

Please read these Memories of one FVC resident who was on the campus of Kent State University on May 4, 1970. To my knowledge there is only one other FVC IL resident who was also there then.

On May 4, 2020 Most of the people in the USA and around the world were thinking of COVID-19. That day Spectrum news detailed a great deal of information about it as I watched. My thoughts were mostly on May 4, 1970. Then came that news. I was finishing the first year of my Ph.D. at Kent State University and was the Graduate Assistant to the Dean of the College of Education. I was in my office across the hall from his office and of the Assistant Dean.

The demonstrations had been on-going for weeks and were somewhat disruptive of night classes. The night of May 3 the demonstrators had burned down the R.O.T.C. building as the protests over the Korea/Viet Nam wars grew more and more violent.

I was listening to the news on a radio. Just about noon it was announced that the National Guard had opened fire and killed several people. I heard the Dean and Assistant come out into the hall to go to lunch, so I hurried out and asked if they had heard the news. They had not. When I told them the first thing the Dean said was, "We've got to get down there."

I watched from windows of our offices on the fourth floor on the Education Building as the Education Faculty went "nose to nose" with the demonstrators. They were on a hill going up from the Quad Parade Field where the Guard was positioned, and had been throwing rocks at the Guard.

Faculty from every part of the campus quickly joined them – all talking calmly and earnestly to the demonstrators. They saved K.S.U. That Guard contingent had been sent to the university very high strung from duty dealing with violent racial problems farther north in Ohio. They kept their position on the Quad with their weapons still at the ready.

Immediately large army tanks blocked all traffic on all main roads into and out of Kent, Ohio. My wife was only able to get home from her teaching position in a district to the north because she knew of side streets to get there. I was able to drive to where our five year old daughter and three year old son were inside Kent city and then on to home.

The Governor of Ohio ordered Kent State University shut down until all demonstrations were ended and were not to resume. As I recall his statement was something like, "If this ever happens again at Kent State University I will make a mental institution of it and I do not mean another university." Really?

The faculty held our classes in their homes and we never missed a thing.

One day at lunch after re-opening I ask the Dean about "suits" regularly coming off campus every day as I was entering. His response was, "I can't tell you." My guess is that they were government agents.

Our family has graduated four generations from Kent State University. It will always be very dear to my heart.

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