

Updated June 25, 2007

CLINTON ARCHIVE A TOUGH REQUEST

As Hillary campaign gears up, researchers and journalists finding it hard to get papers out of Presidential Library

BY GLENN THRUSH

glenn.thrush@newsday.com

March 19, 2007

WASHINGTON - The razor-edged rectangle of the William Jefferson Clinton Presidential Library juts from a bank on the burbling Arkansas River like a massive metal file cabinet plopped in the mud.

To tourists, it's a place to ogle the 42nd president's golf clubs or the former first lady's department-store-bought wedding dress. But to the dozens of reporters, historians, anti-Clinton types and eccentrics who have filed requests for documents from the library's archive, it is Little Rock's Fort Knox.

The museum's 138-million-page presidential archive could play an important role in determining how Hillary Rodham Clinton's controversial White House past will affect her attempt to reclaim 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

"I haven't received any documents or even a note indicating that they're searching the records," said Jeff Gerth, a former New York Times reporter who requested a wide range of the first lady's files for an unauthorized Clinton biography he's working on.

Hillary Clinton UFO Files

Written by Grant Cameron
Monday, 25 June 2007 06:00 -

With the 2008 election looming, researchers are eager to unearth undisclosed details from eight years marked by controversy, scandal and high-wire politics.

The Clintons' longtime personal lawyer, Bruce Lindsey, who helped defend the couple in the 1990s, has veto power over the release of the most sensitive documents. Attempts to contact Lindsey weren't successful.

Among the documents requested: almost all of Hillary Clinton's files as first lady, eight years' worth of her daily White House schedules, office diaries, day planners and telephone logs, according to a list of Freedom of Information Act requests obtained by Newsday.

Requests also have been filed for the internal correspondence of Clinton's ill-fated early-1990s health care reform task force (despite a court ruling saying its deliberations could remain private) and detailed files on Filegate, Travelgate, Whitewater, Monica Lewinsky, the pardons scandal and even back-and-forth about Clinton's 2000 Senate bid.

Sixteen months after the library started accepting applications, no major request for sensitive documents pertaining to Clinton's first-lady years have been released.

Gerth, whose request was logged on Jan. 17, 2006, should be among the first to receive documents - or a rejection letter - based on the library's first-come, first-served policy. He has received neither.

National Archives officials say the sheer volume of interest in both Clintons is slowing things down. As of last month, the archive had received 336 requests for documents, correspondence and e-mails totaling 9 million pages. That's three times the material requested from George H.W. Bush's archive in its first year.

"This is a tremendously complex and convoluted process," said the library's supervising archivist, Melissa Walker. "We review documents line by line, document by document, not box

Hillary Clinton UFO Files

Written by Grant Cameron
Monday, 25 June 2007 06:00 -

by box. It takes a lot of time."

But there is a political component, too. Under the Presidential Records Act, an ex-president's designated representative, in this case Lindsey, has the power to reject any release under the catch-all justification that the document reveals internal White House deliberations.

These so-called "P5" rejections are only allowed for the 12 years after a president leaves office, but President George W. Bush issued a November 2001 executive order that effectively extends that power indefinitely.

Of the first 54 requests that were acted upon for both Clintons between January and November 2006, only four were granted - and they were for videos and ceremonial letters.

Since then, about 500,000 pages of documents have been released - but there's been little movement on the three biggest Hillary Clinton requests, according to the people who made them.

"We're getting nowhere," said Tom Fitton, executive director of Judicial Watch, a Washington-based conservative government watchdog group that has long investigated the Clintons. His organization wants to see Hillary Clinton's schedules and diaries. "We may have to consider filing a lawsuit but the legal issues are very, very complicated."

It will be interesting to see if one particular researcher obtains his documents for reasons that go beyond politics, not to mention the solar system.

No less than 77 of the FOIA requests - about a quarter of the total - are from UFO researcher Grant Cameron, who wants, among other things, "all files related to UFOs, Roswell, N.M., or flying saucers from the files of Hillary Clinton."

It's not clear whether Cameron's request will be granted.

THE CLINTON SCANDALS

Whitewater: Clintons accused of using political influence in the 1980s to profit from ill-fated Arkansas housing development. In 1996, Hillary Rodham Clinton discovered tax documents related to the matter in her personal quarters, two years after investigators requested them. Cleared of wrongdoing by Special Counsel Robert Ray.

Cattle Futures: In 1979, Hillary Clinton invested \$1,000 in cattle futures under guidance from a politically connected friend; 10 months later she quit trading after turning a \$99,000 profit. No wrongdoing found.

Travelgate: In 1994, several Bush appointees were fired from White House travel office and replaced with friends of the Clintons. Ray cleared Clintons of wrongdoing but said first lady may have had hand in the dismissals.

Filegate: In 1996, White House staffer improperly collected FBI files on executive department employees. Clintons cleared.

- Compiled by Glenn Thrush

Copyright 2007 Newsday Inc.

On April 10, 2007 I wrote to the Clinton Library to ask if in fact it was true they were holding back files, and that I probably would not get any of the files I had requested.

Hillary Clinton UFO Files

Written by Grant Cameron
Monday, 25 June 2007 06:00 -

>>> "Grant Cameron" < presidentialufo@presidency.com > 4/10/2007 6:06 PM >>>

John

An article has just appeared which has my name and your library?

<http://www.newsday.com/news/politics/ny-ushill195136182mar19,0,5599319.story?coll=ny-nationworld-nation-utility>

Is it true?

Are FOIAs being taken in order?

Thanks

Grant

On April 12, 2007 the head of the library, Melissa Walker, replied that none of it was true.

Dear Mr. Cameron,

The William J. Clinton Presidential Library is part of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The Library holds Clinton Presidential records that are covered under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA). The PRA makes all of these records available to Freedom of Information Act requests five years after the end of a Presidential administration, which for Clinton Presidential records began on January 20, 2006. All FOIA requests throughout the NARA system are treated, as the law requires, on a first-in, first-out basis, which means that as requests are received they are filed in queues based on the date, size and complexity of the request.

The Clinton Library has experienced an unprecedented number of FOIA requests filed since January 2006 and currently has received 356 such requests. Once a FOIA request comes to the front of a queue, the responsive records must be reviewed on a page-by-page basis for both Presidential restrictive categories and Freedom of Information Act exemptions. Given the size and number of the FOIA requests we have received to date, all requesters are waiting their turn.

Some will have to wait longer than others simply because of the date, size or complexity of their request. We are trying to be equitable to all requesters and process these records as quickly as we can.

Please let us know if you have further questions or need additional clarification.

Sincerely,

Hillary Clinton UFO Files

Written by Grant Cameron
Monday, 25 June 2007 06:00 -

Melissa

Melissa Walker
Supervisory Archivist
William J. Clinton Presidential Library
National Archives and Records Administration

As of today June 25, 2007 still non of my 100 odd FOIA requests has been completed...sigh