



Bulletin Photo by Robert L. Fox

Art Smith points to the "umbrella man" in a photograph.

'Umbrella Man New Mug Shots in

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Of The Bulletin Staff

Chester schoolteacher Art Smith opened up his newspaper yesterday and almost fell over in amazement.

The shock of recognition was instantaneous. There was no doubt in his mind that in front of him was a photograph of the "umbrella man."

The photograph was one of three released Sunday in Washington by the House Select Committee on Assassinations probing the killing of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Tex., 15 years ago.

The photographs ran in major newspapers across the country yesterday with a request from the committee to the general public for help in identifying any of the three men in the photographs.

But the committee provided no other clues to their identities.

"My reaction was immediate," Smith, 30, of 2713 Curran st., Chester, said in an interview last night.

"I thought, 'That's it. For the first time in 15 years they've released a photo of the umbrella man.' And then I thought, 'it's a full-face picture.' No one knew there was such a photo anywhere."

Never before, Smith said, had an official government investigating agency tipped off the public that it may be

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pursuing the umbrella man's involvement in the shooting. And never had he been shown from any angle other than a side view.

The umbrella man theory has been a favorite among private researchers for years since the discovery of photographs showing him and a dark-skinned man referred to as "the Cuban" in the vicinity of Kennedy's car at the time of the shooting, Smith said.

Reactions like that of Smith, a teacher of emotionally disturbed children at the Elwyn Institute in Media, were happening at the same time to dozens of others like him across the nation.

Smith is an independent researcher into the Kennedy assassination who believes the Warren Commission's "one-man, one-gun" theory was a whitewash.

He said he has been studying the shooting for three years, going through more than 50 books and untold news accounts and tapes since seeing the first televising of the now-famous Zapruder film showing the moment Kennedy was shot.

Careful study of that data ties the unexplained "umbrella man" and "the Cuban" to the scene at the time of Kennedy's death, according to Smith. It is a well-documented theory that researchers like Smith say is well known to the committee.

"I've seen 100 pictures of that man," a Dallas, Tex., woman reputed to be among the top authorities on Kennedy's death said of Smith's "umbrella man" in a telephone interview last night. She was contacted by the Bulletin through Smith and she asked that her name not be used.

"I don't know who he is, but he is referred to as the umbrella man. As Kennedy's car passes behind the sign (on Dealey Plaza), the man is standing with the umbrella up (on a sunny day with a temperature of 68 degrees).

"Witnesses said he pumped it up and down as Kennedy's car turned the corner. Afterward, as people are falling to the ground, he sat down on the curb with another man (the Cuban) and the umbrella was folded," she said.

But Smith's thrill at the committee's announcement was short-lived.

The committee refused to give any details about the men in the photographs except to say that one (the so-called umbrella man) was at Dealey Plaza and that the other two may have been in Mexico City in the fall of 1963 when Lee Harvey Oswald, the man the Warren Commission fingered as the lone assassin, was there.

"You don't publish a picture unless you think the man is involved," Smith said. "Why did they withhold all that other information? Why didn't they

explain his movements, show how they were contrary to those of all the people around him? It would make it so much easier to find people who may have seen him."

Smith showed the Bulletin photographs in the Nov. 24, 1963, issue of Life magazine which clearly showed a man with an umbrella standing in Dealey Plaza about 20 feet from the man identified as the Cuban just as Kennedy's car passed by.

Other photographs in Smith's possession, some of which appeared in privately published books about the shooting, such as "Cover Up," by J. Gary Shaw, showed the two sitting impassively on the curb while all around them parade-watchers were running in terror or lying flat on the ground to avoid any bullets. The man's umbrella was neatly folded at his feet.

In the photograph of the "umbrella man" released Sunday, the white socks and dark shoes of a man visible to his left are those of the Cuban, Smith said.

He showed the Bulletin several photographs that he claims are well known among researchers clearly showing the two sitting together at a location that looks surprisingly like the one in the committee's photograph.

"That picture was a researcher's dream," Smith said.