



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MARINE MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR IS IDENTIFIED

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

He is Cpl. Jim E. Moshier, U.S. Marine Corps, of Bakersfield, Calif. He will be buried Wednesday in Bakersfield.

On June 11, 1967, Moshier was one of 11 passengers on board a CH-46A Sea Knight helicopter that was inserting forces into Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam, when the aircraft was struck by enemy ground fire and crashed. Pilots from two nearby helicopters saw the crash and reported that none of the men on board could have survived. Aircraft flew over the site for several hours, but saw no survivors. A ground patrol attempted to access the site the next day, but could not because of the large concentration of enemy forces in the area. Two weeks later, a reconnaissance patrol was within 25 meters of the crash site, but extensive enemy activity prevented the team from approaching closer.

Between 1993 and 1994, U.S./Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted two surveys of the site, and interviewed several Vietnamese citizens who said they witnessed the crash. Two of the citizens claimed to have seen bone fragments while scavenging the site years earlier. The teams found small pieces of wreckage, but no human remains.

In May 2005, Vietnamese officials notified U.S. officials that possible human remains were present at a district security compound in Quang Tri Province. The Vietnamese reported they confiscated the remains and other items, including Moshier's identification tag, from a Vietnamese citizen in 1996. The remains were then buried in the security compound, but the ID tag and other items had supposedly been lost over the years. Later that month, a U.S./S.R.V. team excavated the secondary burial site in the security compound and recovered a box containing human remains.

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 Moshier's remains. Remains from one of the other servicemembers on board the aircraft, Pfc. James E. Widener, U.S. Marine Corps, were identified in August 2006.

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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