

**Hagan:** That was probably the Chens.

**Knott:** That’s from James Michael Connelly.

**Fitzgerald:** That’s my boss. There’s Bobby Fitz.

**Knott:** Bobby Fitzgerald, okay.
Hagan: We’re all going in August to a play about Tip O’Neill, in Cambridge.

Knott: Oh really?

Hagan: Dick Flavin. Do you remember Dick Flavin?

Knott: Sure.

Fitzgerald: He wrote the play.

Hagan: There’s about 15 of us going the opening night.

Knott: Where’s the opening?

Hagan: It’s in Cambridge, near Harvard Square, a small theater.

Fitzgerald: It’s a new theater.

Hagan: Oh, it is? That’s interesting.

Fitzgerald: Yes.

Knott: This is Alice Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald: You know what that is. That was the day I campaigned with Michael, when Teddy was running for President.

Knott: This meant this was in the Boston—

Fitzgerald: And Tom Oliphant did a thing on it.

Knott: In the *Boston Globe*?

Fitzgerald: Yes. There’s Michael walking around with me. It’s freezing cold, and he’s got a coat on that you wouldn’t put over your dog. The whole sleeve was out; the thing was hanging down like this. I said, “Michael, can’t you go home and get a better coat?” [laughing] “This is warm, Alice.” “Okay.” You know.

Hagan: And then once you were campaigning with Kara and you had to take her into a tailor to get a skirt.

Fitzgerald: She came into my office and asked me to take her around because Teddy was running and she was doing some work for Teddy. So I’m sitting at my seat here, in the office, and I look over and she’s shaking somebody’s hand. The whole hem of her dress was down. I
said, “Kara, we can’t walk around Suffolk Probate Court looking like that.” So we had to get pins to pin the damn hem up so she wouldn’t embarrass me anymore.

**Hagan:** People in general don’t usually care at all about that.

**Fitzgerald:** They don’t care. They don’t care.

**Knott:** I’ve noticed that. Now Alice, this is a great quote. This is you, “If it would help, I’d crawl down Massachusetts Avenue on my hands and knees, that’s how much I love him.” End quote.

**Fitzgerald:** [laughing] That’s right. It’s true.

**Hagan:** I’d like to take a look and see you crawling down Mass Ave.—

**Fitzgerald:** We did some crawling, right?

**Hagan:** That’s a riot.

**Knott:** That’s great. A letter from Tip O’Neill—

**Fitzgerald:** Probably.

**Knott:** —congratulating you for being part of the Massachusetts delegation of the ’80 convention.

**Fitzgerald:** At the inauguration for President Carter in ’76, I ran into Tip O’Neill’s office, and he spent 45 minutes talking to us. And that’s a busy time, you know, with inauguration going on. But he was great, Tip O’Neill.

**Knott:** A picture of Alice with Martin Sheen.

**Fitzgerald:** Oh, I know it—

**Knott:** Future President.

**Fitzgerald:** That’s right! I didn’t think about that. Who the heck is that other one? Martin Sheen and—who the heck is the other one?

**Hagan:** Well, I saw the picture of Eileen and Peggy with Jack Nicholson over in South Boston.

**Fitzgerald:** Did you?

**Hagan:** Yes.

**Knott:** This is Senator Kennedy—
**Fitzgerald:** Are you at one of the fundraisers?

**Knott:** A fundraising event, yes.

**Fitzgerald:** There’s John Zamparelli. He’s a lawyer, yes. Good friend of the Senator.

**Knott:** Alice and Sarge Shriver. Is that on the convention floor?

**Fitzgerald:** Yes.

**Knott:** Yes. Is that Gerry Doherty?

**Fitzgerald:** Yes.

**Knott:** Wow. Well, I think the two of you both need to write a memoir.

**Fitzgerald:** We need help. Look, isn’t that what’s-her-face? She was Jack’s—

**Knott:** That’s Evelyn Lincoln, yes. Dave Powers with Evelyn Lincoln.

**Fitzgerald:** That’s going back.

**Knott:** Yes. I.M. Pei, the architect of the Kennedy Library.

**Fitzgerald:** Yes. Don’t you love that building? I love that building.

**Knott:** Yes, I do. This, to me, looks like when they broke ground at the U Mass site, right? For the Kennedy Library? Jackie’s there. That’s U Mass, Boston.

**Fitzgerald:** Probably, yes.

**Knott:** Rose was there. Joan. I think it was the groundbreaking.

**Fitzgerald:** She looked great.

**Knott:** Yes. Unbelievable.

**Fitzgerald:** I think I just saw Paula.

**Knott:** This is a walk down memory lane for me.

**Hagan:** In 1980 when we went to the convention we all stayed at the Waldorf. Joe Leahy had a room by himself. And we sometimes would have to use his room, because there would be about three or four of us in a room, girls. And we’d run out of toilet paper, and Joe would say, “Come on down. I got plenty of toilet paper.” Oh, God, it was funny. We were having breakfast with
Gerry Doherty at the Waldorf almost every morning. Joe would go out and walk—he wouldn’t care if he walked five miles, to get a 99-cent special. But he loved to walk, you know.

**Knott:** That’s great. So neither one of you were ever tempted to try to go work full-time for the Senator in a staff position or anything.

**Fitzgerald:** I was invited three times. Larry Laughlin finally said, “Alice, this is the third time.” I said, “I could help him more outside than I can inside.”

**Knott:** Why did you think that?

**Fitzgerald:** I don’t know. I just—

**Hagan:** A lot of times, being a volunteer you can pick a little bit what you want to do. Not everything, but—

**Knott:** I see, a little more flexibility?

**Fitzgerald:** Yes, I didn’t want to be stuck in an office with—I don’t know, it just wasn’t my thing.

**Knott:** You worked most of your career with the probate. Who was your employer for most of your time there?

**Fitzgerald:** I ended up at the Suffolk Probate and Family Court for my last 20 years. So that was the longest. I worked for an insurance company. When we started I was working for Fireman’s Fund American Insurance Company.

**Knott:** Okay. And Pat, you worked—

**Hagan:** I was 38 years with the Commonwealth. The last 22 was with the Board of Higher Education. But I started with Consumer Council and I worked in the House of Representatives, for six years. And I worked in Governor [Edward] King’s office for a couple years, too.

**Knott:** Really? Governor Ed King?

**Hagan:** Yes. In the legislative office. So I’ve retired three years, I just passed my three years.

**Knott:** Wow.

**Hagan:** Yes, it’s 38 years.

**Knott:** Are you enjoying your retirement?

**Hagan:** I am, yes. I miss it a little bit.
Fitzgerald: But there’s not a thing to do.

Hagan: I miss it a little bit, miss the people and—you know what I mean?

Fitzgerald: It’s the people.

Hagan: Not the work, the people.

Knott: Right. Gerry Doherty.

Fitzgerald: Yes. He’s a wonderful guy.

Knott: Oh, my God. Is that Dottie Curran?

Fitzgerald: Dottie Curran, yes. You remember names.

Hagan: Do you ever hear from Donna?

Knott: Donna Smerlas?

Hagan: Yes.

Knott: Yes. We were interviewing Barbara yesterday. I asked for Donna, but she was out. She had taken her mother somewhere. So I missed her yesterday.

Fitzgerald: I had put in a call to her to say, “If Steve’s still there, I don’t think he has the directions to my house.”

Knott: We had some. We got them off the computer.

Fitzgerald: She wasn’t there, though, when I called.

Knott: And I keep in touch occasionally with this. I don’t know if you remember Frank Rigg, from the Kennedy Library?

Fitzgerald: We love Frank!

Hagan: Of course. We were down at Sotheby’s for the auction for Jackie Kennedy, and he was wonderful to us. He stayed with us. He’s so knowledgeable.

Knott: He really is. He’s the guy who hired me for the job at the Kennedy Library back in ’79.

Fitzgerald: Oh, boy. He’s a wonderful man. I like him a lot. He always shows up at everything. He’s terrific.

Knott: What’s this dollar bill, Alice?
Fitzgerald: I don’t know. But I’ll never go broke.

Hagan: Maybe Senator Kennedy gave it to her.

Fitzgerald: Don’t touch it, Teddy touched it! [laughing]

Knott: That’s great.

Fitzgerald: What’s this one? It’s stars in orbit. We don’t have time for those.

Knott: Do you have any other favorite memories you’d like to get on the record for all time? Recollections of Senator Kennedy, other instances of where he showed a certain generosity or concern? I know there are so many it’s almost an impossible question.

Fitzgerald: Let me go get my little sheets of paper so I didn’t forget something. [leaves room]

Hagan: I think we covered a lot.

Knott: We did.

Hagan: And I don’t want to miss anything.

Knott: You just never know what will be of interest to somebody 50 years, 100 years, down the road.

Hagan: It’s true. Did you work in the campaigns at all? Some?

Knott: Yes, I did. In the ’76 campaign I was a student at Assumption College in Worcester, Mass.

Hagan: Was that the one that Joe Kennedy ran?

Knott: Yes. I was his Assumption College coordinator, and I was also his Paxton coordinator, which is my little hometown.

Hagan: I see.

Knott: And that’s where I got to know Don Dowd.

Hagan: There were so many people. Did you know many people in Worcester?

Knott: Some, yes.

Hagan: Jay LaPorte.
Knott: I certainly remember that name.

Hagan: Well, he used to come to the library parties, of course. And then his father had a photography studio.

Knott: Oh, that’s right. Yes.

Hagan: He was my boss at the Board of Higher Ed.

Knott: There was a [J.] Carlton LaPorte at our—

Hagan: That’s it. That’s my boss.

Knott: Is that your boss?

Hagan: I never found out. I don’t know, maybe his father was Carlton, too.

Knott: I was thrilled when I was hired at the Kennedy Library. That was straight out of college, so it was a great first job.

Hagan: It’s so interesting. I met so many nice people.

Knott: I did. And that’s when I really got to know Don, although I’d known him from ’76.

Hagan: Oh he’s a wonderful man. Don and Gerry Doherty—they are the best.

[Fitzgerald returns]

Knott: This looks like a big one, Alice.

Fitzgerald: No, this is just what he does. “Alice, I travel all over the world. . . .”

Knott: So these are postcards from Ted Kennedy? From all over the—

Fitzgerald: Yes. Over the last few years, too—about three years—we’ve gotten candy at Christmastime from him.

Hagan: Yes.

Fitzgerald: From Nantucket, Martha’s Vineyard.

Hagan: Who was that girl on the right?

Knott: Hmmm. I don’t know.
Fitzgerald: That’s the same, [reading] “It’s a long day for a believer.” Believe me, it was a long day. “Local delegates split on Carter.” That’s what I had a big problem with.

Hagan: I remember Jim King. He went with Carter. You know Jim King?

Knott: Oh, right, that’s right. Yes.

Fitzgerald: I’d love to see Jim King.

Knott: Did the Senator hold it against people who went with Jimmy Carter?

Fitzgerald: Yes, I think he did. I’m not going to lie. I think he did.

Hagan: Well, particularly him.

Fitzgerald: “On Wednesday, November 7, I will announce my candidacy for President of the United States at Faneuil Hall in Boston at 10:30 a.m. I would like to invite you to share this meaningful occasion with me and hope you can attend. Please present this mail-o-gram upon arrival at Faneuil Hall.” So that was 11-2-79 when he made his announcement. Kennedy for President. “Alice, you’re great!” “I know it, Teddy!” [laughing] Oh, this was the aircraft carrier. The whole thing.

Knott: It was 1967. Okay.

Fitzgerald: So many things. “Alice—” This is ’99. “Many thanks for volunteering your time at the Copley Plaza.” We couldn’t wait to get there, you know? He’s thanking us and we should be thanking him. Teddy and Vicki, right there. This is what he does. He sends these—

Knott: Just lots of notes on various occasions.

Fitzgerald: Yes. And then—

Hagan: There’s Rose Kennedy’s funeral.

Fitzgerald: This is, I forgot—

Hagan: What’s that?

Knott: This is your—oh, my God.

Fitzgerald: It’s him.

Knott: I didn’t realize I made the Friends newsletter.

Fitzgerald: Steve did that.
Knott: [laughing] That’s right. “Then to the surprise of Steve Knott, Don announced that Steve was selected to receive the annual scholarship award.” Huh!

Fitzgerald: How’s that?

Knott: You know, I don’t even have a copy of this.

Fitzgerald: Take it!

Knott: No, no, no. Thank you.

Fitzgerald: I’ll make you a copy. When I was going through it the other night, I was sitting there all by myself and I realized that—oh, my God, this is Steve!


Fitzgerald: Billy Gildea passed away. Did you know that?

Knott: Did he?

Hagan: Just not too long ago, four or five months ago.

Fitzgerald: Do you want something cold to drink?

Knott: I’ll have something.
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