

The Home of Cloud Seeding

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Rotterdam resident, the late Vincent J Schaefer (1906-1993) with pilot Curt Talbot on November 13, 1946 flew from the Schenectady County airport with 6 pounds of dry ice to try to change a cloud into ice. Their target was a naturally occurring stratus cloud. They confirmed that the cloud contained supercooled water by photographing the distinct disk shape of the sun as seen through the cloud. They then made a pass through the cloud dropping the dry ice chips. They then observed the cloud as it dramatically changed shape turning cloud water drops into ice crystals. Photographs were taken again showing that the sun was no longer a sharply defined disk, but was fuzzy in outline. The cloud, by then was over Mt. Greylock, in Massachusetts. It was seen with streaks of snow streaming towards the ground. Schaefer's GE Research Laboratory notebook confirmed that the dry ice had converted supercooled water into ice crystals in Nature. This was the all important field replication of his laboratory experiments in July 1946 when he first discovered that dry ice changed supercooled water to ice crystals.

Below is the iconic "Discovery" photo published in Life Magazine with Vincent J Schaefer breathing into the deep freezer making a cloud for testing his dry ice technique--standing on left are GE's Nobel Laureate Dr. Irving Langmuir and Dr. Bernard Vonnegut who discovered Silver Iodide as another cloud seeding agent.

The "Discovery" photo at the GE Research Lab July 1946



