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Kennedy Archives Bjt 360

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WASHINGTON AP - The National Archives reports it has received and rejected 15 requests from persons hoping to see its X rays and photographs of the autopsy performed on President John F. Kennedy.

The family of the late president turned the material over to the Archives Nov. 1, 1966 with such heavy restrictions on its public availability that it may not be widely seen for many years.

Dr. James B. Rhoads, deputy archivist, said the 15 requests came "mostly from people who already have done fairly extensive research on the assassination."

"We've explained to all of them that we just can't show it yet," Rhoads said in an interview. "The heaviest volume of requests came in the month or two after we got the material. In the past eight months or so, nobody has asked."

The Kennedy family gave 14 X rays, 25 black and white negatives and 26 color transparencies to the National Archives for safekeeping. For what Rhoads described as "personal reasons," the family placed the following restrictions on them:

-During the first five years, no one but government investigation bodies and persons with the consent of the Kennedy family could see them.

-Thereafter, for the duration of the lifetimes of Kennedy's parents, brothers and sisters, widow and two children, only recognized experts in pathology and related fields should have access.

Despite the recent lack of requests to view the autopsy pictures, the Archives said there has been "very active interest" on other material concerning the assassination.

"We've had about 450 inquiries in two years," Rhoads said, "particularly about the Zapruder film."

The movie film was taken by businessman Abraham Zapruder in Dallas, Tex., just as President Kennedy was shot to death while riding in a motorcade Nov. 22, 1963-four years ago today.

The film was used by the Warren Commission in its investigation of the assassination and has been cited by critics of the commission who have sought to disprove its findings.

Aside from the autopsy pictures, the only material restricted from public view is that which has a national security classification or which might identify confidential sources of information and anything that might embarrass innocent people or hinder administration and enforcement of the law.

"That only amounts to about 10 per cent of the material we have," Rhoads said. "All the rest is available for anyone who wants to see it."

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