

New JFK Story -- Sex, Pot With an Artist

Washington

President Kennedy had a two year love affair with a Washington artist and smoked marijuana with her in a White House bedroom, the National Enquirer said yesterday.

The account identified the woman as Mary Pinchot Meyer, a longtime friend of Kennedy and his wife.

Meyer was shot to death on Oct. 12, 1964, nearly a year after Kennedy's assassination, while walking along C&O Canal Towpath in Georgetown. A 25-year-old Washington man was arrested and tried, but was acquitted.

The Enquirer said that Meyer kept a diary of her romance with Kennedy and that the diary was destroyed after her death by James Angleton, a CIA official and friend of the Meyer family.

The principal source for the Enquirer story is James Truitt, a former editor and executive assistant at the Washington Post who now lives in Mexico. Interviewed there by a special correspondent for the Post, Truitt confirmed the substance of his Enquirer statements. He said he was paid by the Enquirer, but refused to disclose how much.

Truitt said that he had been told of the affair by Meyer at the time and that he kept notes on what he had learned.

Truitt told the Post that Meyer and Kennedy met about 30 times from January, 1962, to November, 1963, when Kennedy was assassinated. He said that many of the meetings took place when Mrs. Kennedy was out of town, and that Meyer, then 42, was driven to the presidential mansion by White House car and taken by private elevator to living quarters where Kennedy did not permit the Secret Service.

In the Enquirer article, Truitt is quoted as saying that

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Meyer and Kennedy "met this way regularly, sometimes two or three times a week" during the 23-month period. Truitt, according to the Enquirer, said the two would "usually have drinks and dinner alone or sometimes with one of the aides. Then the aides would excuse themselves and leave."

In his interview with the Post, Truitt identified two of the aides as presidential assistant David Powers and Timothy J. Reardon Jr.

Reardon said yesterday that Truitt's account was "not so." He said that he had never heard of Meyer or Truitt, but that "nothing like that ever happened at the White House, with her or anyone else." Powers could not be reached for comment.

The Enquirer article quoted Truitt as saying that his notes "show that after one such dinner the night of July 16, 1962, Mary and Jack went into the bedroom and Mary told him, 'I have something special for you.' She took out a snuff box with six marijuana cigarettes inside and JFK said, 'Let's try it.'"

(Truitt told the Post that he gave the marijuana to Meyer.)

According to the Enquirer account of Truitt's notes:

"Mary said that at first JFK didn't seem to feel anything but then he began to laugh and told her: 'We're having a White House conference on narcotics here in two weeks.'

"She said that after they smoked the second joint, Jack leaned back and closed his eyes. . . . He lay there a long time, and Mary said she thought to herself, 'We've killed the President' . . .

They smoked three of the joints and then JFK told her, 'No more. Suppose the Russians did something now.'

"She said he also told her, 'This isn't like cocaine. I'll get you some of that.' She said JFK wanted to smoke pot again a month later but never got around to it."

A check of Washington Post files shows that Kennedy was in Washington on July 16, 1962. A White House Conference on Narcotics was convened, but it was held on Sept. 27, 1962, two months after the alleged marijuana incident.

The Enquirer account said the Meyer diary was found by her sister, Toni Bradlee, in Mary's artist studio. The Enquirer said the diary was turned over to Angleton, who took it to the CIA headquarters and destroyed it.

In the Enquirer account, Toni Bradlee, former wife of Post executive editor Benjamin C. Bradlee, is quoted as confirming the affair and the existence of the diary.

Asked for comment by the Post, Mrs. Bradlee would say only that "The National Enquirer quoted my words out of context to make it appear that I corroborated their story."

The Associated Press quoted her as saying, "I knew nothing about it when Mary was alive. I have no further comment."

Angleton, who resigned as chief of CIA counterintelligence in 1975 following disclosures of some illegal activities by his department, said Meyer had been a "cherished friend" of his and his wife. He said that he had assisted the family after her death in a "purely private capacity," also making the funeral arrangements. He refused to say whether there had been a diary.

Anne Truitt, who was named in the Enquirer story as having been told of the affair by Meyer along with her husband, also refused to comment when reached by the Post. The Truitts were divorced in 1971.

Bradlee, reached on vacation in the Virgin Islands, said he had no comment on the Enquirer account. In his book, "Conversations with Kennedy," Bradlee mentions Meyer five times, and quotes Kennedy as commenting after a White House dance in February, 1962, about the "overall appeal" of Meyer and saying, "Mary would be rough to live with."

Records of the U.S. District Court in Washington show that a court-appointed conservator was named to manage Truitt's financial matters in 1969 on the basis of a physician's certification that he was suffering from a mental illness that was "such as to impair his judgment and cause him to be irresponsible."

The conservatorship, which was sought by his wife in connection with divorce and support proceedings, terminated in 1972.

A source who refused to be named quoted a National Enquirer reporter as saying the weekly tabloid obtained the story from Truitt a year ago but decided not to publish it. The story was resurrected after Judith Campbell Exner gained nationwide prominence with her account of a "close, personal" relationship at the White House with Kennedy.

Mary Meyer was divorced prior to 1962 from Cord Meyer Jr., an official of the CIA.

Washington Post

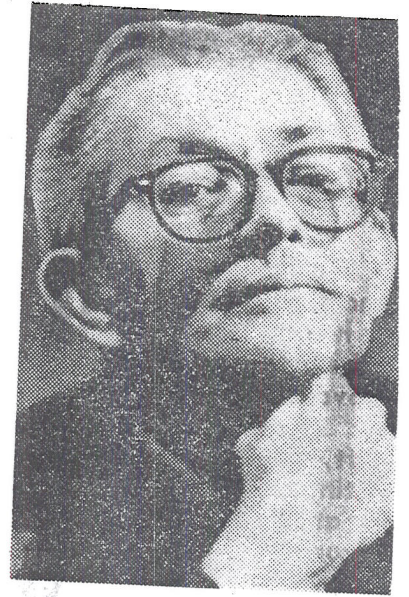


JAMES TRUITT
He was source for story



AP Wirephoto

MARY PINCHOT MEYER
She reportedly kept diary



AP Wirephotos

JAMES ANGLETON
He reportedly destroyed diary