



## News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **AIRMAN MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR IDENTIFIED**

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

Air Force 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. David A. Thorpe, 24, of Seneca Falls, N.Y., will be buried June 23 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. On Oct. 3, 1966, Thorpe's C-130E, with four other men aboard, failed to arrive at Nha Trang Air Base following their departure from Tan Son Nhut Air Base in South Vietnam. Rescue personnel found their remains at the crash site in South Vietnam eight days later approximately 40 miles west of Nha Trang. The cause of the crash is not known.

Between 1984 and 1996 the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) received human remains tentatively linked to Thorpe and the other crew members from various sources including refugees from the Vietnam War and Vietnamese citizens. But lacking advanced scientific tools and complete records during this time period, JPAC was unable to make an individual identification of Thorpe's remains so he was buried as part of a group at Arlington. Other remains associated with the entire group were held at JPAC's laboratory for future testing.

As DNA testing procedures improved in the late 1990s, JPAC's forensic anthropologists applied the latest technologies from the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory to include mitochondrial testing, a sample of which matched the DNA from Thorpe's sister. His dental records also helped confirm the identification.

With the accounting of this airman, 1,687 service members still remain missing from the Vietnam War.

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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