



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NAVY PILOT MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR ACCOUNTED FOR

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that a Navy Pilot, missing from the Vietnam War, has been accounted-for and will be buried with full military honors along with his crew.

Navy Lt. Dennis W. Peterson, 28, of Huntington Park, Calif. was the pilot of a SH-3A helicopter that crashed in Ha Nam Province, North Vietnam. Peterson was accounted for March 30, 2012. Also, aboard the aircraft was Ensign Donald P. Frye, 23, of Los Angeles, Calif.; Aviation Antisubmarine Warfare Technicians William B. Jackson, 32, of Stockdale, Texas; and Donald P. McGrane, 24, of Waverly, Iowa. The crew will be buried, as a group, on May 2, at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

On July 19, 1967, the four servicemen took off from the USS Hornet aboard an SH-3A Sea King helicopter, on a search and rescue mission looking for a downed pilot in Ha Nam Province, North Vietnam. During the mission, an enemy concealed 37mm gun position targeted the helicopter as it flew in. The helicopter was hit by the anti-aircraft gunfire, causing the aircraft to lose control, catch fire and crash, killing all four servicemen.

In October 1982, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) repatriated five boxes of remains to U.S. officials. In 2009, the remains within the boxes were identified as Frye, Jackson, and McGrane.

In 1993, a joint U.S./ S.R.V. team, investigated a loss in Ha Nam Province. The team interviewed local villagers who identified possible burial sites linked to the loss. One local claimed to have buried two of the crewmen near the wreckage, but indicated that both graves had subsequently been exhumed.

Between 1994 and 2000, three joint U.S./ S.R.V. teams excavated the previous site and recovered human remains and aircraft wreckage that correlated to the crew's SH-3A helicopter. In 2000, U.S. personnel excavated the crash site recovering additional remains. Analysis from the Joint POW/MIA Command (JPAC) Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) subsequently designated these additional remains as the co-mingled remains of all four crewmen, including Peterson.

DoD scientists used forensic tools and circumstantial evidence in the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO website at www.dtic.mil/dpmo or call (703) 699-1420.