



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIRMAN MISSING IN ACTION FROM WWII 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 will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is 1st Lt. James W. Blose, U.S. Army Air Forces, of Sharpsville, Pa. He will be buried Sept. 29 in Hermitage, Pa.

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

On April 22, 1942 Blose and another pilot, 2nd Lt. William S. Shaw, departed Nausori, Airdrome, Viti Levu Island, Fiji, on an airborne alert mission. Soon after takeoff, bad weather forced the pilots to fly below the level of several mountaintops in the area and land their P-39D Airacobras at Nandi Airdrome. Shaw successfully landed his plane, but Blose was not seen or heard from again. Initial ground searches in the thick jungles and rugged terrain were unsuccessful.

In late 2004, a Fiji citizen reported to a U.S. official in Fiji that he located possible aircraft wreckage on Viti Levu Island. The official visited the site and saw the wreckage bearing a data plate that correlated to Blose's plane. The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) investigated the crash site in early 2005 and collected additional data plate information.

In 2006, a JPAC team excavated the site and recovered human remains and other items including a pilot's microphone electrical plug with Blose's initials on it.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC also used dental comparisons in the identification of Blose'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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