

On Nov. 22, 1963 the predecessor to The University of Texas at Dallas, known as the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest (GRCS) established by the founders of Texas Instruments, Inc., was represented at the Trade Mart luncheon for President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy.

Dr. Anton Hales came to the GRCS in September, 1962 to head the Geoscience Division. Erik Jonsson of TI and the GRCS had arranged for Hales and his wife Denise to be at one of the preferred tables at the head of the Trade Mart. This transcript is from a Sept. 3, 2002 video tape interview done by then Dean of UT Dallas Libraries Larry Sall with Denise Hales in the Hales home in Australia. It is tape 7 of 7 VHS tapes of Anton Hales, Denise Hales, Glenn Riley, Wendy Riley and others.

We had a top table at the Kennedy happening. Texans had this thing about having radios in their pockets. I don't know who I was sitting by whether it was Erik Jonsson or Eugene McDermott that it was. I heard very softly on this radio (she gestured to where a man's coat pocket where a small transistor radio could have been) "The President of the United States has been shot." And I leaned over to Anton and said, "The President of the United States has been shot." Anton said, "Denise! For God's sake don't start a rumor like that!" Anyway, I kept very quiet. A few minutes later Erik Jonsson stood up and announced to a huge auditorium, just thousands of people in this room with yellow roses, quite impressive, and he stood up and said, "The President of the United States has been injured." Everyone stopped eating. I think we said a prayer and there was this silence. Everyone had this huge T-bone steak in front of them. They never touched them after that. We must have sat there about 20 minutes. Then Erik Jonsson stood up again and said something along the lines, "The President has been shot very seriously and we are completing this event" or something. Because we were in the front of the hall, we were the last to leave. As we went out of the building we heard on a police radio that the President of the United States passed away at Parkland. That was quite a traumatic event. Quite a shattering event.