



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK  
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

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**Interview with Pat Taffe Driscoll**

**Interview Date:** January 19 and 20, 2006

**Interviewer:** Ida Prosky

**Transcriber:** James McMahon

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

**PROSKY:** This is Ida Prosky. I'm interviewing Pat Taffe Driscoll for the Overbeck Project at my home, 306 Ninth Street SE, and the date is January 19, 2006. Pat, you've lived in Washington a long time. You moved to Washington and came to Capitol Hill. So when did you first come to live in DC?

**DRISCOLL:** I came to Washington when I had finished eighth grade, in 1945. I came here to start high school. I was born in a small village in Minnesota, called Graceville, where my father was a veterinarian and mom was a nurse. They separated and I came to Washington with my mom. She had been here several years before, working reviewing medical records for the VA for World War II, which paid more than a regular nursing job in Minnesota. And I remained to finish eighth grade with my class, staying with my aunts so I could graduate with my class, but started high school here. At this point mother was wanting to have our own apartment, but people would not rent to women with adolescent daughters.

**PROSKY:** Why?

**DRISCOLL:** I guess they thought the girls would get into trouble after school. And it was just impossible to find a house or an apartment to rent at that point. So, Mother undertook to take over a rooming house business, run a rooming house at 1818 N Street NW. Just off Dupont Circle on N. It was a three story, big, wide house, with a number of rooms. And they were rented to Georgetown students, to "government girls."

**PROSKY:** How many rooms did you say it had?

**DRISCOLL:** Oh ... two ... say eight, nine. Nine rooms, not counting the bathrooms, which were at the end of the hall. It was my job to clean them on Saturdays, and wipe down the stairs. And Mother and I did the laundry, and she used a mangle for the first time to get the sheets all nice. We would bring the sheets up and they would change their own beds and they kept their own rooms neat and clean.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** Or not. But that was what we did when I was in high school. And then Mother ...

**PROSKY:** Where did you go to high school?

**DRISCOLL:** Oh, I went to Immaculate Conception Academy, ICA.

**PROSKY:** Where was that?

**DRISCOLL:** Which was at 1554 Eighth Street NW, which was Eighth and Q, really. Which is where ... when they sold that to the Archdiocese and Fides house was there for a number of years. And now it's

still a community center. But at the time I had never seen Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul before. They are the ones with the big ...

**PROSKY:** Wings. Yes.

**DRISCOLL:** And they were good educators and got me involved in theater. Really, there was a Sister Madeline who built sets and climbed ladders and ...

**PROSKY:** Oh, that's wonderful

**DRISCOLL:** And I think it was through her influence that I wanted to go to Catholic University's Drama Department when I graduated.

**PROSKY:** What was the racial climate of Washington like at that time?

**DRISCOLL:** The school itself was white. There were a few Hispanic kids, and a new Philippine girl came in when I was a sophomore or junior. And she and I became friends.

**PROSKY:** Were the busses integrated? We're talking about the 40's I guess.

**DRISCOLL:** This would be just after the war and ...

**PROSKY:** They were integrated, the busses were?

**DRISCOLL:** They were integrated, and black people didn't have to sit in the back. They sat wherever. But there weren't any at this school ... not as integrated. This school had kids from Southwest, when there were still houses down there, before they did the urban redevelopment. And I remember hearing them talk about their grandmother having to leave her house because the redevelopment people were coming. And the local people weren't too happy about it, even though, apparently, they got half-way decent prices for their homes. But they didn't like to have to move. I remember at one point a nun who had been the principal of my elementary school came to Washington for some conference and she came over to visit us, and she was just amazed, having ridden the bus from Catholic University to our house on N Street. She had never seen black people before. And this was the time when nylon had first come out and girls liked making sheer blouses of nylon that you really could see through in various colors. But she came and she ... I remember her commenting, "Black all the way down their arms, all the way up their arms." (laughter) And she was amazed. And that surprised me because by then I was sophisticated enough to know that black people were black.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter) Black.

**DRISCOLL:** And for once I was smarter than Sister Ulrie. (Laughter)

**PROSKY:** So where did you go to college?

**DRISCOLL:** I did take the exam at GW, the SATs, in the rain. And ... was very anxiously awaiting word and I got into Catholic University speech and drama department.

**PROSKY:** You were there at a wonderful time, at Catholic University. Walter Kerr was there.

**DRISCOLL:** Walter Kerr.

**PROSKY:** Alan Schneider.

**DRISCOLL:** Alan Schneider was there. And Father Hartke was there.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** So it was sort of a high point of the drama department. It was a great deal of fun.

**PROSKY:** You had a wonderful opportunity to go to Paris. Do you want to talk about that?

**DRISCOLL:** I do want to talk about that, but before that I need to let you know when I took the exam, the entrance exam. We lived near Dupont Circle. But by then my mother had found a house at 718 15<sup>th</sup> Street SE, from an Italian family. How she connected with them in particular I really don't know. But they were moving to the suburbs, and so we moved into their house about the time I started undergraduate school. And so I would take the 90 streetcar up to the Old Post Office near Union Station and then transfer to the 80 to get to Catholic. And then after rehearsals or at 10:30 or 11, I'd take the busses back on home.

**PROSKY:** So you were going all the way across the city, you know, at night?

**DRISCOLL:** And nobody thought anything of it. It was ...

**PROSKY:** Very safe?

**DRISCOLL:** It was not a particularly dangerous thing. I was usually pretty tired, but it was a fine time. And then in later years I knew enough kids who lived in different areas of Southeast that I'd often get a ride home.

**PROSKY:** So you did a number of shows at Catholic University, did you?

**DRISCOLL:** I more worked backstage than on stage. I was from the—from the high school experience, I was a pretty good stage carpenter and painter and also made costumes. Worked with Joe Lewis, the costumer, who lived on Capitol Hill. Just off Eighth Street and on the street that Alberto's is on. He was

an early Hill resident, lived here for many, many years. Those were good years, but the racial climate was ...

**PROSKY:** What was it like at Catholic University in classes?

**DRISCOLL:** There weren't all that many black students. And I remember very often we would go the Wylie's after rehearsal for something to eat. And sometimes they didn't make a big deal out of it and sometimes they did, ah, when we'd have a black student along with us.

**PROSKY:** Oh, I see. OK.

**DRISCOLL:** And I can remember on occasion sitting in the car with a guy named Alex Bussey while the other guys had their ice cream. And then they brought us something to eat. But it was ... I think the students and the faculty were comfortable with people of color. But not very many chose to come to Catholic in the early fifties, although it wasn't hampered. There was Alex in drama and there was the guy in my class who became a physician. I can visualize him but I can't remember his name.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** Cause he was a biology major So it was just sort of there but it was not a big deal during those years.

**PROSKY:** Do you want to talk about Paris now?

**DRISCOLL:** Oh, thank you.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** After I graduated in drama. When I was a senior, I first really got to know a bit about settlement houses. I didn't even know they existed, and my first acquaintance was with Christ Child House, which is at Sixth and ...

**PROSKY:** Massachusetts.

**DRISCOLL:** Massachusetts, which is now some decorator's showcase or something, but at the time Father Hartke asked if I would like to go and direct the Christmas play for Christ Child House. I said what's Christ Child House? And so he explained it had been set in motion, created, by a woman named Mary Virginia Merrick, M-E-R-R-I-C-K, who was a big deal in Catholic Charities. She also had the Opportunity Shop in Georgetown, on Wisconsin.

**PROSKY:** Oh yeah... I remember that in Georgetown.

**DRISCOLL:** And it was originally set up to provide help for the Italian immigrants, who had come to do the terrazzo work in the Capitol. So that they could learn ... so the women could learn English and the kids could learn various arts and crafts and stuff. And then they gradually added a gym in the back, which was one of the early Golden Gloves training things for boxing.

**PROSKY:** Oh, this is Christ Child House?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah.

**PROSKY:** I never knew this.

**DRISCOLL:** For boys who liked to box. And I'm not into boxing and wasn't at the time. But it was a great resource for kids in the neighborhood. And it was a fun place. And there was a big board room across the front. And I got to know some of the kids. And then wrote a Christmas play.

**PROSKY:** So you wrote the play and directed it?

**DRISCOLL:** I wrote the play and directed it, and my mother made the costumes. And it was a great success. And everybody was really delighted, and I found something that was sort of interesting. And at the time of graduation, a number of my friends went off to New York to try their hand at theater. And I went to graduate school—the National Catholic School of Social Service—to get a degree in social work, because it seemed for me that the combination was right. With theater you have to really know and understand your character and the inner dynamics that make them act the way they do. And that's what you're aiming at in social work, too.

**PROSKY:** There's a connection between theater and settlement houses from Jane Hull in Chicago, right on down.

**DRISCOLL:** Yes. Just fairly recently, Bill and I visited Hull House in Chicago and saw where she had done her plays. I feel like ... sort of in that tradition.

**PROSKY:** Okay. Paris!

**DRISCOLL:** Paris! Okay. I was in my second year of graduate work in social work, and was working at the NIH, with the National Institute of Mental Health with Fritz Redl, and severely emotionally disturbed kids. And I would take a street car, the 30, to the end of the line and then a bus. And it was about a two hour commute, and I would spend three days a week there and the other two in class at Catholic. And I got home from this long trek one night and my mother had left a note on the piano saying, "Alan Schneider wants you to go to Paris with him in *Skin of Our Teeth*."

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** And it was April Fool's night, and I thought she was really giving me a hard time. So I went and woke her up, because by then it was about eleven. I had gotten off at nine, it was after eleven. And she said, "No, no." Anna May Brady, the secretary at Catholic University, had called and said that Alan had remembered my playing the part of the baby mammoth at Catholic, when we had done the play with Frances Sternhagen. It was only a minor part and he wanted me to come and do it there.

**PROSKY:** Now what was the cast of that show that went to Paris?

**DRISCOLL:** Well, ... I

**PROSKY:** These are famous names in the theater.

**DRISCOLL:** But I didn't have to try out for the New York one because he remembered the tryout at Catholic. I was in the Drama Department, but I wanted to write. And he said, "You can't write unless you are going to act. You can't write for theater unless you are going to act. And I want you to come and try out for it, the part of baby mammoth."

Now, everybody else had been cast: faculty member Bill Graham for Mr. Antrobus, and Frances Sternhagen was the Sabina, and one of the other students was Mrs. Antrobus. And everybody was sitting in this classroom, and I had to be a baby mammoth crawling on the floor, hands and knees, saying "It's cold, it's cold," my one line, which got repeated several times. And finally one of my classmates reached out and patted me on the head. And that got me the part. And I guess Alan remembered that and how I had done it. So, all the cast was there in New York. I did my finals. I wrote my blue books on the train to New York.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness.

**DRISCOLL:** Mailed them back, and started right in rehearsing. And at the very first rehearsal, the chairs were in a circle on a stage with just a work light. And most people were sort of struggling with their lines. Helen Hayes would hold her book out and the text and try to get her bifocals adjusted so she could read it. She was wonderful and ...

**PROSKY:** George Abbot.

**DRISCOLL:** George Abbot was Mr. Antrobus. And he was gruff and Mr. Antrobusy, and very ...

**PROSKY:** And who was the maid?

**DRISCOLL:** Mary Martin was the maid. Mary Martin was the only one who wasn't casually dressed. This was the period of Ann Fogarty dresses with the many, many petticoats, out. And she had not only

brought with her a feather duster, but she had memorized all her lines in the first act. And so she would get up and walk around. Everybody else is sitting there trying to follow along in the play and ...

**PROSKY:** This is the first read through?

**DRISCOLL:** This is the first read through and she is not reading, she is acting, and she is walking around playing with people with her feather duster and being very distracting and very cute, and very annoying. And she had her lines and they were well done. But she never got any better. She stayed at that level throughout the performance, which caused some problems. Miss Hayes was not great, but every day she got better and better. And later on, still in rehearsal ... the woman who played the dinosaur and I—she was a black woman, Viney Borroughs, who was a wonderfully talented actress, and who has done a number of one-man shows, did one at St. Mark's not too long after that, maybe ten years—we'd seen Miss Hayes, you know, watching us, talking to us, out the window. And one time she would wipe the, not dust, but the moisture, off the inside of the window. Other times she would straighten up a plant, and another time she tried different bits of business to see what would work best. She was always, always working. And her characterization of earth mother and Mrs. Antrobus got deeper and richer with each day, until by the time we got into performance, it was just amazing. She could be off stage just chatting away with somebody in the second act in a wheelchair from Atlantic City. We had a real wheelchair, a rolling chair ... what did they call it? No not a wheelchair.

**PROSKY:** One of those rolling chairs. A boardwalk chair.

**DRISCOLL:** A boardwalk chair, that's what I meant, not a wheelchair. And she'd be sitting during somebody else's time. And she would be chatting away but she would hear her cue and immediately be in character, right there. And the professionalism was marvelous.

**PROSKY:** How long were you in Paris, how long did you stay?

**DRISCOLL:** We were in Paris at the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt, which is a rock music house now, for almost a month. I was 21. The first two weeks we rehearsed in Jean Louis Barrault Theatre way off somewhere. And it was wonderful to get on the Paris Metro and know that you were going to work. You weren't just a tourist, you were going to work! And you tried to make sure that you went to the bathroom before you left the hotel because there was one bathroom. And it was open air at the top and at the far end of the alley.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** (Laughter) And everybody ... You know it was just ...

**PROSKY:** Not what Americans are used to.

**DRISCOLL:** Not what Americans were used to. But we managed and, you know, we got to be good friends. The company got along very well.

**PROSKY:** Did you fly over?

**DRISCOLL:** We flew over. And flew back home again. But while we were there, on opening night, it was wonderful. They had the best French Champagne. And I was pretty much a teetotaler after prior experiences in my family. And I just wouldn't try any of the wonderful Champagne or wine, despite much persuasion. But I was, unfortunately, adamant. That's one regret I have (laughter) about it, but it was really quite a marvelous experience. The lesser people had their dressing rooms on the third floor, off the—Miss Hayes, and Miss Martin and Mr. Abbott were on the first floor. And minor people ... Mary Martin's daughter Heather played the young girl. And I've totally forgotten who played Henry. [ed: Don Murray] But he was a really method actor, and he would go onto the stage half an hour before curtain and he'd be getting into his role, which caused minor conflict with some of the French stagehands, whose duty it was to use something like a flit gun with perfume to spray the theater. They sprayed the stage with this lovely perfume.

**PROSKY:** Why?

**DRISCOLL:** For the actors. To honor the actors.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness.

**DRISCOLL:** And so you have this wonderful ...

**PROSKY:** I never heard that! (laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** It was great. But Henry would be there getting himself all wound up to be the bad boy.

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh.

**DRISCOLL:** And (laughter) the perfume didn't help him, his process.

**PROSKY:** So you actually had that experience in a French theater of clattering down all those stairs.

**DRISCOLL:** All those stairs.

**PROSKY:** In your mammoth costume.

**DRISCOLL:** In my mammoth costume. And from our dressing room window we were up high and the structure that was next to the Sarah Bernhardt was the Tour San Jacques, which is just a tower of St. Jacques. And we were eyeball to eyeball with the gargoyles on top.

**PROSKY:** Oh. (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** Really, you know, you wanted to stay in the dressing room cause it was so neat. And it just worked out very well.

**PROSKY:** When you came back ...

**DRISCOLL:** Before I got back—they used the same costume that I had had at Catholic University that Joe Lewis had made with this elastic head and heavy canvas and some kind of fleecy thing that looked like an elephant or baby mammoth skin. A wooly mammoth. And with corset stays holding it out to be big. And then they figured a better way to get my back straight was to put plungers in the front for my front legs with the handles cut off and cross pieces so that my back stayed straight. And I really did look like a baby mammoth. But they didn't like the color, so instead of dyeing it, they just put on another load, a whole layer of heavy fleecy material. So it got awfully hot in there. And they figured out that if they got an ice bag ... They made me a bonnet, and they tied an ice bag on top—tied under my chin and on top. And then they put an ice bag on my chest and my back as well as my head to keep me from keeling over in there because it was so hot. And one of my responsibilities was to go and ... I didn't have to take the ice bags, but had to retrieve them from the restaurant around the corner. And one day when I was going in to get my ice bags, I saw a little French boy, maybe ten or eleven, talking with his mother and rubbing the front of his teeth and saying, "Le peau de nos dents", the "skin of our teeth". He couldn't get that idiom, at all.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter) Oh, that's funny.

**DRISCOLL:** Another, sort of interesting thing that happened was I made the front page of the theater section of the New York Times.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness!

**DRISCOLL:** Because as part of publicity, they took the dinosaur and me to the Paris Zoo. Now the Paris Zoo has moats to keep you from the animals and a low wall. And in my costume, my face mostly looks down. And I can't see very well and I move on all fours. Now the dinosaur is standing up, and she can see. And there was a new real baby elephant and they thought it would be great to get publicity pictures. So they put ... they lifted us over and ...

**PROSKY:** They lifted you over the moat?

**DRISCOLL:** Over the moat, over the fence, and the little elephant was there, and they were taking their pictures. And the mother elephant caught sight of us, and came charging over and I didn't know what was happening. Viney Burroughs saw the elephant coming and took off over the moat, but I couldn't see and inside the costume I couldn't hear the publicity people calling to me. They finally had to climb over the moat and lift me over the well. The mother elephant only pulled off my tail.

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness.

**DRISCOLL:** *Skin of our Teeth* was really important for me in a lot of ways. It taught me a number of things. One, that I knew that I had a certain amount of talent, but it was limited. And I thought that you had to be really talented and really want theater more than anything in your life and you had to have really good luck. And I knew my talent was okay, but more importantly, I knew I didn't really, really want it more than anything. There were other things. And social work was one of the things, working to help others, that was more important to me than devoting my life to theater. And I think one of the things that I learned from that show was ... There were several conveners for the second act who were hired in New York to go with us. They were, from my perspective of 21, old women at 35, maybe. And they really wanted to be in the theater more than anything in the world. And they just weren't very talented. They could scarcely project a line, but didn't seem to know it. Very unlike Frances Sternhagen, who was exceedingly skilled and understudied both Helen Hayes and Mary Martin.

**PROSKY:** So you came home and decided to be a social worker. Can you talk about some of the ...

[comments about the tape recorder]

**DRISCOLL:** But about the theater part, seeing these two young women who were quite unhappy with their lives and always complaining about something made me know that you need ... It has to be more than just wanting to be in the theater. And it was a hard, painful kind of thing to see. But *Skin* was really important to me and in a number of ways. After we got home, we did the show here in Washington. We did it in Chicago after Washington, and then in New York.

**PROSKY:** So you toured with this, I didn't realize it.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah. And then I went back to graduate school in September. So it was really that whole summer of 1956. And we would pick up extra conveners for the Atlantic City scene in Act II. You

always need extra conveners. And a couple of them were law students from George Washington University. And one of them was a really nice guy. And he kept saying, "Pat, I've got this friend. He's short, he's Irish and he's Catholic and you'd really like him." And I kept saying, "Some other time." I wasn't really interested. But Bud Ansel had a party at—oh, what is the apartment—Arlington Towers, across the river. And Miss Hayes and Miss Martin and Mr. Abbott didn't come, but everybody else did. And it was really a neat party. And there was this guy, who was his friend. And I didn't know this was the person he had had in mind. And we spent a lot of the evening talking.

It was interesting too, because I was interviewed, hometown girl in the show, by Kathy Zadraveck from the *Post* and I've forgotten the young man's name from the *Daily Star*—no, the *News*, the *Star* ignored us. J. Carmody [Stareritie] liked the show, here. Cole, Richard Cole said an "iffy" performance. We never could quite figure out what I-F-F-Y meant. But we did it at the National and it was fun. And I met my future husband!

And Viney Bourroughs was staying with me, the dinosaur, and one of the other gals from the show, who had gone home with somebody else. But Viney and I were going home, and Bill offered to give us a ride. And it was about 2:30 AM, and we are leaving the next day for Chicago. And we go by the Lincoln Memorial and Viney who, remember, is black, said, "You know, I've never seen ... Could we go see Mister Lincoln?" And, so we pulled up right in the front. And started out of the car and we are part way up the steps, and coming down the steps was probably the only African American Park Service guy in the country at that time.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness!

**DRISCOLL:** There weren't very many black Park Rangers, and Viney was very effective and she said, "Oh, I've never seen the Great Emancipator and I am leaving in the morning and I would really like to see him." And so he said, "Okay, ditch the car." He said it, probably, more nicely. "And come on back." And for a minute and a half, two minutes, he turned the lights on for us.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my.

**DRISCOLL:** At three AM. And it was wonderful, really magical. So that you could read the inaugural stuff. And then Bill brought us home. The Park Service guy said, "Get out of here." But it was a very magical kind of moment, and so Bill drove us home. And we went on to Chicago, where the air conditioning failed in the theater on opening night. Adlai Stevenson was there. And finally all the men in the audience took off their jackets. It was sweltering. They had two little air conditioning units in for Miss Hayes, maybe three. Mr. Abbott probably got one too, but Miss Hayes and Miss Martin had little air

conditioned rooms. And they unzipped the back of me and I was sort of spread out in front of the air conditioner.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** (Laughter) Before going on. I looked like a bear rug or something before going on. But it was a great show and we all really got quite close.

**PROSKY:** So when did you see Bill Driscoll again?

**DRISCOLL:** Not until after grad school started, after New York and then after doing it on TV with Walter Cronkite.

**PROSKY:** Oh, you did this live on television?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah! we did it live. But by then, Mary Martin was back in her Peter Pan mode. I haven't said anything at all about Alan Schneider, who was our director, who was wonderful, whom I knew well from Catholic University, who went on ... Who at the time we were in Paris, was connecting with Beckett, and was getting ready to do *Waiting for Godot* on Broadway that fall. So, he had other things in the wings, but he worked really hard with Mary Martin to get her to try to be the bitchy seductress, Lily Sabina Fairweather. And she wanted to be sweet and light and Peter Pan. And she just ... she could do it, but she didn't want to. And so, she was fighting with Alan a lot of the time. Everybody else was fine. But when she got back for the television, she made sure she had her own director, Vincent Donohue.

**PROSKY:** Aha.

**DRISCOLL:** And fired Alan. And got him fired, and so we were all sort of ...

**PROSKY:** Alan, I remember, was not a television director though. He didn't do any television ...

**DRISCOLL:** He was excited about doing it. And these were the funny old-fashioned televisions, monstrously huge. And he was excited to be ... He always wore that Russian, the Greek fisherman hat. And he was so excited about doing it and then quite disappointed. We also met Art Buchwald when we were in Paris. He came and chatted up the stars. It was a really fun time.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** But to get back to ...

**PROSKY:** So, I know you've had a distinguished career in your field. Would you talk about some of the positions you've held and some to the ideas you've tried to pursue in those?

**DRISCOLL:** OK. Well, when I came back I took my second year of graduate study. And it really was great. And I felt that I was doing the right thing. I was asked to stay on at NIH by Fritz Redl, who was one of the leading psychologists, who got out just ahead of Nazi Germany. And he wrote *Children Who Hate* and *Controls From Within*. He did a lot of work with emotionally disturbed boys and a lot of his pioneering work about life space interviewing and direct intervention which is still used today.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** People keep rediscovering it and giving it new names but it's the same thing. It drives me nuts that they don't stay with the name.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** But I had really come to like the idea of the settlement house. And Christ Child, where I had done that bit of work as a senior and they had offered me a position before NIH did. And I think the money was just about the same.

**PROSKY:** So what did you do for Christ Child House?

**DRISCOLL:** I really helped integrate it. I got my undergraduate degree in '54, and my masters in social work in 1956, and went immediately to Christ Child House where I was the staff group worker. And one of the things that I worked very hard at was getting small girls—eight, nine, ten, year olds—in a cooking class. And we had black kids and white kids in the cooking class. And that was unheard of. But the kids all sort of liked it and it was fine with them. I got to know all the parents. I made home visits beforehand so that people would know. And it really worked very well. I also was in charge of the summer camps, where we had integrated groups of kids. And we'd often go to Fort Washington and do hide-and-seek and play down by the water. And I remember one summer we had a beautiful little Indian boy, who was maybe seven, named Anil. And he was just about to fall into the Potomac, which was pretty polluted, even back then. And I grabbed onto a tree and grabbed him with the other hand and pulled him back. I hadn't taken time to notice that the tree was nearly wound round with poison ivy. And I got horrible poison ivy. And the end of camp ceremony Anil said, "And Miss Pat always said not to touch poison ivy, and then she went and got it!" And everybody sort of laughed and grinned. I also formed the first senior citizens group at that agency.

**PROSKY:** There was a nursery school there, wasn't there?

**DRISCOLL:** No, not at that time. There was an arts and crafts teacher, who was very good. And when the kids would get too loud, she would turn her hearing aid off. She was very old lady. And the boys in the gym did a lot of basketball and all sorts of stuff like that. And that was easily and readily integrated.

There was no difficulty with the boys' integration, but with the girls there was a bit more. And we were really working quite actively to have it happen and it did. And it was wonderful.

**PROSKY:** Over a period of how long did that take?

**DRISCOLL:** It was two, two and a half years. When I had done my first year of field work for social work—school, excuse me—I was in the Georgetown Neighborhood House. And there were a few kids ... black kids integrated. There was an after school program there, and a day care program. And actually it wasn't a few, they were more active over in Georgetown with having a more integrated program. And this just seemed the way to go. And the kids at NIH with Fritz Redl were mixed. And you know, it just seemed ... Having grown up with German and Irish and Swedish and Norwegian, but all white, I don't think that I had ever seen a black person until maybe when we visited the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, when I was, you know, a kid—would notice about eight or nine or ten. But certainly in my little village there were the Protestants and Catholics, and that was it.

**PROSKY:** How long were you in Christ Child House?

**DRISCOLL:** I was there for about two years. And then Bill had been drafted and was in the Army and we were writing letters and we got married over here at St. Peter's on January 4, 1958.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness!

**DRISCOLL:** Almost, just past 48 years. Sort of amazing when you ...

**PROSKY:** Yeah, it is.

**DRISCOLL:** Doesn't seem that long. Doesn't seem that long ago.

So we went then to California, where he was in the Army, with the Judge Advocate Generals Corps. He had gotten drafted the day after he took the bar exam. He knew that that was the way it was going to be, because one of his colleague's uncle was on the draft board. And he knew that as long as Jerry was free, he would be free, and they both got nailed the next day. So we had a lovely first year and half, two years of our marriage.

**PROSKY:** Why did you come back to Washington?

**DRISCOLL:** We came back with with Stephen in the back end of a Volkswagen, not a bus, a little bug. And we padded all the boxes and then put in the port-a-crib mattress and so Stephen had a place to be. He was about eight months old when we came back. And I was home with the children and for a while and Bill was working for the government. And it was very convenient because we could ...

**PROSKY:** Now how did you find the house you bought?

**DRISCOLL:** We had been living in Naylor Gardens for a little while. And after David was born in 1960 we realized we needed more space, and needed a house. And my mom was becoming more forgetful and needed more care. So we thought we would get a bigger enough house so that she could stay with us because she had been living by herself all this time. So we were driving around Capitol Hill. My mother and I had lived on Fifteenth Street.

**PROSKY:** Why did you choose Capitol Hill to look?

**DRISCOLL:** Because it was in the city and we realized while we lived in a lovely place in Monterey County in Pacific Grove, the next town to Monterey, enjoyed the seals and the ice plants and the ocean, we didn't enjoy the fact that there was no news. I remember being stunned Russia had invaded Poland, and the headlines, three inch, were "Debbie leaves Eddie" or "Eddie leaves Debbie," I don't know which one, which way it went (laughter). We missed the world. It was very lovely, but very isolated, so it was great that we had that opportunity to find out that wasn't the place for us.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** We needed to be someplace else, and Bill had a job at the Court of Claims. He had actually come back when we were out there and located the position while I went to the first Monterey Jazz Festival, with Army friends from JAG.

**PROSKY:** How did you find the house on Capitol Hill?

**DRISCOLL:** You keep going back to that (laughter). We were driving sort of around the neighborhood and just looking and we had stopped and looked at various open houses and then we saw this big house on Fifth Street. And we were just ... No, it wasn't in front of our house where we live now, it was front of another house. And we ran into Josephine Turner, who was a real estate broker. And she said, "I'm just closing this house." And she saw one small child and another infant in the car, and she said, "But I've got the house for you. It's a big house and I know you'll like it. Why don't you go?" And she gave us the address. "And tell them that I sent you," and so we did. And the woman who opened the door was named Lynn de Beck. She was a year or two behind me at Catholic U.

**PROSKY:** Ho, my goodness!

**DRISCOLL:** She and her husband and a couple of kids were living there. And she said, "Oh Pat, I'm so glad to see you, come on in. I didn't know that you knew where we lived." And so we said, "Well, we're coming to look at the house." And it was great, it just was really ...

**PROSKY:** You bought it from a friend?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, we were somewhat annoyed with things her husband had done, like taking off the metal eyebrow above the window.

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh.

**DRISCOLL:** And the front steps, and starting to chip with an axe or something—or hatchet probably—the paint off the wall.

**PROSKY:** Oh dear!

**DRISCOLL:** You know, and he had done several minor league destructive things. Like, there had been pocket doors. Our living room is long and double, and I expect there had been pocket doors there and he didn't like the idea of two rooms. So he pulled those out, including a big chunk of the plaster in the middle of the ceiling.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** So, we had bare lathe up there and light bulbs with a chain that you pulled, and I'm so short that I had to jump up to ...

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** And Bill's mother came through the house after we had purchased it. She gave him such a hard time for bringing his family to this slum!

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** But we worked on it and spent one very hot ... starting Fourth of July weekend to take the ... there apparently had been wallpaper in the living room and somebody had removed that but they left the bits of paste. And then there was really ugly turquoise paint on the border molding, going round. And we knew we needed to get that off—the paint off the border molding.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** Oh, it was terrible. It was plaster molding, it wasn't wooden molding, so you couldn't use ... You couldn't, no way.

**PROSKY:** You couldn't use a scraper?

**DRISCOLL:** No, you couldn't use a scraper, and you couldn't use paint remover, because it would destroy the plaster. So, what you had to do was vinegar and salt water and hot water.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness Pat!

**DRISCOLL:** And paint brush, and the stuff ...

**PROSKY:** Fall dripping right down your arm.

**DRISCOLL:** Right down your arm, and then you'd use a putty knife to scrape it off. But you would have to squirt a little bit. We got so we were pretty good. And we found several different colors of paint.  
(Laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** The lower ones were better than the really awful turquoise that was there. But we gradually have done things through the years.

**PROSKY:** Yeah, you all have a gorgeous garden, and was that there when you bought the house?

**DRISCOLL:** Oh the garden was not much of a garden. The Green family who had it just before ... Actually, the Garber family had had it way before. He worked at the bank, National Capitol Bank. And the father became ill with heart problems, and so they had a bathroom built onto the kitchen, so that he could stay on the first floor. And then the Greens and they were all adults and that wasn't much changed. Although I think they must have had rooms on the top floor rented during WWII, because there were the holes for a lock.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** And there was a full kitchen on the third floor.

**PROSKY:** It must have been a rooming house?

**DRISCOLL:** It must have been a rooming house during the war.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** But, I've forgotten what I was ... Oh, the garden. The Greens moved in after Garbers. And their kids were bigger, considerably bigger than ours. And they had made a mess of the yard, and so it was sort of like a big mud pie.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** With a few flowers and things and odd spaces. Not flowers I particularly liked, spider plants and ...

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** So we decided to we would lay a brick patio. And Josephine Turner knew where a house was being torn down and arranged for half a truck load—it must have been half a truck load, it wasn't a whole truck load—of bricks to be dumped in our driveway. And we hadn't been there very long, and that was around the time Dr. King was killed.

**PROSKY:** Oh, oh yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** And we didn't know the neighbors all that well, and we had more people helping us carry those bricks back ... They didn't want any weapon left out.

**PROSKY:** I remember this, we did the same thing in our alley. Moved the bricks into the yard. Get them out of sight.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah.

**PROSKY:** I'm going to turn this off because it's ...

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

**PROSKY:** ... second tape of an interview with Pat Driscoll, that date is January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The interviewer is Ida Prosky. Pat, we were talking yesterday about the Martin Luther King riots and I know that at that time you had three sons, like I do. But you were sending yours to public schools, to Brent, I think?

**DRISCOLL:** They started ... they had Stephen and David. Stephen had started at Brent, two years prior to this, in first grade, having graduated from Montessori school. He had transferred to St. Peter's, at this time. And David was there. On the afternoon that Dr. King was killed, we were hearing pretty scary reports on the radio. And we could smell the smoke, and see the smoke from Seventh Street NW. My husband at that time worked in the Department of Transportation, which is on Seventh and Independence, and he was at a meeting with one of his bosses, one of the seniors in the General Counsel's Office which overlooked Seventh Street and the Capitol. And they looked out and could see the smoke rising. He called and said everyone was safe, everyone was fine, they were going to finish their meetings and he'd be home at the regular time. But we knew that he was okay. By then it was about 3:30 and I was starting to get concerned. Stephen was in the third grade, now at St. Peter's. David was in the second grade there. And Dave came home, and told me that Stephen had to take some younger kids from Brent home because the teachers aide at Brent school saw Stephen walking by, knew that he was a pretty responsible kid, and

asked him to deliver various younger children to their families, to their homes. And then come back and get more. This was a wonderful warm lady. I think her name was Mrs. Beatty or Mrs. Lindsey. But I'm not really sure whether she was the aide in first grade or was the overall teacher's aide. But it was ... Steve made several trips back and forth, taking kids home before he came home for himself. When I talked later with the then-principal, Mr. David Rotter, about what had gone on, he said, oh he had dismissed his faculty earlier in the day, because he was concerned that the teachers would be raped in their classrooms. I expressed some doubt about this and said I couldn't think of a less likely place for a rape. And he was concerned for his teachers' safety and well being. Which put a whole different perspective on how you deal with ... unsettled times. And ...

**PROSKY:** A riot in the neighborhood.

**DRISCOLL:** And with safety issues for the children, as well as the ...

**PROSKY:** So he never taught your children.

**DRISCOLL:** No, it was the ... I think it was himself more than the teachers, because he got in his car and he sped off to wherever he lived. He did not live in the neighborhood. He was white. Our next principal was a very effective black principal, whose name I'll have to get from Joan Keenan, because her kids were going to school there. I'll get that name and give it to you. [Mr. Herbert Boyd]

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** Who was really, really good.

**PROSKY:** Why did you move your children to St. Peter's?

**DRISCOLL:** I think we really did want to have the Catholic education for them. And we figured that St. Peter's was very similar demographically to Brent. We wanted our kids to grow up in an integrated neighborhood, which was why we had moved here. A racially integrated neighborhood, and socio-economically, and just age range. With old people and young people and a range. And the faculty had shifted a bit at St. Peter's. And it seemed like this was an appropriate place again. Because the children had done well in Montessori schools. Stephen at five was reading pretty well. And when I initially went to register him at St. Peter's for first grade, the then-principal said, "Oh, well, he'll have to sit there and learn how to read along with all the other little kids." Then he was already reading and I didn't think that was such a sound move, and so we put him into Brent, where he did very well, and made good friends with Laura Taylor, in Miss Baldwin's class. Miss Baldwin was a lovely lady of a certain age who had been a teacher all her life and was devoted to these kids—what a lady. And she and the Klapthor kids went to her. The Taylors lived across the street from Margaret and Frank Klapthor, who lived just down

the block from Brent. And those friendships and relationships that were made back then really have stayed. Recently, we got reacquainted with Taylors, who had moved away when Arnold Taylor left his position as photographer for the *Evening Star* and became an Episcopal minister.

**PROSKY:** Oh my goodness.

**DRISCOLL:** And they were in southern Maryland for a number of years. And they are now back in their house which they had rented during that time. He's retired and we met again at a very sad time a couple weeks ago, when Paul Klaphor, the middle child of Margaret and Frank, died at 46 of cancer.

**PROSKY:** I knew that ...

**DRISCOLL:** And we went to the funeral in Port Tobacco. Or as Margaret would say, "Port Tabbacca."  
(Laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** And Arnold Taylor ... The Mass was done by a Jesuit who had taught Paul and our Christopher at Gonzaga. And then at the grave site, Arnold Taylor spoke the words of his son Tom who had written them, who couldn't be there, but they had all been in Boy Scouts together at St. Peter's.

**PROSKY:** That was a wonderful Scout troop at St. Peter's.

**DRISCOLL:** Oh, it was.

**PROSKY:** They did everything.

**DRISCOLL:** It truly was.

**PROSKY:** Rappelling, canoeing, climbing.

**DRISCOLL:** And do you remember Bob Brugger was the Scoutmaster during the anti-war demonstrations?

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** And he was a Marine Corp officer.

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh.

**DRISCOLL:** He had served in ... I don't know which battles and was teaching, and on peace march days he would wear civilian clothes and go march with the peace marchers.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** And I think that had something to do with his getting an early out and help with getting his doctorate in whatever it was. He was such a good outdoorsmen. A man of integrity.

**PROSKY:** Oh, yeah, that was a great Scout Troop. I loved it because I had a husband who was, you know, was always at the theater. He was never going to take them camping, hiking. He didn't have the time. And I was doing everything I could, but ...

**DRISCOLL:** But it's nice for them to have that.

**PROSKY:** Yeah, they had a whole outdoor experience because of that Scout troop. It was great.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah.

**PROSKY:** It was a wonderful resource in the neighborhood.

**DRISCOLL:** It really was. I gather that that troop is still going on.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** I hear them making noise on Monday night. (Laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter) You went to the grocery store during that time of the riots, too?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, actually my mom had died about a month before. And we had a Month's Mind Mass [ed: a Catholic Mass of remembrance a month after a death] the day after Dr. King was killed. And we went early. And then drove by our friends the Schuldners', who lived in Northeast by then, Dan and Pat. And we saw a whole bunch of bricks in their front tree box that were loose. And we were concerned, and so we got to their door, they were fine. And they said, oh no, their black neighbors next door had wanted to take them in, and they said no. But the neighbors insisted on writing a note to stick on their front doors. And we asked about the bricks, the loose bricks. And they said their kids had been out front making bridges and roadways for their matchbox cars. And so it was their own kids (laughter) who had disturbed the bricks out front. Which was sort of reassuring.

I think also of note ... Both Bill and I were involved in a couple of different organizations on the Hill at that time. Bill was the Capitol Hill Community Council and myself was the tri-school plan. We were trying to improve the integration in the public schools. And we both had meetings the night that Dr. King was shot. I don't remember who babysat for us, though we went to our separate meetings, both of which were integrated. And we started and sat and nobody could work. Everybody just felt too bad and feelings were raw. I think we all felt betrayed, and sad and I know at my school group very little was said but lots of hugs were given and we just quit because we weren't going to get anything done.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** But the caring for each other was evident, and I think it was good that we held the meeting. So the possibility of working things out in a better way was available. It still brings tears ... The next day, Eunice Diggs was the mother of, I don't know, a bunch of black kids who lived down the alley and across from us, that our kids played with a lot. Actually became what we teasingly called the "alley gang". And there is that little picture of the kids. And she was a lovely woman. And she needed groceries and I needed stuff from the Safeway too. So, I offered to drive her. That was in the afternoon of the day after Dr. King was killed, and the Safeway on 14<sup>th</sup> Street was pretty new at that time, and pretty big. And I think Eunice and myself and one other little old, quite old, white lady who looked like she was sort of out of it and didn't know what was going on, were the only shoppers in there. The staff was there but really rattled around and we got our stuff quickly, and checked out. And there were armed young soldiers with guns with bayonets, maybe three or four across the front of the ...

**PROSKY:** Of the store?

**DRISCOLL:** Of the store, and our car was a big old station wagon and it had baseball gloves and bats and stuff. We used to take the kids down to Haines Point to play ball and pile a bunch of neighborhood kids in and just left the bats and gloves in the car. In our neighborhood there wasn't any place to play baseball. And the kids, the young ... Wow, I can't remember now whether it was the guy with bayonet or somebody who was helping us into the car with the groceries, Eunice and myself. And I really can't remember, but they said with Eunice and myself standing there, "I see you got your protection with you, lady."

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** Now, they were baseball bats from the kids playing but he was assuming that I needed ...

**PROSKY:** That that was a weapon.

**DRISCOLL:** Black people with Eunice standing right there. It was awful. We talked a little bit about it on the way home. Another ... What happened earlier that day, no, the next day ... We were at the ... Saturday, we were taking our kids ... I was walking them over to the Presbyterian Church, which was just a block away, and down to Independence and Fourth Street, where there Carl Orff music class in the morning. And there must have been six young men, Army men, with bayonets in their rifles, standing at parade rest or one of those with their arms behind that we had to pass between our house and the Presbyterian Church. And it was really quite frightening. It was scary to have military men with bayonets and their things, and their guns, standing there.

**PROSKY:** And you say that they were bivouacked in Marion Park?

**DRISCOLL:** In Marion Park. Yeah, we sort of got ... They finally, after they stayed ... I guess it must have been two or three weeks. Was it? I think. And they started putting their bayonets away. I think it was the bayonets that got me. Worse because kids went to have their class and I came back in an hour, or whatever it was later and got them, and we walked home. But the military presence was quite strong, although it got more familiar and they weren't quite so close together anymore. They were fewer. But they were stationed in Marion Park, with all their Army tents and field kitchens and all that stuff, which was fascinating because that was very close to St. Peter's School. After a time the kids would get so they would go over and check out what this Army stuff was all about. And come home and say "We talked to the soldiers," which I think ultimately was good. But that first encounter was the armed people, and less than a block from your house. It was a little daunting. And did not make you feel safe. I remember that there were a few stores touched on Pennsylvania Avenue. The bike shop, which was too tempting to be resisted. And as far as I know the only other store that was broken into during the time was the hardware store. Which is where ...

**PROSKY:** It's on Pennsylvania Avenue and Sixth?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, where Mr. Henry's is now.

**PROSKY:** Our Highs on Seventh and Constitution was looted, including the cash register.

**DRISCOLL:** The cash register actually played a part in this hardware store. It was the closest one and you would go there. We didn't go several more blocks down to Frager's.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** But we would go there, I don't even remember what it was called. And they had a number of black clerks, who were really knowledgeable. And they could tell you which wrench or which screw or which whatever. And, "No you don't want to get that, this is what you need to ..."

**PROSKY:** You went there for fix-up projects.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, they were great, but you couldn't just pay them nor could they go to the cash register. You had to go and there was sort of a raised thing and the woman at the cash register could have an overview, oversight over the whole store. And you had to go with the clerk and hand this lady the money. And I asked her one time, in her big blonde beehive hairdo, how come we couldn't just pay the clerks. And she said, "Oh well, you know they can't be trusted." And I thought ... I said I didn't know

why that was so. And I think I did start going down to Frager's because I didn't like that kind of an attitude. And I could sort of see why that one got broken into.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** So there was some logic and not just impulsivity and instant gratification from the bikes or the ice cream. But with that hardware store ...

**PROSKY:** You talked about a neighborhood organization that you were in, were there other neighborhood projects or organizations that you belonged to?

**DRISCOLL:** Oh boy ... (laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter) A whole list huh?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, a whole list. When our children were really small ... Actually, Stephen was born in 1958, at the end of the year. And David at the beginning of 1960, and Christopher into 1961. So they were 14 months to the date between Stephen and David, and 14 months and a week between David and Chris. I remember Marguerite Kelly put that in that book that she wrote with Elia Parsons.

**PROSKY:** Yes, *Mothers' Almanac*.

**DRISCOLL:** *Mothers' Almanac*.

**PROSKY:** Mothers of three boys, she knew a lot of them.

**DRISCOLL:** "Three under three" was how she referred to me (laughter) at one point. But we were wanting good education for the kids. And we were interested in the work of Maria Montessori, and helped found the St. Aiden Montessori School, which was clear across town and on the old Dumbarton Oaks College campus.

**PROSKY:** For a while, don't I remember that there was a Montessori School running here?

**DRISCOLL:** The Capitol Hill Montessori School.

**PROSKY:** Capitol Hill Montessori School, right.

**DRISCOLL:** Bill Driscoll was the first President.

**PROSKY:** Oh, really.

**DRISCOLL:** There were several families from here. The Keenans went across town, and Joan didn't drive initially, for many years, and in order to make that cross town trip she, Joan Keenan, finally decided

that it was time to learn to drive. And so she did, to transport ... But we did start the Capitol Hill Montessori School here. And it had various homes. First in the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, which had some wonderful space. And they were very gracious in making it available.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** For this Overbeck society I interviewed one of the early board members from Reformation. And she was going through all the different outreach activities that they had, and Montessori School was one of them.

**PROSKY:** You were also part of the baby sitting co-op that was one of the first organizations here that these young families started in the sixties?

**DRISCOLL:** Right, we weren't in on the beginning of that but we were the 24<sup>th</sup> couple to join.

**PROSKY:** And how many did they end up with?

**DRISCOLL:** By the time we left, when the kids were twelve, thirteen, whatever, there were more than 200 couples belonging and it was divided into two—north and south or east and west. We weren't using it very much towards the end. But I certainly remember having to delay a trip to New York because I couldn't balance the books. There was one secretary who took the request and matched the request with the sitter. And we exchanged Monopoly money to know how many hours ...

**PROSKY:** You paid in Monopoly money?

**DRISCOLL:** In Monopoly money.

**PROSKY:** In Monopoly money because you would sit somebody else's for so many hours and then they would sit yours for somebody else. That's how that worked, yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** Or you'd have this money and you might sit somebody totally different. But you had to have a secretary who kept very good records and math has never been my strong suit. (laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** I was up very, very late trying to get these bloody books to balance.

**PROSKY:** So you were secretary of that organization?

**DRISCOLL:** It rotated every month. It was an onerous task and nobody wanted to do it, but you were stuck with it, every once in a while. And if there were 24 couples like when we [belonged], it was only

every couple of years. But it was a pain when you had to do it. And always be on the phone and on call. And you got double time after midnight, and between 5 and 7, supper hours. They were the double time.

**PROSKY:** There were a bunch of young theater families working at Arena at that time. Marguerite Kelly kept telling me about the baby-sitter co-op, and I kept trying to explain to her nobody was home. One of the other of us had to stay with the children, the other one was at the theater. So we couldn't use it.  
(Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** Another thing that our kids did with Marguerite Kelly was clean up the glass out of that park. It's a real park now, the one at Fourth and above Independence, above Constitution, in the block where Elia Parsons and Marguerite lived.

**PROSKY:** OK.

**DRISCOLL:** In back of Elia.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** And there was a yard there that wasn't being used. And we, I guess the grown ups, got the weeds out. Why we left the glass for the kids to pick up?

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** Maybe they were closer down to it, or something. But it is sort of neat when now our sons come back with grandchildren and they can go to that park play on the swings and slides that are formally there now, in a real park, and know that at the beginning they help pick glass out of there.

**PROSKY:** Were you part of the playground that Marguerite [Kelly] engineered ... Building at corner of Fourth and Constitution?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah.

**PROSKY:** This is the same park that we are talking about?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah.

**PROSKY:** All right.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah. She was such an amazing person, and she got Market Day going.

**PROSKY:** Yeah. Market Day was the big settlement house fair at Friendship House.

**DRISCOLL:** At Friendship House. Friendship House was the competing settlement with Christ Child House.

**PROSKY:** Christ Child House, they both had nursery schools we were trying to get into. (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** (Laughter) Friendship House was in Southeast at The Maples, just behind the 600 block of Pennsylvania. And Christ Child which is where I had done that play and did my first ...

**PROSKY:** Were you ever chairman of Market Day?

**DRISCOLL:** No, but I worked on lots of stuff ... many, many of them. I tended not to be chair.

**PROSKY:** Oh, wise woman. (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** (Laughter) Let's see, what else here?

**PROSKY:** Other organizations you can think of on the Hill?

**DRISCOLL:** Well, yeah. I guess, while our kids were at St. Peter's, I think we had gotten used to having a major say in how the Montessori school ran. We established a strong scholarship program for neighborhood kids whose families didn't have the money to put them in. Most were black, but not always. I remember Carlton Diggs, who was one of Eunice Diggs' youngest sons, and before the first couple of weeks he would go with Chris, our Chris. They were age mates. And he would, sort of, stand in the corner and keep his coat on.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 1

TAPE 2/SIDE 2

It took him a little while to get used to it but once he took his coat off and got into it he learned just as well as anybody else. I remember teaching Carlton and Christopher how to tie their shoes at about the same time.

**PROSKY:** Now, you went back to work during this period, right?

**DRISCOLL:** Actually, I stayed home from the time Chris was born. I did a little bit of volunteer work. And then I went back to Christ Child as a supervisor for some of their social work interns, which was very part time, from February '60 to June '63. And that was a good transition because I now lived in the neighborhood and was able to really be helpful to the trainees. And I knew how the settlement house worked, having worked there. And, I think it really worked well.

**PROSKY:** And you went on from there to what?

**DRISCOLL:** Well, one of the things that I did while still there was to help the students do a survey of Acker Street. Acker Street is one, two blocks long maybe, between Sixth and Eighth Streets, Northeast. About two blocks above the settlement. And we interviewed all the families there, who were all black, many with middle class aspirations and sometimes really hard-working folks. Sometimes not so hard working. And we got help from the Sociology Department at Catholic. And we passed that information to the settlement house and to the other agencies working in the area, so that the services could be more tailored to what the people would need. That was a good piece of work.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** But I really went to work between 1963 and 1967, at the Child Center at Catholic U., which was a child guidance clinic. And this was when our kids were quite small and I was not working full time. It was just part time in working with families, doing diagnostics with children, helping train social workers, working with the psychiatric and psychological problems of kids and families.

**PROSKY:** Now, your profession is psychiatric social worker?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah.

**PROSKY:** Yeah, OK.

**DRISCOLL:** I once had a supervisor at Georgetown Hospital who declared there was no such thing a psychiatric social worker. There were just social workers. Actually, I started out as a social group worker.

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh.

**DRISCOLL:** I think I'm more generic than what they like. I can do a lot of things ...

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh (laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** ... working with families and understanding kids with emotional problems and the difficulties the families have in coping with that. Whether they are contributing to it or whether they are just coping with a child, enabling.

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh.

**DRISCOLL:** But I think through the years I worked for three or four years at the Child Guidance Clinic at Catholic and it was really fun. It was great to see these young students coming through and really naïve and learning so much. It was good teaching environment. And then, you know I think some of that rubbed off at home, because I was seeing what was going on with my own young children. And Christopher actually got to be the Christ Child in a Christmas play that we put on.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter) There?

**DRISCOLL:** Not there, but at the Kirby foundation.

**PROSKY:** Oh. (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** At another part time kind of thing that I did. And then I really stayed home with the kids between '67 and '72, full time because they were coming home from school. I think it was okay, we had a wonderful woman who cared for them, Norma Brooks, whom I am still in contact with. She would sometimes bring her children and they would play, but when Stephen would come home from school and he needed help with homework, I just felt I needed to be there for those years.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** And I was really fortunate to be able to make that choice and not have to work. I worked on the pre-schools, and I worked on PTA associations. I started to tell you there wasn't any ... I think they called it a PTO.

**PROSKY:** Yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** At St. Peter's.

**PROSKY:** Because it's not part of a national organization.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah. And there wasn't any such thing. And we had been quite used to having a voice in how the school was run.

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh.

**DRISCOLL:** And we thought that was pretty awful. And so we got together with Mary Anne Beatley and Margaret Klaphor, and ( I am trying to think ) people who had moved away. ...

**PROSKY:** To start that organization?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah. To get it going. And, there is one other man, whose name I can't remember right now, but I will give it to you later [Jim Ketchum]. And we worked very hard with the pastor to get it going and one of the neat things was once you had the organization, then you could work together on things. And, again, this was a pretty racially balanced school at that point, but nobody was talking much to each other among the adults. Kids were fine. And so using some of my social group work skills, I got a lot of mothers together to make Christmas ornaments that could sell at a Christmas bazaar, not a bazaar but a party. And it was really fun. We would gather in each others' homes, black and white, and it just worked, a variety of different things, and then the fathers got involved with deciding what booths and

whatever. And we'd have these parties at the rectory and we'd make a little bit of money from the sale of these ornaments and things and bakery things, I guess we had to ... And it was a real coming together of the groups, and it was really quite unifying. It was great, it was very rewarding. That's the way it's supposed to work in all the text books, that's "the way it's supposed to be."

**PROSKY:** One thing that you talked about yesterday before we finished was changes to buildings in the neighborhood and thought was interesting. Do you want to talk about a little bit about Mary's Blue Room, the swimming pool, St. Cyprian's?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, happy to do that. At some point I think it would be helpful to talk more, not a lot but just a little bit more, about my career, because I did go back.

**PROSKY:** Do, please do that now, OK?

**DRISCOLL:** Do that now.

**PROSKY:** Do that now, yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** After being home for quite a while, I was uncertain about how to get back into the profession and I taught for one semester at the University of Maryland School for Social Work. And it was a big commute and that School for Social Work was quite different from Catholic. Or from Smith, where I subsequently did a good bit of work. It was much more community organization, not individual psycho-dynamically oriented. And, you know, I knew the CO stuff because I had been trained.

**PROSKY:** You had been living it too.

**DRISCOLL:** I had been living it too. But, I felt there needed to be greater definite grounding and so I kept slipping some of that into what I was teaching, and students liked it. But it wasn't terribly well received by the faculty. And so I think it was an okay mutual decision. But part of it there was, at least in the social group work section where I was, for the first time I really felt like an outsider because every once in a while at faculty meetings—it was a small faculty, five, six—the other folks would slip into Yiddish.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** (Laughter) I didn't know the language.

**PROSKY:** Oh, that's funny.

**DRISCOLL:** And they would forget and I would have to say, "Hey, I'm here." It needed a reminder. And, you know, it wasn't quite right and, you know, it was mutually agreeable separation. And then I

briefly worked at the Kennedy Institute for educable mentally retarded kids, again training graduate social work students. And that gave me an insight into how organizations work on behalf of people at a very first-hand level and where interferences could be. And while taking those students to a case conference at Children's Hospital, I met a woman who was to become a major mentor for me, a social worker named Dorothy Scallan, S-C-A-L-L-A-N., who was chief social worker at Children's, in the department of psychiatry. And I ultimately moved to Children's as a social worker there. I was quite concerned on the application that said "do you know anybody on the Children's Hospital Staff?" And I knew Mimi Wolf from 11<sup>th</sup> Street very, very well, and so I put that down, being very honest. And I still got the job.

(Laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** But it worked really, really well. I coordinated the medical students training program and treated families and really had a chance to help young physicians in their third year of medical school understand what family dynamics were about and how they could reach out and be helpful to kids, and how important doing an appropriate interpretive interview was to let the family understand what was going on. From Children's, I went on to be the chief social worker and the associate administrator of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services at Georgetown. I think there for just about twelve years, becoming the associate administrator while there. But, again, it was really rewarding, teaching child psychiatry fellows and psychiatry residents the dynamics about families and how mental illness impacts families and how families impact mental illness. And that you can't just treat the individual by their lonesome, especially when it's a child involved

I also while there—it was a small clinic and cases had been for years chosen to meet the specific training needs of whatever residents or fellows were there—opened up intake so that we had a broader range of patients coming through, and this included more black people and lower income people, and their treatment and the training both benefited. It really worked and I think people were pleased to see that and adopted that as a standard. We provided excellent services, and it was really rewarding not only to see the patients improve and leave in much happier circumstance than how they had begun. But to see the young trainees go through and blossom and change and it's ... I'm still in touch with a number of the psychiatrists, one of whom has gone on to be the head of child psychiatry for the State of Maryland. And a number are in private practice in DC. I'm still in touch and it's nice to have been part of that group.

**PROSKY:** That's great.

**DRISCOLL:** I left Georgetown to start a new program in Prince Georges County. I think I was ready to take on a whole responsibility for a program for rather than being part of an on-going program. I started

the PASS program, Parent and Adolescent Support Services, which were funded by money from the Casey Foundation, Annie B Casey.

**PROSKY:** Not Betty?

**DRISCOLL:** (Laughter) No. It's Mr. & Mrs. UPS, they gave the money—they wash their UPS brown trucks everyday, and didn't wash them for one day a week and they gave ...

**PROSKY:** And, that's the money.

**DRISCOLL:** That's the money that we used.

**PROSKY:** And that's an ongoing program now, the PASS program?

**DRISCOLL:** No, I wish it were.

**PROSKY:** Oh dear.

**DRISCOLL:** Part of it is we had an excellent program for severely, emotionally impaired, level five kids. And that was part of a wing, an E-I wing, at Thomas Johnson Middle School, which had a very tight behavioral program, ten kids, a teacher and an aide. And we provided group work and individual work for the kids during school hours. We provided family therapy after school and we did home visits. We had psychiatrists and an after school program therapeutic recreation because the kids would get out of this really tightly restricted classroom, and go bonkers in the school buses going home. And it really was making a difference and it continued for several years there after. But then money ...

**PROSKY:** Ran out.

**DRISCOLL:** Ran out. And the grant had to be picked up and people were pleased with the work, but I left before, to do a similar program with public schools—a preventive program for high risk middle school kids.

**PROSKY:** This was in Prince Georges County again.

**DRISCOLL:** Ah yeah, it was with the Pathway Schools. This particular project was in Silver Spring, but they had a lot of other ones in PG county, and county budget just could not sustain that. So there am I at 60 looking for a job. And, you know, I had all this really good experience and was pretty effective, but from November 1991 to March of 1992 I was looking and, you know, I'd send resumes in and I would be too highly qualified or something. Or too old, they didn't quite say that. But I was really pleased when I applied at the George Washington University Department of Psychiatry for a supervisor job. And the interview was with Dr. Stewart Sotsky, [and] my age was not a factor. It was what I knew and how I

could work. And the chairman of the Department of Psychiatry there was Dr. Jerry Weiner, who had been chair at Children's way back when I had been there. And when I had left Children's to go to Georgetown I remember he took me in his office and he said, "Pat, if you ever want to stop to come back to the big time from Georgetown, let us know." And I haven't seen him in fifteen, twenty years. And apart from that meeting, but he remembered and Dr. Sotsky had liked me. So, I had worked there from March '92 to January '97 where I was the chief psychiatric social worker. Jerry Weiner believed in psychiatric social workers. While there I had the opportunity to develop a working relationship with Smith College School for Social Work, which is one of the premier social work schools in the country, with a psychodynamic base and it just is a very good school. Catholic had had that orientation when I went there and then sort of got "iffy". I think its back on track now. But I became a field faculty advisor at Smith. They used to call them "flying ladies."

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** But then they had male social workers, so they had to get a more appropriate name. Smith has an intensive program during the summers, and (microphone noise interruption) you are in the field five days a week, during the fall and winter. All across the country in Hawaii, Alaska, everywhere, that there's a good program. And so those students need supervision and they have direct supervision in our agencies, but they need some somebody to coordinate and make sure things are going well. So I was one of those coordinating people and we'd go to meetings at Smith and ... What was going and including ... Really in-depth stuff about psychodynamics but also about anti-racism. Smith became an anti-racist institution. Hard to say. And were very serious about it. They had, you know, maybe a third of their students were students of color. And it just was a good strong program and was ahead of where many other schools and universities are. I just came from a grand rounds at GW, where they were discussing the impact of racial bias on therapeutic relationships, which is the first time I'm aware of in the last ten years that there has been ...

**PROSKY:** Interest in it?

**DRISCOLL:** Enough to do a grand rounds. So Smith was ahead of the curve by then. I should also say that when I was way back at Georgetown, I had a really superior student named Pat Harden, who was African American, just a brilliant young woman. And I was able to hire her and she stayed at Georgetown for a while and progressed from psychiatry on into pediatrics and later came to be the social worker at St. Peter's for social work at St. Peter's.

**PROSKY:** Oh, St. Peter's School.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah. So she was on the Hill here and got to know many of the families here very well. And again, we are still in touch.

**PROSKY:** That's great.

**DRISCOLL:** Working elsewhere now. But it's ...

**PROSKY:** That's impressive Pat. I knew you had quite a career. So I did want you to talk about it.

**DRISCOLL:** I'm still seeing three patients now. It's a very small private practice. One little girl, who is not so little anymore. She just grew quickly and is now taller than I. And she is about finished. So, it's been moving from children to adults and the family component, all the way across. So, it's been a good experience.

**PROSKY:** I would like to put on the tape and you have given me a paper that your son wrote on the history of the house you're living in now, 122 Fifth Street [SE], and I'm going to copy that and include it with these tapes. It's a wonderful, full paper. I mean, to know that much about the house one lives in on Capitol Hill is great.

**DRISCOLL:** It's pretty amazing.

**PROSKY:** The Holtz house, Mr. Holtz built it.

**DRISCOLL:** And to know that it really has connections with people. It was built by a man who was grocer and he built, also, the house sort of kitty-corner from us at the southwest corner of Independence and Fifth. So, that house—which is a house now, you can still tell where there were store windows—was his shop. And then it was later owned by somebody who was butcher at Eastern Market.

**PROSKY:** Uh-huh.

**DRISCOLL:** So it has a lot of connections

**PROSKY:** Yeah. You did say something about how buildings have changed on Capitol Hill during the time you have lived here?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah. Some of the ones that I think about were ... You just said some of them and I totally ...

**PROSKY:** Oh, all of the library buildings. The Martin Luther King—not Martin Luther King, the Library of Congress Buildings. You described what was there before.

**DRISCOLL:** Yes, which were lovely row houses behind but along the street where the Madison Building is now. There were wonderful restaurants and shops just like in the next block, including a Giovanni's, which had great pizza and was a fun place to go for a respite from doing your paper in the LC, and they tried to make a go of it in Marlowe Heights but the same clientele wasn't available.

**PROSKY:** Didn't do it. (Laughter) And you remember Mary's Blue Room.

**DRISCOLL:** I do, because that was at the corner of Fifth and East Capitol, across from Market Lunch—no not Market Lunch, what's ...

**PROSKY:** Jimmy T's?

**DRISCOLL:** Jimmy T's, the man who lived next door to us, Jim Teawalt, who was much older than we, and died a number of years back. His daughter lives there now. He would alternate between Jimmy T's and Mary's Blue Room for his meals because lived by himself and you'd see him walking down the street and know where he was headed. He and his father had built the garages that are behind our house and that are entered from the Sixth Street alley when he was there, as a young man. And those are still there. But the garage immediately behind us and behind 120 where Joel Truitt now lives, Joel and Valerie, was made into a swimming pool—inside the garage when Ralph and Muriel Hoitzma lived at 120. He had had a heart attack and needed to be able to swim. So they dug down and put in a small pool. They found they couldn't go as deeply as they had planned because they tapped into one of the subterranean branches of some stream.

**PROSKY:** Oh, really?

**DRISCOLL:** So, they couldn't dive. And they had to have it just be a lap pool. And I expect the stream is also why the walls in the house across Fifth Street get damp.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 2

TAPE 3/SIDE 1

**PROSKY:** Pat Driscoll, the interviewer is Ida Prosky and the date is January 20, 2006.

**DRISCOLL:** I hope we'll be finished soon.

**PROSKY:** We will. (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** (Laughter) But there was, in the walls of this one house not directly across but the next house over ... And the stream must come at an angle. They have had water problems that have never been able to fix. They put up wainscoting finally to hide it. But I expect it's still there. So, it's sort of interesting

to ... Now, when the Hoitzmas moved they sold the house to—who is the lawyer with the McCarthy hearings? What's the guy's name? Put a pause for a minute. [the tape recording stops]

**PROSKY:** OK, so the lawyer for the McCarthy hearings was Roy Cohn.

**DRISCOLL:** Roy Cohn.

**PROSKY:** He lived there?

**DRISCOLL:** Not for very long. He had it bought by his law firm, so that he was not officially the owner. And they didn't always pay the rent. I know Muriel Hoitzma had a hard time with him.

**PROSKY:** Getting the rent out of Roy Cohn. (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** Getting the rent out of Roy Cohn. (Laughter) Periodically, they would have fund raisers and they would put a big elephant out in their front so that everybody would know that it was where to go.

**PROSKY:** The first of the big elephants around town.

**DRISCOLL:** Not quite as big as those elephants. But there were times that there would be private parties there too. And he often had rented or had living in the house a number of gay young men, who on occasion would have rather wild parties. And the back yard we would find beer cans and ...

**PROSKY:** And debris ...

**DRISCOLL:** Debris, yes.

**PROSKY:** And stuff?

**DRISCOLL:** And at one point we were really annoyed so we called over, and I guess some of the young men had a connection with Marine Barracks and very shortly there was a platoon of Marines in a ... Maybe it wasn't a platoon, I don't how many men, but a small number of Marines in work uniforms came to "police" our back yard and clean it up. They were more careful after that. So, it was an interesting, interesting experience.

**PROSKY:** Is there anything that we haven't hit that you want to talk about?

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, a couple of things, but almost, almost all done. I wanted to talk a little bit about two other things. When we bought the house in 1960, it was late mid-summer and we were away for a part of the time. We didn't really see any other kids around. Didn't see any children that first year. And we

thought urr ... Were having doubts about whether this had been a good move. And then spring came, and then all the kids came out in their strollers. (Laughter) So, that was very comforting and ...

**PROSKY:** That's true about row houses in the winter—they close in.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah.

**PROSKY:** They do.

**DRISCOLL:** And we would go to Eastern Savings and Loan to pay our mortgage and I guess have used that as ... No, National Capitol was always our bank. But, at any rate, to the kids that became known as the “lollipop bank,” because they always gave kids lollipops when you went in. That's another change. That's Chevy Chase Bank now. There is no more Eastern.

**PROSKY:** A lot of these banks have changed.

**DRISCOLL:** Where our mortgage was for many, many years. The library changed. The Natatorium was a fire house when we first moved here.

**PROSKY:** See, I didn't know that.

**DRISCOLL:** The fire house, it wasn't a very active one. The one on Eighth Street was always more active. I think there was more storage [at the Natatorium site] than an active fire station. But it was through Jim Hodgson that they got a natatorium built. We didn't have any swimming pool in this part of the world, and you had to go to Georgetown and to that little tiny one over there, or the suburbs. And so they going to tear down the fire house and Jim got it ... I think that was with the Capitol Hill Community Council [that] really worked on that. And of course, the name had to have come from Jim Hodgson, who was such a Latin scholar. Couldn't be a “swimming pool,” it had to be a “natatorium.” And regarding Latin and Jim, our kids took Latin from him at eight o'clock during the summer, for part of one summer.

**PROSKY:** In the morning?

**DRISCOLL:** In the morning.

**PROSKY:** Oh, dear.

**DRISCOLL:** And not a good thing, very unwise investment.

**PROSKY:** Just getting them up, I would think would be a ...

**DRISCOLL:** And getting them up for Latin ... uh! (laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** But another two other memories. When JFK was killed, I just remember that people gathered in our living room and with the church bells around just tolling and tolling. Excuse me, I didn't mean living room, I meant dining room. We sat around the table and drank coffee. And nobody said very much, but it was such an extraordinarily sad time. We were always going to go and get in the line to pass by the bier. And we could look out our bay window and see the line on East Capitol Street.

**PROSKY:** Oh, you could see that line.

**DRISCOLL:** We could see it, and kept checking, at two or three in the morning, we'd check and it was still lined. And we never did get into that line. But other memories are of the peace marches. The "poor people's campaign," do you remember how so many people put up the planners for the poor people?

**PROSKY:** Yes, I do remember that.

**DRISCOLL:** We had a full house.

**PROSKY:** How many did you take in?

**DRISCOLL:** Well we had Uberto Valentin, who was the head of the Puerto Rican delegation from New York. And then we had three young black men from Texas, who were, not SNCC, it's the other one. (back ground noise- doorbell or phone) I am sorry, excuse me. Do want to just turn it off?

**PROSKY:** OK. (laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** It wasn't SNCC; it was the Nonviolent Student...

**PROSKY:** Student Non-violent Coordination Committee.

**DRISCOLL:** Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee. Three of them and there was another couple. I can't remember who, but they would go downtown to their meetings. Our kids slept in sleeping bags in the living room floor, so that various people had their rooms. And ...

**PROSKY:** How long did they stay with you?

**DRISCOLL:** Oh, three or four days, and it worked out.

**PROSKY:** Did you feed them as well?

**DRISCOLL:** I fed them supper, or not really supper, after supper, because they would sit around the dining room table and talk about ... They were all into different groups during the day. And share ideas, and you know, it was a wonderful, vital, just a really natural coming together. The Valentins were

probably about our age in their late thirties, early forties at that point. And the young men were much younger and the other black couple were considerably older. But it was just really well connected and really good. And one of the young men got called to go back to Texas because he had parked his car somewhere and the police were monitoring it and it was being dismantled or towed away or something, so he had to leave. And then one of them was Catholic and I took him out with me to Mass. And he was the one who had lots of bear claws around his ...

**PROSKY:** A necklace?

**DRISCOLL:** And people gave him sort of a wide berth. (Laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** But he was a delightful young man and he wanted to go to Mass and we went. But I think it was really wonderful for the kids to see that different people were working together. And were trying to make things better. And to know that other people on the Hill were doing the same thing. I think the Hill housed more than a hundred people for two of those planning sessions. And then I think, again, when Reverend Abernathy had the Poor Peoples' March that got bogged down and wet and people would come to the Hill and shower and get cleaned up. I know Elia brought tons of food and blankets and things down to help people dry out. I expect you did too.

**PROSKY:** Well, I did some cooking, I think. We had a smaller house.

**DRISCOLL:** But it was neat to be able to do that. And also living here, our kids sort of got used to being evicted from their beds for all the grape picker boycotts.

**PROSKY:** Oh yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** With Caesar Chavez.

**PROSKY:** OK.

**DRISCOLL:** And I had a former social work teacher, Marjorie Murphy, from Catholic University, who would come down from Vermont. By this time she had retired and was getting considerably on in years but she was for fairness and justice and she was going to march with Caesar Chavez. So she got the most comfortable bed. And various other people got beds and the kids were downstairs. And they would go with us to Silver Spring or to wherever Chavez was. And then later after they could have grapes again. Having green grapes was such a joy. I used to like them, but we just didn't have them for a long time. And when they won, it was a big treat and very satisfying for the kids. After Chavez had become so ill and his back was bad, we went and sat in the first or second row at the Reformation Church, when Chavez

spoke. And it was very moving to see this much more frail man, who had to sit in a rocking chair that they brought, but still dynamic and still caring about people and La Raza. And our kids were right there and could see the change and feel a sense of sadness and also of accomplishment at what this man had done.

**PROSKY:** One question, I don't want you to finish without ...

**DRISCOLL:** I think they also had some sense of that not so clearly but after Dr. King was killed there was a memorial service at Ebenezer Baptist, I think it is, the one on Fourth below Pennsylvania. I think that's the right name. And I remember we were sitting right in front of Keith Melder who was a curator at the Smithsonian, good friend of Margaret Klapthor, a good friend of ours. I never realized what a beautiful voice, but what a loud voice. And I never heard "We Shall Overcome" sung more radiantly. It just was overwhelming. The church, everybody, was singing, including us. But Keith was right behind us and it was so clear and so strong, almost too much. But it was sort of triumphant, even though this was close to the time of Dr. King's death. And I think those are memories that stick with kids.

And I think it has continued with our sons, even when they were going to St. Anselm's for high school. Joan Keenan and I used to drive the kids out, take turns when they were younger, but then they would just take the 90 bus here and then to the 80 at the old Post Office, or at the Post Office at North Capitol. And a few of the neighborhood kids from up around there would sometimes approach St. Anselm's kids. Now other kids transferred from Virginia and from other parts and got the bus there and if these kids would panhandle and say "Give me your wallet," the kids who were not comfortable with difference would hand over their wallets. Our kids would engage the kids in conversation and say, "Hey, no, I worked to earn that," and "What do you do to earn money?" And it wasn't a real off-putting kind of thing, but our kids never had to give up their money. And they have always had friends across the boundaries, different races, different cultures. And that's the norm, that's not a big deal for our generation it's more a conscious decision. We do it because we want to do it. They don't think and they just do it. That's the way it should be and that feels really good. I remember Steve, who is an archeologist in Scotland, has sent a number of friends to stay with us when they are seeing Washington, including a very nice young man named Atuka, from Nigeria who is studying at the University of Glasgow. And we didn't realize how tall Atuka would be. And his feet way hung over the bed, he must have been an—who are those Africans who are so tall and slender?

**PROSKY:** Dinkas are one.

**DRISCOLL:** Ebo?

**PROSKY:** Dinkas are one group and ...

**DRISCOLL:** Maybe that was what he was but—no, Watusi. Now we have just ordinary size twin bed and I think he needed another couple feet. (Laughter)

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** So he had to curl up.

**PROSKY:** You also have a son who adopted two black children?

**DRISCOLL:** Yes, David and his wife Jody. David, who is a museum curator. Stephen is the archeologist. I think Margaret Klapthor had a really strong influence on both of them.

**PROSKY:** And your other son also has children?

**DRISCOLL:** He does. He has a little girl and has been in theater for many years—as in the set design part and construction—and is getting ready to take courses to become a luthier.

**PROSKY:** What is a luthier?

**DRISCOLL:** He makes guitars or violins or whatever, but guitar is Chris's instrument and he's going to start that now. He has made one, built one. And hopes to get into guitar making and repair in New England, where he lives in New Hampshire.

**PROSKY:** That sounds lovely.

**DRISCOLL:** So that they are doing well. With David and Jody, and their two African-American children, they have given them African names and Irish too: Ronan is Irish but there is also some African root to that too. And his middle name, Engosi, is African. And then Eniya, the little girl who came to them at two and a half, was after a long wait for a girl, is called Eniya, which means “we asked for her and she came” in Ibo.

**PROSKY:** Oh, that's lovely.

**DRISCOLL:** Which is really cool, but the cousins don't see each other often because they are in such different places, New Hampshire, and Madison, Wisconsin, where Dave is a curator at the Wisconsin Historical society, where Margaret Klapthor had a job interview, at one point and decided to stick with the Smithsonian, but encouraged Dave to go there. And Steve is in Scotland with two little girls [three as of 2008]. So they see each other intermittently. But they have pictures of and know about each other.

**PROSKY:** Oh, that's great, that's great. Anything else you would like to say?

**DRISCOLL:** I don't know what to say about the garden, except it's ...

**PROSKY:** It's a beautiful garden

**DRISCOLL:** Except it's there, and it's a comfort to have there. And I think one of the nice things when you dig in a town in a city, you find things in the ground. Lots of rock and old concrete from prior construction things, and oyster shells which I usually just put back because they add calcium, but there are little shards of pottery, some are plain white, some have little blue, some are brown with little cream colored things. Nothing to build a whole cup or a whole bowl or anything. But just little shards, and so they sit on the window sill of the new windows that we added to the house—after David wrote his paper, we extended the kitchen, so we can now eat in the kitchen and look out at the garden instead of having to have every meal in the dining room, which was dark with that side porch on.

**PROSKY:** So how many shards do you have?

**DRISCOLL:** I have quite a few and when Steve comes home he always says, "That's not archaeology, Mom."

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** It's not real archaeology and I say I know, but it's a history of the people who lived here. It's something of them that is still here now, and I sort of want to keep it. And there are a few things from our time. There is a marble I recognize from our kids. And a part of a little plastic ... There's a whole animal, little plastic animal and a part of a toy soldier that are from our period of time. When I thought of the dining room, I thought of one other thing. When we first moved in, the dining room has a lovely tin ceiling, but when we had bathrooms moved and so on, the ceiling was flaking and it was on the dining room table where we were eating all of our meals, and I didn't want little children to get lead paint poisoning cause we were very strongly warned by Mimi Wolf, who was studying lead paint at Children's at that time, about the dangers. So one Saturday we got up and started scraping, wire brushing the ceiling to get all that old paint off under where that old bathroom had been on the second floor. The wire brush went right through.

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness.

**DRISCOLL:** And so we had to get a new piece for that part. But it was living in an old house. And as our kids have grown, they have all done things to their houses. And they are handy with their hands and they enjoy working with old things. And I think that's another gift that living on Capitol Hill has given.

**PROSKY:** Living on Capitol Hill ... Families, I think.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, this is good. And I think that's almost everything I can think of. Oh!

**PROSKY:** What?

**DRISCOLL:** During Dr. King's march, his "I Have A Dream" speech march, I was nursing Chris. So, I didn't get to go. And so I had all the children from all the neighborhood in our backyard. We must have had fifteen kids, little ones, like four or five on down. And black kids, white kids, and the man who lived three doors down had a small back porch and he came ... It was a hot day, if you remember, it was just really, really hot. And we didn't have a swimming pool, not even one of those little plastic big ones, but we did have a wash tub, an aluminum wash tub, galvanized is the word. And I poured water in that and some black kids and white kids got in at the same time. And the man from across the way was just outraged by this whole thing clearly, yelled across about "you bad person for putting those children together." I said, "No, that's the way it's supposed to be." And he slammed the door and went inside. But, you know, for a day when King is speaking to have that creep do this kind of yelling. He was one of the chief people in the White Citizens Councils, that the Capitol Hill Community Council was created to counter—this white citizens group.

**PROSKY:** I never even heard of that, Pat.

**DRISCOLL:** Oh, yeah! It was really big at that point and that's why more liberal people started the Community Council. But, you know, when I think of Dr. King and his speech at the Lincoln Memorial, I think of my little pool in the backyard, doing that little bit for the cause.

**PROSKY:** That's great.

**DRISCOLL:** And I think that's about it.

**PROSKY:** You think that's it, okay.

**DRISCOLL:** I'll probably think of several other things later, but too bad ... Sorry, forgot a couple of the places. I didn't turn the page over. The Kresge store used to be ...

**PROSKY:** The "dime store" yeah.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah, the dime store used to be on the corner of Seventh and Pennsylvania. Just across from the Peoples.

**PROSKY:** All of our favorite places.

**DRISCOLL:** Which is now Bread and Chocolate, and we have a "D" from the Kresge's five and dime that Joan Keenan picked up and brought home. She got the big K from Kresge's and they were just throwing them out. And so she brought us a "D". The Avenue Grand and the Penn Theaters use to be in that 600 block. The Avenue Grand was the first time our kids went to a grown up ... to a real movie. And

they saw the “Yellow Submarine” in the Avenue Grand. I remember having spent hot summer Sundays in the Avenue Grand with my mother. We had no air conditioning, and that was the only place around where you could get cool.

**PROSKY:** Pat, you are talking about the movie theater that was on the opposite side of Pennsylvania Avenue from the Penn.

**DRISCOLL:** From the Penn.

**PROSKY:** Oh my goodness!

**DRISCOLL:** Which is now Market Place.

**PROSKY:** You are the first person I’ve ever met who went there.

**DRISCOLL:** The Yellow Submarine was great and, I think, my mom and I saw Cornel Wilde being Chopin in *A Song to Remember*, whatever. Because she wasn’t a great one for movies, but we stayed and ...

**PROSKY:** Saw it twice

**DRISCOLL:** Saw it twice, and it was cool. And at the Penn they used to show just ordinary shows and then at one point they started showing porn.

**PROSKY:** Yes, I remember that.

**DRISCOLL:** And again, Marguerite Kelly organized people, and the little kids picketed and said we want cowboy shows or something instead of porn. And that’s now doctors’ offices and stuff. And Hine, where Hine was, this is all right in that area where St. Cyprian’s Catholic Church was, and the convent. And they swore they would make sure they’d never take more land and then they did. But St. Cyprian’s was there. Now St. Cyprian’s was a remnant of the time when Catholic churches were segregated. I remember it as being really beautiful and the ...

END OF TAPE 3/SIDE 1

TAPE 3/SIDE 2

**PROSKY:** With Pat Driscoll, the date is January 20, 2006.

**DRISCOLL:** And we truly are almost finished.

**PROSKY:** You were talking about St. Cyprian's.

**DRISCOLL:** Yeah. St. Cyprian's had a beautiful, beautiful tree in its yard, and I don't know whatever happened to that, or what the story was or maybe they just cut it down. In going back to the Library of Congress, I spent many happy and fruitful days there during my college years doing papers. And I loved the central area where the card catalogue was around the dome.

**PROSKY:** The main reading room.

**DRISCOLL:** The main reading room. And there were desks that were in a circle around card catalogue where they all had numbers and you could order your books. And at one point I didn't quite get where I usually sat. But it was more under where the visitor's observation deck was on the next floor up and I was working and I heard a kid who was quite saying "That's cool. I wonder how far you can spit," and he tried.

**PROSKY:** (Laughter)

**DRISCOLL:** And he got my desk. After that I made sure I moved around to the side. Now that would no longer would be possible because with that wonderful renovation of the building, which is so great. They put up Plexiglas or glass or something, so no more spit.

**PROSKY:** You're not the only one.

**DRISCOLL:** I didn't use the place much afterward. It really did something because I had done most of my undergraduate and some of the graduate papers in that reading room. This is well before computers of course.

One other thing about the boys growing up. They learned which Capitol cops were good guys and which ones were meanies. And they'd know if they saw one from a distance they wouldn't even bother going. But they spent many happy days sliding down Capitol Hill on sleds when it was snowy. Which wasn't all that often. But some days they'd come back very quickly with their sled, but some days they would be out for hours. And we'd also use the sled to go to Eastern Market and get our Christmas trees, when it was snowing.

**PROSKY:** Sledding on the Capitol ground.

**DRISCOLL:** Sledding on the Capitol ground, going down. Now we had another not so good experience on the Capitol grounds, before Lyndon Johnson's inaugural. Mary and Dan Goggin's son Doug, who was the same age as Chris, they were maybe eight, had come over and we had gone down to ice skate on the reflecting pool at the base of the Capitol. And after a couple of hours and turned in ankles, we had very tired little boys and a pretty tired mom, and we were walking up the Capitol. And this was Christmas

vacation, which was before Johnson's inaugural. There were a few signs that said "Don't Come on the Capitol Grounds" and we sort of figured that was made for tourists. I figured that was for tourists. And so we started up the Capitol Hill and Capitol cops came from everywhere, and so we stopped. And they said, "You can't come here." I said, "We just live on the other side of the Capitol and I've got really tired little kids." We all had our skates slung over our shoulders and I asked, "Can't we just go up? It'll cut off a couple blocks." "No way. You might have bombs in those skates."

**PROSKY:** Oh, my goodness.

**DRISCOLL:** So, the concern about terrorists pre-dated our current times. But that was the first time that I can recall any real effort to keep people off the Capitol grounds.

**PROSKY:** Off the Capitol grounds.

**DRISCOLL:** Certainly not before then. We would go and watch and go and see parades. Actually we were on the northeast corner going into the Capitol on Constitution and the turning place there, watching the cortege carrying Kennedy's body. And we could see Jackie and her veil and behind her was Bobby Kennedy with Caroline on his lap. And every line on his face was etched in grief. It was so drawn and down like the tragedy mask, which I always thought was sort of exaggerated. His face wasn't exaggerated. And just after they passed somebody had a radio and Jack Ruby was shot. And the crowd panicked and ran. We had Chris in a stroller and a one-and-a-half and a two-and-a-half. We thought we were going to get run over. We finally just stayed still and let people move around. But to see Kennedy's face was very moving. And he had never been one of my particular favorites, but that did something. Trying to carry on so that when his death came so shortly thereafter ... So being on Capitol Hill ...

**PROSKY:** It gave you a feeling of being a part of things?

**DRISCOLL:** It does. A little part.

**PROSKY:** Yeah, yeah. Anything else?

**DRISCOLL:** I don't think so. Thank you ... Peace marches ...

**PROSKY:** Peace marches, okay.

**DRISCOLL:** Tons and tons of peace marches and Cesar Chavez' grape pickers, too. Always with kids on the floor, and sometimes with visiting professors from some university or other who had heard about a getting a space to stay from friends of friends. And I think that was good for our boys, the experience that people care about and respect others, enjoy their diversity, and are willing to take a stand—what we had

hoped for when we moved into this community in 1960. Yes, Capitol Hill was a good place to grow up.  
Goodbye. Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW