

# ret·ro·spect

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VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE SIXTH FLOOR MUSEUM AT DEALEY PLAZA

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## *A Tribute to Jackie Showcases Kennedy Photographs*

CERTAIN PEOPLE ARE BORN  
TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED:  
PEOPLE WHO ARE SIMPLY  
ADORED BY THE CAMERA

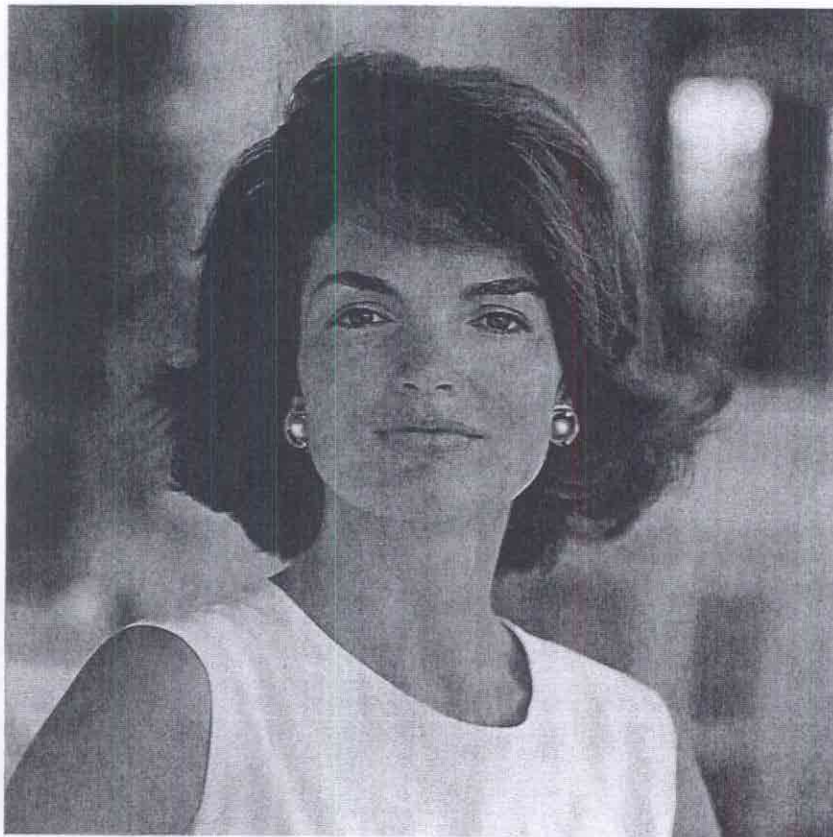
That description applies to both John and Jacqueline Kennedy. Individually, and as a couple, they belong to that elite and blessed group who rarely if ever seem to have taken a bad or unflattering photograph—as is abundantly illustrated in *A Tribute to Jackie: An Exhibition of Photographs by Jacques Lowe to Benefit the Leukemia Society of America*, on view at The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza from October 9 to November 30, 1997.

The seventy-five photographs in *A Tribute to Jackie*—presented by the Museum in cooperation with the Leukemia Society of America Dallas Chapter—provide a poignant and personal testament to the aura and special glow Jacqueline Kennedy lent to the White House during her time as First Lady.

"We are delighted to be hosting this exhibition with the Leukemia Society of America," said Jeff West, Museum Executive Director. "Thanks to our newly renovated Visitors Center, we can now showcase temporary exhibitions such as *A Tribute to Jackie* and provide additional programming for our visitors."

Photographs included in *A Tribute to Jackie* were taken by French photographer Jacques Lowe. An internationally-known photographer, Lowe was the official photographer for Kennedy's senatorial campaign, and his subsequent campaign for the presidency. Lowe was charged with documenting daily events involving those campaigns and continued with President Kennedy after his election to office.

As the president's personal photographer, Lowe had exclusive access to the president and his family. Lowe personally selected the photos included in the exhibition, which he conceived as a tribute to Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who died in



Photograph ©1997 Jacques Lowe

May 1994. Photos in *A Tribute to Jackie* were made from 1958 to 1963, covering Kennedy's senatorial and White House years.

Proceeds from the opening night *Tribute to Jackie* Gala on October 9 benefit the Leukemia Society of America's Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Lymphoma Research Fund. Lowe, who has published five books on the Kennedy years, created a catalogue to accompany *A Tribute to Jackie*. During the run of the exhibition, proceeds

from *A Tribute to Jackie* catalogue sales in the Museum Store will benefit the Leukemia Society.

*A Tribute to Jackie* is free and open to the public during regular Museum hours, seven days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. ■■■

Bob Porter is the Director of Public Programs for The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza



# FIRST LADIES

## *Their Image and Fashions*



*Photograph © 1997 Jacques Lowe*

**J**acqueline Kennedy Onassis was an American woman of elegance and distinction. During the Kennedy administration Jackie redefined the image of a First Lady and brought a new sense of style and grace to the White House and the country.

For *First Ladies: Their Image and Fashions*, Dr. Marian Ann Montgomery will discuss the role of some of America's favorite First Ladies. Using slides and illustrations, Dr. Montgomery and the audience will explore the images of First Ladies as portrayed through their garments, and consider how a First Lady's fashions reflected the role of women at that time in American history.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 27**

10:30 a.m.	Coffee
11:00 a.m.	Lecture
Non-members	\$5.00
Museum members	FREE

THE SIXTH FLOOR MUSEUM AT DEALEY PLAZA  
*(in the Dallas County Commissioners Courtroom)*  
411 ELM AT HOUSTON STREET

For reservations, please call (214) 747-6660, ext. 6625.

Dr. Montgomery is the Director of Interpretation for The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza. She has an extensive background in American social history and fashion and textile history.

*First Ladies: Their Image and Fashions* is co-sponsored by the Leukemia Society of America Dallas Chapter. After the lecture, we invite you to visit the Museum and see *A Tribute to Jackie*—a photographic exhibit celebrating the inspired life, spirit and style of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, created by her personal photographer Jacques Lowe to benefit the Leukemia Society of America. *A Tribute to Jackie* will be on display October 9-November 30, 1997.



### retro-spect

*"I watched Princess Diana's funeral. Today I revisit President Kennedy's life and tragic death. I never really knew either one but somehow it seems they are now tied together. I grieve for both of them and their respective families."*

*"I was only a year old at JFK's death. He was, like Princess Diana, a very loved person by the common people. God bless!"*

*"The loss of Princess Di has brought back so many memories of the senseless passing of great people trying to do good deeds."*

It was an inevitable comparison. After the tragic death of Princess Diana our memory book pages were crowded with comments noting the similarities between the deaths of President Kennedy and the Princess of Wales.

A generation will share the collective memory of where they were when they heard of Diana's death. The power of her life and that memory will unleash a deluge of commemoration—monuments, schools, streets, and events—all an appropriate outpouring of respect and regard that celebrates the impact of her life, rather than the tragedy of her untimely death.

Likewise, the work of The Sixth Floor Museum is varied—exhibits, publications, educational tours. We don't preserve a violent, awful event. We preserve the grief of our citizens for a fallen leader. We preserve the many good works that resulted from that grief to celebrate President Kennedy's life.

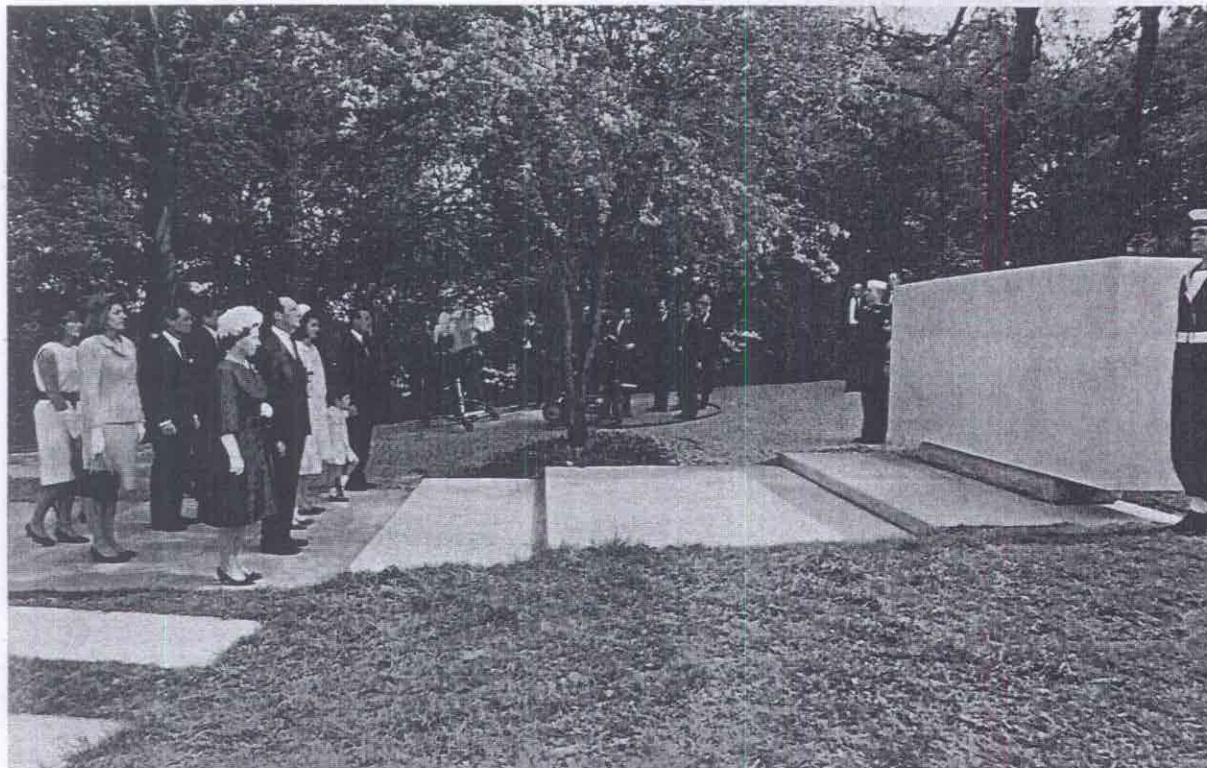
As historian Daniel Boorstin wrote: "To those who have the misfortune to die young, history assigns the role of inspirer."

**SEE YOU AT THE MUSEUM.**

Jeff West  
Executive Director  
The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza



## Artifacts to be Displayed from Onassis Estate

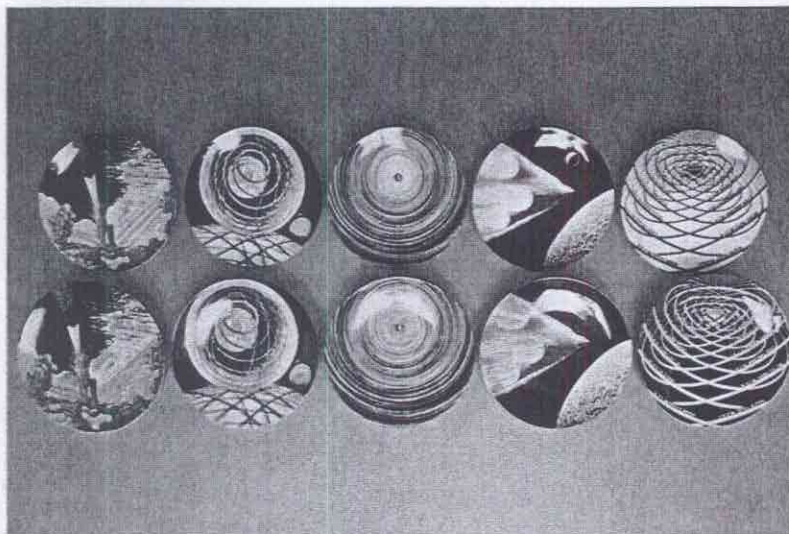


Prior to dedicatory remarks at Runnymede on May 14, 1965, Queen Elizabeth and members of the Kennedy family paid their respects at the memorial stone. To her left is Lord Harlech, England's ambassador to the United States. Caroline, Jackie and John Kennedy, Jr. stand to his left with England's Prince Philip next to them. In the back row, from left to right, are Jean Kennedy Smith, Patricia Kennedy Lawford, and Robert and Edward Kennedy.

*Photograph by Cecil W. Stoughton, courtesy John F. Kennedy Library*

To coincide with the opening of *A Tribute to Jackie*, several artifacts from the estate of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis will be placed on display at The Sixth Floor Museum. Many of the items were acquired by the Museum at Sotheby's May 1996 auction of Mrs. Onassis' estate. Museum acquisitions were made possible through the generosity of several private donors. Additional artifacts have been loaned by others who acquired items at the auction.

☉ The footstool Caroline Kennedy stood on in Jackie Kennedy's White House bedroom comes to the Museum on loan from the Harlan Crow Family. The stool's label states: "Footstool JBK bedroom in White House for Caroline to climb onto window seat." The footstool will be rotated biannually with another loan from the



French porcelain "Man in Space" plates from the estate of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, commemorating the space race and President Kennedy's space program legacy.  
*Tom Jenkins/The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

*continued on page 4*



continued from page 3

Harlan Crow Family: a Chinese Export Porcelain Oval Dish for the American Market (circa 1876). The dish is decorated to represent the surrender of General John Burgoyne at Saratoga on October 17, 1777, and was likely part of the decor in the Kennedys' private White House quarters.

❶ Dissent between the liberal wing of the Texas democratic party led by Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough, and the more conservative wing led by LBJ and Governor John Connally, was central to Kennedy's decision to campaign in Texas in the fall of 1963. Only one Yarborough-related item was offered at the Sotheby's sale, and the Museum was fortunate to have acquired it. A copy of *From the President's Pen: An Illustrated Guide to Presidential Autographs*, inscribed by Yarborough to Jacqueline Kennedy

Onassis, fondly recalls the Kennedy White House.

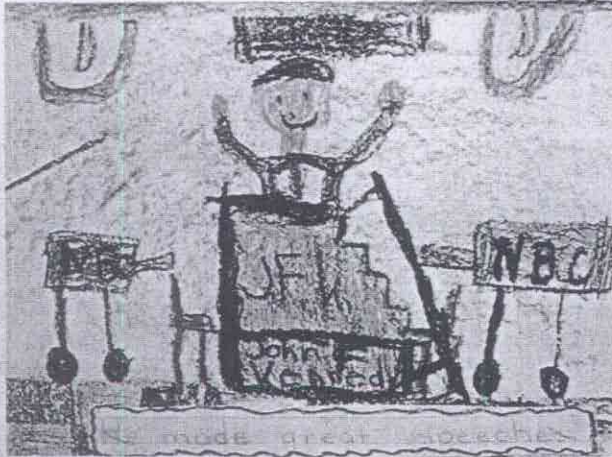
❷ Among the items in Mrs. Onassis' estate was a sterling silver St. Christopher medal depicting the saint, with the reverse inscribed "JFK, JL, WJC" and dated

3-15-53. The medal, on loan from Nancy Quong, is attached to a short silver chain.

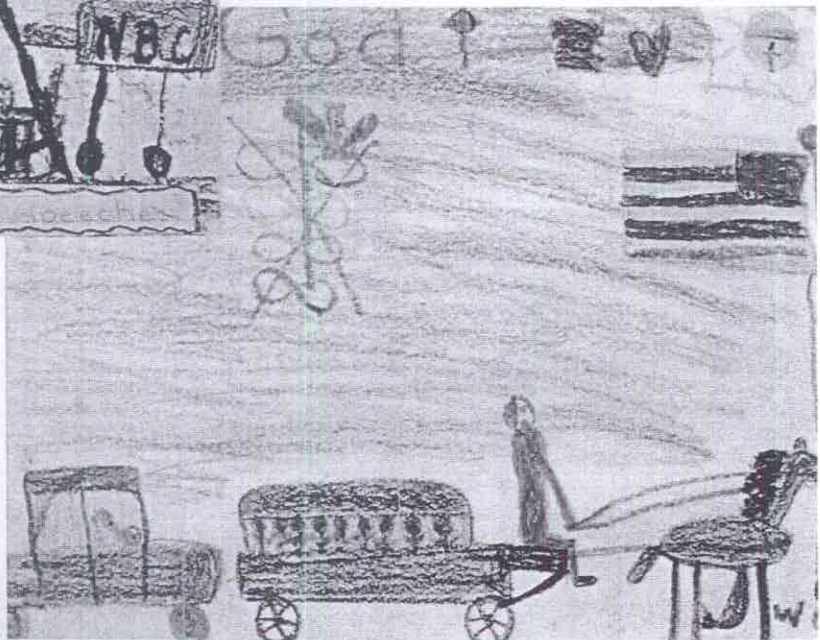
❸ Space exploration was central to Kennedy's New Frontier Program. His goal for the U.S. to reach the moon before the end of the 1960s became an



Children's books from the estate of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.  
Tom Jenkins/The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza



After the assassination, many teachers encouraged their students to draw pictures memorializing President Kennedy, as a way to help children work through their grief and sense of loss. These drawings are among the eight on loan from the John F. Kennedy Library.  
Tom Jenkins/The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza,  
courtesy John F. Kennedy Library





important part of his legacy. To celebrate the Space Race, a set of dessert plates was executed for *Paris Match* magazine in December 1966. Mrs. Onassis' dessert plates were split into two lots at the Sotheby's auction. The Sixth Floor Museum acquired one set of the plates; the companion set was acquired by Michael L. Rosenberg and then donated to the Dallas Museum of Art. The DMA has placed the plates on long-term loan with The Sixth Floor Museum.

☉ In honor of President Kennedy, Queen Elizabeth presented an acre of land at Runnymede—where the Magna Carta was signed in 1215—to the American people. To commemorate the event, a volume of dedicatory remarks was privately printed for Mrs. Kennedy. The Museum acquired one of the books at the Sotheby's sale. It contains the text of the speeches given by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Former Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, Prime Minister Harold Wilson, and U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

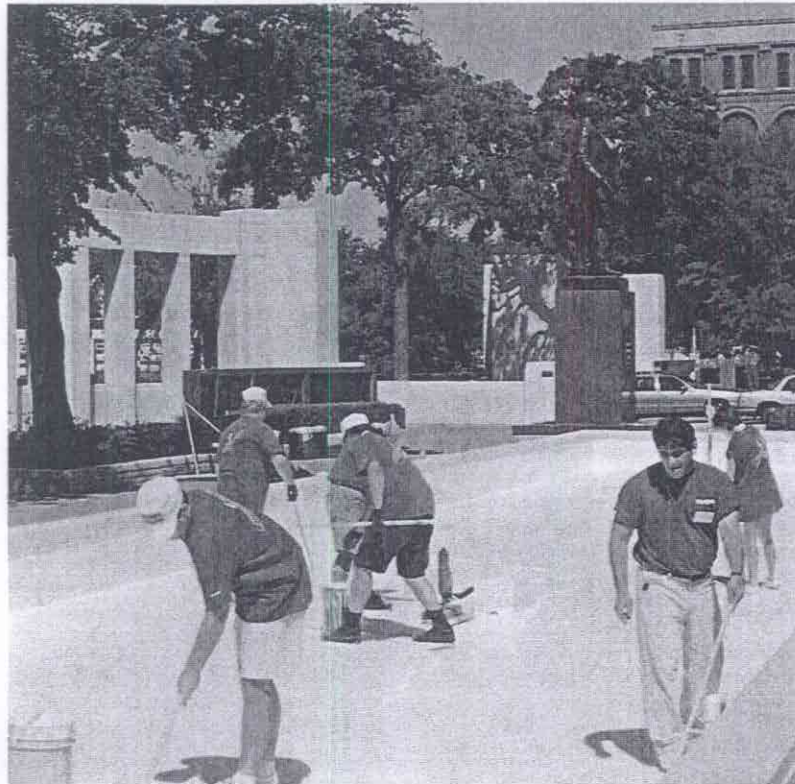
☉ Many books for children were published after Kennedy's death as a way to educate America's youth about the fallen president. The Museum acquired eight books from Mrs. Onassis' estate. For display with these books, the John F. Kennedy Library near Boston has loaned the Museum several children's drawings which commemorate President Kennedy. The loan is the first between the Kennedy Library and The Sixth Floor Museum.

☉ Following the motorcade through downtown Dallas, a luncheon was to be held at the Trade Mart in Kennedy's honor. Although not acquired through the Sotheby's sale, the luncheon place setting that awaited President Kennedy will also be on display at the Museum, courtesy of the Harlan Crow Family.

Artifacts will be on display beginning October 9, 1997. ■■■

*Marian Ann J. Montgomery, Ph.D., is the Director of Interpretation for The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

## Viacommunity Volunteers Clean Up Dealey Plaza



Viacom volunteers paint the W.P.A.-era fountains at the corner of Elm and Houston Streets in Dealey Plaza. Over fifty volunteers spent the day sprucing up the Plaza's flower beds, fountains and fences.  
*Mia Llarena/The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

**M**ore than fifty volunteers descended upon Dealey Plaza on September 11, rolled up their sleeves and spent the day weeding, painting and generally sprucing up the area as part of Viacom's "Viacommunity Day." The volunteers—employees of Blockbuster, Paramount, Showtime and UPN 21—dedicated the entire day to improving the look of the Plaza.

The volunteers, working closely with Museum staff and City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department officials, weeded and cleaned the flower beds, painted the fountain basins and repaired and replaced pickets in the fence near the grassy knoll. The volunteers began the day early by gathering for last-minute instructions in the Museum's Visitors Center. The group then proceeded to the Plaza with paintbrushes, brooms and hammers in hand.

"It was great to have the enthusiastic support of Viacom employees. They took great delight in all of the jobs—weeding, painting and nailing. Their energy was infectious and typifies what is best about the Dallas corporate community. We owe each of them a great deal of thanks," said Executive Director Jeff West.

Viacommunity Day is the second project which teamed the Museum with a Viacom company. Earlier this summer, Blockbuster Entertainment Group provided a grant to the Museum for the addition of trash cans and new benches in Dealey Plaza. The contribution met a matching grant issued by the Downtown Improvement District. ■■■

*Sam Childers is the Assistant to the Executive Director at The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

## McElhaney Sees Events of November 1963 from a Historian's Viewpoint

As a professional historical researcher, Jackie McElhaney naturally possesses a keen eye for the past. She can not only recall events that have taken place in her lifetime, but can also place those events in the social structure in which they occurred.

For example, McElhaney will never forget November 22, 1963, for the tragic, but historically significant events that occurred that day—when she was among the hundreds of thousands who turned out to greet President and Mrs. Kennedy on their visit to Dallas. But she also has the ability to place those events in a perspective of broader social significance.

"I grew up in a small town, but it wasn't until I was in my 20s that I realized that fact," she recalled in an oral history interview conducted for The Sixth Floor Museum. "Monroe [Louisiana] didn't seem like a small town while I was growing up. We had a library and the Ouachita River, but we didn't have an art museum or a symphony orchestra. I didn't realize those things were lacking. I did spend a lot of time at the library.

"It was also a small Southern town in the sense its racial sensibilities were lacking," she continued, reflecting on her early life. "It is something I look back on and am disturbed about, but I was not disturbed enough to do anything about it at the time. I was simply disturbed that something was not right. I was gone [from Monroe] by the

"The attraction was that his wife was coming with him."

*Jackie McElhaney, recalling her excitement at hearing the Kennedys would visit Dallas in 1963*

time the Civil Rights movement got into full swing."

McElhaney graduated from high school in Monroe in 1958 and chose Southern Methodist University to continue her education.

"After about six months I realized I was in Dallas for good," McElhaney smiled, seated in the den of her Dallas home.

Archaeology was an early interest for her, but she majored in history at SMU.

"When I graduated from SMU with a major in history, but no teaching certificate, my father was a bit concerned about what I might do with this degree, and I was too," she said. "But in the 1960s one generally got married and settled down and started a family and women did not pursue a career—which is what I did." (Her husband, John McElhaney, is an attorney.)

Once her children were in school, however, she decided to return to SMU to earn her Master's degree, which she

received in 1982—some twenty years after earning her Bachelor's degree, she likes to point out. That degree provided her with the opportunity to become a professional historical researcher. It is a profession she has come to love.

In some respects life at SMU during her undergraduate years in the late 1950s and early 1960s reflected social tides similar to the ones she experienced in Monroe.

"Most of the people attending [SMU] from Texas and the Southern states were still traditional and extremely conservative in their views of what was going on politically," she explained. "They still had their Old South Ball and I think there was absolutely no minority representation on the campus. There was, however, a liberal element on the campus. They were mostly those from the North. They brought another sensibility to the campus but they were in no way the majority."

She was working in one of the offices at SMU in 1963 when she first heard that President and Mrs. Kennedy were going to visit Dallas.

"I remember being very excited about his coming, simply because I was interested in seeing his wife," she said. "Jackie Kennedy was considered a fashion leader as well as being the wife of the president. She was attractive and young and, unlike previous presidents' wives, she had something about her that made her attractive to young women everywhere.

Jackie McElhaney during her oral history interview with The Sixth Floor Museum.  
The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza





"I saw them, then they were gone. It was an impression of them smiling, with the sun beaming down, and they were gone."

*Jackie McElhany, describing her view of the Kennedys in the Dallas motorcade*

"As for the president, he had not made much of an impression on me. My impression is that I had not voted for him. There was only one person in the sorority house who had voted for Kennedy. So, I had no political affinity for the man at all. The attraction was that his wife was coming with him."

Still, it was a spur of the moment decision that prompted her to join three or four other office workers to see the parade during their lunch break. They went to Lee Park at the corner of Lemmon and Turtle Creek where the motorcade would be slowing to make a turn. It proved to be an ideal vantage point, she recalls.

"I had two distinct impressions," said McElhany. "One, that the First Lady was wearing a bright, pink suit and, secondly, that the president seemed deeply tanned. His face seemed much fuller. He seemed to look a lot beefier than I remembered. It was almost like a photographic moment. I saw them, then they were gone. It was an impression of them smiling, with the sun beaming down, and they were gone."

She had no sooner returned to her office when someone told her the president had been shot.

"I remember it was like being hit in the stomach. It was a sickening feeling. I didn't

know if he had been shot or killed but I thought it simply wasn't possible. I was incredulous. I was totally shocked. Weak at the knees.

"I think at first it was the shock [that] something like that could happen. At first it wasn't a sense of personal loss. Just that you could see someone and a few minutes later they would be shot. This was not an era when violence was so commonplace in America. At that time, murders did not happen so frequently in Dallas. It was not like it is now."

Another vivid memory she has is the role Jackie Kennedy played in the funeral ceremonies that took place in Washington, D.C.

"Jackie Kennedy had enormous dignity," she said. "I think that for all of the criticism that came to her for whatever reason, [at that time] she elevated what was going on with the memorial observance. I think people [watching the ceremonies on TV] recognized they were seeing class. A very proper, very historically high-minded ceremony to commemorate what was going on. She was very much behind the tone that was set."

McElhany also remembers returning from church on Sunday to learn Oswald had been shot.

"This was just not the way things happened. There was this element of disbelief. What was going on? Things were going wrong.

"Looking back on the post-assassination period when a stigma fell on the city of Dallas," McElhany says, taking a historian's point of view, "that had to be a watershed for me. There had been an enormously vitriolic right-wing presence here [in Dallas]. The fallout was that people stepped forward and said this does not represent the way I think. This is not what Dallas is about. There are good and fair-minded people in the community. That happened in many

areas. At last people were standing up and being counted."

Viewing the community as it exists in the 1990s, she says, "Dallas has grown enormously since I first moved to the city. It has become a more sophisticated city in terms of cultural amenities. It has also, unfortunately, become a more violent city in terms of the realities of what city life is about. But, it has also become much more diverse. Political leadership has become more spread around.

"I think that, all in all, Dallas has, at least on some levels, come to grips with what happened [in 1963]," she added after a pause. "It now has the sort of atmosphere that is attractive to a whole lot of people. There is still a lot of conservatism in the community, but I think as a result of what happened here there was a collective eye opening. There came the realization there had to be a more balanced approach to political life in the city. That has happened." ■■■

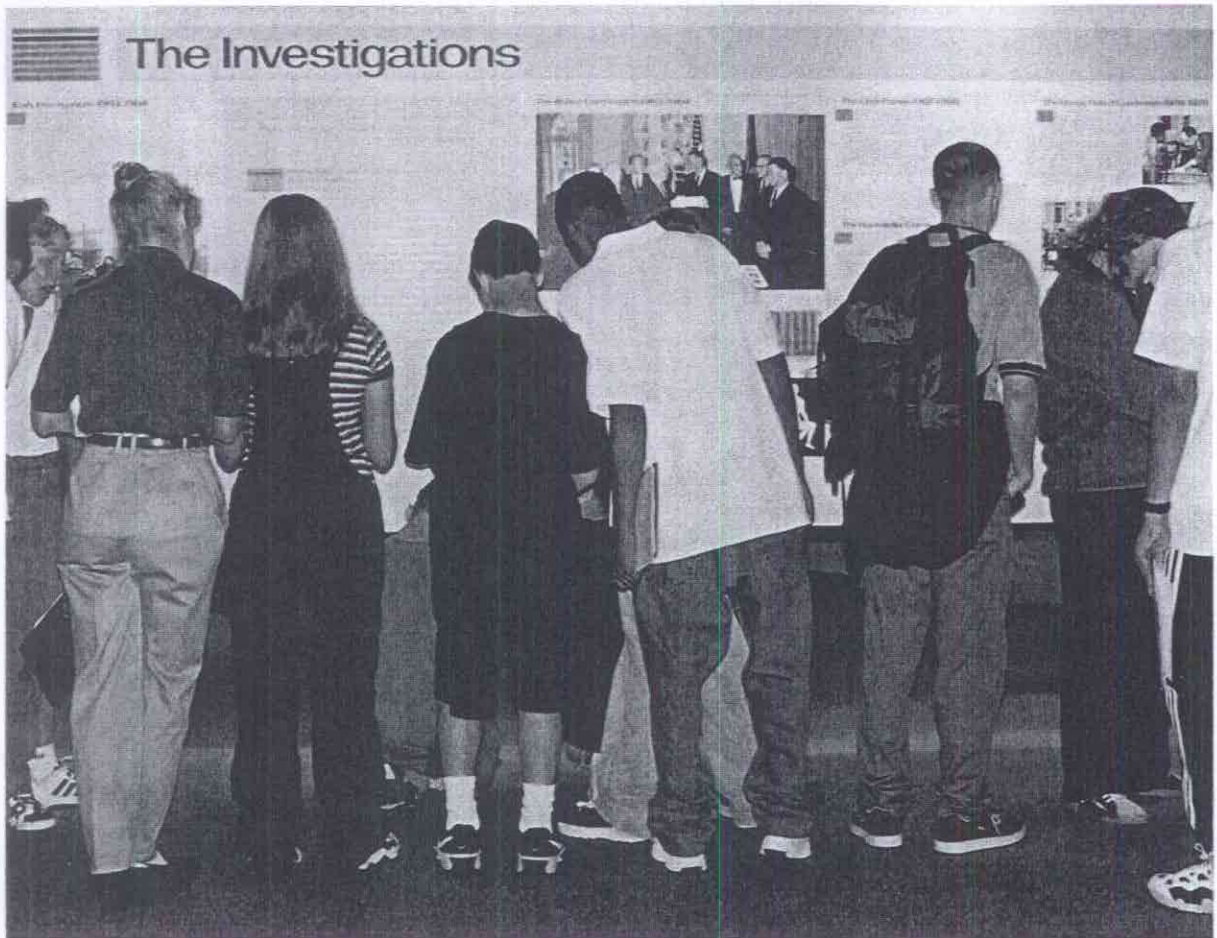
*Bob Porter is the Director of Public Programs at The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

"When a stigma fell on the city of Dallas, that had to be a watershed. . . . The fallout was that people stepped forward and said. . . this is not what Dallas is about."

*Jackie McElhany, commenting on Dallas's reaction to the assassination*



## *New Educational Programs Announced*



Students from Memorial Preparatory School in Garland, Texas investigate the Museum.  
*Roy Langdon/The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

It's a typical busy day at The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza. A group of visitors stands at the elevators to the sixth floor, trying to figure out which button is "rewind" on their audio tour unit. On the other side of the Museum, a group gathers near one of the Elm Street windows, discussing the possibilities of Oswald's guilt. Others mill around video kiosks and read texts in the exhibition. In the midst of this activity are pockets of students: discussing issues the late President faced during his administration, and writing responses in an eight-page Gallery Guide titled *Who was JFK?*

"If you lived during the time of the Kennedy Administration, what issues would

be most important to you?" reads the Guide.

"Civil Rights," writes one student. "Because in the United States, we all should have an equal opportunity to succeed."

The 1997-98 school year is well under way and with it comes many changes in The Sixth Floor Museum's education programs. In the ongoing effort to meet the needs of over 60,000 student visitors annually, the Museum's education staff has developed new curriculum-based school programs. For the coming year, age-appropriate Gallery Guides and Teacher Packets will be introduced and tested by volunteer school groups and educators.

*Who was JFK?* introduces students to John F. Kennedy by exploring his personal

and professional accomplishments. The take-home booklets complement the Museum's highly-acclaimed permanent exhibition and encourage students to consider such issues as how Americans felt about Kennedy during his time as president, and how Kennedy's assassination has affected the way Americans feel about him today.

Gallery Guides and Teacher Packets were introduced in September, and will be tested throughout the fall and winter. Teachers and school groups across a spectrum of socioeconomic levels, racial and ethnic groups, age and grade levels, and neighborhoods throughout North Texas will participate in testing the new materials. Museum docents will provide orientations

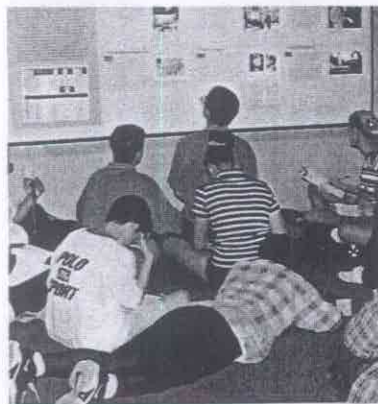


to the exhibition, and lead student discussion groups. Final versions of the Guides and Teacher Packets will be available in Spring 1998.

Would you like your child to participate in these new programs? Perhaps your child's school would like to receive sample Teacher Packets and lesson plans. Ask your child's teacher or principal today to contact Mia Llarena, Museum Educator, at (214)747-6660, ext.6692. ■■■

*Mia Llarena is the Museum Educator for  
The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

Students from Memorial Preparatory School, studying Kennedy's legacy and discovering *Who was JFK?*  
*Roy Langston/The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*



## Sample Questions from *Who was JFK?*

*Imagine you were a student during the 1960s.*

*What would you think of John F. Kennedy as president?*

*Why did the Kennedys visit Texas?*

*Name one reason why people were critical of President Kennedy and his policies. Why would others have supported his policies?*

*Imagine you were in Dealey Plaza on the day of the assassination.*

*What would it be like on that day? How would you have responded to the assassination?*

*What was the Warren Commission?*

*Other agencies also investigated the assassination. Why do you think other people wanted to investigate the death of President Kennedy?*

*In what ways has President Kennedy been honored since his death? What does this say about his influence?*





## Unique Visual Artifacts Added to Museum Collections

**R**ecent items donated to The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza tell a unique visual story. Copies of photographs and documents from local police and sheriff's departments include views of the Kennedy motorcade, and the former Texas School Book Depository building, as well as images of Lee Harvey Oswald, and nightclub owner Jack Ruby.

Perhaps most intriguing are several pictures of Ruby sitting in a courtroom in front of Judge Joe B. Brown, Jr., apparently at a hearing before Ruby's March 1964 murder trial. Cameras were barred from Texas courtrooms in 1957; however, an unknown photographer shot several pictures at the hearing. Very few known photographs exist of Ruby during the proceedings, as opposed to those of Ruby during a court recess, or being led to and from his jail cell.

Other photographs show the former Depository building, presumably in 1963 or 1964, from rarely seen angles. One, taken of the northeast corner of the building, shows part of the main loading dock, which is now the back entrance to the former Depository. It was through that door that Oswald allegedly brought a package containing his rifle. Interestingly, the Depository employee who saw Oswald enter the building told the Warren Commission he saw no package.

Another picture shows the old storage shed on the building's west side. That addition was partially reconstructed for Oliver Stone's movie *JFK* in 1991. At the time of the assassination, the storage shed was the site of an early search. Deputy Sheriff Harry



Balding Jack Ruby, with his back to the camera, facing Judge Joe B. Brown, Jr. To Ruby's left is defense attorney Melvin Belli. Standing at the right, wearing horn-rimmed glasses, is Dallas County Sheriff Bill Decker.

*The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

Weatherford watched the motorcade turn off Main onto Houston Street. Hearing the shots and believing they came from the Depository, Weatherford ran inside the building with other investigators. He reasoned that if a gunman was on the roof, an ejected shell might land on top of the shed, so he crawled out a second floor window to check. Finding nothing, he crawled back in. At that same moment, WFAA-TV photographer Malcolm Couch, temporarily parked at the Stemmons entrance ramp west of the Triple Underpass, filmed Weatherford as he

went through the window. It is a strange scene, one that Channel 8 News still shows today.

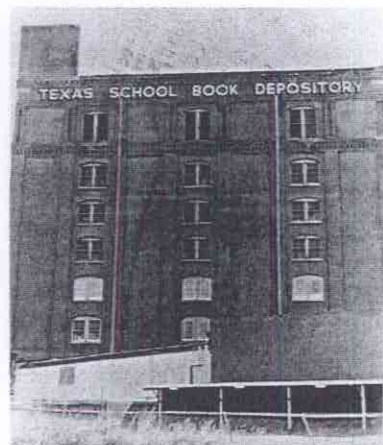
Also included in this new collection are two photographs of the motorcade, submitted by an unidentified photographer to the Dallas Police. The photos were made on Main Street and show both President Kennedy's car and Vice President Lyndon Johnson's car only a few blocks from Dealey Plaza.

*Gary Mack is the Archivist for  
The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*



Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough appears smiling and waving in the back seat of Vice President Lyndon Johnson's car as the motorcade nears Dealey Plaza. Lady Bird Johnson is seated between the two men.

*The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

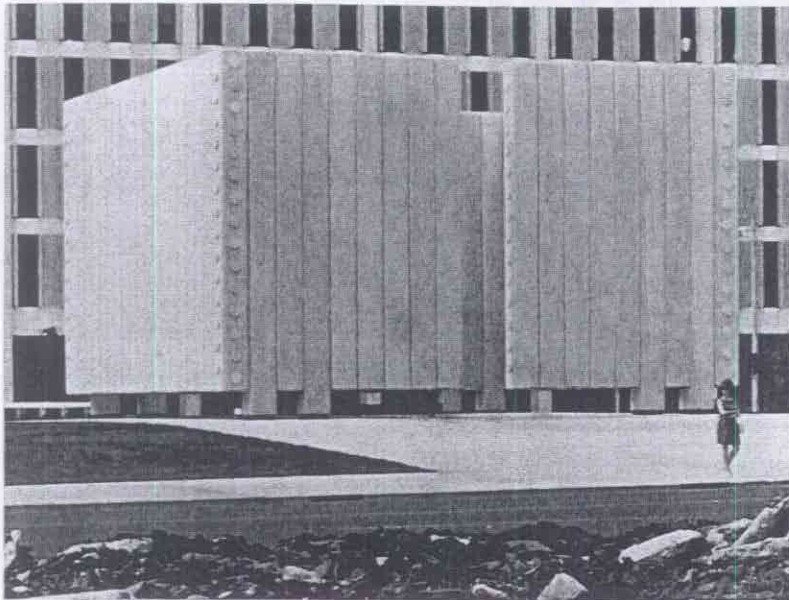


The west side of the Depository building showing the now dismantled storage shed.

*The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*



## Records Sought for Kennedy Memorial



Nearly 500 attended a small dedication ceremony at the Kennedy Memorial in Dallas on Tuesday, June 23, 1970. Several of those responsible for its creation, including Memorial Commission Vice Chairman Robert Cullum, reminded onlookers that the structure memorializes the accomplishments of President Kennedy's life, not his death.  
*Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection/Special Collections Division, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries*

Certainly Dallas's response to the assassination of President Kennedy was one of shock and grief. Dallas leaders quickly mobilized, however, to create a fitting memorial to the slain president. Within weeks after the assassination, a committee of Dallas citizens began discussing plans, and soon commissioned noted American architect Philip Johnson to design a memorial. One square block of land—located east of the assassination site between Main and Commerce Streets—was donated by the people of Dallas County in 1964. The John F. Kennedy Memorial Plaza was officially dedicated in 1970.

Piecing together the complete history of the Kennedy Memorial fell to Museum intern Stefan Frazier this summer. Frazier gathered copies of all known materials related to the building of the Memorial and the activities of the Memorial Committee. Unfortunately, a complete record of the Committee's minutes and correspondence has not been located.

"The history of the Kennedy Memorial tells us a great deal not only about JFK's legacy, but also about Dallas's response to the assassination," said Gary Mack, Museum Archivist. "We encourage anyone who has documents or artifacts related to the Memorial to contact us, so these materials can be preserved and studied by researchers in the Museum's archives."

The Kennedy Memorial's stark 1970s architecture is often misunderstood by visitors. Johnson intended his creation of a cenotaph—or open, empty tomb—to symbolize Kennedy's spirit as one that could not be contained. Jacqueline Kennedy was consulted on the design, which was Johnson's first memorial commission.

Currently the City of Dallas and Dallas County share maintenance responsibilities for the Kennedy Memorial and the surrounding park.

"The proper preservation of the Kennedy Memorial is an important issue," said Museum Executive Director Jeff West, "both as a tribute to President Kennedy, and for its significance in modern American architecture. For the thousands of visitors who pay their respects at the Memorial each year, and for our own community, the factual interpretation of this site is critical." ■■■

*Marian Ann J. Montgomery, Ph.D., is the Director of Interpretation for The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*

## PUBLIC RESEARCH CENTER OPEN

On July 21, 1997, The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza officially began making its collections and archival materials available for research by the general public. The Museum currently has more than 13,000 items in its collections. Items include newspapers, photographs, books and magazines, video and audio tapes, and other documentary materials.

Collections that may be of particular interest to researchers include:

- Parkland Hospital Collection—containing medical records related to the treatment of President Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald, and Jack Ruby, as well as the autopsy report of Officer J.D. Tippit
- Julia Knecht Collection—containing several thousand items related to Dallas's political climate in 1963 and the Kennedy assassination investigations, collected by the personal secretary to Major General Edwin Walker
- Dallas Times Herald Collection—including the newspaper's photographs from the assassination weekend
- Tom Dillard Collection—photographs taken over the assassination weekend by the chief photographer of *The Dallas Morning News*
- KDFW-TV Collection and KTVT-TV Collection—totaling more than 150 hours, these collections include film, video and audio tapes of coverage relating to the assassination

While the goal of opening the archives is to make the Museum's collections more accessible to the public, the condition and stability of the collections is a vital consideration. Where the condition of an item prevents its availability, the staff attempts to provide alternate sources, such as photocopies or photographic reproductions.

The Museum's archives are open Monday from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., and Tuesday through Friday by appointment. To schedule research time, please contact Registrar Megan Bryant at (214) 747-6660, ext. 6619, or Archivist Gary Mack at ext. 6693. ■■■

*Megan Bryant is the Registrar for The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza*



## ret·ro·spect

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THE SIXTH FLOOR MUSEUM  
at Dealey Plaza  
411 Elm Street • Dallas, Texas 75202-3301  
(214)747-6660 • Fax (214)747-6662  
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The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza is a non-profit organization.

The Museum Visitors Center is located directly behind the former Texas School Book Depository building. The entrance to the Museum is on Houston Street between Elm and Pacific; wheelchair access is on the north side of the building. All Museum films are captioned. The Visitors Center has a Museum Store, and is located in the West End Historic District, which offers numerous restaurants, shopping and entertainment.

Museum memberships start at \$50 and offer such benefits as free admission and audio tours, reduced price tickets for guests, Express Entry at the box office, a 10% discount in the Museum Store and a subscription to *ret·ro·spect*.

The Sixth Floor Museum is open seven days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Closed Christmas Day.

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### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Administrative Offices.....(214)747-6660  
Corporate and Group Tours...Keith W. Hickman  
Public Research Center and Archives...Gary Mack  
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