

## **Some Recollections of JFK Assassination/Berlin Wall**

### **Eric:**

On Nov 22, 1963 I was at Idlewild Airport doing a detailed tour of the design, construction and operation of the airport now named Kennedy Airport. I was a fourth year Civil Engineering student at U of T. We were on a multi-day field trip touring major infrastructure projects, (bridges tunnels, expressways and airports) in the NYC area to broaden our classroom teachings. I can remember that during the tour without warning or explanation, we were told that the tour was cancelled and we were quickly escorted to our buses. Only an hour or so later were we informed about the assassination. I also remember staying in a hotel near Broadway Ave and going out on the street looking for some nightlife. The streets had no traffic and the restaurants and bars were completely empty. It was a very sad and sobering and eerie feeling. We had one day left on the trip but there our enthusiasm had evaporated. The bus trip back to Toronto was very long.

### **Len:**

Here is my memory.

I was writing a term test in grade 12 history class at RH King Collegiate in Scarborough.

I remember looking up into the upper left-hand corner of the room where the PA speaker was located and listening to our principal make the announcement. I was stunned.

I don't remember how I did on the test, probably not that well.

### **Pam:**

From September 1963 - June 1965 I was in Germany as a teacher with the Royal Canadian Regiment in Soest, A beautiful old Hansa town in north Rhine-Westphalia and not far from the Mohnese. I remember well hearing of Kennedy's death - a few of us had got together one evening when the news broke; just shattering.

It must have been the following year we flew in to West Berlin Tempelhof for a few days and had a tour through Checkpoint Charlie in to East Berlin. I remember being rather scared seeing all these heavily armed soldiers at the checkpoint and rather relieved when we had left the east. And what a

contrast once through to the other side - rather dull and gray and still many of the buildings with old war damage still evident.

I have been back several times since, and have been so impressed with it as a united city once again. The rebuilt Reichstag is particularly impressive with the memorial stones outside as memorial to some of the "undesirable" Germans killed by the Nazis, and the smaller Roma memorial as well as the large Jewish memorial.

Of course I had to visit Charlie but it was really unrecognizable except there was a museum there and throughout the city several remnants of the notorious wall. What a great city it is - I remember going to a concert at the impressive Philharmonia Hall and seeing Simon Rattle conducting a concert. But just wandering those well known streets - the Kurfürstendam and Unter den Linden and standing by the Brandenburg Gate was a thrill. How could such terrible acts of hate and violence be committed by the same hands responsible for this beautiful city?

# BERLIN WALL

