

John F. Kennedy visited Oklahoma on at least six occasions. He came to the state twice after being elected president in 1960. His final visit was to attend a memorial service for Sen. Robert S. Kerr. OCT. 29-OCT. 30, 1961 Having stayed overnight at the ranch of Sen. Robert S. Kerr as part of a tour of the region's agriculture and water resources. Kennedy dedicated a highway at Big Cedar, made an appearance in Fort Smith, and viewed a cattle exhibition in Poteau. Above, Kennedy stands with an official at a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Ouachita National Forest Road on Oct. 29. NOV. 7, 1957 Kennedy spoke to an Oklahoma City dinner crowd. He was described as "the rising sun of the Democratic Party," according to accounts in The Oklahoman's archives. SEPT. 16, 1958 Kennedy stayed at the Mayo Hotel in Tulsa during a campaign visit. A dinner was hosted by Sen. Robert S. Kerr and J. Howard Edmondson, who became governor later that year. According to the Tulsa World archives, during the dinner, Tulsa resident I. John Mitchell stepped from the crowd and said, "Hi, skipper." The presidential candidate responded, "Well, for crying out loud." Mitchell was an executive officer on the PT-109 when Kennedy commanded it during World War II. It was the first time the two had seen each other since 1943. NOV. 14, 1959 Kennedy and three Democratic hopefuls appeared at an Oklahoma City dinner for a campaign stop. The others sharing the platform were Sen. Stuart Symington of Missouri and Govs. Pat Brown of California and G. Mennen Williams of Michigan. NOV. 3, 1960 Days before the presidential election, Kennedy made another stop in Oklahoma City to give brief speeches at the airport, a shopping center and the Municipal Auditorium. JAN. 4, 1963 Kennedy attended Kerr's funeral in Oklahoma City as head of a delegation of dignitaries including Vice President Lyndon Johnson and Texas Gov. John Connally, who was later wounded in the gunfire that killed Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963. Sources: Tulsa World archives and The Oklahoman archives