A Special Edition to Commemorate the Dedication of the New Museum

The John F. Kennedy Library Newsletter

A Publication of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation

WINTER
1993

"The 21st century can be our century if we approach it with the vigor, the determination, the wisdom and the sheer confidence and joy of life that John Kennedy brought to America in 1960."

—President Bill Clinton

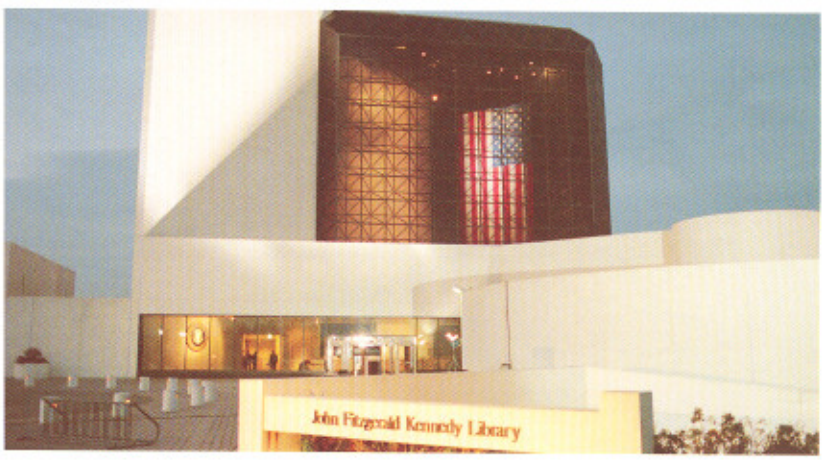
A Day of Celebration as President Clinton and the Kennedy Family Dedicate Library's New Museum

President Clinton joined many members of the Kennedy family, including Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Caroline Kennedy, John F. Kennedy, Jr. and Mrs. Robert F. Kennedy, for the dedication of the new museum on October 29.

The ceremony took place in the Library's Stephen E. Smith Center which was filled to capacity with guests and a large media contingent from around the country. Tom Brokaw, anchor and managing editor of NBC Nightly News, was master of ceremonies; he also anchored the evening news from the Library.

The hour-long program featured an address by President Clinton, during which he said, "The 21st century can be our century if we approach it with the vigor, the determination, the wisdom and the sheer confidence and joy of life that John F. Kennedy brought to America in 1960." The other speakers were Senator Kennedy, Caroline Kennedy (see page four), Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy, II, Foundation Chairman Paul G. Kirk, Jr., and Library Director Charles U. Daly. The invocation was delivered by J. Donald Monan, S.J., the president of Boston College.

During a day which included many celebratory words and actions, one of the most touching moments came when Museum Curator Dave Powers pounded a gavel and declared the new museum officially open.



The 18,000 square foot museum is a complete redesign of the original exhibit space. It provides visitors of all ages an opportunity to experience "first hand" President Kennedy's life, leadership and legacy.

"The new museum gives visitors a 'you are there' sense of immediacy," Mr. Daly said recently. "Several years ago we realized a growing number of our visitors were under age forty and had no personal recollection of the Kennedy Administration. The original museum depended on visitor memories of John and Robert Kennedy for much of its effect. We decided that if the Library is to educate a new generation of visitors and engage their interest in history, a whole new approach to our museum is warranted."

The philosophy behind the new museum is to inspire visitors with the vision of John F. Kennedy by having them learn of his challenges, decisions and commitment to public life through the President's own words, without interpretation or analysis.

"The new museum highlights President Kennedy's fundamental belief that individuals can make a difference, and makes that ideal relevant for today," said Senator Kennedy. "It is our hope that the museum will be a source of education and inspiration to the Greater Boston community and to visitors throughout the world, and will encourage those who come here to dedicate themselves to public service in their own communities."

The new museum was designed by Jeff Kennedy Associates of Somerville, Mass., and was constructed by Hadley Exhibits of Buffalo, NY, and Morello Construction Corporation of Medford, Mass. The 20 new video presentations, including a 17-minute orientation film, were developed by Academy Award-winning producer Peter Davis.

Hundreds of members of the press looked on, as Caroline and John, Jr. welcomed President Clinton to the Library.

Excerpt from the Remarks of Caroline B. Kennedy at the Dedication of the New Museum

The most important reason we began the new museum was that we realized that more and more of our visitors had not lived through the Kennedy years, and in fact, most of them had not even been born.

We decided that the best way for them to understand that time was to hear about it from President Kennedy, in his own words.

We have tried to put the visitor back in time, to experience the excitement of the campaign, the tension of election night and the crises which confronted the President: Cuba, civil rights.

Perhaps the most important new exhibit to us is the Legacy area, where visitors are reminded that November 1963 was not the end, but that there are still so many things that need to be done. There, visitors interested in public service today can find out about volunteer programs which need help now.

Growing up, it meant so much to me when people would say, "Your father changed my life. He asked me to help my country." To me, President Kennedy lives on in those he inspired to enter public service, and those they in turn inspire. That is why we are so grateful to you, Mr. President, for coming today. You are inspiring a new generation to believe that politics is a noble profession. Your presence here truly represents a triumph of hope for the future over nostalgia for the past.

We hope that visitors will leave the new museum with a sense of President Kennedy's idealism, his commitment to public service, and his twinkle. My own children are just beginning to ask about their grandfather, and I look forward to bringing them here.

Kennedy Library Welcomes Presidential Library Directors

The John F. Kennedy Library and Foundation was the host of the 1993 Presidential Libraries Directors' Conference in early November. Library directors from nine presidential libraries and fifteen officials from the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. convened to discuss a range of issues pertaining to library operations, budget and personnel issues, research and museum customers and the changing relationships between libraries and their foundations.

Trudy Peterson, acting archivist of the United States, and John Fawcett, assistant archivist for presidential libraries, led the three days of meetings. All of the library directors voiced concern over an ever-tightening federal budget and recent suggestions that library foundations be called upon to replace, rather than supplement, government appropriations.

In varying degrees, the presidential library foundations support education and other outreach programs, museum redesign, and special efforts such as the Kennedy Library's Profile in Courage Award.

In an effort to promote quality visits for researchers and museum visitors, the libraries will cooperate in the formation of customer surveys and questionnaires, an effort that has come out of Vice President Gore's initiative to "reinvent" government. Directors agreed that they will work closely with frontline employees in an effort to ask hard questions, give viable choices to customers, and provide information necessary to produce total quality whether it be in the research room or exhibit areas.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first president to build a library for the specific purpose of preserving his personal, pre-presidential, and presidential materials all in one place and making these items available to the public. It was under Dwight Eisenhower's administration that the Presidential Libraries Act was passed by Congress. Today, there are nine presidential libraries that have been built with private funds and then given to the National Archives and Records Administration to administer.

The Museum's Role in Library Education Programs

On October 29, in his remarks during the opening ceremony of the Kennedy Library's New Museum, President Clinton recalled how thirty years earlier he was moved to devote his life to public service after shaking hands with President Kennedy in the Rose Garden. President Clinton then noted: "What we owe John Kennedy today...is to make this museum come alive not only in our memories, but in our actions."

On Monday, November 1, the Kennedy Library's Education Department initiated a series of new programs designed to flow from the "you are there" feeling students will experience as they join JFK on his journey to win the presidency and to meet the challenges facing the nation in the early 1960s. Whether students are from elementary or high school, the combination of imaginative museum settings and discussions led by Library staff and volunteers will promote a greater understanding of American history and contemporary politics and will encourage students to actively participate in public affairs through thoughtful citizenship and, possibly, full or part-time public service.

Sam Rubin, of the Education Department, meets with one of the Library's many student groups.

"A QUEST INTO HISTORY"

The Education Department's school program theme, "A Quest Into History," reflects both the tenor of JFK's presidency—the probing search for answers to the complex problems of a new global age—and the Library's mission to help students experience the excitement of learning about American history, politics and government.

For upper elementary grades, the theme is most appropriately explored in a biographical context—the story of John F. Kennedy's service to this country as a political leader, and his effort to address the great public problems of the times. The exhibit settings encourage the imaginative engagement so important at this age. To help students make concrete connections, they will be given "scrapbooks" to organize their impressions of JFK's experiences on the campaign trail and in the White House.

Students in middle school are able to look with broader scope at the history of our nation as it strives to realize the ideals of freedom, justice and compassion. Thus, while tracing Kennedy's career, students will also study the democratic process, selected topics in foreign affairs, social welfare, civil rights, and the American experience in the early 1960's. Each class will have a set of questions to help guide their search.

For senior high students, a museum visit is an opportunity to enlarge their sense of history, and the powers of judgement that study of history can help to build—vital steps in becoming independent and responsible citizens. The exhibits provide a stimulating context for students to exercise critical thinking and to evaluate historical evidence.

MAKING THE EDUCATION PROGRAMS HAPPEN

Prior to visits, schools will receive teacher packets with pre-visit and follow-up activities and museum study materials which address JFK's background and the major events of the Kennedy years. Staff will meet with classes for an orientation and introductory discussion. Teachers may also arrange for staff to conclude class visits with question-and-answer sessions.

To ensure that the museum and the educational programs are accessible to all school children, the Kennedy Library Foundation will establish a travel fund to provide grants to local school districts that may need them. A group of museum teaching interns will also be hired to work specifically with student visitors.

And, of course, these programs work because of the on-going and generous support of the many Friends of the Kennedy Library—individuals, corporations and foundations.

If you would like information to share with your local schools, or would like to join in support of these programs, please contact the Development Office of the Kennedy Library Foundation (617-436-9986).

News from the Archives

"SO LET US BEGIN ANEW"

During the period of 1992 and 1993 when the Museum at the Kennedy Library was under redesign and reconstruction, the Archives of the Library also made impressive strides and contributions. Many of these are directly related to the expansion and renewal of the Library.

Increased Archives Space. Early in 1992, the first full year of operation for the new public facilities in the Smith Center, the installation of state-of the-art moveable compact shelving was completed in the archives storage area beneath the Smith Center—the same shelving later adopted for the new National Archives and Records Administration building in suburban Washington. This increased the Library's capacity to hold paper material by nearly 40% from 18,000 to 25,000 cubic feet or 50,000,000 pages of documents and books. It created a smaller but significant increase in the audiovisual storage capacity.

The new archival storage enabled the Library to bring home to this building 2,900 cubic feet of material which had been left behind at the government's records warehouse near Boston when it moved to Columbia Point in October 1979. Nearly 1,000 cubic feet that had been collected and held over the years by the National Archives in Washington was also recently returned.

Search for New Archival Materials. The addition also made it possible to resume efforts to develop and expand the archival holdings to include some valuable collections of personal papers of Kennedy associates which had not yet been acquired by the Library. In 1992, the increase was a modest 1%. During 1993, it was 1,000 cubic feet or about 7%. This is a remarkably high figure for a 30 year old archive which already has its core collections in place and concentrates primarily on a closed period of the past.

Recent Acquisitions. The Library has "let the word go forth" through active solicitation with the help of Caroline and John Kennedy, Jr., acting as the Foundation's Collections Committee, that the archives is seeking new donations. Some of the people who did deposit important papers in 1992 and 1993 are: Douglas Brinkley, historian, biographer of Dean Acheson and James Forrestal; John Kenneth Galbraith, economist, author, diplomat; Doris Kearns Goodwin, author, biographer; Joel Halpern, Agency for International Development anthropologist in Southeast Asia; Nigel Hamilton, author, JFK biographer; Edward Hanify, lawyer, Kennedy family associate and advisor; several additions to the Hemingway Collection; records of the 1961 Inaugural Committee; additions to the papers of Edward M. Kennedy, US Senator, brother of JFK; Evelyn Lincoln, JFK's longtime personal secretary; Major John Newman, Army officer, Vietnam historian; several additions to the Peace Corps Collection; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., historian, special assistant to JFK; Sargent Shriver, lawyer, politician, diplomat, brother-in-law of JFK, director of the Peace Corps and Office of Economic Opportunity; William Walton, artist, Kennedy and Hemingway friend and associate; and an 8,300 item addition to the White House Photograph Collection.

Future Acquisitions. In addition, the archives has received commitments and strong expressions of interest in future donations of papers from a number of prominent individuals. Some of these are in direct response to a solicitation effort. Others have resulted from the participation of prospective donors in the Library's Distinguished Americans Program. A few of those from whom new papers are expected in the near future are Benjamin C. Bradlee, journalist, Kennedy friend; McGeorge Bundy, national security advisor to JFK, educator, foundation executive; Roswell Gilpatric, deputy secretary of defense, lawyer, Kennedy family friend; Richard Goodwin, special counsel to JFK, deputy assistant secretary of state, author; William Manchester, author, JFK biographer; and Pierre Salinger, journalist, White House press secretary to JFK.

Major World War II Exhibit Will Be Shown at Kennedy Library

Next summer, beginning in June, the Kennedy Library will present a special exhibit: World War II: Personal Accounts - Pearl Harbor to V-J Day. The exhibit is sponsored by the National Archives and Records Administration and was created and designed by the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library; it has been travelling to the other presidential libraries since late 1991.

Through the use of personal narratives, the exhibition focuses on 15 major episodes of the war, including Guadalcanal, Normandy and France, V-E Day, the Atomic Bomb and V-J Day. The exhibit features dramatic letters, diaries and photographs from participants who witnessed the heroics and horrors of history's most devastating global war. Among the significant items included in the exhibit are: a rare ten-minute film depicting the actual Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Franklin D. Roosevelt's draft of his "Day of Infamy" speech, correspondence between Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt, and General George Patton's diary.

Young People From Northern Ireland Meet at the Library

Visitor Services staff member, Fran Coen (center), who was born in Ireland, gave a special museum tour to the visitors from Northern Ireland.

They may have grown up in the same neighborhoods, separated by walls of concrete and religious intolerance, but they learned to form friendships together for the first time during a visit to the United States, which included a tour of the Library's new exhibits. The young people were in Boston in late October as part of "Friends Forever," a concept initiated by YMCA's in Northern Ireland and Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1986.

The goal of the program is to promote leadership skills and commitment to social change among Protestant and Catholic young people in Northern Ireland. Chosen for showing promise as future leaders, the students were in America for two weeks.

"If you want to get to know someone, get into a life raft," said Elizabeth Kennedy, marketing director of the Seacoast YMCA in Portsmouth. "Adrift in a strange environment, you come to recognize similarities are much greater than differences."

After a workshop on leadership and the Cuban Missile Crisis, the group toured the museum. "I think the Library is just brilliant," said Bernie McNally from Lisburn. Gillian Craig, from Larne, said, "All I knew was that President Kennedy had been assassinated. Now I know what he did for America."

Back in Ireland, the young people will meet regularly to reinforce their shared experiences in the United States.

Library to Library Program

In the fall of 1992, the Kennedy Library Foundation initiated the Library to Library Program - inviting town libraries to become members. For an annual membership contribution, member libraries can loan free museum admission cards to their patrons, receive a newsletter subscription and invitations for educational forums and special events.

Currently there are 26 member libraries:

Ashland Public Library
Boylston Public Library
Billerica Public Library
Carver Public Library
Chelmsford Public Library
East Providence Public Library
Falmouth Public Library
Fiske Public Library
Goodnow Library, Sudbury
Jonathan Bourne Public Library, Bourne
Massasoit Community College Library, Brockton
Medford Public Library
Melrose Public Library
Millis Public Library
Norfolk Public Library
Peabody Institute Library, Danvers
Salem Public Library
Sawyer Free Public Library, Gloucester
Shrewsbury Public Library
Solomon R. Baker Library, Bentley College
Somerville Public Library
Snow Library, Orleans
Taunton Public Library
Thayer Public Library, Braintree
Turner Free Public Library, Randolph
Watertown Free Public Library

To learn more about the Library to Library Program, please contact Jennifer Carr at the Foundation, 617-436-9986.

Volunteer Openings

The opening of the new museum presents many volunteer opportunities at the Kennedy Library, particularly in the Visitor Services division. Please call 617-436-9986 for more information.

Kennedy Library Children's Hour

The Kennedy Library is pleased to present a series of free programs designed especially for children. Children, accompanied by their parents, relatives and friends are invited to participate in a series of performances by some of New England's most noted storytellers, musicians and puppeteers. All performances begin at 10:30 a.m. Call 617-929-4523 for reservations and further information.

"Acorn the Elf" with
Marianne Donnelly, storyteller
December 11, 1993

"Melting Pot" with
Sally Rogers, singer
January 15, 1994

"Fire Cloud Cave" with
Galapagos Puppets
February 23, 1994

"Irish Need Not Apply" with
Ben Tousley, storyteller
March 19, 1994

"The Earth Awakes" with
Jennifer Smith, storyteller
April 2, 1994

Senator Kennedy reads a story to his daughter, Caroline, in 1959.

Museum Hours

Daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed Thanksgiving,
Christmas, and New Year's Day

The John F. Kennedy Library Newsletter is published by the Kennedy Library Foundation. Tax deductible donations and bequests may be made to the Kennedy Library Foundation, Boston, MA 02125

Newsletter Editor:
Shelley Kurtz Sommer

The John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library
Columbia Point
Boston, MA 02125

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 56527
Boston, MA

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

GCIU 348 Printed on recycled paper.