

The Cold War Times

The Newsletter of The Cold War Museum

Spring 2019



Letter from the Executive Director

By Jason Hall

If you've been a member of the museum for a long time, you know it's been quite a while since we've published the last full issue of *Cold War Times*. That was due to some unforeseen problems in the production chain of volunteers, but we've got a new team in place with this issue and we expect to be able to produce the newsletter now on a more regular schedule throughout the year.

Much has been going on, as you can see from the articles in this issue. We're particularly delighted that our Presentation Series of speakers, all of whom were eyewitnesses to, or are otherwise experts on, Cold War events, has been increasingly successful. These events serve both as a means of keeping alive the key history of this era for future generations (we film all of these for the museum's archives) and a way to honor the service of the Cold War professionals, chiefly in the military and intelligence communities, who both give the presentations and represent the many other people whose stories cannot be told, at least at this time. Our audiences for these events now average 50-70 people, and they ask very knowledgeable questions in the Q&A sessions after each presentation.

Another area where we've made very good progress is in acquiring rare and significant artifacts for the museum's collections—and with the right artifacts, our staff has the base to launch additional stories about aspects of the Cold War. These range from a U-2 camera and additional purpose-built surveillance receivers to a Thunderbolt (a very large and extremely loud Civil Defense siren on a pole.) We're tempted to light up the latter once we get it rehabilitated, but we'll probably restrain ourselves, to avoid panic for several miles in every direction.

None of this is possible without your continuing support, as Board Chair Ray has noted in his letter to you; I think you know this. So thanks for helping us not only do what we do, on your behalf, but grow in size and service.

One thing I'd like you to consider: if you are giving to us annually as a member, and you would like to do more to help but have budget constraints relating to a large annual gift, please think about doing what an increasing number of our supporters are doing—giving to the museum on a monthly basis in smaller amounts, automatically, through Network for Good. To find out how, go to our website (<http://www.coldwar.org/museum/contributions.asp>) or go directly to Network for Good. Those of us involved with this museum—and our tagline is *The Real People Explaining the Real Things*—love keeping this history alive for future generations, and love finding new ways to do that which resonate with our visitors. You make that possible, so our thanks are sincere.

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Jason Y. Hall
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The Cold War Museum is a
501(c)(3) charitable organiza-
tion

Time to make a difference...
give where you live!

**GIVE LOCAL
PIEDMONT**

**NORTHERN PIEDMONT
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

**MAY 7 TUESDAY
2019**

Features

**50th Anniversary
of the Moon Landing**
By Gene Eisman
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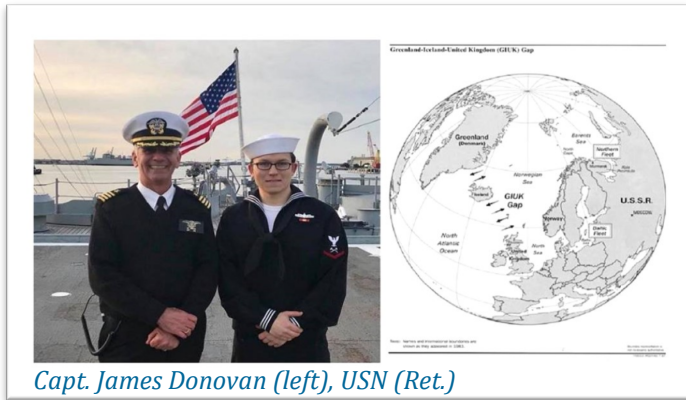
Movie Review: Apollo 11
By Joe Felice, Editor
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2019 Lecture Series

The Cold War Museum kicked off its 2019 Lecture Series on January 20 with a presentation by former NSA Deputy Chief Scientist, Dr. John O'Hara, who talked about NSA's presence in space during the Cold War.

February's lecture was presented by former CIA analyst Aris Pappas on the career of Col. Ryszard Kuklinski as a Warsaw Pact spy for the U.S. during the Cold War.

In March, the museum sponsored two lectures, the first with Chris Sturdevant, head of the museum's Midwest Affiliate, who discussed his new book on the effects of the



Capt. James Donovan (left), USN (Ret.)

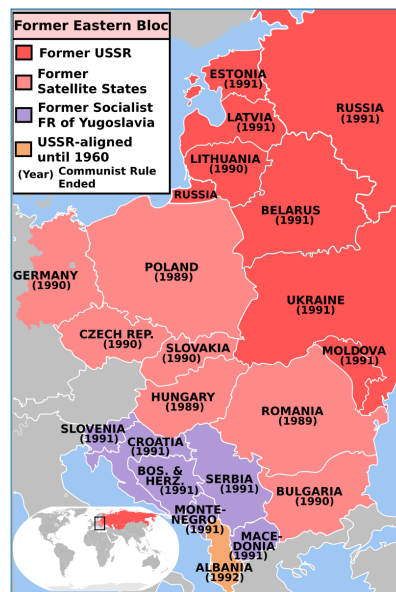
Cold War in the midwestern state of Wisconsin, and Gene Eisman, the museum's expert on Soviet and US Cold War aircraft and author of *Epic Rivalry: Inside the Soviet and American Space Race*; the second presentation was led by Capt. Jim Donovan, USN (Ret.) Jim gave a presentation on SOSUS, an acronym for the underwater sound surveillance system used to locate and track Soviet submarines during the Cold War.

"... you know I want to be there at the "live" presentation..... If you don't see me on Sunday, I'll be looking for the link to view the presentation online. Thank you for what you do to make such events come together for those like me."

- Teresa N., Little Rock, AR

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36th International Churchill Conference

"Churchill: Masters of our Fate"

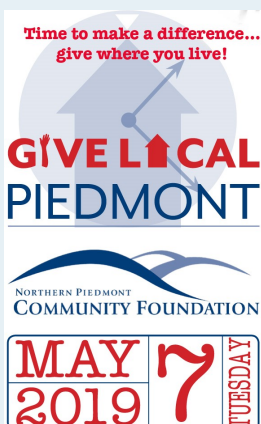
The International Churchill Society will hold its thirty-sixth International Churchill Conference October 29–31 in Washington, D.C. at the Georgetown Marriott. The conference coincides with the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Churchill's involvement in the Cold War will be explored by leading scholars.

The opening night reception will take place at **Anderson House**, the historic headquarters of the Society of the Cincinnati, on Tuesday, October 29. Winston Churchill visited Anderson House on January 16, 1952 during a trip to Washington, D.C.

For details and tickets, go to [EventBrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

For reservations by phone, call toll-free 877-212-5752, or local phone 1-506-474-2009.



Map Source: Wikipedia.org (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:EasternBloc_PostDissolution2008.svg). Use of the map illustration is allowed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).



Charles A. Ray
Chairman, The Cold War Museum

Letter from the Chairman

As usual, the museum has been busy during the past year. Visitors are up from last year by a small margin, and our Presentation Series have proven to be a popular offering. Our Executive Director and volunteer staff have put in an enormous effort to make the museum a popular place to visit to learn more about the Cold War, a pivotal era in American history that is even more relevant today than ever before.

I know that readers have heard this before, but it bears repeating. In order to continue in our role as a center of excellence for preservation of artifacts and documents relating to The Cold War, we will need to expand our staff, facilities, membership, and program offerings; but in order to do that, we urgently need the support of everyone interesting in nurturing and preserving this important institution. We will soon be engaged in [Give Local Piedmont](#), and I encourage everyone to give generously during this time. But even more important is the need for your support throughout the year.

In addition to the support you give as an individual, encourage others to become museum members (<http://www.coldwar.org/membership-mb.asp>) and to help us grow. This is YOUR museum, and with YOUR assistance, we can become the premiere museum on Cold War history. It's a bit late to make New Year's resolutions, but I ask each of you to forget the calendar, and resolve to make this the museum that I know you want it to be.

Upcoming tours at the CWM

The Cold War Museum is delighted to welcome the following groups for a private tour of the museum guided by our docents:

April 2- Signal Officers Wives Club

April 3—Marshall Library Writers Group

April 9— National Army Security Agency Association

April 20- Katie Roehl (father stationed at VHFS)

May 1- Gary Powers & Group

June 28—Major Lucas & group—Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)



Museum Staff

Jason Hall, Ph.D., CAE
Executive Director (Historian)

John DePerro, Chief Curator
(Army veteran)

Bill Rinehart, Collections Chief &
Chief Exhibit Builder
(Air Force veteran)

Paul Schaya, Imagery Intelligence
Collections/Exhibits
(CIA imagery veteran)

John Suter, Imagery Intelligence
Collections/Exhibits
(NRO imagery veteran)

Gene Eisman, Director
Public Relations
Cold War Times contributor

Chris Sturdevant, Chairman
Midwest Chapter
Cold War Times contributor
(Air Force veteran)

Kevin Knapp, Special Events Support
(Army Special Forces veteran)

[Name withheld], Signals Intelligence
Technology Specialist



Thanks to Social Media Lead Doug Harsha, you can now follow the museum on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

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Museum Staff

Cont. from p. 3

Stan Manvell, Chief Fabricator
(construction industry)

Birgitte Tessier, Registrar/Archivist
newsletter production

Mike Washvill, Full Tours Docent
Presentation Series staffing
electronics engineer
(Vint Hill Army veteran)

Bryan Zwanzig, Lead Staffer
Private Tour Arrangements &
Presentation Series staffing
(Vint Hill Army veteran)

Doug Harsha, Assistant Curator,
Civil Defense Expert,
Social Media Lead Staffer

John Welch, Board of Directors
Co-Founder of CWM
Membership Records
Website, Newsletter

Joe Felice, Newsletter Editor



Civil Defense

Based on new research, The Cold War Museum's Civil Defense display was recently redone to better tell the story of Civil Defense while showcasing the actual equipment used to safeguard America during the Cold War. The majority of The Cold War Museum's Civil Defense collection was recovered from the former Wash-

ington DC Civil Defense Headquarters, a bunker under Lorton Prison in Fairfax. According to Civil Defense expert Doug Harsha, the facility was responsible for both broadcasting the emergency alarms and supervising the 1,664 shelters that comprised the Washington DC shelter network at its height.

The collection encompasses a large quantity of equipment and documents. The documents, including plans, procedures, and maps, are the main focus of the museum's research. Some documents have remained untouched since the 1960s.

The museum recently added a new item to its Civil Defense collection, a Thunderbolt 1000 air raid siren, donated by Porters Sideling Fire Company in Pennsylvania. The museum plans to restore the siren to full working order. The Thunderbolt 1000 was the first in a line of bright yellow air raid sirens that became icons of the Cold War.

They're known for their distinctive - and extremely loud - sound produced by forcing 250 cubic feet of air per minute through the 5-port chopper and out the horn.

Many sirens are still used as tornado warning units in the Midwest to this day.

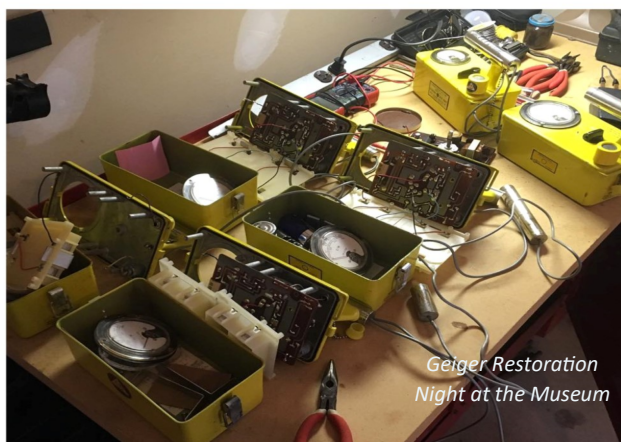
This particular siren appears to have been manufactured in the 1950s and was installed in 1962 in the town of Newberry, right next to what would become the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station. In 1983, the siren was relocated to the fire station during the station's construction.

The museum also recovered the local and remote control systems, including an early model AR-1 timer from the late 1950s and a Plectron radio designed to trigger the siren remotely from an Emergency Operations Center.

The museum would like to thank both Porters Sideling Fire Co. and Mike's Towing and Recovery for their generous donations of the siren, and their time, effort, and equipment.



Thunderbolt 1000 air raid siren



Geiger Restoration
Night at the Museum

TUESDAY 7 MAY 2019

**Time to make a difference...
give where you live!**

**GIVE LOCAL
PIEDMONT**



What is Give Local Piedmont?

An annual campaign by the Northern Piedmont Community Foundation

What is the goal?

To inspire the local community to give generously to nonprofit organizations in our region who help build a thriving community

Why should you give?

The Cold War Museum is an all-volunteer organization

The Cold War Museum needs your support to fulfill its mission

Every dollar donated

from midnight to midnight

on May 7th

will be increased with additional "bonus" dollars generously provided by the PATH Foundation and prize dollars from sponsors.



50th Anniversary of the Moon Landing

July 2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the first landing by humans on another celestial body—the moon—by American astronauts.

By Gene Eisman, Director, Public Relations



This July 20 will mark the 50th anniversary of the first landing of humans on the Moon, the culmination of President John F. Kennedy’s speech to Congress in May 1961 committing the U.S. to achieve this goal before the end of the decade.

The goal, named Project Apollo, was finally achieved, at great costs in money and lives, especially the loss



*Apollo 11 astronauts:
Neil Armstrong (left), Michael Collins (center), and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin (right.)

of three NASA astronauts during the program. The successful culmination came in 1969 with a lunar landing by Apollo 11. Three NASA astronauts constituted the crew: Neil Armstrong, Mission Commander, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin, Lunar Module Pilot, and Michael Collins, Command Module Pilot.

Two of the astronauts would actually land on the lunar surface in the lunar module, named “Eagle.” The third crew member, Collins, remained aboard the Apollo capsule orbiting the Moon. Armstrong and Aldrin would later reunite with Collins in the capsule, before returning successfully home to the Earth.

The launch of Apollo 11 from Cape Canaveral on July 16, 1969 on the huge Saturn V rocket marked the start of the mission, with uncounted millions of Americans watching on television.

To mark the historic occasion, the Apollo 11 explorers left on the lunar surface a plaque bearing a map of the Earth, with

an inscription: ‘HERE MEN FROM THE PLANET EARTH FIRST SET FOOT UPON THE MOON, JULY 1969 A.D. WE CAME IN PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND.’

“That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

- Neil Armstrong

Later, Collins observed in his memoir, “to begin with, it (the Moon) is huge, completely filling (the window of the Apollo capsule...This cool magnificent sphere hangs there ominously, a formidable presence without sound or motion, issuing no invitation to invade its domain.”

Once the module had successfully landed on the lunar surface, Armstrong confirmed that humans had safely landed on the Moon, sending a message to NASA headquarters in Houston that “The Eagle has landed.”

Armstrong and Aldrin then descended to the lunar surface, with Aldrin describing the scene as “the magnificent desolation of the lunar surface.” The two astronauts stayed on the moon for some 22 hours, including 2.5 hours on the lunar surface, before their ascent back to the Apollo capsule. The landing was televised to a global audience, including Armstrong’s epic words, “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

The pioneering astronauts safely returned home to a tumultuous welcome in the United States.

* Photo source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ap11-s69-31740.jpg>. Photo by The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) [Public domain], Photo ID: Ap11-s69-31740.

2018 in Review

By Jason Hall, Executive Director



New historical marker at Vint Hill
dedicated 1 September 2018

Photo by Craig Swain, Leesburg, VA, 8 Oct 2018.
Courtesy of The Historical Marker Database, Hmdb.org.

The Cold War Museum director and staff worked hard in 2018 to continue the museum's mission to educate and inform visitors and guests about the Cold War era. The museum sponsored ten very successful lectures at Vint Hill with the help of its neighbor and friend, The Old Bust Head Brewing Company, featuring eyewitness accounts and other expert commentary on key Cold War events and activities. Topics included Special Forces Berlin, Code Girls, and NSA's tech innovations.

501 people attended the 2018 lectures, and the museum also hosted 32 private tours in 2018, resulting in 264 private tour visitors to the museum, as well as many scout and school group visitors. Museum staff participated in various events, including the annual Culpeper Fly Fest at the Culpeper Regional Airport and the Manassas History Day, to

generate interest in the museum and its mission.

In February 2019, the National Czech & Slovak National Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa contracted an 8-month loan for 32 of our artifacts. They requested USSR and Warsaw Pact military uniform items, flags, pins, and propaganda posters to augment their museum's temporary Velvet Revolution display. Last month, the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum at West Texas A&M University returned 20 items to us from a year-long loan for their temporary Cold War Pop Culture display. These items including 16 Soviet propaganda posters, the Monopoly-style novelty board game "Kommissar," and our working 1980s IBM desktop computer programmed to interactively recreate a key scene from the 1983 movie "Wargames".

Museum Director Jason Hall and staff attended the dedication of the new historical marker at Vint Hill on 1 September 2018. Gary Powers Jr. spoke at the dedication about his own attachment to Fauquier County and to Vint Hill and of the importance of recognizing the role played by the many men and women who served at Vint Hill Farms Station, not only during WWII but also afterwards during the Cold War period.

The museum board and staff continue our efforts in the ongoing campaign to secure a larger space for the museum at Vint Hill. With your help and your continued support, we look forward to a successful 2019!

Don't forget [Give Local Piedmont](#) May 7!



Docent John DePerro (left, back row)
conducted a tour of The Cold War Museum for members of the
National Army Security Agency Association (NASAA) in April.

M

ovie Review: Apollo 11

A must-see for all space enthusiasts



By Joseph Felice, Editor

“Apollo 11” is truly a must see for any space enthusiast. The feature consists entirely of restored original film. This pure historical format serves to bring history to life in a manner so substantive that it connects viewers of all ages to the vibrant atmosphere being wit-

nessed and experienced by spectators, ground crews, and astronauts of Apollo 11.

Historical hindsight has blinded many, including myself, to how truly vulnerable astronauts Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins were to the dangers they were launched into in July 1969. Given the success of their mission, it is easy to fall into the trap of viewing their moon shot purely as an historical fact, making it seem like these three men were impervious to any impending threats. This is truly where the beauty of “Apollo 11” lies. The filmmakers’ decision to only feature original footage in chronological order serves to break up the concrete historical hindsight of the success of the first moon landing and allows viewers not only to live fluidly in the moment as events unfold, but also to feel the fear and excitement of the upcoming lunar mission. The film’s capacity to allow viewers to experience the apprehension, excitement, and relief as though these events are unfolding for the first time gives this feature a three-dimensionality often lacking in the historical genre.

I was grateful to the filmmakers for inviting audience members such as myself, who were not alive when the moon landing occurred, to experience the same sense of pride and joy as the Apollo generation felt when seeing our flag on the moon.

- Joseph Felice

The film begins by showing childhood photos along with wedding portraits and family snapshots of each astronaut. This introduction of them as ordinary citizens with wives and children who were once kids themselves when juxtaposed with audio of Mission Control reading matter-of-factly the astronauts’ resting heart rates during launch really does demonstrate well their extraordinary fortitude under pressure. Audiences hear how Buzz Aldrin’s heartrate was 88 bpm during vehicle ascent. I was amazed, given I could practically feel my heart jump out of my chest during the scenes that showed the mighty Saturn V’s engines roar to life as the rich orangey-red flames plumed out from underneath them following Capcom’s orders to begin the ignition sequence. It certainly had to have awoken the father and son who can be seen in the film sound asleep in the back of their station wagon in the lot of cars gathered at the beach with anxious spectators prior to lift off.

The archival footage does an excellent job explaining through diagrams the mechanical operations of the flight path to the moon once the craft is in orbit. Audiences experience another critical moment and feel the tension in the air in Mission Control when Armstrong is piloting the craft down for the landing on the lunar surface and we see that the Eagle is running low on fuel. Even I felt as though I was about to turn blue along with the rest of Mission Control looking at the depletion of the fuel on the lower left-hand side of the theater screen. Although everyone knows the outcome was successful, this is yet another instance in the film when the audience still feels just as tense as ground crews in Mission Control were in that moment before the Eagle touched down. The immediate relief expressed in the collective audible exhale of mission controllers is one of the few moments during the mission when the tension in the air seems to completely dissipate, even if but for a moment.

Buzz Aldrin provided the next ice breaker with his humorously toned yet serious reminder to himself not to lock the hatch door before stepping foot on the moon nearly 20 minutes after Armstrong descended down the Eagle’s ladder. The film’s ability to allow its audience to feel as though the sequential events are happening for the first time proved most valuable when the American flag was planted on the lunar surface for the first time. I was grateful to the filmmaker’s for inviting audience members such as myself, who were not alive when the moon landing occurred, to experience the same sense of pride and joy as the Apollo generation felt when seeing our flag on the moon.



Upcoming Events

4/14/19—Col. Charlie Simpson USAF (Ret.) presentation on the US missile command during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

5/12/10--Former U-2 Squadron Commander and Flight Instructor Chuck Wilson on flying the U-2. Updated presentation includes information on how the U-2 is used today for surveillance missions.

6/9/19—Gary Powers Jr. presentation on his new book *Spy Pilot*, about his dad, famous U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers.

6/30/19—NSA Historian Greg Nedved presentation on Tiananmen Square events (30th anniversary).

7/14/19—Former Military Attaché (read: spy) at the Moscow Embassy Bruce Slawter, on being an eyewitness to the 1991 coup attempt against Gorbachev.

[Felice Movie review cont. from p. 10](#)

Footage filmed after the flag being unfolded shows how the astronauts collected rock samples and set up test equipment such as the solar wind experiment.

The film once again takes advantage of the sensation of living history as it is happening by addressing the often overlooked loneliness that Michael Collins must have been felt as he remained alone inside the Columbia while orbiting the moon. CapCom mentions how relieved he must be upon Armstrong and Aldrin's return to Columbia to finally have company again. Collins agrees and shares with Mission Control that he was able to combat the loneliness by thinking of the hundreds of thousands of well-wishers back on Earth who were watching the mission unfold on television. CapCom confirms to Collins that everyone watching was with him in spirit during his seclusion in Columbia. After watching Armstrong and Aldrin joyfully execute their mission on the moon, one cannot help but feel a little heartache for the loneliness Collins endured.

Reentry is beautifully depicted with appropriate music to capture the theme of the documentary's focus on the people involved in the Apollo 11 mission. The successful mission is celebrated at Mission Control by controllers waving small American flags. Their enthusiasm is contagious beyond the silver screen. The film concludes with describing the astronauts' 18-day quarantine to make sure they did not bring back lunar contagions. Upon their release, Armstrong takes a moment to joke that while he would not choose to spend time in quarantine, he was glad they were all assisted by the personnel who were present and thanked them for bringing the mission to a successful conclusion. The film succeeds on so many levels and especially in giving attention to overlooked historical figures such as Apollo 11 Lead Flight Director Clifford E. Charlesworth and all members of the mission control teams - Green, White, Black, and Gold.

Aside from being able to feel history as it unfolded, a technique which this film masters so well, I had a couple of added advantages that made this film feel a bit more intimate for me than for other audience members. In 2002, at an air show held on the campus of Daniel Webster College, I had the honor of meeting Flight Director Gene Kranz and shaking hands with him for a picture and autograph before he gave his lecture on working as Flight Director during the Apollo years. During scenes with Kranz as flight director on the White team, I could not help but feel the same ecstasy I felt when I got to meet him all those years ago. It made me feel connected to this story in ways that most others in my age group cannot.

Also, my parents who both worked in the space program with GE and accompanied me to this film were able to share with me their stories afterwards. My father's gleeful reaction to seeing the OIC building where he worked at the Cape enhanced the three-dimensional feel of this film for me by helping me realize there was a time when none of this was the certainty that we all now read about in history books. Rather, the film captures perfectly the actual *uncertain* reality wrought with setbacks and danger, an uncertain reality that was met head-on with courage, talent, and expertise that yielded the result we all now take for granted - Americans landing on the moon.

Book Review

By Gregory Johnson, Docent, The Cold War Museum



Robert F. Kennedy: Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis

(New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc, 1999)

Thirteen Days is about the greatest emergency of the Cold War. Robert F. Kennedy (RFK), Attorney General of the United States during the crisis, wrote the book in the last year of his life. It's the terrifying story of a nuclear close call. The book was written like a newspaper article. Facts are compiled in a day-by-day description of the crisis, virtually without commentary or opinion. The book's themes only become explicit in the last two chapters. These include the need for a leader to surround himself with a large number of advisers and points of view and "the importance of placing ourselves in the other country's shoes". Most critically, the need to avoid any confrontation that forces one's adversary to choose between humiliation and nuclear conflict.

Kennedy starts with the morning of October 16, 1962. He and his brother, President John F. Kennedy (JFK), reviewed photos recently taken from a U-2 flight showing Soviet nuclear missile sites in Cuba. The President immediately set up the Executive Committee for the National Security Council (Ex Comm), which would meet almost continuously throughout the crisis. The President never doubted he would have to act. Within minutes of the launch of these missiles, eighty million Americans would be dead. The presence of these missiles so close to America's borders was unacceptable from a standpoint of national security (and, of course, political suicide for Kennedy). After some extremely tense and indecisive meetings of Ex Comm the decision for a naval blockade was reached. This plan wasn't the result of a thought out process so much as a lack of knowing what to do or a clear vision of how the crisis could end. The President was extremely concerned throughout the crisis about the need to avoid overt provocation and the risks of miscalculation. On Saturday, October 27, the day the crisis came closest to actual conflict, F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover informed the Kennedy's that Soviet Embassy personnel were destroying sensitive documents – an evident precursor to war and an ominous parallel to Japan's destruction of documents on the eve of Pearl Harbor. On that same day Air Force pilot Rudolph Anderson's airplane was shot down (pieces of which are displayed in the Cold War Museum) and JFK and Ex Comm agonized over how to handle the crisis late into the night. The President was planning an invasion within the next three days, possibly as early as Sunday. That night, RFK met with Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrynin and worked out recommendations to resolve the crisis. The next morning the Soviets decided to withdraw the missiles.

The book starts with a Forward by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., President Kennedy's Special Adviser and "Court Historian". In it he told of a conference he had attended in Cuba in 1992 where he learned things that were truly terrifying. He realized we were much closer to the abyss than he knew during the crisis. Specifically, the Soviets had nuclear missiles in Cuba before the crisis began. These weapons could be launched by Soviet Field Commanders, in the event of a conventional military invasion by the U.S., without Moscow's authorization.

An Afterward written by Political Scientists Richard E. Neustadt and Graham T. Allison discuss how this book helps dissolve dangerous patterns of denial and the mistaken belief that nuclear war can't really happen. It also addresses the reasoning behind Kennedy's blockade and much of the strategy of the Cold War. Leaders must choose peace but, controversially, must be willing to risk war - the nuclear paradox. This Afterward also shows just how fortunate a set of circumstances came into play delaying an airstrike that almost certainly would have triggered a nuclear response. Key factors around the decision:

- The Air Force telling him that airstrikes might leave some missiles in operation
- Defense Secretary McNamara's and RFK's opposition to the strike
- JFK's distrust of the military's advice after the Bay-of-Pigs debacle a year-and-a-half earlier
- JFK's last minute decision forbidding the Air Force from invading after the shooting down of Anderson's plane

Though obvious, the book's intensity is unstated. Written in a chronological fashion, the reader is left grasping for each new bit of information, wondering how disaster was averted. This is heightened by a detailed accounting of the

thoughts of the President. As the decision maker, he vacillated, worrying over the potential loss of life, believing that the military training of the Joint Chiefs made it difficult for them to understand the political implications of the situation and so on. The reader shares in his uncertainty, making the story that much more powerful.

Another problem during the crisis was communication. Communications between Moscow and Washington were exceedingly slow and tedious. Encrypted messages had to be relayed by telegraph or radioed between the Kremlin and the Pentagon. This led to a chaotic and perilous situation of Kennedy and Khrushchev trying to guess the other's intentions and led to the establishment of the Hotline between Washington and Moscow a few months later. The decision to create the Hotline was made during the Crisis.

While advances in communication technology make the Hotline less important than in 1962, recent events show these issues are relevant to the current relationship between the U.S. and Russia. In September 2016, President Obama issued a warning to Russian President Vladimir Putin not to interfere with the 2016 U.S. Presidential election. Though evidently unsuccessful, today's relationship between the U.S. and Russia is beset by the same mistrust and lack of communication as it was during the Cold War.

Probably without knowing it, RFK describes the agonizing moments that led to a widely overlooked shift in the Cold War. From the Soviet acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1949 to the resolution of this crisis in 1962, the U.S. and the USSR were never far from nuclear conflict. Neither side had become fully accustomed to these weapons and both sides were conditioned by centuries of military conflict to equate national prestige with the willingness to use all of one's power.

However, from the resolution of this crisis until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, despite occasional backtracking, a new norm of coexistence existed. The end of this confrontation signified a new relationship between the two adversaries: continued ideological opposition but an implicit agreement to stand back from the nuclear threshold. This change was maintained even, I believe, during Reagan's arms buildup of the early 1980's.

Robert Kennedy was a key participant in the crisis. He was the primary caretaker of his brother's legacy and a presidential candidate. Bias was inevitable. He never questions the wisdom of using a blockade before exhausting diplomatic alternatives even though the President thought this decision meant there was a one-in-three chance of nuclear war. He doesn't mention how close U.S. sailors came to the provocative act of storming Soviet ships to get hold of their missiles. And he continues to conceal the fact that the crisis was only resolved when the US agreed to eliminate its missiles from Turkey.

Nevertheless, this book shouldn't be read as a campaign press release. Free from conspicuous narcissism, the book admits to indecision, fear, and misunderstanding. He acknowledges being unable to interpret the pictures of the missile sites and admits both he and the President didn't fully understand how to deal with the crisis. His lack of self-importance gives the story credibility.

Like literature, the successful study of history often depends on the effective adoption of a point of view. Whether a story is told by a journalist covering the event, historians analyzing the situation years later, or politicians debating the merits of an occurrence, one's point of view effects the story's interpretation. When it comes to really understanding historical developments, however, knowing the thoughts of someone who was close to the center of events is indispensable. And so we have, from one of the main participants in the crisis, a first person narrative of humanity's narrow escape from self-destruction.

The Cold War Times is the official newsletter of The Cold War Museum.

Editor: Joseph Felice, joefelice@aol.com

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To submit articles, book reviews, and other material to The Cold War Times, please contact the editor for guidelines.



Mission Statement

The Cold War Museum is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to education, preservation, and research on the global, ideological, and political confrontations between East and West from the end of World War II to the dis-

The Three Main Goals of the Museum:

- ◇ Develop permanent Cold War Museums to preserve local and regional Cold War history with the headquarters and National Museum facility located in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.
- ◇ Erect Cold War Memorials with the National Cold War Memorial located near Arlington National Cemetery to honor the men and women who were killed as part of Cold War events and activities.
- ◇ Establish a reference library and research center to help maintain the historical accuracy of the Cold War.

Museum Membership

Individual Membership

\$25/year

Member Benefits

- Access to The Cold War Times
(including all prior issues)
- Listed as a “Founding Member”
- Priority access to the executive director

Sponsorship Circles

Friend:	\$75/year
Patron:	\$150/year
Benefactor:	\$300/year
Guardian:	\$600/year

The Cold War Museum is an all-volunteer operation. 100 percent of your contributions are applied to fulfilling the museum’s mission. Contributions to the museum *above and beyond membership* are fully deductible in accordance with IRS guidelines for contributions to 501c3 organizations.

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