

CONTACT PROFILE

Document's Author: Douglas Home/ARRB

Date Created: 12/13/96

Contact Description

Contact Name: Sandra Spencer**Company:****Title:****Category:** Witnesses/Consultants**Street Address:****Phone Number:** [REDACTED]**FAX Number:****E-mail Address:****HSCA Letter Sent:****Additional Information**

She was an E-6 Photographer's Mate serving at the Naval Photographic Center at Anacostia in 1963 who was involved in developing photographs of President Kennedy's body the day after the assassination.

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CALL REPORT: PUBLIC



Document's Author: Douglas Home/ARRB Date Created: 12/13/96

The Players

Who called whom? David Marwell called Sandra Spencer of Witnesses/Consultants, Jeremy Gunn called Sandra Spencer of Witnesses/Consultants, Douglas Home called Sandra Spencer of Witnesses/Consultants, David Montague called Sandra Spencer of Witnesses/Consultants

Description of the Call

Date: 12/13/96

Subject: ARRB Interviewed Sandra Spencer (Revised 12/16/96)

Summary of the Call:

Jeremy Gunn conducted this initial assessment interview, which was audiotaped; for this reason, I will record only a summary of interview results below:

- Sandra Spencer worked at NPC Anacostia from early 1960 until 6 months after the assassination;
- She was an E-6 (a PH1, or Photographer's Mate, First Class) in charge of the "White House Photo Lab," which was a subset of the Color Division at NPC which was responsible for color still photography--officially, this "White House Lab" reported to the Naval Aide to the President, but in reality, Chief Petty Officer Knudsen, the military photographer who worked at the White House, was the White House lab's direct supervisor, and gave them all of their developing assignments, delivered exposed film to them, and took the developed product back to the White House. Representative of the typical work performed by the White House lab were pictures of Presidential Ceremonies, and family photographs.
- She said that on November 23, 1963, the day after the assassination, probably in the afternoon, a Federal agent whom she believes was named "Fox" arrived at the NPC Quarterdeck and she went down to escort him up to the still color photography lab. (She is not sure, but told us that for some reason she believes he was FBI.)
- Fox delivered to her 3 or 4 duplex film holders which contained 6 to 8 sheets of film; she said this film was color negatives. She was positive this film was color negatives, not color positive transparencies. The developing process she recalled using was "C-22."
- Test prints were made of each image, then filters were used for color correction, and then 8" X 10" prints were made of each image.
- The agent took all of the materials with him when he left.
- The agent stuck with her "like glue" during the developing process.
- She was under the impression that the photographic images were classified material, but no one specifically, to her recollection, swore her to silence--she said they would not have had to, because the materials were considered classified.
- She said that in her division, color positive transparencies were never developed. She did not see any color positive transparencies on November 23, 1963, nor did she subsequently hear of any autopsy photography on color positive transparency film. When asked whether any other department at NPC had the capability of developing color positive transparencies, she said that the black and white section at NPC may possibly have had the capability of developing color positive transparencies, but that they could not have done so on November 23, because the whole building was secured that day, except for her section.
- When asked, she said that Vince Madonia did not help with this processing job, and that as far as she knew, Chief Knudsen did not accompany agent Fox during Fox's visit; she also said that this one visit on

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November 23 was the only photographic event related to autopsy photography in which she participated.

-She said that none of the people working at NPC the weekend of the assassination got any sleep "for 4 days," because they were busy printing 10,000 copies of a "prayer card" on which was a photograph of the President which Jacqueline Kennedy had selected; she also said that the Fox visit interrupted the production of the prayer cards.

-Image content:

-views were "body shots," and were not like the normal autopsy photographs she had experience with from her previous duty at Pensacola, in that there was no one in the background, and she does not remember any instruments in the photographs;

-the views were also unlike other autopsy photographs she had seen, in that the body of the President was "very clean," explaining that there was "no blood and no gore" visible;

-she remembered no measuring devices visible either;

-she remembered no identification tags or cards visible in any of the photos;

-she remembers a wound at the base of the front of the President's neck which was circular, and about the size of the round end of a person's thumb;

-she remembers a wound in the back of the President's head which she described as a "blown out chunk" about 2 to 2.5 inches wide located in about the center of the back of the President's head, about 3 or 4 inches above the hairline at the back of his head;

-the top of the head was not visible in the photos, so she said she could therefore not tell us whether there was any damage to the top of the head;

-she remembered no damage to the right side of the President's head;

-she said that the people helping her were junior to her in rank, and remembered the name of one: "Bonita" or something similar.

ARRB relayed its intent to have Ms. Spencer come to Washington for a more in-depth interview, and to view the autopsy photos in the National Archives. Discussion of an exact time was deferred. END

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CALL REPORT: PUBLIC



Document's Author: Douglas Home/ARRB Date Created: 01/09/97

The Players

Who called whom? Douglas Home called Sandra Spencer of Witnesses/Consultants

Description of the Call

Date: 01/09/97

Subject: ARRB Called Sandra Spencer

Summary of the Call:

Doug Home called Sandra Spencer this date.

She confirmed receiving our letter of December 17, 1996, and said she had reviewed the enclosure containing the NPC muster rolls from 1963. She confirmed that the name Carol Ann Bonito on our enclosure was indeed the person she referred to in her interview who assisted her with developing of post-mortem photography of President Kennedy shortly after the assassination; she also said that although she recognized many other names on the muster roll, that none of them assisted her and Bonito with the post-mortem photography of JFK.

I asked her if she could come to Washington later in January to be interviewed in person, and to view the official autopsy photographs of President Kennedy, and she said that her duties as the only available caregiver for her mother, who is an invalid and quite ill, would preclude her from coming to Washington until after April 15, 1997, the approximate date when she believes that someone will be able to temporarily relieve her of her caregiver duties. I asked her if I could call her during the first half of April, 1997 to try to schedule her visit to Washington, and she said that would be fine.

Her plans are to drive to Washington in her own car, and to stay with a friend while here, so she will not need a hotel reservation. I told her we would reimburse her for mileage incurred.

Last item: she said she had a print of JFK and the Black Watch taken about two weeks prior to the assassination, and that if we needed to snip any of the paper for chemical testing (i.e., comparison with autopsy photos) she would make that photograph available. END

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