

HOW ROSE KEEPS GROWING!



Mrs. Kennedy, very much in the swim, talks about Ted, motherhood, drugs, women's lib, Catholicism and keeping young. By Lenore Hershey

We are at the oceanside Kennedy home in West Palm Beach, on one of those nippy Florida days you didn't come down for. My acquaintance with Mrs. Kennedy goes back for years, but this is my first visit to the southern compound, a large, Spanish-style house designed by Addison Mizner in the early thirties, the heyday of this millionaires' resort. Now the house is silent, and I miss the sound of all those Kennedy voices. Mrs. Kennedy is spending some of the winter months here—alone, except for some family retainers. I wait for Rose Kennedy in a small, dark study crammed with photographs of the family and am particularly intrigued by a picture of a tiny, solitary girl toddling away from the camera.

"That's Caroline," says Mrs. Kennedy, who has just come downstairs from the second floor. The study is suddenly more warmed by her vibrant presence than by the old portable electric heater glowing in a corner. Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy will be 82 in July, yet she is a tidy, trim woman, fashionable in a pants suit and patent moccasins. It is early morning, and she is without makeup—yet the face is fresh and firm.

She suggests that we talk in the

dining room, where the windows look out across the lawn to the surly Atlantic Ocean. The long dining table has one solitary place set at its head, with a ring of vitamin bottles where the wineglass should be.

For a split second I play with images, and people the rest of the table with faces and voices from other times. Mrs. Kennedy seems to sense my feeling about the house.

"Almost half the family is gone," she says, in her matter-of-fact Boston twang. "I was reading through some papers and letters, and I found that many weekends we used to have about twenty-one people here."

I mentally count off: Joe, Kathleen, Jack, Bobby—cut off before their time. Rosemary, who at 53 remains in a home for the mentally retarded. Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy, Rose's husband for 55 years, dead since 1969. Four children left: Eunice, Pat, Jean and Edward. And 28 grandchildren. And now the single place setting at the long table.

But there is not a whimper in that calm voice, or a touch of self-pity in those spirited gray-green eyes. Rose Kennedy is nostalgic, but she is mentally and physically involved in today.

Each day she walks three or four miles around Lake Worth. She tries to swim in the sea every morning, no matter how heavy the surf. She plays nine holes of competitive golf in the afternoons at a nearby country club, (continued on page 140)



Nixon and Premier Chou engage in a discussion of women. "Are women more intelligent than men?" the President asks with a twinkle. Chou En-lai answers in dead seriousness. Equality of women is no laughing matter in China. "Women are more intelligent in artistic work," he says. "Some women work so hard," the Premier goes on, "their husbands stay home and help take care of the house." He points to an interpreter whose husband does this, "Just make sure he doesn't sit around and watch television all day," the President says. The Americans laugh.

Afternoon with Mrs. Nixon: to the Shanghai Cultural Palace. Housed in a grim building once owned by the British. Here each day 2,000 youngsters from seven to 16 come after school to learn everything from ballet and shadow boxing to table tennis and painting, model ship building to the playing of classical instruments. They perform for us with shiny faces, beautiful voices, poise and confidence. But when their words are translated, we hear once more the thoughts of Chairman Mao. "Little Red Soldiers study everything," chant these six year olds, "but most of all they love to study the words of Chairman Mao."

I can't pretend to know China in eight days. As one colleague remarked when we left, "That's one day for every one hundred million people." But some things I do know.

Mental conformity

The Chinese have made accomplishments, but at a very great price. At every level, there is mental conformity. There is no room for individual thought or expression. Are the people happy? Who knows? I'm not even certain they do. There is a drabness, a grayness to the country. No beauty. No texture. No creative art. All is the same, mass-produced and mass-induced. I realize that although the Chinese have been courteous and cooperative, I have made no friends. After one week in Romania, also a Communist country, I had made several friends among interpreters. In China, I never got beyond small talk or Mao talk.

I know I could never live as the Chinese do or totally understand how they can live as they do. But I feel that we have lost our fear of China. Our freedom and individuality is totally foreign to their way of thinking. But that doesn't mean we can't exist together. This week has shown me that we can.

At two in the morning, I am, as usual, still up. My roommate, Mrs. Fay Wells of Storer Broadcasting, and I are throwing away old notes and trying to figure out a way to prevent the

Chinese from returning our trash, when there is a knock on the door. Two serious looking Chinese men enter and dump huge gift-wrapped boxes into our laps. They must weigh 30 pounds each. "Candy. Compliments of the Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Government," says the one who can speak English. They leave and Fay and I burst out laughing. Two in the morning and 30-pound boxes of candy to carry home. The end of a perfect day!

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where she has been a member for almost 20 years.

She also likes to read.

"My eyes do get tired now," she admits, "but I've always been a reader. I am reading *Jennie*, about Winston Churchill's mother. And I read *Eleanor and Franklin*, although the book does not mention my husband. Mr. Kennedy

Mrs. Kennedy also listens to French and German records for "intellectual stimulation."

"I just bought a couple of new records. Years ago, you couldn't get records like those. Now I can listen to the Comédie-Française, or de Gaulle's speeches, or André Malraux, or readings from Proust."

Rose Kennedy also has an interest in the disadvantaged, particularly in the mentally retarded. The Rose Kennedy Child Study Center, affiliated with the Albert Einstein College of Medicine-Yeshiva University, in New York City, is one of her favorite projects. She spoke at a fund-raising dinner the evening of our interview. Glamorously gowned and speaking words she had memorized, she melted hearts and opened check-books.

One invariably approaches Mrs. Kennedy with reverence, as if she were a living national monument. But she always turns a meeting into a warm, pleasurable, woman-to-woman conversation—especially if you allow her to direct it her way.

"I don't presume"

We talk of many things. Her voice breaks only once—when she speaks of the many letters she still receives about Bobby. When I find the courage to ask her how world events might have worked out if John F. Kennedy had lived, she says, "That's too intricate a question. I don't presume. One shouldn't try to be expert on such large subjects. For example, my husband always said so few people understood finance—that there were so many 'ins' and 'outs' to the depression besides just the generalities." (Later, she tells me that she knows nothing about stocks, never reads the stock market reports, and considers finance an alien world.)

But on other matters she talks with verve and ease. Her eyes gleam with deviltry as she warns that she'll stop mentioning a certain French designer's name if he doesn't lower his prices. (He undoubtedly knows the lady's frugal reputation, but he also knows she loves his clothes.)

On the piano in the living room are two small color reproductions of the Aaron Shikler paintings of John F. Kennedy and his wife that now hang in the White House. Rose Kennedy saw the originals at the White House during a private visit arranged by Mrs. Nixon. The reproductions were a gift from Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, of whom Rose speaks fondly.

When Mrs. Kennedy discusses any one of her daughters or daughters-in-law, she invariably discusses all of them. She gives credit to Eunice for her work with retarded children; to Pat for her book about Bobby; to Jean for what she is doing to raise funds for

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The next morning, our press planes pick us up in Shanghai. The Pan Am stewardesses, with their sunburned faces, pink lips, blue eyeshadow and long, tanned legs look like Playboy Bunnies next to the somber, plain-faced Chinese women. The stewardesses wave miniature American flags as President and Mrs. Nixon say their good-byes and climb into their plane in that empty, silent airport. A few minutes later, our own plane climbs over the green fields of Shanghai. I can see no sign of life on the land at all. A half hour later, the stewardesses serve hot dogs and hamburgers. Home. **END**

was there during all that period, you know. I have a letter from Mrs. Roosevelt thanking my husband for all he had done. I remember she had the children to tea at the White House once. I also remember that when we met the Churchills in England—the Roosevelts were still in the White House—Mrs. Churchill asked me what Mrs. Roosevelt was really like. English women didn't quite understand all that interest in politics and other activities. I was glad to tell Mrs. Churchill that we all praised Mrs. Roosevelt and were very much edified and inspired by her involvement in public affairs."

Bobby's memorial; to Ethel for her efforts on behalf of Bedford Stuyvesant; to Joan for her music. Carefully she mentions each daughter and daughter-in-law.

"I have to," she laughs. "I'll get Mother, why didn't you say something about me? if I leave someone out."

She speaks most often of her sole surviving son, Senator Edward M. Kennedy. He had been in Palm Beach with her the week before, and when, at one point in our conversation, Mrs. Kennedy mentions that she would like to go to China, I remind her that Ted had said he wanted to go, too.

"Maybe he'll take me," she says. "He's very sweet about taking me places."

Rose Kennedy also makes it clear that as far as she's concerned, Ted is definitely not running for President this year. "I think there is too much risk now," she says firmly. "If he wants to, it would be much better to run a little later. . . . No, Teddy really is not going to run this time," she reiterates. "Most of my friends—and I guess almost everyone—is glad he has taken that decision. He has a certain obligation to Ethel's children, and of course to his own children. A President has so little time for family matters. I think it would be much better if he runs later, if he wants to. He says I can campaign until I'm ninety, and that's still almost ten years away. I am sure it is Teddy's present intention not to run. I think it is a wise intention."

There is little doubt about how deeply Rose Kennedy feels about that word "risk." A few days before, she had told another reporter, "We all know he [Ted] might be assassinated . . . but it's never discussed." She told me, as we talked about violence in general, and the prevalence of crime in the cities, "Yes, yes . . . that's why we're happy about Teddy's decision."

A maid, handing her a glass of water, interjects: "Mrs. Kennedy doesn't have any fear about herself. I wish she'd be a little more concerned about her own protection."

When Mrs. Kennedy and I first discussed this meeting, we had agreed to center our conversation around the subject of motherhood, to commemorate Mother's Day. She had sent me some notes from her files, and I studied what she'd written several years before:

"Women may excel in business. They may be leaders of society. They may be famous beauties. But these goals are ephemeral. New beauties appear, new leaders, new favorites. But a mother's joy and interest and satisfaction, her influence and pride, continue unabated and even increase through the years. A woman engrossed in her family twenty-five years ago now sees them grown-up, fulfilling worthwhile goals, adding luster to her name. They and their children coming home to her with words of cheer and affection, asking her to rejoice in their triumphs, and to advise and sympathize with them in their trials, will make her feel still needed, still loved, still a vital part of life—and that is the important thing. So I feel that if children bring these satisfactions to parents, so several children will increase these blessings, not only for parents, but for themselves."

I wondered how, tactfully, I could ask her to relate these thoughts to the changing world of women. I did not have to ask.

"That material I sent you is outdated," she says. "I was trying to encourage everyone to have at least four children, so every girl could have a sister and every boy a brother. I know how devoted Joe and Jack were, and I know the advantages of a larger family. But today I am hesitant. I know there are so many complications about world population control, about the food shortages and other hardships that will occur. And so perhaps I should learn more about it before I take that stand any more."

"You are always learning," I comment, remembering everything I had ever read about that absorptive, self-disciplined mind.

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Cucumber and Beauty

by ANA MAHER

Every woman, at some time in her life, faces the spectre of an aging skin. Most women never solve the problem, and finally become resigned. A fortunate few find the answer and are rewarded with a complexion that remains youthful all their lives.

Ten years ago, I had this skin problem. Nothing very serious, but when I took my mirror over to a bright light, I could detect evidence of dryness and faint little lines in those areas where wrinkles have a tendency to show first. And I didn't like it. I knew that these were danger signals that warned of an aging skin.

I was also very bewildered. I had always taken the best care of my skin. I used expensive night creams, lotions and highly touted astringents. So I tried other creams, with no improvement. Finally I became resigned. After all, everybody gets older and most of us show our age.

Then one day I had a visit from an elderly widowed neighbor. This charming lady was about seventy, but she had the most beautiful, moist, youthful skin. I remarked about it and mentioned my own skin problem.

She told me she used a marvelous cream which had been formulated by her late husband, a physician, and that she made it herself. "Try it," she said, and then she left and returned with a jar of this cream.

So I tried using my neighbor's cream.

In only three weeks, I began to see a marked improvement. My skin was fresher, clearer, smoother. After two months, my former dry, dull skin was revitalized. The lines and puffiness had been eased away. My skin now had a youthful, almost translucent quality. I was thrilled with my neighbor's formula.

For six years, this kind lady kept me supplied with this cream. And I want to tell you that my skin was more vital and younger looking than it had been when I first started to use it, six years before.

Then my neighbor died suddenly—and with her went that wonderful cream and its secret ingredients. I was saddened by the loss of a good friend—and dejected by the loss of a miracle cream. Her family told me that her personal papers revealed no formulas of any kind. I was desperate. But I did have three jars left from the last batch she had made.

So I took the cream to one of the best known analytical cosmetic chemists. The cost of the analysis was enormous, but I got what I wanted. I had the wonder cream formula.

It had a base of pure cucumber juice, two super-moisturizers and three natural lubricants. It also contained Vitamins A and D and a special component to keep the cucumber juice fresh. My chemist told me that the formula consisted of only safe, pure ingredients—no hormones, estrogens or steroids.

I made a batch of cream for myself, following the chemist's instructions. Then my friends and relatives began using it. And in every case, the results were absolutely astounding.

Soon friends began insisting that the cream should be made known and available to all women, since the problem of aging skin is universal.

So my cream was put on the market three years ago, with the financial help of an uncle. It is called Cucumbre Frost.

The same wonderful results experienced by me, my friends and relatives were repeated time and time again by women all over the country. I have in my file hundreds of letters from grateful women telling of the remarkable results obtained with Cucumbre Frost.

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I know what Cucumbre Frost can do for you. Therefore, I offer you this UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE. Try it. See for yourself in your own mirror how, after a few treatments, Cucumbre Frost helps revitalize dull, dry, aging skin. How Cucumbre Frost helps ease away lines and puffiness. Many women wrote me of astonishing results after only two weeks. Some take longer. But I say this to you: If, for any reason, you are not delighted with Cucumbre Frost—return the unused portion to me for a complete refund. No questions asked.

You now have the opportunity to have vital, youthful, lovely skin—at no risk. Cucumbre Frost can be purchased only by ordering it directly from me. Simply fill out the coupon and mail today.

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"Mommy and daddy are not mad at you Marilyn.
Mommy and daddy are mad at the naughty thing you've done."

"I try to keep up," she responds. "I used to think of myself as *au courant*. I try to be 'with it.' I still believe that motherhood is the crown of a woman's experience. But I'm also aware of the problems of world population growth."

Mrs. Kennedy is keenly aware of the changing role of women. She reminds me that a stamp bearing the portrait of poetess Emily Dickinson had been issued recently, and that more and more women now work outside the home.

"When I grew up," she points out, "women didn't even have the vote."

I ask her whether she herself would opt for a political career if she were starting all over again as a young woman today? I cite the cases of Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi, the prime ministers of Israel and India.

Possible temptation

"I don't know," Mrs. Kennedy answers. "I never had any political aspirations. I was always happy just to be along—to be the Ambassador's wife, the President's mother. But I don't know what would happen if I were starting out today. It's possible that I'd be tempted. It's even more possible for my daughter Eunice. I think she might easily be tempted to do something in the political field."

"I think Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi have done wonderful jobs."

Had she ever considered the possibility of one of her granddaughters going into politics, possibly even becoming Vice President or President?

"It's still far in the future, but I can see one or more of my granddaughters going into politics some day. I hope they will. Today's young people are taking much more of a part in social movements than they did in my generation, or even my children's generation. My oldest granddaughter went to Arizona and worked among the Indians two summers ago; another time she went to Alaska and worked with the people there. This past Christmas, Eunice and her husband [Sargent Shriver] took their children to a kibbutz in Israel."

Does she have any difficulty communicating with her grandchildren when she sees them?

"I see more of them in the summer, of course. And it's encouraging. Even though you are an older woman, the younger people seem to enjoy talking with you and being with you. Like Alice Roosevelt Longworth. I used to hear all my children rave about her. They loved to talk and listen to her. I think it very encouraging today for older women, and for older men, too, to find out that they are sought after, that they have something to share with the young. But they should keep up,

keep 'with it,' and kind of mix in the new with their own experience."

Speaking of keeping up, I ask Mrs. Kennedy if she had been following the Howard Hughes case and all its ramifications. Indeed she had. Had she ever met Hughes?

"No, I never did. But I am amazed at all the interest. Why is everyone so interested in Howard Hughes?"

I offer the guess that it is because he is so mysterious.

"I don't think girls realize what they are sacrificing by having so much freedom," she says with conviction. "I don't know what will eventually develop. I think it's difficult for everyone these days, deciding how to live with the changes, figuring what is going to happen."

What about the drug problem?

"It's so sad. I haven't come into contact with it directly, and there are far greater authorities than I. But I

religion. Does she still go to Mass every morning?

"Yes, I do. But a lot of people do. It's really not that extraordinary."

Is she, as the holder of that rare Vatican title, Papal Countess, aware of a new interest in religion, and of the many changes in the churches—including her own?

"Yes, you hear so much about the rebirth of religion. Years ago, in my own Catholic church, you would think nothing would ever change. But

some of the changes are very good. Having the Mass in English, for example, has meant a great deal to a great many people. If you knew Latin, you loved the old liturgy which has gone on for centuries. But after all, very few people out of the millions who go to church could understand or follow the Latin. So I think it's a fine idea to have it in the vernacular."

And what about faith, the element that has given her so much strength to bear her suffering, that has shaped her strict participation in the rituals and sacraments of her religion?

"If you have faith," says Rose Kennedy, "it is a wonderful thing. Try to encourage it, nurture it, transmit it. But faith isn't given to everybody, unfortunately. And some people lose it for one reason or another."

"I think life should be enjoyed, too. Jack had that quality—the enjoyment of life. It's from Ecclesiastes: a time to weep, to mourn, but a time to laugh. People should enjoy life if they can. We have a great country, and most people have a lot to be thankful for, instead of fussing over silly things."

New challenges

Is Rose Kennedy enjoying life now?

"Yes," she responds, after a moment's concentration, a moment to look into her inner self. "I am enjoying some of the same things I always did, but different things, too."

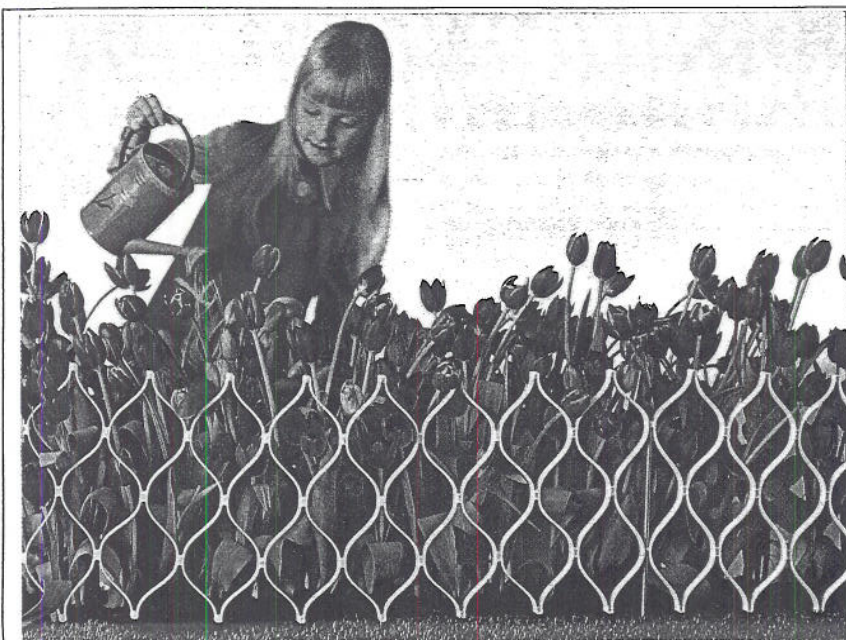
The wistful quality in her answer is not regret. It is, or at least I think it is, a kind of womanly seeking, a restlessness to move on to something new.

One new and challenging thing in Mrs. Kennedy's life is her autobiography. She spends two hours each morning taping her reminiscences with an editor from Doubleday.

Another new and challenging project is her plan to build or buy a new house in Palm Beach, one more suited to her needs.

Rose Kennedy is not yet ready to sink into the sunset. Fate has elected her to be survivor—a graceful survivor—and she will not waste a precious moment. With the continuing luck of good health and mental acuity, her horizons are still wide open. This Rose is still blooming. And the growth is invigorating to watch.

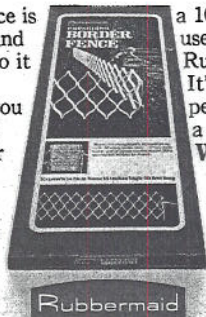
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a 10-foot section, so you can use it just about anywhere. Rubbermaid Border Fence. It's one of those little personal touches that make a house a home.

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"That's probably it," she says. "I think the easiest way to get people interested in you is by being mysterious. To be a leader you should have a bit of mystery about you. That's a good question: how close should you be to the people, how tired will people be of seeing your picture, of hearing you talk?" She grins. "I am not mysterious . . . I talk too much."

We return to the subject of young people, and their new standards of morality and life-styles. She acknowledges that there have been sexual changes, that the old "double standard" is going by the board.

thought that perhaps if it had occurred among my children, I would have started, in my generation, a kind of anti-drug league. I would have made it prestigious, and active, and fun, and a substitute for drugs. Because from what I read, a lot of young people get into the drug syndrome to be part of something, to go along with their friends and be in step with today. If there were an equally attractive movement that said, 'We are part of today and we don't have to be full of smoke or whatever they call it,' it might be helpful."

The conversation turned, as it always must with Rose Kennedy, to faith and