



News Release
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COLD WAR MISSING IN ACTION AVIATOR IDENTIFIED

The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) has announced that the remains of the co-pilot of an aircraft shot down in China during the Cold War have been identified and will soon be returned to his family.

He is Mr. Robert C. Snoddy of Roseburg, Ore.

Snoddy and his pilot, Mr. Norman A. Schwartz, took off from an airfield near Seoul, South Korea, on November 29, 1952, with two other crew members to extract a CIA operative from China. The mission in the Jilin province of northeast China was planned to pick up the agent on the ground with an airborne extraction system.

Unfortunately, the agent on the ground had been compromised by the Chinese, and when the C-47 aircraft flew over the pickup point it was shot down by hostile ground fire. Snoddy and Schwartz were reportedly killed, while the other two crew members, Richard G. Fecteau and John T. Downey, were captured by the Chinese and held until 1971 and 1973, respectively.

For years the U.S. government asked the Chinese for information related to the fates of Snoddy and Schwartz. The Chinese had in 1975 acknowledged to President Ford that the two had died in the crash and buried near the site but that it was impossible to locate their remains.

But in 1999 the DPMO presented more detailed information about the crash to the Chinese which led to their approval in 2002 of a visit by a U.S. team of investigators. Specialists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) interviewed a 78-year-old villager who had witnessed the shoot down in 1952. He described the incident in detail and directed the investigators to the site where they found aircraft wreckage but no human remains.

In June 2004, a joint JPAC-Chinese recovery team excavated the site where they found more aircraft debris, personal effects of the crew as well as human remains. Among other forensic tools, scientists of the JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used mitochondrial DNA to confirm the identification of Snoddy.

Of the 88,000 Americans missing from all conflicts, 129 are from the Cold War. The remains of 19 other Americans, including Snoddy, have been accounted for since the end of the Cold War.

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

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