

Update on the Kecksburg Investigation June, 2003

Results of FOIA requests and filing of NASA appeal

Our initial round of FOIA requests is complete. We filed requests with over a dozen federal and state agencies, for information on various aspects of the Kecksburg incident of 1965. In most cases, we received a "no records" response or were referred to other agencies.

We have the complete Project Blue Book files on the Kecksburg incident, which have previously been released from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to other investigators. Blue Book was the official Air Force investigation into unidentified flying objects. Serving largely as a public relations operation, it was terminated in 1969. Its files reveal that a "three man team" was sent out from Oakdale, PA "to investigate and pick up an object that started a fire." The documents state that nothing was found. This directly contradicts accounts from numerous eyewitnesses at the scene.

Maxwell Air Force Base sent us the December 1965 Historical Record of the 662nd Radar Squadron based in Oakdale – again, previously released. This Air Force unit had a liaison officer with Project Blue Book. One officer, James Cashman, was mentioned in the Blue Book files as the one who called in from the 662nd to report that nothing was found.

Our experience with NASA was unique in that the agency denied us records that we know were in the possession of the agency as recently as eight years ago. We asked NASA for four very specific items ([Exhibit 2](#)), including records of a 1960's NASA official for Project MOONDUST whose name appears on a NASA document as custodian of the Fragology Files from 1962 to 1967. The Fragology files consist of "reports of space objects recovery, analysis of fragments to determine national ownership and vehicle origin." ([Exhibit 3](#)). We have in our possession the document previously released by NASA referencing the list of Fragology Files and another that confirms that MOODUST official Richard M. Schulherr was indeed on NASA's staff in the 1960's. (For a detailed account of Stan Gordon's previous experience with the NASA Fragology Files, go to The Story of the [NASA Fragology Files.](#))

We had every expectation that NASA would repeat the performance of the National Archives and Maxwell Air Force Base by at least sending us material previously released. Instead, NASA provided us a "no records" response on these documents and others that we know were in its possession previously. In addition, we requested information on Cosmos 96 – the Russian space probe

that went down the same day as the Kecksburg object. NASA could not provide records on this either.

On May 9, the Law Offices of Lobel, Novins & Lamont filed an appeal under the Freedom of Information Act with NASA. (see [Letter from the Law Offices of Lobel, Novins & Lamont](#)). The appeal includes 5 exhibits showing NASA that it had previously released the requested information, and that Schulherr did indeed work for NASA.

In our appeal, we referenced a 2002 news article about Schulherr's activities in 1968, when he "flashed fancy government credentials" and required the person in possession of a mysterious cone-shaped object found in the North Carolina woods to release it for testing in Washington. The reporter states that Schulherr was "a staff engineer" with NASA. In his letter about the analysis of the object – determined to be junk from a metal refining operation – Schulherr explains that the object was tested since "potentially it could have been a fragment of space hardware, a meteorite, or terrestrial material of uncommon shape" (see More on [MOONDUST officer Richard M. Schulherr](#)).

This illustrates his role at NASA only three years after the Kecksburg incident.

Schulherr would have had knowledge about MOONDUST acquisitions and entries into the Fragology Files, for which he was custodian. Based on this evidence, we believe his files at NASA may make reference to the Kecksburg incident.

We are hopeful that NASA will cooperate with us on this appeal by providing the requested documentation and additional materials. We understand that the agency has been overwhelmed with requests related to the Columbia disaster.

We have also submitted a follow up letter to the US Army, requesting a more in-depth search. We are providing newspaper articles that clearly state the Army was on the scene, along with excerpts from a detailed radio broadcast stating the same. We also have signed witness statements of encounters with army personnel, some of whom pointed weapons at civilians. US Army vehicles were reported on the scene by many witnesses. We hope that this documentation will assist the Army FOIA office in providing us with records explaining the purpose of the Army's presence in Kecksburg that night.

Addition of Archival Research Firm

Through this process, we have experienced the limitations of the Freedom of Information Act. In April, we were pleased to engage the assistance of the professional archival research firm, History Associates Incorporated (HAI), based in Rockville, MD. HAI's thorough search at the National Archives did not reveal much new material, as expected. However, in the State Department collection

called the "Lot Files," researcher Amber Moulton found a Department of Defense memorandum of October 1965 to the State Department regarding a UFO in Massachusetts which referenced MOONDUST and the transfer of a fragment to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. A second letter from NASA to the State Department, dated November 7, 1966, refers to NASA's authority over the analysis and return of foreign space fragments to their country of launch. These documents do not relate directly to the Kecksburg incident, but provide background which point to the likelihood of NASA involvement with the event.

HAI is currently in the process of searching for records at federal records centers and other government and military repositories outside the Washington, DC area. Files at some of these locations are not publicly available and can only be examined through permission of the agency that created them. In some cases they may be classified. HAI has extensive experience working with such records and making arrangements to access them. These other facilities may contain the requested documents that FOIA offices have not been able to locate.

New military witnesses

In addition, we are now working with a private investigator, formerly with the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), who is helping us locate military, intelligence and NASA personnel who may have been involved with the search and retrieval of the Kecksburg object. He was able to determine, for example, that Richard Schulherr died in 1987. Our attempts to contact family members have not been successful.

The investigator (who does not wish to be publicly identified) was able to locate members of the 662nd Radar Squadron. One of them was on the team that searched for the object; others were at the Oakdale base that night; and we are still trying to locate additional members of the search party. These people have never spoken to an investigator before, except for one who was contacted by a representative of NICAP in 1968.

These interviews have added a great deal of new information, while heightening the contradictions inherent in the investigation. Three 662nd members told us that nothing was found that night. However, there are glaring, puzzling contradictions within the accounts provided by them on major points. Discrepancies also exist between what some of them said versus reports in the media and in the Blue Book files. We are not certain if this is simply a question of memory, or if other factors are at play. We will provide details and analysis of this part of the investigation when the process is complete. These interviews have so far served to increase the complexity and mystery of this case, making it even more compelling.

In addition, we have located a man who told us in confidence that he was a former Army intelligence officer sent to oversee the removal of the Kecksburg object. He states that the object was not of this world and that he was instructed to debunk the case. We are in the process of acquiring more information from this person and learning more about him.

I have made several trips this year to the Kecksburg area to interview witnesses and review records collected by Stan Gordon during his 30 years of investigation into the case. Stan was able to arrange meetings with many credible people from the area with a range of experiences that corroborate each other. These witnesses tell the story of something crashing that night which was removed by the military. I also visited the spot where the object was alleged to have landed.

Petition drive for GAO investigation

CFi supports the Pennsylvania state petition drive launched by Stan Gordon in March. The goal is to request Pennsylvania representatives to conduct a GAO investigation into the Kecksburg incident on behalf of their constituents. CFi will help facilitate this process on behalf of these Pennsylvania citizens, when enough signatures are collected. Please see www.signpetition.com for more information, and to sign the petition.

CFi is very pleased to welcome the professionals who have recently joined our investigative team. Stay tuned for the results of their collaboration with us. We will do everything we can to acquire the information on this case that is owed to us as citizens under the Freedom of Information Act. No matter what the outcome, our process should uncover useful information on government operations that will affect future work on other cases.

Leslie Kean
June, 2003