

HYANNISPORTER

Official Newsletter of the Kennedy Political Items Collectors
Founded in 1974

April 2014

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IN MEMORY OF
BONNIE C. GARDNER,
1932-2003

Collecting Kennedy Overseas



Co Patist (shown above with Pierre Salinger), is a long-time Kennedy collector from the Netherlands. As a 12-year-old, he bought a (translated) copy of *Profiles in Courage* as a gift for his father (who liked Richard Nixon). His father disliked the book, so Co kept it for himself... the start of a collection.



A journalist by profession, Co has assembled quite a collection of Kennedy-related material, not only for JFK, but also for RFK and EMK, as well as members of the Kennedy family.

He had the opportunity of seeing Robert Kennedy during Bobby's trip to The Hague in March, 1962.

One of Co's interests is that of autographs. He has more than 50 Kennedy autographs of members of the family including the brothers, Sarge Shriver, and even Honey Fitz.

At the age of fourteen, he wrote to then President Kennedy, sometime near the end of 1962. He awaited a reply, but nothing came. The family moved from The Hague to the city of Wageningen, about 100km (60 miles) west.

On November 22, 1963, the news of JFK's assassination was broadcast in the Netherlands.

Like everyone else, Co was shocked. He also thought something like "now I will never get his autograph". "Four days later, some folks from the street where we now lived that we had not yet met, rang at the front door. In their hands was an envelope from the White House, with our old address in The Hague, on front of it. The mail service had written down our new address on the envelope, but with the wrong number, and the envelope was opened. The neighbors brought this envelope apologizing for opening it. Inside was the well known photo of the president and his wife, standing on the balcony of the White House, with the Washington Monument in the background, and their facsimile autographs underneath it. Needless to say that I was absolutely astonished, thrilled and more than satisfied".

Co is part of a group of Kennedy collectors who gather every so often to share their interests and exhibit parts of their collections, also holding auctions, buy-sell-trade sessions, just as we do here in the U.S. This is proof once again that the Kennedys are still very much remembered and admired by many people all over the world. The photos above are from the collection and private museum of Peter Klages of Garching, Germany, also a leading member of the Kennedy group. Much more about Peter in the next issue.