

Time Hasn't Changed Anything For Mother of Lee Oswald

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FORT WORTH, Tex. — The days are long and tear-provoking for Mrs. Marguerite C. Oswald, mother of the man who, on one deadly Friday in Dallas, changed the course of world history.

It was Nov. 22, 1963, the day that President Kennedy was assassinated. Two days later, Lee Harvey Oswald was killed by Jack Ruby in the basement of the Dallas police station.

The Warren Commission found that Oswald alone killed the President and on his own, and that no conspiracy was involved. Yet, through the years as then, Marguerite Oswald was steadfastly claimed — to all who would listen — that her son was innocent. Even today, her strong voice proclaims his innocence from her home on Byers Street, on Fort Worth's west side.

The telephone rang only once before a quiet, yet sturdy voice answered.

"Yes, this is Mrs. Oswald. My telephone has been ringing off the wall, and if you're a newspaperman you ought to know I'm the right Mrs. Oswald," she said in her old manner of not mincing words.

The voice was steady, outlining her problems of the years since 1963, problems which include unemployment, few friends and not much food.

"But I haven't done badly for someone who has all that going against them," Mrs. Oswald concluded. "I managed to stay well, even if I did have to dispose of most of my things just to have food in the house."

And then, a gasp from the other end of the line. "Oh, there is my boy's picture on TV again, and he's saying those words that I knew were so true all these years. I didn't just say they were true — I knew it. You know, it's pretty hard to be going through all this again. You probably don't understand what I mean, but it's hard for a mother."

(One of the last things Lee Harvey Oswald ever said, answering a reporter's question, was: "I didn't shoot anybody.")

At this point, Marguerite Oswald changed her mind; she would consent to an interview; she would like to do it, she said, because it now seemed timely in view of the recent claims that Oswald was not the gunman, and also because of the recent late night TV showing of film of the assassination.

"I think the sooner we get it in the paper, the better it will be," she said. "I want a copyrighted story, and I want to edit it for correctness before it ever gets into print."

The question was sidestepped, since editors on major newspapers edit what is written. But immediately she was on another topic, roaring as in those days

when she made news almost every day.

"I haven't eaten in a few days," she said. "It can get pretty rough, and so I would have to have some pay for my services in granting the interview."

Her voice was to the point, yet cultured and well modulated.

Marguerite Oswald never indicated how much money she

wanted for an interview now that she was again on the fringe of the limelight, but her reaction was swift.

She hung up promptly, saying nothing except one of those phrases that involves what is known today as a deleted expletive. Whatever the new developments in the Lee Harvey Oswald case, his mother is unchanged.