



Stetson Hat intended for President John F. Kennedy

Date

1963

Primary Maker

John F. Kennedy

Medium

Cloth; Leather

Description

A Stetson hat intended as a gift to President John F. Kennedy from Texas Governor John Connally. The Stetson is off-white with inner ring leather embossed in gold with the initials "JFK". The original order sheet is affixed to the inside of the hat and reads, "Name: John F. Kennedy/ Address: White House". Connally ordered the Stetson to be custom made by Joseph's Man's Shop in Austin, Texas in November 1963, in anticipation of JFK's visit to Texas later that month. Governor Connally had planned to present JFK with the Stetson on Friday evening, November 22, 1963, at a fundraising dinner at the Municipal Auditorium in Austin. This was to be JFK's final public engagement before heading to Johnson City for a weekend of relaxation at Lyndon B. Johnson's sprawling 1,570 acre ranch. Sadly, Kennedy was shot at 12:29pm Central Standard Time in Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas and was pronounced dead less than an hour later. John F. Kennedy (1917-1963), often referred to by his initials JFK, was the 35th President of the United States from 1961 until his assassination on November 22, 1963. Kennedy was born into a prominent Massachusetts family before enrolling at Harvard University in 1940. He joined the U.S. Naval Reserve during World War II, where he commanded patrol torpedo boats in the Pacific theater. While commanding PT-109, his boat was struck by a Japanese destroyer and Kennedy led a rescue of several of his injured sailors. Kennedy later served in both the United States House of Representatives and Senate, representing Massachusetts. In 1960, Kennedy successfully ran for President, defeating incumbent Vice President Richard Nixon. During his time in office, President Kennedy oversaw Cold War conflicts - including the Cuban Missile Crisis. He championed civil rights reforms, some of which were later included in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. On November 22, 1963, Kennedy was in a motorcade procession through Dallas, Texas when he and Texas Governor John Connally were shot. Kennedy succumbed to his wounds while Connally was left gravely injured. Lee Harvey Oswald was apprehended in the assassination, only to be shot and killed two days later by Jack Ruby. Kennedy was the youngest person elected as president at a turning point in American society where politicians' influence had crossed over into popular culture. Kennedy continues to be widely admired by American society, with his brief presidency remembered as a bright spot in the 20th century.

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