

**CONTACT PROFILE**

Document's Author: Douglas Home/ARRB

Date Created: 06/21/96

**Contact Description**

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**Contact Name:** Vincent Madonia**Company:** Retired Naval Officer**Title:****Category:** Witnesses/Consultants**Street Address:** [REDACTED]**Phone Number:****FAX Number:** [REDACTED]**E-mail Address:**

HSCA Letter Sent:

**Additional Information**

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This former Naval Officer was a LT (jg) working at the Navy Photographic Center at the time of the Kennedy assassination. His name appears in at least 3 assassination documents related to developing of the JFK autopsy photos.

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# CALL REPORT: PUBLIC



Document's Author: Douglas Home/ARRB      Date Created: 06/25/96

## The Players

**Who called whom?** Douglas Home called Vincent Madonia of Witnesses/Consultants, Tim Wray called Vincent Madonia of Witnesses/Consultants, Dave Montague called Vincent Madonia of Witnesses/Consultants, Jeremy Gunn called Vincent Madonia of Witnesses/Consultants, and David Marwell called Vincent Madonia of Witnesses/Consultants

## Description of the Call

**Date:** 06/25/96  
**Subject:** ARRB Telephone Interview of Vince Madonia

### **Summary of the Call:**

An initial assessment interview was held via telephone on Tuesday, June 25, 1996. Text below is not verbatim unless placed in quotation marks; the intent of this interview report is to record a paraphrased summary of the interview.

I initiated the phone call at the time and date previously agreed to, and after getting Mr. Madonia on the line, I told him I was about to switch to speaker phone since I had a few other people in the room. At this point, before I had hit the speaker phone button, he said: "So am I." When asked whether he felt able to speak completely freely on the subject of JFK autopsy photography, he said yes, and that he had no problems talking to us.

The interview began with ARRB staff asking Mr. Madonia to review highlights of his Navy career. He said he had a 25-year Navy career, from 1949-1974. He said that after becoming a senior enlisted person (photographer's mate), he received his commission as an officer (Limited Duty Officer or LDO, still specializing in photography) in 1962. He said that his tour at Anacostia at the Navy Photographic Center was his first PCS tour as an officer, and that he was a Division Officer at NPC, responsible for about 12 people.

Command structure and organization: He said a Navy Captain (O-6), whose name he could not remember, was the Commanding Officer, and that his department head was a LCDR Richard Halverson, USN. When asked, he said he could not remember the chain-of-command for NPC (i.e., could not remember which command NPC worked for). He said that he was directly responsible for the color lab at Anacostia. He also explained that there was a separate "White House Lab" at NPC which, although 3 of his people were assigned to it, was separate from the color lab. The White House lab was behind locked doors, and most of the work there was done at night, since the White House would routinely want photos taken one day ready the next morning. When asked by ARRB, he said that he had no knowledge of any standing relationship between the Secret Service and NPC. Regarding White House photography, he said that he was aware of two military White House photographers who sent work over to Anacostia: one was a motion picture photographer, and one was a still photographer.

When asked if he remembered any JFK autopsy photography done the weekend following the assassination, he said that there was "a lot of traffic, a lot of pictures" done that weekend following the assassination. At one point he also used the phrase "a lot of documents" done that weekend. He said there were a lot of Secret Service and FBI agents at NPC Anacostia all weekend, and that the developing

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activity at NPC went on for the whole weekend, for 3 full days. He said that the federal agents were overseeing the processing of film.

When asked by ARRB staff whether he developed any autopsy film himself, after a pause, Madonia said no. When asked whether any of his people developed any autopsy photography, after another pause he said that he was not sure; ultimately he said that they may have "assisted" others. He said that a female named Sandy may have assisted others with autopsy photography. ARRB asked whether this person's name was Sandy Spencer, he said yes, it was, and stated that she was a First Class Petty Officer (Navy E-6), and said she was a very reliable worker, an "excellent" worker, whom he had a lot of respect for. He said that she was the senior of the three people who did the work in the NPC White House lab.

When asked by ARRB whether he had seen any autopsy photos that weekend, he said that he had seen a few prints which just happened to be turned face up during the sorting process, when he went in to check on how things were going. He said the work that weekend was classified, and the less he knew about it, the better. He quickly followed by saying that he didn't remember anything about what those prints showed in the way of wounds, or content.

When asked whether he remembered photographic work related to the JFK autopsy being done after that weekend, during the one month period following the assassination weekend, he said that yes, agents did come back for some more photos which "may have been about the autopsy" during subsequent weeks, during a couple of subsequent visits. Other than the subsequent visits taking place, he could not remember details.

When asked whether there was any photography other than autopsy photography going on that weekend, such as other photos of the assassination, he said that there just might have been some pictures from Texas, but that he could not be sure.

When asked whether he had ever been orally sworn to secrecy, or given a written secrecy order, regarding autopsy photography at NPC following the assassination, he said he could not remember whether he had or not.

When asked, Mr. Madonia said he did not remember any specifics about film that weekend: neither number of rolls, nor format, nor type (B & W or color, film speed, etc.). He said that the color lab almost exclusively did color prints. When asked whether he remembered developing color positive transparencies related to autopsy photography, he said he did not recall any transparencies being developed, only prints. He said there was no good system for making prints from color positive transparencies; NPC had the capability to develop transparencies and make internegatives, but he did not remember this happening following the JFK assassination.

Madonia, when asked, said he did know Robert L. Knudsen, and remembered that he was a White House photographer, and said, "he may have been there that weekend (right after the assassination)." As soon as he had said this, however, he said, "take that out of your notes, I shouldn't have said that, I'm not sure."

When asked whether he knew or remembered meeting either James K. Fox, Robert Bouck, or a Mr. Knowlin/Mr. Nolan, he said no to all 3 names.

Madonia did vaguely remember the "Naval Photo Center Negative Log," a page of which had been faxed to him for review by ARRB staff prior to the interview. He said the column "PAA No." was a listing of the negative numbers of photos developed for each job, either individual negatives for single prints, or multiple negatives for multiple prints. His memory did not aid ARRB in interpreting any other details on the form. When asked whether he remembered any details of record-keeping that weekend, he said that the special "White House Lab" should have kept any records that were kept, and suggested we search for their files.

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Mr. Madonia at one point apologized for his poor memory, and said "my mind is gone."

Mr. Madonia was told by ARRB staff that we would be contacting him again in the future, but that we were not sure when. He responded by saying that was fine with him. END

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# MEETING REPORT



Document's Author: Douglas Home/ARRB Date Created: 11/27/96

## Meeting Logistics

**Date:** 11/22/96  
**Agency Name:** Witnesses/Consultants  
**Attendees:** Vince Madonia, Jeremy Gunn, Doug Home, and Dave Montague  
**Topic:** **ARRB Interviewed Vince Madonia**

## Summary of the Meeting

ARRB interviewed Vince Madonia on Friday, November 22, 1996 after his arrival the previous day from California and recorded the interview on the first 3 sides of two 90-minute audiocassettes. The audiocassettes are filed along with a set of 15 exhibits which will be needed to understand the documents discussed on the tape. Accordingly, this interview report is limited to bullet summaries of his best and/or most significant recollections:

-His Navy Career: Active Duty from 1949-1974; started out as a photographer's mate (Navy enlisted), and was commissioned a Limited Duty Officer (LDO) in the field of photography in 1962. His first duty assignment as an LDO was at the Navy Photographic Center (NPC) in Anacostia, across the river from Washington, D.C.

-Duties at Anacostia: Was in charge of color lab, meaning color still photography--primarily color prints. Supervised about 15 people in the color lab; approximately 4 of these people operated a separate, distinct White House lab (from within the color lab) which made prints directly for the two White House military photographers. His job was to take care of personnel and see that they were performing their jobs; he said that while at Anacostia he did no hands-on photographic work, and was merely a supervisor.

-He recognized a photograph of Robert Knudsen and Cecil Stoughton, and verified that these were the two White House military photographers to whom he had referred. He said he had fairly regular contact with Mr. Knudsen.

-Color Lab capabilities:

Ektachrome E3 Color Positive Transparencies: Probably;

Kodachrome Color Positive Transparencies: No, Kodak would have had to do these;

Portrait Pan B & W negatives: Yes;

Color Prints: Yes.

-Activity at NPC Weekend of Assassination: Remembers 3 full days of photographic activity, which began the evening of the assassination prior to midnight. Federal agents from both the FBI and Secret Service (a total of 2 or 3 people, he estimated) were present these three days to ensure tight control over films, and to prevent unauthorized reproduction. No one went home the night of the assassination--people worked straight through that first night. He believes he saw Robert Knudsen sometime that weekend, but is not sure when. He does remember that some personnel in the White House lab unit developed autopsy photography that weekend, as well as motorcade photography from the time of the assassination until and including arrival at a hospital in Texas (and removal of the President from the limousine); however, he does not remember any details of the President's wounds from any of this photography the weekend of the assassination. He does remember development of color negatives, and color prints that weekend; he does not remember development of color positive transparencies. He does remember development of 35 mm film and 120 film, as well as a B & W film pack (12 ea 4" X 5") that weekend; he does not remember any other 4" X 5" photography that weekend, such as 4" X 5" color positive transparencies in duplex holders. He could not specify which types of pictures were on which film formats, but seemed reasonably sure that NPC developed no 4" X 5" color positive transparencies following the assassination. He said with some assurance that "tons" of photographs were produced that weekend; when asked to clarify, he

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said the numbers were literally in the hundreds. He said that after 3 full days of activity developing photographs at NPC, assassination-related photography "dribbled in" for some time, but was not sure exactly how many more days this continued.

-Names of personnel involved in developing of autopsy photography which ARRB should pursue as leads, which he independently recalled, were:

Sandra Spencer (female E-6 photographer's mate who did autopsy photos and was possibly LPO of White House lab);

Ann Kleckner (female E-6 photographer's mate who relieved Sandra Spencer, probably after the assassination);

Chief Petty Officer Marshall (male Chief photographer's mate who assisted that weekend);

"Smoky" Stover (male E-6 photographer's mate who assisted with work the weekend of the assassination).

-Names of military personnel at NPC which he recognized when read to him were:

CAPT McNair: C.O., NPC;

CDR Kubbe: Executive Officer, NPC;

LCDR Halverson: His Department Head (immediate supervisor);

LT Atkins (Color Film Photographer);

Velma Vogler: Personnel Officer at NPC.

-Names he did not recognize at all were:

James K. Fox;

Roy Kellerman;

Robert Bouck.

-Autopsy Photographs: He emphasized that he saw a lot of products being bundled up for transport to what he believes was the White House, but that he made a point of not being too curious about what the photographs showed; he summed up his attitude at the time by saying "the less I knew about it, the better." All he could remember about wounds was a general impression that the President looked "pretty beat up," but when asked to expand upon this he repeatedly said he could not, nor could he remember whether probes were visible in any photographs. When asked if he remembered ever seeing photographs of the President's brain, he immediately said no. He said it was his recollection that NPC did not keep any of this assassination-related material, and that therefore NPC was not likely to find any logs mentioning it since the logs he remembered only recorded those negatives which were kept on file. If negatives were "no good," or were not kept on file for any other reason, then they were never logged. In the normal course of events, he said certain White House jobs were sometimes not kept on file at NPC at White House request, and in those cases, nothing would be logged because the logs only recorded negatives kept on file at NPC. On the weekend of the assassination, he said none of the photographic products were kept, and that all products went back to the White House.

-Documents: Mr. Madonia reviewed USSS 1967 documents related to the chain-of-custody of the autopsy photographs, the Navy-USSS receipts from 11/22/63, as well as the transcript of the 1978 HSCA deposition of Robert Knudsen. Those interested in specifics should refer to the tape recording of the interview. END

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