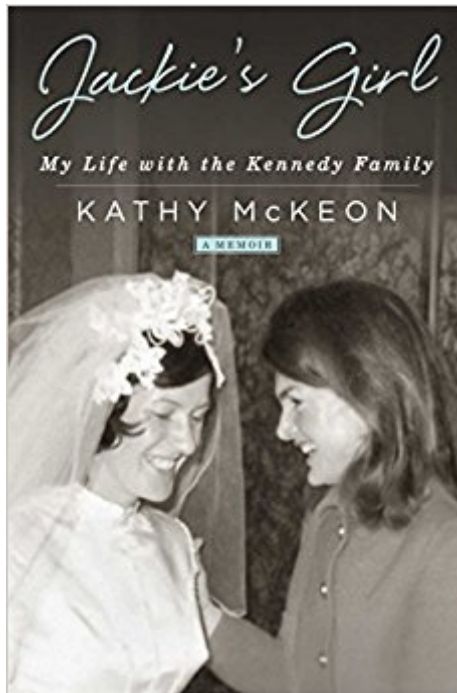




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# Jackie's Girl: My Life With The Kennedy Family



## Synopsis

New York Times Bestseller An endearing coming-of-age memoir by a young woman who spent thirteen years as Jackie Kennedy's personal assistant and occasional nanny and the lessons about life and love she learned from the glamorous first lady. In 1964, Kathy McKeon was just nineteen years old and newly arrived from Ireland when she was hired as the personal assistant to former first lady Jackie Kennedy. The next thirteen years of her life were spent in Jackie's service, during which Kathy not only played a crucial role in raising young Caroline and John Jr., but also had a front-row seat to some of the twentieth century's most significant events. Because Kathy was always at Jackie's side, Rose Kennedy deemed her "Jackie's girl." And although Kathy called Jackie "Madam," she considered her employer more like a big sister who, in many ways, mentored her on how to be a lady. Kathy was there during Jackie and Aristotle Onassis's courtship and marriage and Robert Kennedy's assassination, dutifully supporting Jackie and the children during these tumultuous times in history. A rare and engrossing look at the private life of one of the most famous women of the twentieth century, *Jackie's Girl* is also a moving personal story of a young woman finding her identity and footing in a new country, along with the help of the most elegant woman in America.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 320 pages

Publisher: Gallery Books (May 9, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1501158945

ISBN-13: 978-1501158940

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 245 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #12,677 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Irish #33 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > United States > US Presidents #44 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Presidents & Heads of State

## Customer Reviews

"In a wonderfully readable narrative, she shares good and bad times with the family and their

children, always faithfully protecting their privacy. McKeon's delightful memories have been tucked away for 50 years, and thankfully, she has brought them out to share the enchanting magic of Camelot with us all." --Kirkus

"Celebrity watchers who covet an insider's role will find McKeon's frank yet benevolent memoir to be both a sobering reality check and an engaging foray into the ever-fascinating world of the Kennedy dynasty."

(Booklist, starred review)

The fourth of eight children, Kathy McKeon grew up in Ireland and came to America in 1964 when she was nineteen. She was then hired as Jackie Kennedy's assistant and occasional nanny to her children from 1964 to 1976. She is now a mother of three and a grandmother and lives in Florida.

This book arrived yesterday, and I have almost completed it in one sitting. It is effortless to read and engaging from the very first page. The writer tells her personal life story growing up very poor, but happy in Ireland, as well as leading the reader through her transition from Ireland to New York City to work for the wealthy. The tale of her life with Jackie Kennedy and her children is mesmerizing. She paints Jackie as human, with flaws, but forgiving flaws, and a lot of love and grace. The most surprising thing I have found in this book is just how funny little John Kennedy Jr was as a child. More than once, I have doubled over in hysterical laughter reading her accounts of his mischievous boyhood, and innocent sense of humor. Love love love this book!!!

Of all the books I've read by people who actually knew Jacqueline Kennedy or her children (John in particular), this one is quite possibly my favorite. It's a very well-written account of what it was like to be a young Irish immigrant, born and raised in humble circumstances (i.e. poor as a crow), new to America and thrust into one of the most auspicious positions anyone could've found themselves in at that time in our country's history. It's also refreshingly honest. Lots of people have handed themselves over in service to various Kennedys over the years, either via friendship or employment, without ever realizing how much of their own lives they were willing to sacrifice in exchange for the privilege. (See "Fairy Tale Interrupted" written by John Jr.'s secretary/personal assistant at George Magazine, RoseMarie Terenzio, as a prime example. Like many of her fellow acolytes, Terenzio didn't just work for a Kennedy; eventually her entire life revolved around his without so much as a second thought - and likely still would be if he was with us today, God rest him.) Most fascinating to me is how special most of them think they are for being allowed to become such loyal soldiers - and

just how pitiful anyone else who isn't them must be, including those in "lesser" positions of importance in the ranks. McKeon was not one of these people. She worked hard for her employers and gave them a lot of her free time, but she worked just as hard to become her own person living her own life. She developed real affection for and close relationships with them, understood and respected their importance, and admired them as much as the next person, but more importantly she learned to value herself enough not to allow them to take advantage of her, something people like the Kennedys become so accustomed to doing it's as natural as breathing to them. In that regard, McKeon's years with the family is as much a coming of age story as anything else. She grew up, got a life and family of her own, and one gets the profound sense that that is how it should be. And she pulls no punches, giving both loving praise to and no nonsense portrayals of the people she came to know, some of them less affectionately than others but with goodwill and a lot of humor. In short, they couldn't have been luckier to have one another, and one gains a respect for all of them for their knowing it. My heartfelt thanks to Mrs. McKeon for sharing her story with us.

Kathy is a great storyteller! Jackie's Girl is an easy read as she draws you in with her genuine innocence and sense of humor. If your goal is to examine Kennedy gossip you are sadly missing the over-arching theme of two women, from extremely different backgrounds, deeply connecting over mutual experiences of tragedy, isolation, and aloneness. She weaves together the stories of her life with Jackie in a manner that makes you feel the connection between Kathy and Jackie as it grows over time. This book is about a life-changing experience, it's about human connection despite extremely different world experiences. It's about a relationship that only becomes significant for those taking the time to think and reflect on how an individual can come into our lives and dramatically influence who we are. We are all human, and we can all relate to the moments when we hide in the pantry eating a loaf of Wonder Bread or finish a pint of Ice Cream from the container with a giant serving spoon. A beautiful story that will make you laugh and cry all at the same time. Add it to your Summer reading list!

Once I began reading this book, I couldn't put it down. I thought the author's experiences and memories were honest, credible, and reflective. She portrayed her famous boss and their relationship in a very accurate privately humanistic manner. Their long relationship was based on mutual trust, respect, and love. I enjoyed this book very much.

From the author's childhood in rural poverty in Ireland to working for a very famous and wealthy woman, this book gives perspective on how, while money certainly matters in this world, it is not everything.

I have never really read much about Jackie and there are a lot of books to choose from. I was surprised how well this was written. The author gave us a rare glimpse of the Kennedy family, what they really were like and how they lived. My only thought after was I wish there had been more info on her life with Aristotle Onassis. Still, good book that also lets you see how the other side lives.

I didn't expect to enjoy this book so much. It was a very easy read. I hated for it to end. Thank you Kathy for telling a wonderful story.

Highly recommend reading this amazing book as soon as you can! I finished it last night and was so sad it was over! Kathy McKeon certainly has the gift of Irish storytelling and her stories are amazing. I'm hoping she decides to write another memoir! Proud to say I have met her (prior to her writing of this incredible book) and she is an amazing person in addition to an amazing author of such wonderful life experiences.

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