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Plaque honors Kennedy

DALLAS (AP) - With an assassin's nest as a bleak backdrop, Dallas unveiled a simple but eternal tribute Monday to the memory of President John F. Kennedy.

Twin fighter jets thundered low above Dealey Plaza and a flock of white doves fluttered skyward at the exact moment of the assassination 30 years ago.

It was 12:30 p.m. Nov. 22, then and now.

In 1963, a clock atop the Texas School Book Depository recorded the time as a sniper on the sixth floor opened fire on the motorcade, killing Kennedy and wounding Gov. John Connally.

In 1993, Connally's widow, Nellie, slipped a black drape from a plaque marking the sloping, sunswept plaza as a National Historic Landmark.

"Thirty years ago, fate brought me here as an unwilling player in the most unforgettable tragic drama of our time," Mrs. Connally told thousands of spectators and dignitaries.

Some choked back tears. Others wept openly.

"Now," she continued, "three decades later, we are gathered not to look back with grief, but to look forward with hope.

"Many of us share our own indelible memories of that awful hour, but today we recognize the lasting place this site will forever have in our nation's history."

Sen. Edward Kennedy and other family members and friends marked the day with visits to JFK's grave at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

His sister Jean Kennedy Smith observed the anniversary in Ireland, land of the family's ancestors. Mrs. Smith, the U.S. ambassador to Ireland, read extracts from his speeches at a memorial Mass in Dublin.

"It's a day to remember the great

man that he was and that for a short space of time he was at the highest seat of power in the world," said the Rev. Michael Kennedy, a relative from Tipperary, who celebrated the Mass at Dublin's Pro Cathedral.

In Kennedy's hometown of Boston, city government and institutions named for the 35th president held no ceremonies.

"We are not very enthusiastic about celebrating the day he got killed," said Charles Daley, director of the JFK Library. "I hate to think we would celebrate the day (President Abraham) Lincoln went to Ford's Theater. We celebrate Kennedy's birthday, which we think is more appropriate."

Throughout the Dallas ceremony, spectators glanced and pointed intermittently toward a seven-story red brick building overlooking Dealey Plaza.