

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

by Megan Carey

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, known as **JFK**, was **born** on May 29, 1917, in Brookline, Massachusetts. He was the second child of Joseph Kennedy, Sr. and Rose Fitzgerald. Both the Fitzgerald's and the Kennedys were very wealthy families and belonged to the Irish Catholic Boston families. John's father worked very hard at becoming a successful businessman. His mother was a Philanthropist and socialite. John F. Kennedy, was the second oldest of a group of nine unbelievably talented siblings. Joseph, John (JFK), Rosemary, Kathleen, Eunice, Patricia, Robert, Jean and Edward.

Kennedy attended Edward Devotion School in 1922 up to 3rd Grade then he attended Riversdale County School in the Bronx for 3 years he then spent a year at the Catholic Canterbury School, in New Milford Connecticut and finally he went to The Choate School also in Connecticut during his secondary education, JFK was a popular student. He did very well during his time in Choate with an IQ of 119 "John scored a 119 on an IQ test to enter Choate Academy" [1], and strong scores on the English and Algebra parts of his entrance exams.

Also that year he sailed to London with his parents and his sister Kathleen. Then he was enrolled in the London School of Economics where he planned to study political economy. Soon after enrolling Kennedy was struck by an illness "He left Princeton in December due to a gastrointestinal illness that put him in the hospital"[2] and his father insisted for him to return home. When Kennedy arrived home he enrolled at Princeton University. Kennedy also enrolled in Harvard University that same year while still battling that same illness .His family covered the majority of the illness up because Kennedy's father thought it was a sign of weakness to show that he was sick.

In the spring of 1941," When Jack signed up for the navy, his father pulled strings to ensure his poor health did not derail him" [3]. Kennedy volunteered for the U.S Army but was rejected mainly because of his health problems including his weak back. Nevertheless in September of that year Kennedy was accepted into the navy due to the director of the Official of Naval Intelligence being a former attaché to the Ambassador, his father. JFK attended the Naval Reserve Officers Training School and Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Training centre before being sent to Panama and later the Pacific theatre. "Kennedy entered combat with an assignment to Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Two based in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific in 1943".[4]In the pacific theatre JFK earned the rank of lieutenant, commanding a patrol torpedo boat. During his time Kennedy earned three major medals including the Purple Heart.

JFK returned to Massachusetts after the war ended and he was determined to get into politics and was elected as a Democrat to the US House of Representatives (1947-53) and the US Senate (1953-61). JFK failed in his bid in 1956 for the Democratic vice-presidential nomination. In 1960 he became the youngest and first catholic president. His first three years in office were eventful and dramatic including the growing problem of Vietnam and The Cuban Missile Crisis. By 1963 he was thinking about re-election and this took him to Dallas in November of that year.

“By the fall of 1963, President **John F. Kennedy** and his political advisers were preparing for the next presidential campaign”[5] as Kennedy had barely won Texas in the 1960 elections, to help solve the problems of several of the leading Texas Democratic Party members who were fighting politically amongst themselves. It was planned that JFK would travel from Love Field airport in a limousine through downtown Dallas to give a speech at the Dallas Trade Mart. “Air Force One lands at Love Field in Dallas and the disembarking President Kennedy and first lady Jacqueline Kennedy are met by the press and a crowd of Texans” [6] The trip to Texas began when the President and his wife left from the White House by helicopter at 10:45 am on November 21st 1963. They took the presidential plane, Air Force One, at 11 am arriving at San Antonio at 1:30p.m. Later that day he flew to Houston and drove through the town. Kennedy made a speech in Rice University Stadium and attended a dinner in honour of U.S Representative Albert Thomas. On the 22nd of November after clearance due to bad weather the president and his party arrived at Love Air Field in Dallas at 11:40am.

On his arrival in Dallas Kennedy was warmly greeted by the people. When the motorcade arrived in Dealey Plaza it turned right from the Main Street to Houston Street and it later turned onto Elm Street passing the Schoolbook Depository Building, where the assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was situated. “Onto Elm Street passing the Schoolbook Depository Building, assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was situated at the time of the assassination.”[7] When Kennedy passed the depository and continued down Elm Street shots were fired at his limousine. Most eyewitnesses recall 3 shots being fired. Many people didn’t react when they heard the first shot being fired because they thought it could have been a backfire from the car. The last shot was the most damaging and dangerous of all shots, this took place in front of the “John Neely Bryan north pergola concrete structure. A large hole was shot out of the president’s head splattering blood and tissue around him.

The security team got the car to go to Parkland Memorial Hospital .Kennedy was treated here in the Trauma Room however it was established that there was no chance of survival due to the fatal last shot in the head. At 1:00 p.m., Kennedy was pronounced dead. “One of the bullets fired by Lee Harvey Oswald fatally hit **Kennedy** in the head; another struck and passed through the president before hitting Texas Governor John Connally; and the third **shot** fired by Oswald”. Governor Connally was also taken to emergency surgery, where he had two operations.

Just after 2:00 p.m. the dead body of JFK was taken from Parkland in a bronze casket and was driven to Love Air Field for the long flight from Dallas, Texas, to Washington, DC. “At 4:40am on Saturday, November 23rd, President John F. Kennedy's body was brought back to the White House.”[8]. Vice president Johnston was also in the Air Force One and took an oath and was sworn in as the 36th U.S President.

The autopsy on JFK was performed in the Bethesda Naval Hospital at about 8pm and was completed at 11pm. This was where the 3 pathologists all agreed that the most fatal shot was the 3rd and final one.

The funeral of JFK took place on the 25th of November. Representatives from up to 90 countries attended his funeral. After his funeral JFK was laid to rest by the Military Caisson

in Arlington National Cemetery. “On this day in 1963, President John F. Kennedy, who was assassinated three days earlier, is buried at Arlington National Cemetery “although some of his family members wanted him to be buried in Brookline, Massachusetts but Jackie his wife insisted in Arlington Cemetery. After the assassination and funeral of JFK there were many official investigations carried out, such as the investigation by F.B.I “Former FBI Agent Recalls Role in JFK Assassination Investigation” [9] and the Dallas Police. But the most famous and controversial is known as the Warren Report. “On November 29, 1963 President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed the President’s Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. It came to be known as the Warren Commission after its chairman, Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the United States.”This commission established the Lee Harvey Oswald was the only gunman involved in the assassination “The Warren Commission came to the conclusion that John F. Kennedy was assassinated by a lone gunman, Lee Harvey Oswald” [10]. These theories have been challenged frequently.

“The president's assassination left people shocked and stricken from ... in from all segments of the country, CBS News' Walter Cronkite said.”[11]Kennedy’s death shocked the country more than any other event since December 1941 attack of Pearl Harbour. Some people say that the dark day of November 23rd was the day that America lost its innocence. “The assassination and its aftermath had a profound impact both culturally and politically that changed America forever.”[12] Still to this day people of the U.S are shook by this event.

[1] <https://www.quora.com/John-F-Kennedy-How-intelligent-was-JFK>

[2] <https://www.princeton.edu>

[3] www.historynet.com/john-f-kennedy

[4] https://www.google.ie/?qws_rd=ssl#

[5] <https://www.jfklibrary.org>

[6] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/22/jfk-assassination-timeline>

[7] www.riversdalecc.com/the-assassination-of-john-f-kennedy

[8] www.cbsnews.com/videos/jfks-body-brought-to-the-white-house/

[9] <https://www.fbi.gov/video-repository/...fbi...in-jfk-assassination-investigation/view>

[10] spartacus-educational.com

[11] www.cbsnews.com/news/jfk-assassination-the-world-mourns/

[12] <https://mic.com/articles/74069/5-ways-jfk-s-assassination-changed-america-forever>