



## **NEW Episode: The White House 1600 Sessions Podcast “Becoming FDR: The Personal Crisis That Made a President”**

*White House Historical Association President Stewart McLaurin  
Discusses the Personal Evolution of Franklin D. Roosevelt  
with Author Jonathan Darman*

**March 22, 2023 (Washington, D.C.)** – The White House Historical Association released a [new episode of “The White House 1600 Sessions”](#) podcast today featuring a conversation with Jonathan Darman, author of *“Becoming FDR: The Personal Crisis That Made a President.”* In the episode, Stewart McLaurin, president of the Association, discusses with Darman how polio shaped Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his presidency.

“A lot of people don't focus on the fact that FDR had a whole career in politics before he got polio,” said Darman. “It's only having that experience of having his life really turned upside down in the middle of life and having to think hard about who he was, what he wanted to do, and how he could get back on the path toward the presidency, that he had to sort of dig deep and develop all these new qualities, like empathy and strategic thinking, and this great oratorical presence, all the things we associate with FDR.”

It was 90 years ago in March of 1933, that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was sworn in for the first of his four terms as president of the United States. Struck with polio in 1921, at the age of 39, FDR drew strength from his illness and used those hard-fought lessons to lead the American people out of desperate times and into a New Deal, inspiring future presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Ronald Reagan along the way.

“To most Americans, they think about his famous words from the first inaugural address: ‘The only thing we have to fear is fear itself,’” said McLaurin. “I wonder how much of that in his own mind applied to himself and his own fears about taking on the presidency, having no idea at that point that he would be a four-term president? That was truly one of the greatest challenging times in American history.”

Watch the full video of this podcast episode on the Association's YouTube channel [here](#).

The White House 1600 Sessions is available on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, and Stitcher.

For more information, please contact [press@whha.org](mailto:press@whha.org).

**The White House 1600 Sessions**

White House Historical Association President Stewart McLaurin is the host of “The White House 1600 Sessions,” the Association’s official audio and video podcast devoted to exploring the history, cultural impact, untold stories, and personal accounts of America’s most iconic residence and highest office.

#### **About the White House Historical Association**

The White House Historical Association was founded in 1961 by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy to support her vision to restore and preserve the Executive Mansion and its legacy for generations to come. Mrs. Kennedy sought to inspire Americans, especially children, to explore and engage with American history and its presidents. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has contributed more than \$100 million to the White House in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit [WhiteHouseHistory.org](http://WhiteHouseHistory.org).

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