

Dallas plans opening of book depository

DALLAS (AP) — After 25 years, Dallas has matched courage with cash and will open the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository to the world.

Over the decades, the old warehouse has survived arsonists and calls for demolition. For a time, all buyers shunned it. All because a new young order clerk named Lee Harvey Oswald perched at a corner window on boxes of "Rolling Readers" and apparently fired two, maybe three, rifle shots at a motorcade passing below.

Now workers are just a month away from topping off an outside elevator that will carry up to half-a-million visitors a year to the infamous sixth floor, where they can view an exhibit on President John F. Kennedy and look out that corner window down to Dealey Plaza.

It's a \$3.5 million project 12 years in the making — one that Dallas, for a long time, feared would draw more attention to a tragedy that heaped shame on the city.

"What we are doing is facing up to our history," said Lindalyn Adams, chairwoman of the Dallas County Historical Foundation, who has made the exhibit a decade-long personal crusade.

Every day of the year, virtually around the clock, a steady trickle of tourists and tour buses makes the pilgrimage to Dealey Plaza and the grassy knoll.

They see a 10-sentence plaque on

the side of the book depository. The nine sentences noting the spot where Dallas was settled are followed by this:

"On Nov. 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."

And then they invariably count six floors up.

Next Feb. 20, on President's Day, "The Sixth Floor Exhibit" will open to the public.

More than \$1 million has been raised privately, with \$300,000 to go.

To permit construction to begin, the county advanced \$2.2 million, which will be repaid through a \$4 admission charge.

The exhibit will be a maze of historical panels tied together with videos and movies produced by acclaimed filmmaker Martin Jurow.

The exhibit will have few actual artifacts. There will be 400 photographs, many taken by the 22 people who were photographing the motorcade when the shots were fired.

The corner window will be sealed by glass panels, although the actual green-painted window frame was removed by a previous owner. The spots where Oswald's rifle, three spent cartridges and palm prints were found will be recreated, based on police photos.



A couple and their young daughter view a Life Magazine photograph of the late John F. Kennedy at Boston's Kennedy Library yesterday.