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Anne T. Kent California Room**

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INTERVIEW WITH GENEVIEVE COCHRANE MARTINELLI
by Carla Ehat & Anne Kent
August 25, 1976

INTERVIEWEE: Genevieve Cochrane Martinelli (GM)
INTERVIEWERS: Carla Ehat (CE) and Anne Kent (AK)
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TRANSCRIBER: Marjorie Hoffman

CE: Today is Wednesday, August the 25th, 1976. Continuing the Oral History program of the Moya Library and for the California Room of the Marin County Library at Civic Center, this is Carla Ehat and once again we are at the residence of Mrs. Thomas Kent in Kentfield, 131 Goodhill Road. And we have the delightful pleasure of interviewing this morning of interviewing Genevieve Cochrane Martinelli, Mrs. Jordan Lorenzo Martinelli, Sr. The Martinellis have resided in San Rafael all of their lives, Mrs. Martinelli having lived here since her birth, April the 2nd, 1899. And she's here today to tell us not only of her life. She's been such an active member of the community, given over the years her talents, her energies, to all of the community efforts that have been so worth while. She has been active in the Red Cross. At one time she was the County Chairman of the blood donor effort for the entire county. She has been involved in the Marin Art and Garden Center. There are so many, so many activities and social organizations that she has given of her time unselfishly that we will discuss them in greater detail later. Well good morning, Gen!

GM: Good morning, Carla.

CE: I think it would be delightful. You have sketched out a brief narrative in history of your family. Shall we start with your narrative?

GM: Very good. My mother was born in Australia while her family was visiting relatives.

CE: And what was your mother's name?

GM: My mother's name was Angelina O'Mara. Her mother was born in Ireland. Her father was born in Locarno, Switzerland. The family came to California, and her mother died in California in childbirth. My mother helped her father raise a family, a younger brother and sister. My father, Patrick Henry Cochrane, was born in San Rafael. His father was born in Ireland and his mother in Scotland. His father was in the drain business in San Rafael. My father attended the local schools.

CE: Excuse me Gen, he was born in 1869, I believe. Is that correct?

GM: I didn't have the date down. 1869. As a young man he was a blacksmith; later he attended Hales Business College. I forgot to mention that he attended the local schools.

CE: Yes.

GM: He went into the freight business in San Francisco, and at the time of the 1906 earthquake, he was entirely wiped out. Later he went into politics in Marin County. He was a very popular man and was Assessor from early 1900 until he died in 1922. On the day of his funeral, all the schools in San Rafael were closed, all business houses, banks, and public buildings were closed during the funeral. There had never been such a large funeral in San Rafael. When the heartbroken family returned home, the house was in shambles. It had been robbed. Every room was turned upside down. Every thing of value had been taken. I had only been married a short time. We were living on Lincoln Avenue in the house Jordan's father had given us for a wedding present. Before the funeral we had taken all of our wedding presents and everything of value to my mother's house. Why, I'll never know, because no one ever locked their houses in those days. Months later the robber was caught and sentenced to San Quentin. He had disposed of everything. The San Francisco police located a few pieces of our flat silver. He was referred to as the "funeral burglar." This was the first time in the history of Marin County that anything like this had ever happened.

CE: Tell me Gen, your father, Patrick Henry Cochrane, I understand, was one of eight children?

GM: Yes.

CE: And his parent's names were -- we should get this in the record -- Michael Cochrane and Ann Fitzgerald Cochrane. Is this correct?

GM: That's correct.

CE: And some of the children -- Would you name some of the children? You had an Uncle James, I believe.

GM: He had a brother Jim Cochrane who was the District Attorney.

CE: District Attorney of Marin County.

GM: And a brother Michael Cochrane who was the owner and publisher of the *San Rafael Independent*. It was not called the *Journal*; later they acquired the *Journal*. And another brother, John Cochrane, who was also a blacksmith until later years when he did other work. And then there were -- The others were girls.

CE: Were you going to go into the achievements of your father a little later?

GM: Yes, I have that.

CE: Good.

GM: My first school was the Short Primary School, and there I have a picture for you to look at, then the B Street School, the Fourth Street School. Why the three schools I'll never know, but evidently there were just a few grades in each school, and so we kept going up. When I graduated in 1913 -- from where I graduated in 1913 --

CE: Continue, Gen.

GM: The San Rafael High School was around the corner in E Street. I graduated from the high school in 1917. I was very active in all school sports and school activities and social affairs. High school days were happy days. It was roller-skating in the winter in a huge skating rink located where Macy's new household store is now situated. Fourth Street extended through to Third Street.

CE: Oh, it did in those days.

GM: We walked down a long lane to the rink. You have heard the story how my romance started in the skating rink, so I won't repeat.

CE: I think we should have this story from you. Do you mind repeating it? Please, it's a charming story.

GM: Well I was skating; I was skating with Jordan's brother who had gone all through school with me.

CE: What was his name?

GM: Ennio. He is in some of these pictures here. And we were just skating around; we were both very good skaters; everyone was a good skater in those days. And out of the blue this handsome, handsome man whom I'd never, ever paid any attention to comes and takes me away from his brother. At the time I didn't even know it was his brother. So we skated the rest of the afternoon, and he took me home because he didn't think that his brother was good enough for me. So the romance started there and continued until we were married.

CE: Thank you.

GM: We also played basketball in the same place, no big auditorium or gymnasium like the young people have today. Saturday nights we would go to the Star Theater to see vaudeville shows. The theater was in the block between C and D Streets. We would walk up flights and flights of stairs. Across the street was a nickelodeon where we would go in the afternoons for five cents to see silent movies. In the summer everyone went swimming in the huge municipal baths or Plunge as it was called. And there is a picture there.

CE: You've got some pictures of that.

GM: The Plunge had replaced the old open swimming baths where the salt water from the bay was drawn in through flood gates with the tide. None of us owned a bathing suit. We rented a towel and suit for twenty-five cents. When we finished swimming and changed our clothes in the old wooden bathhouses we had to rinse our suits and towels, put them through a hand wringer, return them to Mr. or Mrs. Sims. They were the managers. The suits and towels were hung in the sun to dry. Imagine the sanitation. The Sims were a dear fat

couple. They tolerated no nonsense. Anyone who stepped out of line was sent away and told not to come back, and, believe me, they didn't disobey. The older folks would row around the water in flat-bottom boats, and there are pictures of this.

CE: Shows a skiff here yes, all dressed up, incidentally, too.

GM: Yes, all dressed up. And there is a picture in the back there of the big municipal baths that none of us ever -- Of course we were very impressed with the splendor of it, but it was never the fun that the old bathhouse was.

CE: Tell me, where was that bathhouse?

GM: At the very end of Lincoln Avenue.

CE: Near Second?

GM: Yes, at the very end, it took in a whole area there. And then later they tore down the bathhouse, the big municipal bathhouse, and the Little Burner Company was built there. And that burned to the ground. I don't remember what year, in the '20s.

CE: Was that the Ray Oil and Burner Company?

GM: It was the Little Burner Company.

CE: Little Burner Company.

GM: I had a very happy childhood. My mother --

CE: Sounds like it, doesn't it, Mrs. Kent?

GM: My mother was a very talented artist and botanist. She loved her garden and flowers. She was a strict and severe person. Believe me, we walked the chalk line. She took all of the neighbor's children and our school friends on long hikes, and we would collect wildflowers. We often had a tea and a wildflower show in our house. The Parson's wildflower book—And Anne, what is the first name of --

AK: Mary Elizabeth.

GM: Mary Elizabeth Parson's wildflower book was her bible. The flowers would be displayed in bottles or jars with the botanical and the common names written on paper beside them. My sister Ruth was exactly like my mother but not severe like my mother, and gardens and flowers were her life. During vacation my mother kept us very busy. As I look back, we never had a chance to get into trouble. She would draw street scenes of our neighborhood with the children playing or scenes of various hills or places where we had hiked. She drew them on large flour or sugar sacks. If you recall we always bought sugar by the hundred pounds, flour by the hundred pounds, potatoes, everything came in large --

CE: And she would utilize these --

GM: Well she would have us rip them, then she'd launder them, and we'd have to sit down and stitch the hems by hand. She would draw on those. It was a treat to etch the scenes in red embroidery thread and recognize ourselves in places where we had been. We were the envy of all the children for blocks around. Any child interested in sewing could come to our house and sew these towels but they could not take the embroidery towels home until they were finished.

CE: Gen, have you mentioned where this home was, your home?

GM: No, it was on the corner of Bayview and C Streets, very close to the Short Primary School which was a couple of blocks away.

CE: Bayview and C.

GM: When I was older we embroidered towels, pillowcases, tea cloths, napkins that my mother had stamped. We even crocheted, tatted, and did needlepoint. She sent me to a lady to learn to do fancy cutwork and other types of intricate embroidery. If she had only taught me to sew clothes, I would have been better off today. She was a beautiful seamstress and made all of our clothes. A German dressmaker came to our house twice a year, in the spring and fall. She designed dresses for us, for the three of us.

CE: Would she stay and live with your family?

GM: Everything was remade. Martha, the oldest, always got the new material, but her clothes were restyled for Ruth, my second sister, and Ruth's were restyled for me. I was younger, and I didn't care whatsoever, but Ruth was very, very conscious of it and felt very badly. My mother was very frugal. Her rags, bottle and sack man would often come by, about once a month, calling for wares. And he would call out, and we were just so entranced to hear him, "Rags, bottles and sacks!" Mother always had something to sell. They were the Smith brothers, one of the Smith brothers. Today the Smith brothers are multi-millionaires. They own -- Anne, you would remember this -- all the Foster property which is on the way to Sonoma, and I can't think of the name of it. Jordan would be able to tell me, but I can't think of the name of it.

AK: Well we called it the Smith Brothers' property, and it was afterwards used as the dump, and now it's very, very expensive property.

GM: Yes, all of that they own but, Anne, further up they bought where the Abbots lived.

AK: Oh, in Sonoma?

GM: In Sonoma. And then they own a great deal of property out at Fairfax. They own property all over.

CE: Just made from this business?

GM: They started in that way, rags, bottles and sacks. And then they had a secondhand store on Fourth Street near D. A Chinaman came to the house each week for the laundry.

CE: Now how would he come?

GM: A little horse and wagon.

CE: Horse and wagon.

GM: And he would take the laundry and we all loved him. He was a very dear old Chinaman. There were many Chinese in San Rafael in those days.

CE: And in Marin.

GM: In Marin. On Chinese New Years he always brought gifts for all of us, but we loved the lychee nuts and the Chinese candy that he would bring. Of course my mother loved the tea that he would bring in the little crocks, you know, that you see today. The iceman would come, and he would carry a hundred pounds of ice into the house twice a week, and all of us children and all the neighborhood children would stand around the ice wagon to pick up the ice that had chipped off, chipping off the ice.

CE: That is a tradition that followed until they did away with ice trucking, until they invented refrigerators, but it was a delight to everyone.

GM: The bane of our life was when Nave's vegetable horse and wagon arrived. Once a week he came from Novato with a wagon full of fresh vegetables and fruit. It meant work for us girls, helping to preserve.

CE: Explain that.

GM: My mother would go out and look over his wares, and she never bought a basket of fruit. She would buy a lug of peaches, a lug of apricots, a lug of pears, whatever was in season.

CE: To work.

GM: And then we would have to sit and peel all of this fruit. She did the preserving. Of course there was no canned fruit in those days.

CE: This was your winter supply of fruit?

GM: Winter supply. But Nave today -- You've heard of the Nave Shopping Center?

CE: Yes.

GM: Those people are very, very wealthy today. I think my father should have started out with something like that. Frequently tramps would stop by for a free meal. They came on the freight trains down from Eureka, and it was always a sight for us to see them standing on the train with their sacks on their backs. There must have been a mark on our house because they always came to our house.

CE: Word gets around.

GM: My mother never turned a tramp away and many and many a tray I carried to the back door, and he would sit on the back stair and eat it. But we were never afraid of them; they were very honest and they would always ask when they came, "Do you have any work for me?" Of course my mother always said, "Yes, you could chop wood or dig in the garden." And they worked and then they got a very fine meal. Grosjeans was the main grocery store, with two deliveries a day. And I've often heard people say that it was comparable to Goldberg Bowen's in San Francisco. It was a remarkable store; they had absolutely everything in there.

CE: Where were they located, Gen?

GM: They were on Fourth Street between Fifth. No, between C and D. And I often would hear my mother phone for a pound of butter, and when I think of it -- And it was a horse delivery.

CE: Operation?

GM: Yes. I remember the dirt roads on Fourth Street that were so muddy in the winter and the boardwalks. October 12th, Columbus Day, was always a great occasion in San Rafael. A tremendous parade. My father was usually the grand marshal. And I have a photograph of him. There was a queen and her court, a barbeque, and a large ball at night although I was never allowed to go to the ball.

CE: Where would the barbeque be held?

GM: I don't recall; that I don't recall.

CE: Okay.

- GM: All was very festive and gay, but no rowdyism. We all idolized my father. As a very small girl, he would wake me up around four thirty or five a.m., he'd give me a little breakfast and we would go with his horse and buggy out to the Lucas Ranch which is now where Terra Linda is to pick mushrooms. The Lucas' were very, very close friends of my family. They were very hospitable people, and they would very, very frequently invite people to come and stay for a weekend or several days, and I remember on many occasions someone staying at the house and my father and mother would go off in the horse and buggy and stay for a weekend.
- CE: Well now they own that vast tract of land that had originally had been a grant to Timoteo Murphy. Where did that extend from, Puerto Suello?
- GM: Puerto Suello out to where all of Terra Linda is today and where St. Vincent's is. They owned all of that out to the bay and all of it over to Big Rock. It was a tremendous piece of property. But they were typical of the old families. When they needed money they would go to the bank and mortgage some of their property, then they would have another big affair and that would go on for years. My family was also very close to the McNear Family. The same thing, they would go to the McNear's and the old timers were very hospitable, very, very, hospitable. My early childhood was very active. Bicycle riding was very popular. On Saturday several of us girls would ride to Greenbrae, take our lunch. There were only beautiful fields covered with wildflowers, a little ranch here and there and the Greenbrae slough. Jordan and I would often go rowing there when we were in high school and that's where South Eliseo is now. I don't think they call it a slough anymore. What do they call it?
- CE: Well we still do; the old timers call it the slough. It's on the map as the Corte Madera River and you know why it's called that? Because it is a navigable stream, and the Army Engineers have to keep all streams navigable. Some people call it the Corte Madera Creek.
- GM: Oh I see. Swimming was a very popular sport. Tennis in Boyd's Park was also popular; the same courts are there today. Horseback riding and hiking were also very popular. When I was in high school, Miss Higby our botany teacher, would take us on hikes up Mount Tamalpais collecting flowers. We would ride on the train to Kentfield and start from there. Many times we hiked to Stinson Beach and stayed at Huldah Moorhead's family summer home, stayed there overnight. When I was growing up, the big occasion in our life was when my father was leaving for two weeks to go around the county to assess property and collect the poll tax. In those days they collected the poll tax, which was the county road tax.
- CE: I understand he did this, he made this tour in a horse drawn shay.
- GM: He was a very large man, six foot four, weighed about two hundred and fifty pounds. He drove a small buggy with a hood on it to keep the rain off.
- CE: Do you have a photograph of that somewhere?
- GM: I couldn't find it. I do have it but I couldn't find it for today. And he drove a very fast, spirited horse. He stayed overnight at the ranches as the hotels were few and far between. When he came home we could hear the horse running blocks and blocks away. Dan the horse was anxious to get back to the stable.

No matter what the hour, it was always at night, we all went out to greet him, help him unharness Dan, wipe him down, walk him a bit, and help get him into his stall. When we were back in the house, we would sit and listen to his tales and experiences. In 1915 my father bought a large Studebaker car. It was very elegant. Oh we were so proud of it. But in my estimation nothing could compare to Dan and the buggy. In 1915 George Middleton brought the California Motion Picture Company to San Rafael. They built a cluster of buildings on Center Street between Fifth and Forbes Avenue. The older children from high school were hired for extras. I was never the lucky one. Middleton featured his wife Beatriz Michelena who was the niece of the lady who gave me the embroidery lessons. The pictures were all cowboy westerns. Why they ever left Marin and went to Los Angeles I'll never know. Probably they were received coldly and received a cold reception from the people in San Rafael. Well what a blessing they left, or we would have been, had a Hollywood here today.

CE: But it's true that the motion picture, taking a motion picture in San Rafael predates Hollywood.

GM: Yes it does.

CE: That's even made *Believe It or Not Ripley*.

GM: In 1918 was the terrible flu epidemic; many people died, a cousin of mine being one of them. We wore flu masks. As I look back we were all a sight with the gauze masks on our faces. They were made of about three or four thicknesses of gauze about that wide with four strings that tied in back of us, and we were warned never to take them off.

CE: How long did you wear them? How long did that epidemic last, Gen? Do you have any idea?

GM: Oh, no, I don't. For months and months and months.

CE: Months you wore them?

GM: Oh yes we did. There were hundreds and hundreds and thousands of deaths. Oh it was just terrible.

CE: It's the same sort of virus they're talking about now, the swine flu.

GM: Yes, yes it is.

CE: They want everyone to be inoculated.

GM: These masks must have been full of germs. But my mother made us take ours off every night. Each one of us had several masks, but we had to wash ours every night, but many of the people didn't, and they were the dirtiest looking things when you see them on the street.

CE: But you wore them just when you went on the street?

GM: Yes, just on the street. I'll never forget, Jordan was at Mare Island at the time, and I was over at the Ferry Building seeing him off and I had my mask on and he wanted to kiss me and I was told by my mother never to take that mask off and what my mother said was law, so I was going to kiss him with the mask on. And he said, "Won't you take the mask off and kiss me goodbye?" After graduating from high school, I went to the San Francisco Normal School, later called San Francisco Teacher's College. I rode on the train, the boat, the streetcar.

CE: Was that the one out there on Oak?
GM: Haight, it's on Haight Street. Jordan had left Santa Clara because he couldn't get out to see me. They were very strict in Santa Clara in those days; they had high fences. And was attending St. Ignatius. We would go over together on the train and boat; I was the envy of all the other girls. Jordan was so handsome. Later years I heard as many girls as possible sat in back of us on the boat to listen to our conversation and pass it on to the others, and we never knew they were there. When I was at Normal School I was sent out to several San Francisco schools to do practice teaching. Although they have pupils at the school I never knew why I was sent out or why I was chosen. One of the highlights was my assignment to Tiburon. I would take the train to Sausalito, wait for a half an hour for a launch and go to Tiburon. After getting off of the launch I would walk to the stairs, go up a long, long flight of stairs and walk across an overhead trestle that covered the freight yard. Do you remember that, Anne?

AK: Yes.
GM: From there I'd walk up a steep hill to the small school. It was very close to where St. Hilary's Catholic Church is now, and I don't know if the school is still there.

CE: Well there is a school there.
GM: A little school?
CE: A little school there, so it must be the same grounds, the same property.
GM: Is it still -- Are they still using it? It was just a little one room.
CE: Well this is the same property, and the school must have been enlarged.
GM: Oh I see.
CE: Just below St. Hilary's.
GM: The graduation ceremonies were from the State Normal and they were very elaborate in the Greek Theater in Berkeley.

CE: Now you have photographs?
GM: Photographs of it, yes.
CE: 1919.
GM: We were months practicing the intricate formations, and we would have to go over on the ferry to Berkeley. My first school was the little Homestead School in Mill Valley. I would take the train to Alto, transfer at Alto and go to the local station. From there I would walk through this beautiful valley. I was there one year when my sister, Martha, resigned from Ross where she had been teaching for five years. She was going to be married and going to live in Honolulu, which we thought was the end of the earth.

CE: She was teaching in the Ross School.
GM: Yes and my sister Ruth was teaching in the Fairfax School; the three of us were teaching.

CE: Did you all three go through the same Normal School?
GM: Yes. I'll never forget the Ross trustees coming to my house one evening and asked if I would take my sister's position. I was making \$75 a month. They offered me \$125. I've hardly ever gotten over the shock of it; it sounded to

me like a million dollars. I cringe when I think how I walked out of that little school in the middle of the term, but I was young.

CE: You mean you took the job?

GM: I took the job, and I left the little Homestead Valley School. Of course in those days, you know, teachers were a premium, not like today. I was at the Ross School a year and a half before I was married.

CE: Who was the principal at that time? Do you recall?

GM: Olive Lake.

CE: Olive Lake.

GM: Very remarkable, a very remarkable person.

End, Side A

CE: Well tell us, Gen, some of those students you taught, have you made friends with them over the years?

GM: They're all my great friends today. Of course they weren't very much older than I, younger than I was. I wasn't very much older than they were. Muriel Chapman was one. I taught the fourth and fifth grade, and then I taught ancient history in the eighth grade, and those children were in the eighth grade. Muriel was one, Muriel Chapman.

CE: What was her maiden name?

GM: Johnson, her father was the Warden of San Quentin. And her sister Nellie had already graduated. Carson O'Connell was another and Charles McGee. I don't know; they're not here anymore. Maxine Chapman was another; Maxine Manning was her name. They were all wonderful children. Of course in those days the children were very good; they weren't like they are today.

CE: They minded the teacher.

GM: That's true.

CE: Fine. Then what did you do? You were at Ross a year and a half. Were you getting close to the time when you were going to get married?

GM: I was married in 1922. I left the Ross School. And months before I was married, someone called me from St. Vincent's Orphanage, it was called then, and asked me if I would come and do some substitute teaching out there. It seems that St. Vincent's School was having difficulty financially, and they had turned the school over to the public schools in San Rafael. So for one month I went out there and taught the seventh and eighth grade. And I would go out on a bus and the boys were about the size of my husband-to-be; they were enormous. And the principal who had come from San Rafael and was a part of the educational system in San Rafael couldn't control them at all, had absolutely no control over them and they were not under the jurisdiction of the San Rafael Schools very long. They were glad to turn them back to the priests and the sisters. So I was just there a month, and then I was married in February, February 21, 1922.

CE: And you have two children. Would you give us their names and birthdays, please?

GM: Jordan Junior was born in '24 and Rod was born in -- three and a half years later.

CE: 1928?

GM: Yes.

CE: Before we go into your own achievements, for the moment I think I would like to read, or have read into the record a little bit more about your unusual father. Would you verify these for us, Gen? He was County Assessor for seventeen years, 1906 to 1922.

GM: Yes.

CE: He was President of the Marin County Bank. In addition he was, let's see, he was a member of the Board of Education, 1910 to 1914.

GM: Yes.

CE: He was a trustee of the City of San Rafael, 1915 through '17. He was President of the California State Assessor's Association, 1917 to 1920, and in addition he was an ardent sportsman and horseman. Well, you talked briefly about that.

GM: Yes.

CE: There is something that I think has been written about him. One of his close friends, James H. Wilkins, wrote a paragraph about your father when he died, and I'd like to read it into the record. "His life was well rounded and happily proportioned. The title good citizen had a definite and luminous meaning when applied to him because he was the embodiment of good citizenship. His success in life is directly ascribed to his genial nature, his industry and strict integrity. His word was his bond, and he inherited his pleasure by assisting others. He never could see ill in anyone and never took advantage of anybody." Would you agree with this assessment, Gen?

GM: I certainly would.

CE: Were you close as a family, your father and the children?

GM: We were very, very, very close happy family. We did everything together.

CE: Was he affectionate?

GM: Very, very. He had no sons and when I was born, when I was expected, he was hoping he would have a son. So he said at one time, I was supposed to have heard it though, "I made the best of a bad bargain and I've made a boy out of her." And he taught me hunting and he taught me fishing and he taught me how to horseback ride and hiking, so I was really his favorite, but I had a very wonderful childhood with him.

CE: You were blessed by being the youngest.

GM: The youngest, that is the truth. But it was wonderful for me for my married life because when I married Jordan, who was a sportsman also, I just continued with our children, and we have led a very wonderful, happy life.

CE: Well I would like you to go into that a bit. Now, you have acquired property out in Bolinas, and there's a photograph here somewhere on the table; you're branding cattle, it looks like.

GM: Oh yes.

CE: When did you acquire that property?

GM: We acquired that in 1940, and there is a picture here that I brought for Mrs. Kent to see of the big mesa, and we bought that at the same time. And that borders on the RCA property.

CE: There are five Cochrane girls here.

GM: Five Cochrane girls but there are just the two families you see there.

CE: 1912. Was it a working ranch or was it a pleasurable ranch?

GM: Well it was pleasurable and working but not too productive. When our son Jordan was married we went into the cattle business, and we raised very fine white-faced Herefords. And we would have a cattle roundup every year. Many, many a time I would help round up cattle, and I helped brand cattle. There's a picture here of Jordan and myself branding cattle. And I'll never forget, one morning about five o'clock, the phone rang and it was my son Jordan saying, "Mother, will you come and help me?" He was raising his cattle on what is now the Scout Ranch. Do you know where the Scout Ranch is, coming down White's Hill? And his cattle got out, and they were on the highway, and he was trying to get them back into the Scout Ranch. So I got into the car, it was then about five fifteen I guess, and went up on White's Hill with the traffic coming and helped him get all those cattle back into the Scout Ranch. So I was always very happy that I had that training that I had with my father. We would have roundups on the ranch once a year, which we had to brand the cattle. And that was always fun because all the neighbors who had cattle would come and help and of course we would have a big barbeque for them. Our first barbeque was a surprise and shock of our lives because we didn't know so many people would come. They would all tell their friends, and they would bring all of their children. You never saw such a mob. The second roundup that we had was very different because we were prepared. We were greenhorns in the beginning.

CE: Does your son still enjoy the ranch?

GM: Oh he loves it; Jordan loves the ranch; he's still there. He goes on the weekends and he goes --

CE: Do you go as often?

GM: Yes, I love the ranch also. When the bottom fell out of the cattle business, we went into the sheep-raising business there, and that was wonderful to see the sheep all around. And I think everything that my husband went into on that ranch lost money, but it was fun anyhow, and we all had a good time.

CE: How many acres did you have approximately?

GM: Well we had about seven hundred and fifty where the house is now and then out on the mesa I think about four hundred acres, and we grazed both places. So eventually we gave up the sheep and a man by the name of Banducci who has a flower garden, raises flowers, over in Muir Beach knew of the wonderful soil that we had on that ranch, which we had. He leased acres and acres to raise stock, and it was the most beautiful sight. Not only sight but you could come in there and you would --

CE: The fragrance --

GM: The fragrance of those stock and of course there were big barns there, and he had all Mexican labor. He would come from Muir Beach, and they would

pick the flowers, oh before dawn, and take them into the barns and stack them. Well, eventually he had a hard time with the Mexicans; they thought it was too far to come over there. So he had to give it up. We were just sick to lose the flowers. But another Italian came along and wanted to raise artichokes and he had thirty acres in artichokes.

CE: How did the artichokes take in that climate?

GM: Oh, in that climate, with the fog, they did beautifully. But the same thing happened, was labor; he couldn't get the labor. So he was there several years, and he did very, very, very well. He also raised string beans, and I think that was it. His string beans grew beautifully there. He tried tomatoes, but they didn't grow at all, but the artichokes were just remarkable. And it was a wonderful sight; everything was under irrigation. In fact, my husband had put in a very large irrigation system, because we had so much running water through there. Even today we are supplying the town of Bolinas with water, from the stream that's running in front of the house. Every year my husband would dam the stream, and we would swim. He'd dam it for the children and the grandchildren, and we would have a wonderful time swimming there. I will say it was cold, but of course we were accustomed to the ocean water in Bolinas where we always swam as children, so we didn't mind that. But if any of our friends came, they couldn't see how we could possibly get into that stream of water, but we loved it.

CE: Oh that's fascinating. Well now Gen, we've got to get to you and your story. I know intimately how involved you are at least with one organization, and I must read this in the record because you have agreed this year to be Honorary Crusade Chairman for the American Cancer Society, the Marin unit, and it has been such a help to us, and your support and your belief does much to help us in our fight against cancer. Now you have been involved in many, many things that have been so worthwhile. Would you tell us a little bit about them, way back where they began? I know in '45 you were involved in the Red Cross, but perhaps you have a chronological list.

GM: Well I was involved in the Red Cross when I was in high school in World War I. I would go down to one of these large houses on Fourth Street; I think it was the Dufficy house, and help roll bandages. And in World War II I was walking across over to the courthouse with my husband who was then a practicing trial lawyer, and I saw a lady looking out of the window watching me come along this little street and talking and laughing with Jordan. And I went into court, and I saw this lady sitting in the jury box. It turned out it was Emme Gilman. And that night I received a call from Emme Gilman. I didn't know her at the time, and she asked me if I would work in the blood donor service, and I said I would, for the Red Cross. Well it turns out that I am made the Marin County Chairman for Blood Donors Service, and my position was to obtain women who would sit at tables at the bank, the motion picture theaters, churches, Marinship and get recruits to give the blood because the big blood donor truck came once a week to San Rafael. We would go down, I think it was to the high school down there on E Street. And I have brought a

box here that is very, very interesting that Emme Gilman had made in a San Rafael High School workshop, and she gave these boxes to me and I gave --

CE: Now, this is a box painted white with a red cross on the top, and it has a sliding cover and it's about twelve inches by six. A little bigger than a shoe box. What was the box for, Gen?

GM: Well that box held all the supplies of the latest literature on blood donor service, and I was to take that to each one of the leaders in these various places to keep her informed so she could sell the idea to people to give their blood.

CE: I see.

GM: And then once a week we would go, a certain group of us, down to where the mobile unit was working, and we would work every Friday and take care of the patients on the bed who were giving their blood and that was really very, very, interesting wonderful work.

CE: Would you do it any differently than the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank does today? Would you give any sort of an orange juice or anything?

GM: Oh yes.

CE: In those days what would you do?

GM: We always gave orange juice and coffee.

CE: Orange juice and coffee.

GM: Yes. But it was -- We had a wonderful group working together. I brought some pictures, and they are pictures of people I think all of you are very familiar with, and they were a very loyal group.

CE: What's this title, "The Brass Hat"? You're the power people.

BM: Yes we were the head of a certain section of the Red Cross.

CE: It's your responsibility.

GM: And everyone in there had a certain responsibility for this blood bank.

CE: Grace Cook, Gen Martinelli, Bertha Leach, Florence Davis, Joel Allen, Emme Gilman, Mary Palmer to name a few of the ladies, I recognize. I see there's a clipping you brought.

GM: May I go on about the blood bank?

CE: Yes, certainly, go on.

GM: Just a little bit. One of the highlights with our work at the blood bank was to go to San Quentin. And we went there every other week. And Clinton Duffy -- I'd been all through high school with Clinton, and he was then the Warden of San Quentin.

CE: Was he a local man?

GM: Oh yes, he was born at San Quentin. And we would go there, of course we were under a great strain. We had had very strict instructions before we went, how we were to act, how we were to behave with these men, because they were all prisoners, and we always had to be in a body you see, no one could stray away at all. The mobile unit would drive us down. But the highlight of the whole day was the enormous dinner that Clinton Duffy saw was served to us, and that was the time that meat was rationed, and we would have a huge steak apiece. He saw that we were very, very well fed. That really was something. Another highlight was when we were all sitting in the reception

room; we could never move unless we moved as a body, and Mrs. Cornwall -- Do you recall her, Anne? I was sitting along side of her, and she grabbed me on the side, and she said, "Genevieve, look! The diamond is out of my ring." I must have been inspired, I stood up, and I should never have done it, and I walked out into the yard where we had recently crossed and picked up the diamond. The prisoners had all just walked out. What do they call the honor system? You know the men who are allowed to go out?

CE: The trustees.

GM: The trustees had all just walked over to bury it. And it was the hugest diamond I had ever seen. Well I leaned over, and I picked it up, and I brought it back to Mrs. Cornwall. She almost had a stroke. Can you imagine such a thing as that? Well another highlight was our return trip home. Mrs. Basage worked with us and that dear Mr. Basage. When everyone was delivered to our home, you see, by the mobile unit, and when we arrived at Mr. Basage's home -- I think it was the old McAllister house, wasn't it, Anne?

AK: Yes it was.

GM: He would have us in and give us all an old fashioned.

CE: That was your reward.

GM: And maybe you think that didn't taste good, when we'd been working under strain all day and very, very tired. And that was every two weeks.

CE: I see there's an article here in the 1945 paper where twelve-hundred were signed up at Marinship. What an achievement that was.

GM: Yes. We had a wonderful response people. We had to work; my recruiters had to work. They were there every day; someone was sending them to some location. Just read that one there.

CE: Well this is a letter on --

GM: Where I resigned after the war.

CE: The Blood Donor Service of the American Red Cross, dated May the 21st, 1945 and it's signed by Mrs. P.K. Gilman, Chairman, whom we know today affectionately as Emme Gilman, the renowned photographer. And evidently Mrs. Martinelli has told her of her decision to leave, and she has answered. I won't read all the letter but the last paragraph is, "I want you to know that we all appreciate beyond measure the fine, meticulous job you do and inspiration you give to your workers. They love to work for you and with you and that makes you irreplaceable. If you feel you cannot call upon Ruth Venborda to act in your stead when you are away, we must find someone else to serve as co-chairman, but your spirit and your personality must be there. That is intangible and difficult to express to you, but it is the most important part of your work." Of course, your letter came as a shock to her.

GM: It did, yes. But I felt now that the war was almost over I should give a little more time to my family.

CE: Yes.

GM: Now I'd like to tell you about the work that I did with Gladys Hodgson's Junior Assemblies. And that was all very interesting work. Mrs. Russell Smith, Marjory, whom you all knew well was the chairman for Ross; I was the chairman for San Rafael; Ruth Marcus was the chairman for and Helen

Seymour, Mill Valley. And our work was to screen the children who wanted to join these assemblies. They were beautifully conducted; Gladys Hodgson did a remarkable, remarkable job in training all these youngsters. Not only in how to dance but etiquette in the ballroom and how to act when they were at a dance and so forth.

CE: Wonderful.

GM: We had very, very good times together. And the three of us, Marjory Smith and Ruth Marcus and myself, very frequently would have a dinner dance for the, for our group, for the young people.

CE: Is this still continued?

GM: I don't think so.

CE: I wondered, with the change of lifestyle, if that was still a part of the --

GM: I don't know whether it is or not but it was -- In my position I had to be very, very careful and diplomatic because at that time Jordan was city attorney and people would call me continually to have their children join the assembly and it was hard for me to --

CE: Delicate situation.

GM: It was a very delicate situation. Now, another one of my projects was working with a very remarkable lady and that was Georgia Wintringham and the Needlework Guild of America, and I was her secretary. And she would have me going all over the county talking up the big needlework drive that was coming out.

CE: And what was the mission of the Needlework Guild?

GM: Well the mission was, they would ask a person to give two new garments a year and that was not very much to have but the idea was one in the wash and one to wear. That was her slogan. And those articles were distributed to the orphanages, to Sunny Hills, to St. Vincent's, Dorothy's Episcopal Rest Home and various, various places.

CE: But it stayed within the County or the community?

GM: No, Dorothy's Rest Home I think is up on the Russian River, isn't it?

AK: That's right.

CE: I see. Well you must have had a large task force of women to do this?

GM: We did, we had a very, very large task force, very. Now the Bolinas Rummage Sale is something that I -- I just want to tell you about that picture of the Junior Assemblies. Those are some of the young people. Anita Marcus who is now Mrs. ?? Her husband was Secretary of War under Kennedy.

CE: Secretary of the Navy.

GM: Secretary of the Navy, that's right.

CE: And here's your son, Jordan.

GM: My son Jordan Martinelli Junior. Nancy Ferguson who was married to Stanley Dollar who recently passed away, Ned Stevens whose mother lived in Mill Valley. He still lives there but I think the mother has passed away.

AK: Yes.

CE: We don't have a date on this paper but it would appear to be what, 1950?

GM: About that, about 1950.

CE: What else now?

GM: The Bolinas Rummage Sale. I worked with them for over thirty years. Mrs. McGavern. Do any of you know Mrs. McGavern?

AK: Indeed we did.

GM: She was Mrs. Wilkerts' sister. A very, very remarkable person. It was her idea to have this rummage sale. And the money was distributed four ways, to the Episcopal Church in Bolinas, the Presbyterian Church in Bolinas, the Catholic Church and the Community Center.

CE: Four-way split.

GM: Four ways. They each received every year about two thousand dollars, and Mrs. McGavern was an unbelievable worker in acquiring material. Some of the finest, finest things would come in to that rummage sale. She would haunt her friends in San Francisco. She lived in San Francisco. All of us workers were just what they call "weekenders"; we only had weekend places there, you see. But it was a lot of work, and people would come from Sacramento, come from Stockton, all the weekenders who had summer cottages there would always come back. Well this last summer, just last first of August, it was always done the first weekend in August, was the last one.

CE: The last one?

GM: Well several years ago when the hippies invaded Bolinas, everything changed.

CE: Do you think that's a permanent change? I don't.

AK: I don't.

GM: Well I don't know whether it is or not because I went over, I missed last year, they called me and asked me if I would come back, and we had sort of a reunion with the few of the old timers, and they said it was to be the last one, so I don't know. But it was always a wonderful, wonderful, occasion to be over there and see all of your old friends. In 1941 Mrs. Powers Symington -- I think you all knew her.

CE: Maude Faye Symington.

GM: Maude Faye Symington gathered a group of young ladies at her home in San Francisco, and she lived -- I forget the name of the street, but she lived in a district that today is not popular but probably at one time -- Grove.

CE: It was on Grove Street.

GM: It was Grove, that's right.

CE: That's the original Faye home.

GM: She has us over there to interest us in the Catholic Social Service, and I have pictures here of the Catholic Social Service and what they do. They do a great, great deal of remarkable work. They still do today. And I learned something from Mrs. Power Symington that I've never forgotten. She did not have us meet in a hall or the church or the auditorium, she had us meet in her home and have a tea. In that way you became acquainted with the people you were going to work with, and it is far more enjoyable and it created a far more interest with your workers. So from that time on, I've done the same thing. In every organization that I've ever belonged to, I have had people to my house. When I lived on Lincoln Avenue I did the same thing, and I continued on Mountain View.

CE: And that beautiful tea you gave this spring for the American Cancer Society, yes.

GM: Well I've been doing the same thing for years, and it certainly pays off if you want your workers to work.

CE: That's right.

GM: Emme Gilman was so pleased when she convinced me I should be the chairman for Marin County for the Blood Donors, and so I had the tea there for all the workers, and I would -- When they would give their report tea they would all come to my house. Well she organized, as you can see from that paper, the work that the Social Service does. They do wonderful, wonderful work, but we needed money, and someone conceived the idea of having a ball. Well my sister, for a number of years, was a designer in Podesta. Her name was Ruth Cochrane Kelly. And she said that she would be our designer and create the décor for us. Well the first ball that was held she -- how she ever thought of this I'll never know -- she wanted calla lilies, and she knew where there was a swamp of calla lilies over at Stinson Beach on the Nye Ranch. You probably have seen the --

AK: Yes.

GM: So I get up, leave the house at five o'clock in the morning unknown to my husband, and I drove to Stinson Beach with the bare boots on and walked in the swamp, and I gathered hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of calla lilies, and you never saw anything so beautiful as the Meadow Club for that first ball. Well it made a reputation for us, you see, and every year the balls have been beautiful, but no ball as ever as beautiful as that one.

CE: You certainly have been busy. What other activities have you been involved in?

GM: Well the Marin Music Chest, The Lawyer's Wives.

CE: Now that was a Maude Faye Symington endeavor.

GM: She started us all in that, when we went out and collected sponsorship for twenty-five cents apiece.

CE: Yes.

GM: The Lawyer's Wives first started here and the Marin Charitable Foundation. And with all of these I have had teas at my house for them.

CE: Well yours has been a most interesting life, Gen. We have had the pleasure, as you know, of interviewing Judge Jordan Martinelli and his story was so fascinating. You've been a very close family haven't you?

GM: We have been a very close family, Carla, and we've had a very close family life, and we still have that today. We all fished, we all hunted, we all drove cattle, we all branded cattle, and we all worked in roundups together. We took many, many fishing trips to the Stanislaus River, and I brought some pictures to show you the rugged waters we used to fish in. We rode horseback for miles and miles over rugged trails in the backcountry of the Sierras where few people venture. We were the first family to walk over the Golden Gate Bridge before it was completed or the base laid. And I don't know why I --

CE: There's an article here in 1937 from the newspaper; could you give us a little highlight of that experience?

GM: Well that was really very, very exciting and very thrilling, although I almost lost my mind. The boys were very young, and they would lie on their stomachs, and there was no foundation; there were just boards across that we would have to walk over, and the boys would spit down into the water. It was really quite an experience.

CE: Well it seems to me you've had the daring and the love of life to share in all these wonderful experiences with your family.

GM: Well we've had all of that, but don't think it's all been just Pollyanna, no grief. We've had sickness, and we've had trouble and all --

CE: You've had your grief and your loss.

GM: We've had our grief and all, but we've come out on top.

CE: Well I think one thing, if I might say, and I think Mrs. Kent will agree, you have always given of yourself Gen Martinelli.

GM: I don't know about that.

CE: You have, and you are certainly beloved by a host of people in this community, and we thank you so much for sharing with us this story of your wonderful family in life. Thank you.

GM: Thank you.