



News Release

**Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)
Washington, DC 20301-2400**

Phone: (703) 699-1169

Fax (703) 602-4375

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 5, 2006

MISSING WWII AIRMAN IS IDENTIFIED

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

He is 1st Lt. Shannon E. Estill, U.S. Army Air Forces, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He will be buried on October 10 in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

On April 13, 1945, Estill's P-38J Lightning was struck by enemy anti-aircraft fire while attacking targets in eastern Germany. Another U.S. pilot nearby reported seeing Estill's aircraft explode and crash. Because the location of the crash site was within the Russian-controlled sector of occupied Germany, U.S. military personnel could not recover Estill's remains after the war.

In 2003, a team from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) investigated a crash site near the town of Elsnig in eastern Germany. The site had been reported by two German nationals whose hobby is finding the location of World War II crash sites. They also claimed to have found remains at the site, which they turned over to U.S. Army officials. The team surveyed the site and interviewed two more men who witnessed the crash as children.

In 2005, another JPAC team excavated the crash site and recovered additional human remains as well as P-38 wreckage. Included in the recovered wreckage was an aircraft data plate from Estill's plane.

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 the remains, matching DNA sequences from a maternal relative.

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.

-end-