



News Release

Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)
Washington, DC 20301-2900

Phone: (703) 699-1169

Fax (703) 602-4375

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 3, 2008

SAILOR MISSING FROM WWII IS IDENTIFIED

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

He is Seaman 1st Class General P. Douglas, U.S. Navy, of Newcomb, Tenn. He will be buried Jan. 26 in Sneedville, Tenn.

On July 6, 1943, the light cruiser USS *Helena* was struck by torpedoes fired by Japanese destroyers off the coast of Kolombangara Island, Solomon Islands, in what would become known as the Battle of the Kula Gulf. More than 700 servicemen were rescued, but Douglas was one of more than 150 servicemen who were missing as the ship sunk.

In June 2006, a resident of Ranongga Island, Solomon Islands, notified U.S. officials that he exhumed human remains and Douglas' dog tag that he found eroding out of the ground near a trail by his village. The officials contacted the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) who subsequently traveled to Ranongga Island to examine the burial location where they verified that no additional remains were present.

Among dental records, 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.

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-