



News Release
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSING WWII AIRMAN IDENTIFIED

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

U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Arthur F. Parkhurst, of Evansville, Ind., will be buried on Oct. 16 in Dayton, Ohio. On March 12, 1945, Parkhurst and five other crew members aboard a C-47A Skytrain departed Tanauan Airfield on Leyte, Philippines, on a resupply mission to guerilla troops. Once cleared for takeoff there was no further communication between the aircrew and airfield operators. When the aircraft failed to return, a thorough search of an area ten miles on either side of the intended route was initiated. No evidence of the aircraft was found and the six men were presumed killed in action, their remains determined non-recoverable.

In 1989, a Philippine National Police officer contacted U.S. officials regarding a possible World War II-era aircraft crash near Leyte. Human remains, aircraft parts and artifacts—including an identification tag belonging to Parkhurst—were turned over to the local police, then to U.S. officials.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command used dental comparisons and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used mitochondrial DNA—which matched that of Parkhurst's brother and sister—in the identification of his remains.

Of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II, more than 400,000 died. At the end of the war, the U.S. government was unable to recover and identify approximately 79,000 Americans. Today, more than 72,000 are unaccounted-for from the conflict.

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

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