

# Boston Sunday Globe

SUNDAY, JULY 18, 1999

Inside



**Moon struck**

Thirty years ago this weekend during a summer of social upheaval, Americans watched in awe and fascination as astronauts walked on the moon. Today, it is a memory they'll never forget. B1



**Search continues**

Police continued looking for Melissa Gosule in Halifax and Falmouth yesterday. They've searched the woods, in the waters, and along the roadways, using dogs, divers, helicopters, and volunteers, but still haven't located the substitute teacher who disappeared last Sunday after her car broke down on Cape Cod. B1

**Broken accord**

Kevin Cullen writes that the agreement to return local rule to Northern Ireland may have been doomed by too strict demands on too tough a deadline. A3.

**Eyeing the frontrunner**

The strength of GOP presidential candidate George W. Bush has opponents grasping for strategies to slow his momentum – but he only seems to be growing stronger. A8



**Concordia celebration**

To the sailors who own them, Concordia yawls are in a class by themselves. The graceful boats were under sail yesterday in a regatta in Buzzard's Bay. B1

**Bad cell, good cell**

Some companies are seeing promising results in using patients' own tumor cells to make cancer vaccines. G1

**What made Mac run?**

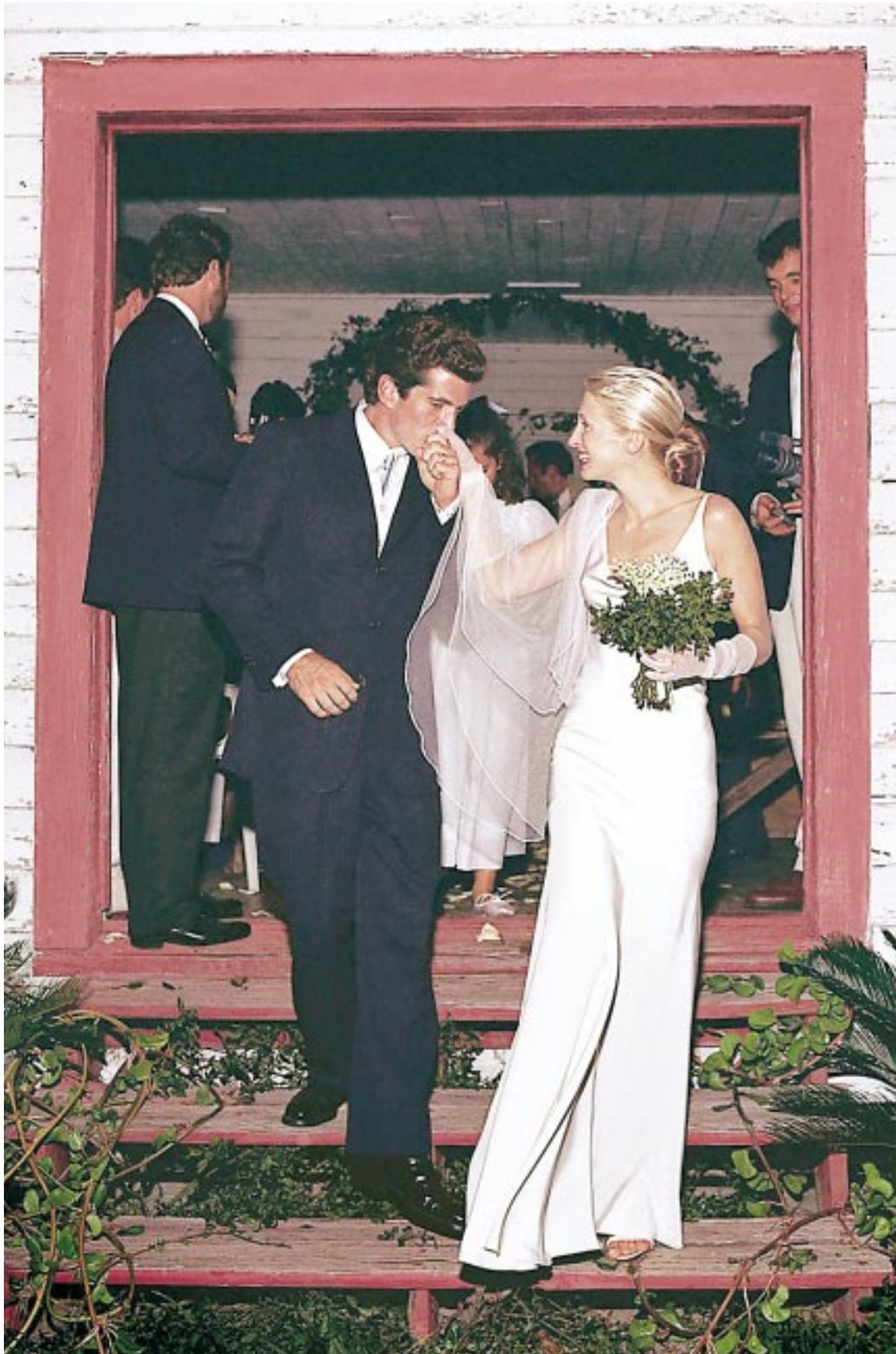
When prominent Hartford lawyer F. Mac Buckley vanished for seven weeks his friends were mystified. The case still baffles. Magazine

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Globe Newspaper Co.



# A grim search



John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette Kennedy after their wedding in 1996. The two, along with Carolyn's sister, Lauren Bessette, had been en route Friday night to Martha's Vineyard.

## JFK Jr., wife, sister-in-law presumed dead in crash

By Mitchell Zuckoff and Matthew Brelis  
GLOBE STAFF

John F. Kennedy Jr., who crawled out from under his father's Oval Office desk into a life of tragedy-tinged celebrity, was presumed dead yesterday along with his wife and her sister when the small plane he was piloting apparently crashed off Martha's Vineyard.

Hope that the glamorous and free-spirited member of the nation's most chronicled political family had simply made an unscheduled landing dimmed when wreckage and luggage were found off Philbin's Beach at the westernmost end of the island. A short walk down the beach is the Vineyard home that Kennedy and his sister inherited from their mother, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.

As darkness fell, no bodies had been found, and an intensive search involving the Coast Guard, Air Force, Air National Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Civil Air Patrol, and scores of private vessels continued into the night.

Investigators said it was too early to speculate on the cause of the crash, but preliminary efforts are focusing on Kennedy's becoming disoriented because of poor visibility and losing control of the plane, fuel mismanagement, or loss of control after doing a flyby of the family property.

Kennedy, 38, a onetime Manhattan prosecutor who left the law to become publisher of *George* magazine, was accompanied by his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and her older sister, Lauren Bessette. They were aboard his single-engine Piper Saratoga II HP, a plane the novice pilot had purchased just 10 weeks ago.

Kennedy and his wife planned to drop off her sister on Martha's Vineyard, then head to Hyannis for the wedding of a cousin, Rory Kennedy, daughter of the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy. The wedding scheduled for yesterday was postponed, and

KENNEDY, Page A14

## Once again, anguish and disbelief

By David M. Shribman  
GLOBE STAFF

Even now, no words prompt so much anguish, so much grief, so much disbelief as these: John F. Kennedy is dead.

**Commentary**

Those words flew around the country yesterday in frantic electronic pulses, though this time it was not news of the death of a president but of his son, missing and feared dead after a small-plane crash.

This time the fragmentary reports did not throw the government into convulsion. This time the tragedy did not come at a time of Cold War peril. This time the news will not freeze a nation in a frightful memory.

But the news that tragedy had apparently struck another Kennedy – indeed, a young man bearing the very name of the slain president – still had the power to shock a nation that has come to believe it is all but injured to shock.

Because the fearful phrase – John F. Kennedy is dead – has a special meaning and triggers, for many, a cascade of emotion and memory: The flag-draped casket. The widow's unflinching courage. The funeral Mass in St. Matthew's Cathedral. The foghorn voice of Cardinal Richard Cushing. The skirling of the bagpipers from the Black Watch. The gathering of world leaders from France's Charles DeGaulle to Canada's Lester Pearson.

And the salute, unbearably brave, of the president's son on the

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**Aircraft and pilot**

## New to plane, he was familiar with Vineyard airport

By Anthony Flint and Matthew Brelis  
GLOBE STAFF

Visibility wasn't optimal. He wasn't licensed to fly using instruments only, and some fellow pilots suggest he should have brought a flight instructor. He had just upgraded to a more powerful and complicated plane.

But as he headed for the small airport on Martha's Vineyard Friday night, John F. Kennedy Jr. knew where he was going.

"He was a good pilot and as familiar with this airport as someone of his experience could be," said Arthur Marx, chief pilot for Flywright Aviation at Martha's Vineyard Airport, where Kennedy and his first plane, a Cessna Skyline 182, were seen frequently over the last year.

In April, Kennedy purchased his new plane – a 1996 model Piper Saratoga II HP, a 300-horsepower, single-engine six-seater – for an estimated \$300,000. It was originally used by a private North Carolina company, then by Munir Hussain of Hasbrouck, N.J., who sold it to Kennedy through a broker. Government and company records indicate no history of mechanical problems.

Kennedy learned to fly at Florida-based Flight Safety International and obtained his

PLANE, Page A18

**The flight**

**8:38 p.m.**  
Plane leaves Essex County Airport in Fairfield, N.J.

**9:39 p.m.**  
FAA radar tracks plane on final approach at 2,200 feet altitude, descending at 500 feet per minute. Twelve seconds later, the plane was at 1,300 feet altitude. Twelve seconds after that, it disappeared from radar.

**The search**

**2:15 a.m.**  
Family friend notifies Coast Guard in Woods Hole plane is late.

**3:28 a.m.**  
Air Force takes charge of the search.

**4:29 a.m.**  
Coast Guard begins search off Long Island.

**6:13 a.m.**  
Civil Air Patrol joins the search, focusing on Long Island area.

**7:55 a.m.**  
A Coast Guard helicopter starts the search around Martha's Vineyard.

**1:00 p.m.**  
Search narrows to area 17 miles west-southwest of Martha's Vineyard airport.

**The plane's last position** on radar is 17 miles west-southwest of the airport, about 6 miles from shore.



**The first sign of wreckage** is found at 1:30 yesterday afternoon 100 yards off Philbin Beach in Aquinnah, often called Gay Head.

GLOBE STAFF GRAPHIC / SEAN MCNAUGHTON



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / EVAN RICHMAN

A suitcase and a plane wheel were found yesterday in the surf off Aquinnah, on Martha's Vineyard.

**The search**

## First a call of alarm, then debris and a growing sense of dread

By Ross Kerber and Carlos Montje  
GLOBE STAFF AND GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

The call came in to the Coast Guard station in Woods Hole about 2:15 a.m.: An airplane piloted by John F. Kennedy Jr., expected to arrive on Martha's Vineyard just before 10 p.m., had not shown up.

It took nearly an hour and a half longer before an initial search was launched and the plane's disappearance officially noted.

By dawn yesterday, hundreds of military and civilian rescuers had begun to scan about 6,000 square miles of ocean and coastline from Long Island to Martha's Vineyard, searching for clues to the aircraft's location.

At about 1:30 p.m., in the surf near Aquinnah, some clues were found: a headrest, bits of carpet, an aircraft support with a wheel attached, and a canvas bag with identification from Kennedy's sister-in-law – one of the passengers on board the Piper Saratoga II HP.

At that point, Kennedy's plane, which took off from Essex County Airport in Fairfield, N.J., had been missing for 15½ hours.

Judging by the debris, Coast Guard officials yesterday believed that the airplane had ditched into the Atlantic, perhaps miles short of the airport in West Tisbury. Last night, Kennedy and his passengers, his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and her sister, Lauren Bessette, were presumed dead.

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Complete Kennedy crash coverage on pages A12-A20