

THE BAYLOR LARIAT

Friday Afternoon, Nov. 22, 1963

KENNEDY ASSASSINATED

President Dies in Dallas At 1 p.m.; Connally Also Shot

By ED DeLONG
Lariat Associate Editor

DALLAS—President John F. Kennedy was killed by an assassin here Friday.

John Connally, governor of Texas, was shot three times in the same incident and is reported in serious condition at Parkland Hospital.

Assistant press secretary Malcolm Kilduff made the official announcement of the President's death at 1:35 p.m.

"President John F. Kennedy died at approximately 1 p.m. CST today here in Dallas.

"He died of a gun shot wound in the brain.

"The President was shot only once."

Kilduff said only doctors were with the President when he died in an emergency admitting room.

Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Connally, both uninjured, walked into the hospital as the President, and the Governor were carried in.

The President was shot at 12:35 p.m.

"The President was not dead on arrival but did not regain consciousness," Kilduff said.

Shortly before Kennedy's death became known, he was administered the last rites of the Roman Catholic Church. He had been the first Roman Catholic President in American history.

Even as two clergymen hovered over the fallen President in the hospital emergency room, doctors and nurses administered blood transfusions.

The President was in Dallas on the fourth stop in his tour of five major Texas cities. He arrived at Dallas' Love Field about 11:30 a.m. to be greeted by an unusually large number of cheering spectators.

As he left the plane, preceded by the First Lady, Kennedy did not go directly to the waiting limousine.

Instead he strode briskly over to a large group of children waiting behind one of the barricades and spent about five minutes

shaking hands and talking to them.

This was in sharp contrast to his usual habit of passing through the reception line and directly into the waiting car. After the President entered his car, the motorcade began moving away from the airport at about 10 miles per hour.

It passed from Dallas' Love Field into the heart of downtown

Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as President of the United States of America at 2:45 p.m. CST Friday.

The swearing in ceremonies were held at Dallas Love Field where Johnson and the late President John F. Kennedy had landed only hours before.

Dallas, where people in this strong Republican city had been lining the streets since 9 a.m. to get a glance of their Democratic president.

The President's caravan passed through these cheering people and out of the canyon of Dallas' downtown business area.

It passed around the Dallas County Court House and toward the three-level interchange that leads to Stemmons Parkway, and to the Dallas Trade Mart about two miles away.

It was as the President's car approached this interchange that the assassination took place.

They believed the fatal shots were fired by a white man, about 30, slender of build, weighing about 165 pounds, and standing 5 feet 10 inches tall.

Meanwhile, at the Trade Mart, an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 people awaited the President in a festive mood.

As the minutes passed, they began to wonder where the presidential party was but did not become alarmed because they remembered the President had been behind schedule in Houston the day before.

Newsmen, hurrying between the first floor banquet tables and the pressroom on the fourth floor, suddenly began hearing that the President had been shot.

Except for this, no one suspected anything until long after the President had died.

When newsmen arrived at Parkland Hospital they found many police and Sen. Ralph Yarborough standing outside the emergency entrance to the hospital. The President's car—usually opened but now with a long black convertible top pulled over it—stood in the ambulance drive.

Inside the hospital there was no definite information until Kilduff made his announcement.

Death Mourned

Baylor President Abner V. McCall issued a statement Friday on the death of President John F. Kennedy.

The statement read: "The assassination of the President of the United States is a tragedy. It is not only the loss of the national leader at this crucial time but a blow to the whole American tradition of freedom and self-government.

"All Baylor people will join in prayer for the family of President Kennedy and for our nation in this crisis."



A FINAL PHOTOGRAPH—This photograph of President Kennedy was taken in San Antonio Thursday by Lariat photographer Paul Currier, less than 24 hours before the President was killed.

Shooting Described

By RAY HUBENER
Lariat Staff Writer

DALLAS—A woman who said she witnessed the assassination of President John F. Kennedy said a gunman above a hill shot the President in the head as his limousine came around a corner on the way to the Trade Mart.

Another witness said the President grabbed his chest and fell over. Mrs. Kennedy fell over him and said "My God, he's been shot."

Gov. John Connally also was shot. Blood was seen on his head and face, but he did not fall over completely.

Dallas police picked up a neatly dressed young man in his 20s. He has denied the slaying and said he has witnesses to prove it.

There was no emotional outburst after the news of the shootings broke out. "It's a sad day," a man in his middle 30s said.

Women cried. Most people stood by, stunned. There was reserved weeping all around.

At 1:10 p.m. there was a moment of silent prayer then an oral prayer as the audience waiting to hear a speech by the President filed out of the Trade Mart.



JOHNSON IN SAN ANTONIO THURSDAY
The Vice-President Was Riding In Another Car Friday
—Photo by Paul Currier

Yarborough Tells Press What He Saw

By ED DeLONG
Lariat Associate Editor

DALLAS — Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough, who was riding in the third car of President John F. Kennedy's procession Friday when the President was shot and killed, gave this account of the shooting:

"I couldn't see the President's car because the second car in the procession was full of secret service men who were standing up. There were two explosions.

"I had the impression that they came from the right and behind us.

"After about the second explosion—it sounded like a powerful rifle—we could see smoke lingering over the area.

"The secret service men whipped out a submachine gun. But I do not know whether they fired," Yarborough said.

"The shots sounded like an explosion (here Yarborough paused and counted slowly to five) another explosion and then another bang.

"The secret service men in the second car told the Vice-President and Mrs. Johnson and me to lie down. We got down level with the top of the car," he said.

Yarborough said that the President's car, the secret service car, and his car immediately accelerated to a high rate of speed.

"We were moving very fast—our car could hardly keep up. We came straight to the hospital emergency entrance.

"I saw a secret service man on the car of the President beat the car in despair and I knew then that the worst had happened," Yarborough said.

Campus Reaction Students Stunned At News of Death

Baylor students were stunned at the news of the assassination of President Kennedy.

"This is the most unbelievable thing I've ever heard of," said Elaine Moore. "I can't believe the insanity of a person who would

do a thing like that. I'm embarrassed to be a Texan."

Jeanine Hicks, niece of Gov. John Connally who was shot in the right shoulder, leg, and wrist by the assassin, was working in an office on the fourth floor of Tidwell Building when she heard the news over the radio.

"All I've heard is what came over the radio," she said. "Uncle Johnny talked to Bill Stinson, a friend and advisor from Austin, who was with him there in the operating room. He (Connally) said that the President had been shot and Stinson asked how it happened.

"Uncle Johnny said he didn't know."

Here are other comments from students:

"I think it's awful," said Nancy Canada. "I think it's worse for Texas. I'm from Dallas. Just to think that people from my own hometown could do such a thing, well . . ."

Jack Arrington, also of Dallas, said, "It's a bad thing to happen anywhere. What can you say?"

Rogers sophomore Brian Harbour said, "It's unreal. I can't believe anybody would be so completely . . . a maniac. I can't believe he's dead . . . in Dallas, Texas."

"Tragic. Very significant of what's happening politically . . . lasting impact on world and nation," said Page Fulgham, Atlanta, Ga., senior.



GOV. JOHN CONNALLY
In Serious Condition

Web

See the Lariat's full coverage of the days that followed the shooting. Only on baylorlariat.com.



Inside p. 2

The doctor that operated on JFK recounts what it was like in the OR 50 years ago today.



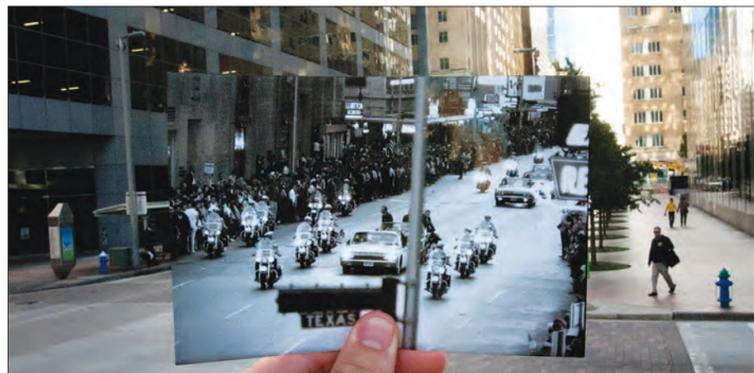
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Baylor student takes it upon himself to restore a plaque vandalized by conspiracy theorists.





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50 years remembered

Above:

Right: This Sept. 9 photo shows an image provided by the City of Dallas Archive taken Nov. 22, 1963, of a Dallas police officer pointing to the seat at the Texas Theatre where Lee Harvey Oswald was sitting when police entered to arrest him, juxtaposed against the current scene in Dallas.

Top Left: This Nov. 21, 1963, photo shows people lining Travis Street near Texas Avenue to see President John F. Kennedy's motorcade during a visit to the city the day before he was assassinated, juxtaposed against the Nov. 7 scene in Houston.

Bottom Left: This Sept. 10 photo shows an image taken Nov. 22, 1963, of Jackie Kennedy and Secret Service agent Clint Hill climbing on the back of the limousine after Kennedy was shot, juxtaposed with the current scene in Dallas.

Below:

Left: Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President John F. Kennedy, is escorted into Dallas police headquarters Nov. 22, 1963.

Right: Ed DeLong, former Lariat associate editor, reports at the Dallas Police Station on Nov. 22, 1963, as police officers parade through the hall with the rifle thought to be used by Oswald to kill the president.



ASSOCIATED PRESS



COURTESY PHOTO

'63 Lariat staff looks back on assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy

By ADA ZHANG
STAFF WRITER

Baylor Lariat staffers Ed DeLong and Ray Hubener hopped in DeLong's car on Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, and drove to the Dallas Trade Mart. The Lariat had been covering Kennedy's entire trip through Texas. In fact, DeLong and Hubener had just covered Kennedy's speech in San Antonio on Thursday, where they actually saw Kennedy and the first lady step off the plane.

They were in the Trade Mart, waiting for the president to arrive. In the mean time, DeLong was looking for someone to release a copy of the President's speech. He went into the press room on the fourth floor and heard the news that completely altered his assignment for The Lariat: "The President has been shot."

From that point on, the story became much larger than just Kennedy's tour of Texas.

"Ed came up to me, pulled me away and said, 'I need to tell you something,'" said Hubener, currently in his 70's and living in New York. "As soon as we were in a quiet place, he said, 'Kennedy's been shot.'"

Hubener was shocked to hear the news, but he understood that he and DeLong had a job to do.

"We said OK, let's do the job," Hubener said. "And we just did the job, which was start collecting facts and information and start talking

to people."

Security was loose back then compared to how it is now. Their Kennedy-trip press tags looped DeLong and Hubener into the same category as the rest of the reporters present at the scene that day. No one could tell they were student reporters.

"The aftermath of the events in Dallas was the end of a time when you could just stroll in pretty much anywhere — the end of one era and the beginning of another when you had to get identification or be escorted to get in many places," DeLong said. DeLong, who is now in his 70's and lives in Australia, described his memories of covering the assassination by way of email to the Lariat.

A policeman, who took notice of their press tags, hailed a car for them to take to Parkland Hospital where Kennedy had been taken.

Outside the hospital, DeLong jotted down Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough's description of Kennedy's shooting. Yarborough was weeping as he retold what he saw.

Professor David McHam, a journalism professor at the University of Houston who was the Lariat faculty advisor for DeLong and Hubener, said portable recorders were not around at that time, so taking notes on a notepad was the only way to record the quotes.

"He had a notebook," McHam said. "He practiced taking notes in

class. That was one of the skills you learned in those days."

DeLong and Hubener worked independently — Hubener outside the hospital and DeLong inside.

DeLong observed the scene in the hospital, but he did not feel emotional as he covered the assassination. He was too busy working. "A woman on a stretcher in the hall watched puzzled as nurses and interns gathered in hushed groups and newsmen scurried around searching for telephones," DeLong wrote in his original report.

Later, DeLong heard the Assistant Press Secretary Malcolm Kilduff announce Kennedy's death.

"The several hundred newsmen — tough veterans who are not usually affected by the stories they cover — let out a gasp even though they already knew unofficially that the President was dead," DeLong wrote.

A nurse had secured a telephone for DeLong to use to the Lariat office. Once DeLong heard the news, he bolted for the phone.

"She fought off all others who tried to use the phone while I went in search of more info and attended the briefing where Malcolm Kilduff announced to a teary-eyed press corps that the president was dead," DeLong said, thankful for her help.

The closest equivalent to today's cell phone in 1963 were radio

phones. These large radio phones were rare, DeLong said.

"On a breaking story, locating a pay phone booth or a pay phone on the wall in a building was often the first thing a good reporter tried to do," DeLong said.

He said McHam had taught him to always have at least one dime on him in case he needed to make a call.

DeLong was calling the story in, which meant he was reading his reports over the phone to a Lariat staff member in Waco.

"There were no such things as computers," Hubener said. "He called it in and someone was there typing it up on a typewriter."

A special one-page issue of the Lariat was planned to run that afternoon to relay the breaking news of America's fallen leader.

After spending a few more hours in the hospital gathering information and relaying it to Waco, DeLong and Hubener headed to the Dallas Police Station.

Because of their press tags, they were granted immediate access to suite 317, where the Homicide and Robbery office was located. DeLong said a policewoman had directed them to the suite without batting an eye.

Amidst a mob of reporters, they could see Kennedy's alleged shooter, Lee Harvey Oswald.

"Oswald was a little man," Hubener said. "I remember seeing

him behind bars."

In his original report, DeLong wrote that Oswald kept screaming, "I didn't shoot anybody. I don't know anything about it."

DeLong worked diligently straight through the night, constantly listening for updates. Reporters came in and out. Witnesses were brought in. Rumors spread as police continued their investigation.

DeLong said he still remembers "the way the police paraded Oswald's rifle through a hallway choked with reporters."

At some point during the night, Jack Ruby came into the police station and offered DeLong a couple of White Castle burgers and a coke.

DeLong said he was well acquainted with Ruby. When DeLong had time during the school year, he would drive from Waco to Dallas to visit Ruby's Carousel Club, which is a bar in Dallas, and drive back to Waco in the same night. DeLong had been visiting Ruby's club for two years, a secret he said he kept from his strict Baptist parents.

"He brought me back a couple of White Castle burgers and took a bag of others into a room where police officers were carrying out their investigations," DeLong said.

At midnight, District Attorney Henry Wade announced that Oswald had been charged with Kennedy's murder.

Reporters made another rush to the telephones. However, the intensity of the President's death waned with time.

"By Saturday the immediate shock had passed," DeLong wrote in his original report.

DeLong and Hubener checked into a hotel at 3 a.m. Sunday and slept until noon. They learned through the television that they had missed Ruby shooting Oswald.

"All I can say is that it's a small world — a fact that I've experienced many times since," DeLong said.

DeLong and Hubener drove back to Waco Sunday afternoon.

"The real world came crashing in when I got back to Waco on Sunday evening and had to start cramming for a Constitution Law examination that was coming up on Monday or Tuesday, as well as attending Monday classes and work at the Lariat," DeLong said.

For its superb coverage of the Kennedy assassination, the Lariat won a national award from the Society of Professional Journalists.

Looking back on that experience 50 years later, Hubener said it was both traumatic and fantastic. It was traumatic for him personally because he was a supporter of Kennedy.

"It was a fantastic experience from a reporter's point of view," Hubener said.

Kennedy's surgeon talks about fateful day

By CLAIRE CAMERON
REPORTER

Dr. Robert McClelland was in the operating room at Parkland Hospital in Dallas 50 years ago, the day former President John F. Kennedy died. Two days later, he was one of the surgeons who tried to save Lee Harvey Oswald's life.

The 84-year-old retired doctor is the last living doctor to have operated on Kennedy. He recalls what that day was like when the president was shot, and the events following his death.

McClelland, who was a general surgeon at Parkland Memorial Hospital, spoke at Baylor on Oct. 24 about his experience of caring for Kennedy, operating on Oswald and then testifying before the Warren Commission.

Q: Can you describe what that day, Nov. 22, 1963, was like when the president was shot?

A: It started out like any other day. I was showing a film at the hospital to some residents and medical students on how to do a certain surgery when I heard a tap on the door and I saw Dr. Charles Crenshaw, one of my colleagues, in the hallway. I stepped outside and he said, "I have something very important I need to tell you." I said OK, went back into the room, turned off the movie and then went back into the hallway and Dr. Crenshaw said, "The

president's been shot and he is on his way to the hospital right now. We need you down in surgery." The first time I really absorbed the news about Kennedy, I was in the elevator with Dr. Crenshaw on my way down to surgery. I was still in my suit; I didn't even have time to change.

Q: What happened when the president was brought into the hospital?

A: Well all the way down to the emergency room, Dr. Crenshaw and I were trying to cheer ourselves up, but when we got down to the first floor, it was chaos. They had news reporters everywhere trying to take pictures and shouting questions. I saw Mrs. Kennedy near a corner sitting down outside the entrance to Trauma Room One, where the president was, and I had to force myself over to where she was and through the door. When I walked in, I was horrified. It was obvious that he had a fatal wound and there was nothing we could do, but nonetheless, we tried to do all we could.

Q: Can you describe what it was like operating on the president?

A: I walked in and put on some gloves. A few doctors were already in the room trying to get chest tubes in the president and Dr. Malcolm Perry and Dr. Charles Baxter, two other surgeons, were already there performing a tracheotomy. They basically were looking

for a way to get an airway so the president could breathe. There was already a wound on the president's neck that they cut into to search for an airway. I was helping them with that surgery.

I stood at the president's head, and I was horrified again to see the back of his head. I was staring down at his bloody head and that image still sticks in my head to this day. I still have the shirt with the president's blood on it. Like I said, I didn't have time to change before we went in to operate, and I was standing at his head where he was bleeding the most and got it on my suit. My wife took the suit to the cleaners, but I kept the shirt and still have it.

We tried to get him breathing again and a doctor brought in a machine to measure his heart rate. We tried all we could, but his head was blown open; I could see his cerebellum. We operated on the president for about 20 minutes

but the heart monitor he was hooked up to showed his heart had stopped beating and around 1 p.m. Dr. Kemp Clark called it. "He's gone. The president is gone," he said.

Q: What happened after the president was pronounced dead?

A: All the reporters and the news people that had crowded around the room left in a hurry and we, all the doctors in the room,

"She walked around to the other side of the table where his right foot was sticking out from under the sheet he was covered with, bent down, kissed his toe and left."

Dr. Robert McClelland | Former surgeon at Parkland Hospital



JUSTIN NEWMAN | ASSOCIATED PRESS

The limousine carrying mortally wounded President John F. Kennedy races toward the hospital seconds after he was shot in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. Secret Service agent Clinton Hill is riding on the back of the car, Nellie Connally, wife of Texas Gov. John Connally, bends over her wounded husband, and first lady Jacqueline Kennedy leans over the president.

started filing out. Before Dr. Clark and I could exit the room, a priest came in to deliver the president's last rites, and we couldn't leave the room because the room was so small. We waited. After that, again, before we could leave, Mrs. Kennedy came in and she looked at him, the president, then walked over and took off her wedding ring and placed it on his hand then took off the president's wedding ring and tucked it in her pocket. After she exchanged their rings, she walked around to the other side of the table where his right foot was sticking out from under the sheet he was covered with, bent down, kissed his toe and left.

Q: What was it like being in the room at such an emotional moment? What were you feeling?

A: I want to say that Mrs. Kennedy was one of the most dignified ladies I have ever seen. She was obviously grief stricken, but she was very self-contained. She didn't scream and cry. You could tell she was upset but she was very dignified and poised. It was terrible and unimaginable but it was something I had to do — it was my job. I can't describe how I felt; it was a tense moment.

Q: You also operated on Lee Harvey Oswald — what was that

like?

A: Well two days after the president's death, it was a Sunday and my family and I had gone to church and afterwards, my wife was getting our two small children ready for lunch and I turned on the television and I could hear the report before the picture came on, but I heard, "He's been shot, Oswald's been shot." Then I saw a picture of Oswald on the ground and bloody. I ran to the stairs and told my wife, "I have to go, Oswald's been shot." She said, "Who's that?" I told her the man they think shot the president. She said, "See you later."

So I drove to the hospital and when I got there he was in Trauma Room Two and he had been shot in the abdomen and was as white as a sheet from all the blood he lost. We had to get blood into him and we massaged his heart two or three times to try and revive him but we failed and he was declared dead.

Q: The Warren Commission was a committee set up by President Lyndon B. Johnson to investigate the death of President Kennedy and examine whether Oswald was part of a large group that plotted the president's death or simply a lone gunman. Were you called before the Warren Commission?

A: Well it was a few months

after the president's death. But going before the commission is something I knew I had to do. The commission was set up by President Johnson and it was decided eventually that Oswald was a lone gunman, but you know the thing about it is that over the years all this information has been found that Oswald used to work in the CIA and about 80 percent of people thought that Kennedy's death was a conspiracy after it happened. Another secret commission was set up after the Warren Commission to go into further detail about Kennedy's death and whether Oswald was a lone gunman and in 1979 the men on the commission publicly announced that they couldn't release what they had found out for 50 years so in 2029 they will report what they find.

Q: What kind of mark do you think Kennedy left on America besides his assassination?

A: Well his death is most certainly and unfortunately is what he is most well known for, but he had a lot of good plans about civil rights and I think he was a very forward-thinking man who was cut down before he had the chance to do those things.

Professors share vivid accounts of 50 years ago

'Presidents don't die like that'

By MIKE BLACKMAN
BAYLOR ALUMNUS

Looking out the window Friday, looking at the chilly gray noontime crowd heading off to lunch, thinking about another noontime 33 years ago.

We were coming back from Snappy Lunch, a little eatery in south Waco near the Baylor campus. You could get a chicken-fried steak for a buck and a quarter, and they would hold the check until your weekly allowance from Mama came.

We were walking toward the dorm, Brooks Hall - at \$75 a semester the cheapest on campus. It was there, in the middle of the courtyard, that we encountered A.J., often known as Applejack. He was running south.

It was a little after 12:30.

"They've shot the president — they've shot the president," he said. We laughed at Applejack. He always was a prankster, the craziest and wildest kid we knew. Smartest on campus, probably if not surely. He was going to be a doctor, although most of that scholarly brilliance he devoted to testing professors, naive coeds and his souped-up '56 Chevy, which he tinkered with endlessly and indelicately raced through narrow campus streets, all hours.

"No, no," he insisted, "I'm not kidding. They've shot Kennedy." This from a guy that stayed up all night and built a cast for his otherwise healthy arm so he could elude a biology test, which he would ace in a couple of days anyway, no studying. This from a guy who didn't like his stairwell monitor, and so he torched the guy's tie rack - in a flamboyant "Z" like Zorro - with a flaming stream of charcoal fluid. He was just a young pre-med who liked to have a good time.

"Get off it," we told Applejack. "It's not funny."

"Not being funny," he said. That's when we notice the tears running down his cheeks. Good God, maybe he was serious for once. Suddenly we were scared, sick in the stomach. A.J. started running toward the administration building, past Minglewood Bowl where we played touch football and over Waco Creek where we deposited our empty Coke cups. Never did know where he was running to.

We hastened to the TV room in the first floor of the dorm. Mr. Cronkite was right there, in flickering black and white, trying to comfort, having a hard time. No word on the president yet. Nothing about being dead yet. There was great relief all around.

It was quiet in the little room; about three or four guys were there, watching, all very quiet. The old TV made it hard to see clear, but you could make every word out. They

were sorrowful words, mostly, about a young president, and no details on what really happened or who the gunman was, but everybody was hoping for the best. It didn't seem real. Presidents don't die like that - not like that, not in Texas, for God's sake.

Fifteen, 20 minutes later, Mr. Cronkite, he really did seem like an Uncle Walter, made the announcement. The president was dead. Died at 1 p.m. at Parkland Memorial Hospital. Mr. Cronkite was choking up a little. So was everybody in the TV room with the lumpy vinyl chairs that nobody was sitting in. Somebody said oh damn and somebody else stormed out of the room, but mostly we just stood, sad, befuddled, lost 18- and 19-year-olds transfixed by the flickering TV, hoping for a bad dream.

"Damn that Dallas," somebody said, and everybody seemed to agree, for there had been a lot of anger in Dallas lately. Kennedy wasn't all that popular right then in Texas, especially Dallas.

It turned cloudy and chilly later that long-ago Friday, and everybody looked for something to do, those who didn't stick by the TV all afternoon.

There was a pool hall across the street, behind a chili and burger joint. It was a good deal at a dime a game, because house rules allowed the retrieval of your scratch shots in eight ball. Made for long games, got your money's worth.

We were frequent visitors to this popular establishment. Why, A.J. practically took his meals there. He was very good, too - could even do trick shots like jumping balls and banking them three or four times before making the right one disappear into the appropriate leather pocket. We expected A.J. to show up any time that afternoon, as it would clearly be an Applejack thing to do. Then again, we thought, maybe he was still running across campus, still running south - all the way to Austin, for all we knew.

Nobody was in the pool hall but the old one-armed man who ran it. We played all afternoon, just the two of us. He played by holding the end of the bridge cue high under his stubby arm. Real good, too. Only words said the whole time were "rack'em" a couple of times. We kept playing till nearly dark, and I kept thinking A.J. would stop by, but he never did. The one-armed manager never charged a dime either, all those games, not the whole afternoon.

Mike Blackman is the former Fred Hartman Distinguished Professor of Journalism at Baylor, a veteran reporter and editor, and a Baylor alumnus

This article originally ran Nov. 24, 1996 in The Fort Worth Star-Telegram. This has been reprinted with permission.

'Those images are fixed. They won't go away.'

By ADA ZHANG
STAFF WRITER

Photographs reveal a glamorous president with wispy hair and a cool composure. Young Americans gather from family photos of his beautiful wife and two young children that this president brought energy into the White House.

Many young Americans think of President John F. Kennedy as a charismatic and handsome historical figure. But those who were alive during Kennedy's presidency remember his life and death as an integral part of America's grand narrative, a narrative too complex to encapsulate in pictures. Fifty years later, they have not forgotten Nov. 22, 1963.

Dr. J. Mark Long, professor in the Baylor Interdisciplinary Core, was in a seventh grade Social Studies class when he heard the news that the president had been assassinated. He recalls his teacher's reaction vividly.

"She was laughing and crying at the same time," Long said. "She asked, 'I know that you're not allowed to have gum here at school, but if one of you has a piece of gum, can I have some?' Almost every hand in the class room went up. She stood there chewing gum, and she could hardly speak."

Dr. David Hendon, professor of history, heard the news when he was a junior in high school. He was in an advanced geometry class when word got around, he said.

"I went across the hall and told my young English teacher what happened, and she said, 'I just knew they were going to get him,'" Hendon said.

His teacher's response, Hendon said, was due to her awareness that parts of Dallas venomously disliked the liberal president.

"Everybody was shocked and depressed," Hendon said. He said he heard of some cases where people expressed joy at Kennedy's death, but sentiments of such nature were not apparent at his school.

Only a fourth-grader at the time, Dr. Michael Parrish, professor of history, still recalls what the weather was like that fateful Friday.

"It was a cold but very sunny day in late November," he said. "Of course, fourth graders were excited about Friday and getting out of school and going home for the weekend."

Parrish said class was interrupted by the principal, who called the teacher into the hallway and told her what had happened. The teacher came back into the room crying and delivered the news to the class.

"Most of us just sat in shock trying to understand what our teacher had said," Parrish said. "One of my classmates, a boy, screamed out, 'I'm glad they shot him!'"

Parrish said the whole class, including the teacher, was horrified at this student's proclamation. He didn't understand why anyone would be glad that a young, energetic and inspirational president had been shot, he said.

Long, Hendon and Parrish all remember being glued to the television for several days after Kennedy's assassination. Hendon said part of reason everyone remembers Kennedy's death today is because it was the first big national tragedy to be televised.

"When the funeral came, I was watching," Long said. "The solute that little John-John rendered to his father, and the funeral procession — this montage of images comes back to me. Those images are fixed. They won't go away."

The turbulent decade that followed Kennedy's death was



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jacqueline Kennedy walks down the Capitol steps with her daughter Caroline and son John Jr. on Nov. 24, 1963 after President John F. Kennedy's casket was placed in the rotunda in Washington.

rife with conflict. In 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were both assassinated.

"I had such a sense of chaos," Long said. "The backdrop of the '60s — the race riots that occurred across nation, the larger social upheaval that involved women's rights and the agony of the Vietnam War — for those of us who were younger, the prophets we turned to were our rock musicians. There was a dooms song, 'This is the End,' and it seemed to capture what we were experiencing in the '60s."

Parrish said Kennedy was a casualty of the Cold War, the rivalry between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Tensions from the Cold War continued to affect the landscape of American politics, Parrish said, until the 80s. Kennedy's assassination signified the beginning of that process.

Good also came out of that era, Hendon said, which is important for Americans to remember.

"Appreciate the good things that came out of that era for black people, for women, for young people," Hendon said. "People don't realize how much things change. It's a good thing to know — because we can do it again some time."

Parrish said people should consider Kennedy's death within a broader context. Thinking about the bigger picture, Parrish said, sheds light on what Kennedy's death means for Americans today.

"As a result, students are better able to put themselves in the broad scheme of life, to put themselves in a place, in a time that includes the past, the present and the future," Parrish said.

Testaments from these three professors are univocal: Kennedy's assassination was a devastating event in American history. America's leader had fallen, his life cut short at 42. Despite the hollowness that he said he initially felt, Long later found a hopeful ending to Kennedy's story.

"I recall so well in 1962 when he gave his address at Rice stadium," Long said. "He said by the end of decade, we'll put a man on the moon. Almost seven years later, I watched the television as we landed on the moon and Armstrong spoke those memorable words. I went out into the backyard. I looked up, I could see the moon. I stood there transfixed, thinking, 'We're there. We are there right now.'"

Student revives defaced Kennedy plaque in Dallas

By PAULA ANN SOLIS
STAFF WRITER

In preparation for the spotlight that will shine on the city of Dallas where President John F. Kennedy was assassinated 50 years ago, one Baylor student did his part to make sure conspiracy theories would be muted and the day honored appropriately.

Rowlett senior Charles Stokes, apart from his studies as a computer science major, is also the youngest member of the Dallas County Historical Commission and has been since his freshman year at Baylor. Now in his second two-year term as member for the commission, he took it upon himself to restore a defaced historical plaque on the Dallas County Administration Building where Kennedy's believed assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, planned and executed his attack on the sixth floor.

"The restoration needed to be done," Stokes said. "I just thought it was really important that it be in good condition and easy to read, especially with the 50th coming up."

Stokes said he learned about the sign's vandalism from an online blog and decided to contact the Director of Planning and Development Rick Loessberg for permission to attempt the restoration. Stokes provided photos of previous restoration work and after review, the young historical commissioner was given the go-ahead to refurbish the plaque.

The main area of concern on the plaque was the last sentence that reads, "On November 22, 1963, the building gained national notoriety when Lee Harvey Oswald allegedly shot and killed president John F. Kennedy from a sixth floor window as the presidential motorcade passed the site."

Vandals had created a deep gash in the plaque highlighting the word "allegedly."

Stokes said while he worked on the plaque with his father Judge Charles Stokes who assisted on the Nov. 2 project, several conspiracy theorists approached them and warned they would only return later to repeat their vandalism.

"The guys that sold conspiracy pamphlets told me they were the ones that originally scratched it with a battery powered saw," Stokes said. "They talked to us while we were out there for a while about possible conspiracy theories involving the CIA Military Industrial Complex. They said that they were the ones responsible for the assassination. I told them 'I suppose we disagree.'"

Loessberg said he knew after giving Stokes permission to restore the plaque, it would likely be vandalized again and said, because his office is in the building where the plaque rests, he has already seen several lines etched under the word "allegedly" again.

"It's a misdemeanor but to catch the person doing it is difficult when you have hundred

of people walking past it everyday," Loessberg said. "That's just a running battle, but we have a black marker to shade that part in. The rest of it looks great though."

The sign is in much better shape and easy to read for the many viewers that will be in Dallas over the weekend for the event "The 50th: Honoring the Memory of President John F. Kennedy," which will take place at Dealey Plaza Friday. Stokes is among those who will attend as a VIP guest.

Stokes said he would gladly return to repair the plaque if the county requested his services, even though he described the process as pain staking and said it takes at least four hours to complete. For this repair, Stokes paid out of pocket for the paint and tools needed.

"He's probably one of the most active members that the board has ever seen," said Dallas Commissioner Mike Cantrell. He is also the commissioner who first appointed Stokes, the youngest member ever, to the historical society.

"He's brought a lot of new insight and perspective to that committee," Cantrell said. "We are very impressed with the work this young man has done."

Because Stokes is not able to repair every sign in the Dallas area, he said he is putting together a workshop in the near future where he will teach other volunteers how to do a similar type of restoration following the method provided by the Texas



COURTESY PHOTO

Rowlett senior Charles Stokes, member of the Dallas County Historical Commission, works to restore the plaque outside the Dallas County Administration Building, which was vandalized by conspiracy theorists.

State Historical Commission.

Though these activities cut into his school time, he said as a fan of history and as a third-generation historical commission member it is something he greatly enjoys and allows him unique opportunities.

One such unique occasion includes seeing first hand death row inmate rooms in the Dallas County Jail, the same jail that housed Lee Harvey Oswald's murderer Jack Ruby.

Stokes said while there he stumbled upon what he described as a "death row baptismal room," where inmates were

baptized before their execution. It is closed off to the public and not well known about.

This discovery is of great historical importance, Stokes said, because not only were inmates baptized there but they also created many religious murals.

Stokes is currently seeking funding and partners to help the city of Dallas extract the murals from the now-shutdown jail house so this piece of history can be shared with the world, much like the Sixth Floor Museum showcases the day Kennedy died.

Assassination shaped future of journalism

By TAYLOR GRIFFIN
A&E EDITOR

In modern day, discovering breaking news is as quick as swiping a text notification on a smartphone or as simple as stumbling upon a trending tweet. News now spreads so expediently and more concisely than any other time in history.

Undoubtedly, times have evolved since the primitive times of technology in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Families would gather around their television set to hear the latest news, mostly in 15-minute evening bulletins.

However, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy halted the world in reverence — many in mourning, others in curiosity. The television set became the hearth of the American family unit for four days from the time of the first gunshot announcement to the somber funeral procession that followed.

"I don't think there was ever a time before that in history where people were in a position to witness simultaneously the same event as they were on that particular weekend," said Rick Bradfield, senior lecturer in the department of journalism, public relations and new media.

In modern news gathering, broadcast journalism has become a direct documentation of the human narrative. In conjunction, associate professor of journalism Robert Darden said he believes history is news accounts with perspectives.

Though he credits the rise of broadcast news to the CBS coverage of McCarthyism in the 1950s, Darden said the assassination of Kennedy 50 years ago was the spark that ignited a new, matured medium of news.

"TV had just come of age before the assassination," Darden said. "A series of incidents led people to believe that television could be a viable news option."

Though the telling of his murder and thereafter were influenced by television reporting, no other president successfully managed a life in the public eye like Kennedy did.

"Kennedy was a master communicator of television: handsome, photogenic, spoke in a way that television could use and cut," Darden said.

According to a story by David Greenberg from *The Slate* magazine, approximately 90 percent of American homes had their own televisions by 1960, just in time for the Kennedy/Nixon debates. An estimated 70 million viewers tuned in for the first of four rounds.

The 1960 election ignited his charisma and charm, both of which were elevated far above his Republican opponent Richard Nixon. In particular, the presidential debate — televised and the first of its kind — virtually sealed Kennedy's spot for the presidency. With a gaunt complexion and disheveled presence, Nixon paled standing next to his opponent on the television



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Three-year-old John F. Kennedy Jr. salutes his fathers' casket in Nov. 25, 1963, in Washington, just three days after the president was assassinated in Dallas.

screen.

"Kennedy came across as a leader who intended to deal with the nation's greatest problems; Nixon registered with voters as someone trying to gain an advantage over an adversary," author Robert Dallek wrote in Kennedy's biography "An Unfinished Life."

His vice presidential running mate, Lyndon B. Johnson, also followed Kennedy's style of oration and unity with the camera.

Beyond the images of television and photographs, the infamous Zapruder film, so named for the Dallas resident who captured the scene, still burns as fervently as it did 50 years ago. Though the 26.6 seconds of shocking footage was not widely distributed or even publicly seen for a dozen years after the shooting, it remains one of the few complete recorded vantage points and highly criticized pieces of history.

"What people remember from these sorts of events are the images, not the facts," Bradfield said. "They remember that horrible Zapruder film and the shot that hits Kennedy's head, the two young Kennedy children standing and watching the procession with John John saluting."

Though the Zapruder film is the best footage from that day, Darden said TV coverage from then on is ubiquitous. Unlike Kennedy's actual shooting, Oswald's murder by Jack Ruby following his arrest was televised to the public. In retrospect, it foreshadowed the future of TV reporting, including the coverage of the moon landing, the Rodney King incident and the developing events of Sept. 11, 2001, according to a recent *New York Times*

story by A.O. Scott.

"Television...was a medium of instantaneous transmission and endless iteration, a template (though this was not clear at the time) for the digital world we now inhabit," Scott wrote.

The assassination directly affected the coverage of the impending Vietnam War of the late 1960s and 1970s, Darden said, and the coverage of the matured both broadcast stations and the viewers who received the footage.

"We go through an incredibly violent stage in this country where extremists and hate groups just pushed the democracy to the edge," Darden said. "Television covers all of it."

Bradfield said this maturity was mostly due to the advancement of technology in broadcast news. He described the assassination coverage as an underscoring of the importance of live coverage, a motion setter for a lot of technological development that produced the tools to cover live events and a movement of revenue for TV news.

The realization that TV was a powerful tool and that broadcast news could be a profitable medium led to a 20-year long expansion of network and local television news, Bradfield said. Out of the development of technologies grew an awareness of the importance of live coverage because very little was recorded the day of the assassination.

"That was almost the point in television history in which that whole axis began to turn away from the newspaper folks toward a new generation of folks who were interested in broadcast," Bradfield said.

Though he was not the first to report the shootings, Walter Cronkite became synonymous with the day's coverage and arguably the most remembered because of the way he handled the reports.

"Cronkite in particular occupied a position as a very direct consequence of the assassination that one in broadcast history will ever again occupy," Bradfield said. "It was pretty remarkable. He was sort of the most trusted news person in the country for a couple of generations of people."

The birth of the iconic anchorman image that followed stemmed from Cronkite's influence on broadcast journalism and ignited the careers of Dan Rather, Jim Lehrer and Bob Shieffer.

However, Bradfield said he believes the true impact of the assassination lies in the purity of the coverage. Everyone at the time was hearing and watching virtually the same thing with hardly any discrepancy, he said. If something similar were to happen today, he said, many would turn to television, but it wouldn't have anything approaching the power of the Kennedy coverage. Most stations would color the event with outside expert and commentator perceptions that would take away from the tragedy at hand.

"It wouldn't be allowed to breathe," Bradfield said. "It wouldn't be something we would witness, but rather something we would be told or shown."

Stephanie Parks, a student worker in the Poage Legislative Library who helped with the curation of the JFK exhibit, said every generation has its tragedy, and for society of the 1960s, Kennedy's assassination was one of its defining moments.

"He was kind of a celebrity president," she said. "I feel like people had a personal connection to him just because they had seen images of him and knew his family."

Parks also said she saw a significant change historically in the delivery and diffusion of news. While reporting has always been about immediacy and accuracy, she said, news became more investigative and thoughtful following the assassination.

"It changed the way that news spread," she said. "It's still heartbreaking to see the newscasters' faces on that day. I know it's certainly hard to be professional in that kind of tragedy, and for them, it was the hardest story of their lives."

Despite its ever-evolving nature in society, broadcast journalism has uniquely recorded history like no other medium, and specifically in the time of Kennedy's final moments, television news became the glue that held the American public together in such a time of despair.

"It was a time when the technology was fairly primitive, but suddenly there was a realization that we have the power to really bring people together in a way that no medium has ever been able to do before," Bradfield said. "That was the remarkable thing about it."

Legacy of JFK unique to blacks

Civil Rights support earned Kennedy favor of King Sr.

By REUBIN TURNER
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

He was the youngest elected president in the history of the United States.

Fate cared little, though, as it threw him the toughest issue any president had ever been confronted with — the possibility of nuclear war.

For some, it was his aversion of an imminent war with Russia that defined the administration of President John F. Kennedy and garnered him international respect.

But in the eyes of Dr. Joseph Brown, associate professor of political science, Kennedy's legacy in the eyes of blacks across the nation was shaped unequivocally by his involvement in civil rights.

"Although Kennedy himself was not successful in getting the bill through Congress, he was the architect," Brown said.

Kennedy was the first to go on record in support of passing legislation for civil rights on June 11, 1963, when in a national address he called civil rights a moral issue and urged the nation to "examine its conscience."

It was during this speech that he introduced to Congress the Civil Rights Act, which would later go on to be passed during the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson.

Kennedy gave the speech the same day he sent the National Guard to ensure the peaceful integration of the University of Alabama, after Governor George Wallace and protestors attempted to block it.

Brown, who was 17 years old at the time of Kennedy's assassination, reflected on the day Kennedy died, and said sadness and disappointment were the only things he remembers feeling on that day.

He attended Carver High in Lafayette, La., an all black, segregated school and recalls many were crying. He said almost everyone was in disbelief.

"During that time, we felt that the two major leaders of the movement were King and Kennedy," Brown said. "When Kennedy was assassinated, it was as if half of our hopes were taken out with him."

Despite the overwhelming black support for Kennedy during his tenure as president, some such as Dr. James SoRelle, professor of history, contend that many black voters were initially cautious of Kennedy because of his Catholicism.

Martin Luther King Sr., senior pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta who often spoke about national issues from the pulpit, said he could not in good conscience vote for a Catholic. King Sr. was also a life-long republican and had endorsed Nixon.

"Many southern blacks were both Protestant and staunch Republicans before the 1960s, as it was the party of Lincoln," SoRelle said. He also said many southern blacks abhorred the Democratic Party because they included many famous racists such as George Wallace and, for a time, Lyndon Johnson.

SoRelle said, however, that King Sr.'s views on Kennedy changed when he and his brother Robert Kennedy helped get King Jr. released from prison after he was arrested in an Atlanta sit-in protest.

Upon King Jr.'s release from prison, his father was quoted as saying "I didn't like Kennedy because he's a Catholic, but now that he's got my boy out of jail, I've got a whole suitcase full of votes and I'm going to go to Washington and dump them in his lap."

SoRelle said he believes this was the turning point for the Kennedy campaign in regards to black support, as King Sr.'s message began to spread outside of Atlanta.

"At this point, what appeared to be a platform in favor of civil rights, really appealed to the black voters, especially in the South," SoRelle said.

And this couldn't have come a moment too soon, as the election was less than two weeks away.

According to an article published by the *New York Times* the day after the election, Kennedy was able to win the election due to strong support of both northern and southern blacks.

Kennedy won the popular vote by less than 1 percent, and the months ahead would prove challenging as many leaders of the Civil Rights Movement regularly criticized the Kennedy administration for their reluctance to move quickly on civil rights legislation.

Despite this, Brown said he believes the attitudes of most black Americans toward Kennedy from that era center around one idea — "he was a pioneer in the movement, and for that we are eternally grateful."