

IN MEMORY OF

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

STATEMENT BY THE STAFF OF
THE JOHN F. KENNEDY LIBRARY AND OFFICERS,
DIRECTORS AND STAFF OF
THE KENNEDY LIBRARY FOUNDATION

THE KENNEDY LIBRARY HAS LOST ONE OF ITS FOUNDERS. JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS WAS A BOUNTIFUL SOURCE OF IDEAS AND INSPIRATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS INSTITUTION, DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND HONORING ALL THOSE WHO, THROUGH THE ART OF POLITICS, SEEK A NEW AND BETTER WORLD. MEMBERS OF THE LIBRARY STAFF, OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND STAFF OF THE KENNEDY LIBRARY FOUNDATION, AND THE MILLIONS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE, IN SOME WAY, BECOME A PART OF THE KENNEDY LIBRARY IN THE PAST THIRTY YEARS SHARE A PROFOUND FEELING OF LOSS WITH THE PASSING OF JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS. OUR GRIEF IS TEMPERED BY THE REALIZATION OF ALL SHE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE CREATION OF THE KENNEDY LIBRARY AND BY THE SPIRIT OF HOPE AND PERPETUAL OPTIMISM THAT SHE BROUGHT TO HER LIFE AND SHARED SO WILLINGLY WITH THOSE WHO KNEW HER.



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She was a blessing to us and to the nation, and a lesson to the world on how to do things right, how to be a mother, how to appreciate history, how to be courageous.

No one else looked like her, spoke like her, wrote like her, or was so original in the way she did things. No one we knew ever had a better sense of self.

Jackie brought the greatest artists to the White House, and brought the arts to the center of national attention. Today, in large part because of her inspiration and vision, the arts are an abiding part of national policy. And then, during those four endless days in 1963, she held us together as a family and a country. In large part because of her, we could grieve and then go on. She lifted us up, and in the doubt and darkness, she gave her fellow citizens back their pride as Americans. She was then 34 years old.

Afterward, as the eternal flame she lit flickered in the autumn of Arlington Cemetery, Jackie went on to do what she most wanted - to raise Caroline and John, and warm her family's life and that of all the Kennedys.

Her two children turned out to be extraordinary, honest, unspoiled and with a character equal to hers. And she did it in the most trying of circumstances. They are her two miracles. Her love for Caroline and John was deep and unqualified. She reveled in their accomplishments, she hurt with their sorrows and she felt sheer joy and delight in spending time with them. At the mere mention of their names, Jackie's eyes would shine brighter and her smile would grow bigger. She once said that if you "bungle raising your children nothing else much matters in life." She didn't bungle. Once again, she showed how to do the most important thing of all, and do it right.

And for those of us who knew and loved her, she graced our lives.

When she went to work, Jackie became a respected professional in the world of publishing. And because of her, remarkable books came to life. She searched out new authors and ideas. She was interested in everything. Her love of history became a devotion to historic preservation. You knew, when Jackie joined the cause to save a building in Manhattan, the bulldozers might as well turn around and go home.

She had a wonderful sense of humor - a way of focusing on someone with total attention - and a little girl delight in who they were and what they were saying. It was a gift of herself that she gave to others. And in spite of all her heartache and loss, she never faltered.

In truth, she did everything she could, and more, for each of us. She made a rare and noble contribution to the American spirit. But for us, most of all she was a magnificent wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt and friend. She graced our history.





Photo: Howard Allen

Following are the comments and a poem read by Caroline Kennedy at the funeral Mass:

The poem I'm going to read comes from a book my mother kept on a special bookshelf in her room.

The front of the book reads Marie McKinney Memorial Award in Literature, First Prize, Presented to Jacqueline Bouvier, June 1946.

And the poem is called "Memory of Cape Cod" by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

THE WIND IN THE ASH TREE
SOUNDS LIKE SURF ON THE
SHORE AT TRURO.

I WILL SHUT MY EYES.

HUSH. BE STILL WITH YOUR
SILLY PLEADING SHEEP ON
SHILLING STONE HILL.

THEY SAID, COME ALONG.
THEY SAID, LEAVE YOUR
PEBBLES ON THE SAND AND
COME ALONG.

IT'S LONG AFTER SUNSET.

THE MOSQUITOES WILL BE
THICK IN THE PINE WOODS
ALONG BY LONG NECK.

THE WINDS DIED DOWN.

THEY SAID, LEAVE YOUR
PEBBLES ON THE SAND AND
YOUR SHELLS TOO AND
COME ALONG.

WE'LL FIND YOU ANOTHER
BEACH LIKE THE BEACH AT
TRURO.

LET ME LISTEN TO THE WIND
IN THE ASH. IT SOUNDS LIKE
THE SURF ON THE SHORE.

John F. Kennedy, Jr., before reading a passage from the Book of Isaiah, said that in choosing the readings for the service, "We struggled to find ones that captured my mother's essence."

He said three attributes came to mind. "They were the love of words, the bonds of home and family, and her spirit of adventure."



THE ROLE OF JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS IN THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF
THE JOHN F. KENNEDY LIBRARY

The Kennedy Library was organized in 1964, in the sad days following the death of John Kennedy. From the start, it was the hope of Mrs. Onassis that the Library would be a place where people could search for historic truth, learn more about politics and leadership, and reflect on the need to serve the public in some way.

She wanted the building to be a magnificent work of art, celebrating the energy, grace, dignity and boldness that John Kennedy, and those associated with him, brought to the world of politics and public service.

In a statement on the plans for the Kennedy Library, Mrs. Onassis wrote:

"MY HUSBAND HAD LOOKED FORWARD TO RETIRING TO HIS LIBRARY AT THE END OF HIS TIME IN WASHINGTON. NOW HE WILL NOT SEE THE BUILDING TO BE ERECTED IN HIS NAME. BUT HIS PARENTS AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS AND I ALL LOOK ON IT AS HIS MOST FITTING MEMORIAL. BECAUSE JOHN KENNEDY WAS SO INVOLVED IN LIFE, HIS LIBRARY WILL BE NOT JUST A REPOSITORY OF PAPERS AND RELICS OF THE PAST. IT WILL ALSO BE A VITAL CENTER OF EDUCATION AND EXCHANGE AND THOUGHT, WHICH WILL GROW AND CHANGE WITH THE TIMES.

JOHN F. KENNEDY BELIEVED STRONGLY THAT ONE'S AIM SHOULD NOT BE THE MOST COMFORTABLE LIFE POSSIBLE - BUT THAT WE SHOULD ALL DO SOMETHING TO RIGHT THE WRONGS WE SEE - AND NOT JUST COMPLAIN ABOUT THEM. WE OWE THAT TO OUR COUNTRY, AND OUR COUNTRY WILL SUFFER IF WE DON'T SERVE HER. HE BELIEVED THAT ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE - AND THAT EVERY PERSON SHOULD TRY.

I HOPE THAT MANY OF YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN WILL BE ABLE TO VISIT THE KENNEDY LIBRARY. IT WILL BE A MEMORIAL TO PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND A LIVING CENTER OF STUDY OF THE TIMES IN WHICH HE LIVED, WHICH WILL INSPIRE THE IDEALS OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM IN YOUNG PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. HIS LIBRARY WILL BE YOUR LIBRARY. FOR, WHEN COMPLETED, IT WILL BE TURNED OVER TO THE GOVERNMENT AND BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES FOREVER."

Mrs. Onassis played a major role in the selection of I.M. Pei as the architect of the Kennedy Library. At an early meeting, Mr. Pei explained, somewhat apologetically, that as a young architect he had not worked on monumental projects. Mrs. Onassis, nevertheless, chose him for he seemed so filled with promise and he had the imagination, skill and temperament to create a structure that would reinforce her vision of the Library. When a site in Cambridge proved to be impractical, Mrs. Onassis joined in the search for a new location for the Library. She was pleased with the selection of Columbia Point in Dorchester because of the symbolism of being near the childhood home of John Kennedy's mother and, most importantly, because of the beauty of the adjacent harbor and the love that President Kennedy had for the ocean.





"I DO NOT THINK IT ALTOGETHER
INAPPROPRIATE TO INTRODUCE
MYSELF TO THIS AUDIENCE. I AM
THE MAN WHO ACCOMPANIED
JACQUELINE KENNEDY TO PARIS,
AND I HAVE ENJOYED IT."

John F. Kennedy
June 2, 1961

In 1964, Mrs. Onassis was deeply involved in two new programs. The Library created the first large oral history project undertaken by a presidential library. This bold endeavor sought to record the recollections of members of the administration and those who knew and worked with the president. The program succeeded, in large part, because it had the constant encouragement and support of Mrs. Onassis. The acquisition of the papers of Ernest Hemingway was designed to expand the scope of the Kennedy Library's work. "Nothing would have pleased my husband more," Mrs. Onassis said when the gift was announced, "because this collection of papers will help to fulfill our hope that the Library will become a center for the study of American civilization, in all its aspects, in these years." Mrs. Onassis was the guest of honor at the opening of the Hemingway Room in 1980 and was a charter member of the Friends of the Hemingway Collection. Through her efforts, the Ernest Hemingway Foundation Award is presented annually at the Library to recognize the best first work of fiction in the United States.

Mrs. Onassis quietly shared the joy of all those associated with the library when the facility was dedicated in the fall of 1979.



She had done so much to make it possible, yet she recognized the work was not complete. In 1984 she joined in the creation of the Kennedy Library Foundation, and became an honorary chairperson of the board of directors. For ten years, the Foundation has provided support for a host of programs: conferences and forums for the public; the JFK Library Corps, a public service program for Boston students; the Distinguished Foreign Visitors Program; the Profile in Courage Award; museum programs for students; and research grants and internships for students and scholars using the collections in the archives.



In 1987, Caroline Kennedy was elected president of the Kennedy Library Foundation. Mrs. Onassis continued to participate actively in Library events, while constantly encouraging members of her family and her friends to expand their efforts in helping her initial dreams become reality. At the opening of the new museum at the Kennedy Library in October 1993,

Mrs. Onassis proudly acknowledged the work that Caroline Kennedy and Edwin Schlossberg had done in developing exhibits that would provide people of all ages – but especially young people – with a better understanding of the dramatic events and decisions of the 1960s and a realization of all that can be accomplished through courageous political leadership.



The Library has received thousands of letters of condolence from people all over the world. This outpouring of good will has been extraordinary both for its volume and for the depth and sincerity of the messages. Many people expressed to Caroline and John Kennedy how inspirational their mother's dignity and courage has been to them. Among the tributes were contributions from people who requested that we use the funds to support Kennedy Library projects of particular significance to Mrs. Onassis.

In that spirit, we want readers to know that their generous donations will be dedicated to improving the landscaping surrounding the Library. For many visitors, the wild beach roses, Japanese black pines, honey locusts, weeping willows, and dozens of other varieties of trees and plants on the Library grounds reflect the landscape of Cape Cod familiar to President Kennedy. The sweeping views of the harbor and the Atlantic Ocean beyond are reminders that, throughout his life, John F. Kennedy drew inspiration from the sea.

When the Library opened in 1979, the grounds were prepared according to a plan developed by I.M. Pei, architect of the Library; Dan Kiley, an internationally acclaimed landscape architect; and Rachel Lambert Mellon, who had designed the Rose Garden and the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden at the White House. Fifteen years later, several projects that would enhance the beauty of the grounds have been identified. Caroline and John feel that beautifying the Library's surroundings is a fitting tribute to their mother.

TO ALL OF OUR FRIENDS WHOSE DONATIONS WILL HELP TO MAKE
THE WORK POSSIBLE, WE EXTEND OUR SINCERE THANKS.



AT THE CHURCH SERVICE, MAURICE TEMPELSMAN CHOSE TO READ
"ITHAKA" BY C.P. CAVAFY

As you set out for Ithaka hope the voyage is a long one, full of
adventure, full of discovery.

Laistrygonians and Cyclops, angry Poseidon - don't be afraid of
them: you'll never find things like that on your way as long as you
keep your thoughts raised high, as long as a rare excitement stirs
your spirit and your body.

Laistrygonians and Cyclops, wild Poseidon - you won't encounter
them unless you bring them along inside your soul, unless your
soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope the voyage is a long one.

May there be many a summer morning when, with what pleasure,
what joy, you come into harbors seen for the first time; may you
stop at Phoenician trading stations to buy fine things, mother of
pearl and coral, amber and ebony, sensual perfume of every kind
-as many sensual perfumes as you can, and may you visit many
Egyptian cities to gather stores of knowledge from their scholars.

Keep Ithaka always in your mind. Arriving there is what you are
destined for.

But do not hurry the journey at all.

Better if it lasts for years, so you are old by the time you reach the
island, wealthy with all you have gained on the way, not expecting
Ithaka to make you rich.

Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey. Without her, you would
not have set out.

She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you.

Wise as you will have become, so full of experience, you will
have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

THEN, HE CONCLUDED WITH HIS OWN WORDS:

*"And now the journey is over, too short, alas, too short.
It was filled with adventure and wisdom, laughter and love,
gallantry and grace.*

S o f a r e w e l l , f a r e w e l l ."

