

Inspector statement

On 10/25/2013 this inspector interviewed four people who say they saw what they believe to have been Piper Cherokee N113WS flying over the area before it crashed on 10/21/2013.

The first witness stated she saw the aircraft, a low wing single engine airplane, flying toward the west, gradually descending at first then leveling off at a very low altitude. She noted the time to be around 3:05 local because she was walking toward the bus stop to meet her youngest child, and she always leaves her home at that time. She estimated the airplane to be about two to three miles north of Muse, OK, her home is located roughly one mile south of Muse.

The second witness stated he saw the airplane fly over his home westbound at a very low altitude, roughly two to three times the height of the trees in his yard. Those trees are approximately 75 feet tall.

The third witness stated she was out in her pasture tending to one of her horses when she saw the airplane fly directly over her home, westbound and very low. She stated the time was around 3:15. She also stated that a heavy rain cell had just moved through, moving northeast, that there was a cloud layer, and that shortly after she lost sight of the plane another rain cell moved through the area. She did not know the cloud layer altitude and did not remember whether or not the mountain tops to the south were visible.

The fourth witness reported exactly the same thing and stated the time was 3:20. He noted the time because there has been another airplane flying very low in the area in the past few weeks and he is planning to call in a complaint once he can identify it, he felt an accurate time would help investigators. He stated this was not the same airplane that he has observed in the recent past.

All but the first witness identified the airplane as a low wing single engine aircraft, white with gold or yellow and either dark blue or black trim. They all stated the engine sounded like it was running smoothly and that the airplane did not seem to be in any distress. None of these people saw the airplane turn to the south. None of these people were willing to provide a written statement.

Thomas D Doerner
FAA Aviation Safety Inspector
10/29/2013