

NOVEMBER 22, 1963  
06-17-2013 BY HARRY ZIRKELBACH



On 22 November 1963 I had a routine lunch at Lowry Air Base Officers Club with Bob Brendenstaul retired Air Force, a fellow employee of Jeppesen & Co, then 8000 East 40th Ave, north of Stapleton Airport.

We arrived at noon, ordered the Special. Shortly, the Dallas shooting of President Kennedy controlled the conversation. By then the President was dead, Dallas being on Central time.

Later that afternoon, and as had been the custom for three years, I went to Buckley Air Base for a flight to Dallas Naval Air Station for another Navy Reserve week end Training with Patrol Squadron VP-702. The monthly, 4th week-end, routine flight operations Saturday and Sunday returning late Sunday.

Saturday eve, 23 November, a group not involved in night flight operations drove to downtown Dallas, traced the Kennedy route where history had been made thirty hours earlier. Silent visitors. All learned little beyond that witnessed by America hours earlier.

This Squadron was commissioned July 1960, had the first two week training at Los Alamitos Navy base in California. In the second week of that Anti-submarine training over the Pacific, Jack Kennedy was nominated as Democratic candidate for President in near-by Los Angeles. Some attended an early part of that convention, spoke to Denver delegates. Then few thought Kennedy would be the nominee.

Later October 1962, the same Squadron engaged in another two week Training, this at Jacksonville Florida Naval Air Station during the Cuba Missile crises. This training included search of Russian shipping headed to and from Cuba.

None visiting downtown Dallas 23 November 1963 knew Jack Kennedy other than as President, yet that evening etched in memory, felt a JFK kinship from his Navy days with PT-109, 1943-1944.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 35th President, enjoyed a sunny morning, friendly crowds in Dallas November 23, 1963. In traveling from Love Airport, the motorcade drove on Main Street, to Houston Street, to Elm Street, onto Daely

Plaza leading to Stenmark Freeway then Dallas Trade Mart where the President was to speak.

As the motorcade was a short distance onto the Dealy Plaza Road at 12:35 pm, rifle reports were heard.. The first bullet struck Kennedy in the back, the third in the back of the head, killing him instantly.

There was no motorcade Press coverage at that time.

That changed when the world followed the dead President on TV for three days.

His body rests in Arlington Cemetery on a knoll below the Custis/Lee Mansion, on a sight Jack Kennedy admired a few days before traveling to Dallas and death. Had said then, "I could remain here forever." An Eternal Fame burns there, with a collection of writings from this literate man.

Jack Kennedy was President 995 days.

In part, said at his Inauguration,  
"Our work will not be finished in 1000 days, or a thousand years ..... Let us begin."

Jack Kennedy was the youngest to be elected President, the youngest to die, the fourth to be Assassinated; Abraham Lincoln (1865), James Garfield (1881) William McKinley (1901).

Today liberals, conservatives, Tea Party members, all political stripes embrace these JFK's Inaugural words, plus these he had said.

Life is not Fair.