



U.S. Department of Defense  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)

## News Release

On the Web:

[http://www.defenselink.mil/cgi-](http://www.defenselink.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi?http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2005/nr20050520-3241.html)

[bin/dlprint.cgi?http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2005/nr20050520-3241.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2005/nr20050520-3241.html) Media contact: +1 (703) 697-5131

Public contact:

<http://www.dod.mil/faq/comment.html>

or +1 (703) 428-0711

---

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**No. 499-05  
May 20, 2005**

---

### **Vietnam War Missing in Action Serviceman 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 returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is Air Force Maj. Robert Harry Schuler, Jr., of Wellsburg, N.Y. His interment is scheduled for Saturday in Franklindale, Pa.

On Oct. 15, 1965, Shuler was flying his F-105 *Thunderchief* as part of a four-ship flight north of Hanoi when the lead aircraft was hit by enemy fire. Shuler remained in the area to provide support to the downed pilot while the two other aircraft departed for aerial refueling. When they returned, Shuler was no longer in the area and they could not establish radio contact with him. An extensive aerial search of the entire flight route met with negative results.

Between 1993 and 1998, joint U.S. and Vietnamese teams conducted seven investigations, including unilateral archival research by Vietnamese officials. The final investigation in Nov. 1998 led the teams to a Vietnamese army officer who recounted his unit shooting down an F-105 on the date and in the area where Schuler went down. That team surveyed the crash area, found fragments of an F-105, and recommended the area for excavation.

Teams led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) excavated the site on four occasions between Sept. 1999 and Mar. 2001, recovering more wreckage as well as human remains. In addition to other forensic tools, JPAC scientists used mitochondrial DNA comparisons to confirm the identification of Schuler's remains.

Of the 88,000 Americans missing in action from WWII, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War and Desert Storm, 1,833 are from the Vietnam War, with 1,397 of those within the country of Vietnam. Another 750 Americans have been accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War, with 524 of those from the country of Vietnam.

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

<http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2005/nr20050520-3241.html>