



## News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### WWII SOLDIER IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, from World War II, have been identified and are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Army Air Force 1st Lt. Robert G. Fenstermacher, 23, of Scranton, Pa., will be buried on Oct. 18, in Arlington National Cemetery. On Dec. 26, 1944, Fenstermacher was a pilot of a P-47D Thunderbolt that was on an armed-reconnaissance mission against targets in Germany, when his aircraft crashed, near Petergensfeld, Belgium.

A U.S. military officer reported seeing Fenstermacher's aircraft crash. Reaching the site shortly after impact, he recovered Fenstermacher's identification tags from the burning wreckage. No remains or aircraft wreckage was recovered from the crash site at that time and Fenstermacher was declared killed in action.

Following the war, the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service (AGRS) investigated and interviewed a local Belgian woman who told team that an aircraft crashed into the side of her house. The team searched the surrounding area but was unsuccessful locating the crash site.

In 2012 a group of local historians excavated a private yard in Petergensfeld, Belgium, recovering human remains and aircraft wreckage consistent with a P-47D. The remains were turned over to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC).

To identify the remains, scientists from JPAC used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools such as dental comparisons, which matched Fenstermacher's records.

There are more than 400,000 American service members that were killed during WWII, and the remains of more than 73,000 were never recovered or identified.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

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