



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIRMAN MISSING FROM WWII IS IDENTIFIED

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

He is 2nd Lt. Harold E. Hoskin, U.S. Army Air Forces, of Houlton, Maine. He will be buried Friday in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

Representatives from the Army met with Hoskin's next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process, and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

On Dec. 21, 1943, Hoskin was one of five crewmen on board a B-24D that departed Ladd Field in Fairbanks, Alaska, on a cold-weather test mission. The aircraft never returned to base and it was not located in subsequent search attempts. The following March, one of the crewmen, 1st Lt. Leon Crane, arrived at Ladd Field after spending more than two months in the Alaska wilderness. He said that the plane had crashed after it lost an engine, and Crane and another crewmember, Master Sgt. Richard L. Pompeo, parachuted from the aircraft before it crashed. Crane did not know what happened to Pompeo after they bailed out.

In October 1944, Crane assisted a recovery team in locating the crash. They recovered the remains of two of the crewmen, 1st Lt. James B. Sibert and Staff Sgt. Ralph S. Wenz. Hoskin's remains were not found and it was concluded that he probably parachuted out of the aircraft before it crashed.

In 2004, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) received information from a National Park Service Historian regarding a possible WWII crash site in the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, Alaska. The historian turned over ashes believed to be the cremated remains of the crew, however, it was determined they contained no human remains. In 2006, a JPAC team excavated the site and recovered human remains and other non-biological material, including items worn by U.S. Army officers during WWII.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA in the identification of Hoskin's remains.

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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