

Bat 21 Crew Remains Repatriated



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News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Air Force MIAS from Vietnam War are Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of four U.S. servicemen, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

They are Capt. Peter H. Chapman, II, Centerburg, Ohio; Tech. Sgt. Allen J. Avery, Auburn, Mass.; Tech. Sgt. Roy D. Prater, Tiffin, Ohio; and Sgt. James H. Alley, Plantation, Fla., all U.S. Air Force.

Prater is to be buried in Columbia City, Ind., on June 19. Other burials are being scheduled individually by the families of the airmen.

On April 6, 1972, six airmen were flying a combat search and rescue mission in their HH-53C Super Jolly Green Giant helicopter over Quang Tri Province in South Vietnam when they were hit by enemy ground fire and crashed. Joint U.S. – Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) field investigations from 1989 to 1992, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), yielded evidence leading to an excavation at the crash site in 1994 as well as two reported burial sites. Team members recovered human remains and personal effects as well as aircraft debris. As a result of these recoveries, all six men on the aircraft were accounted-for in 1997 and buried as a group at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. Three were individually identified at that time. Recent technical advances enabled JPAC to identify additional remains to be those of Prater.

Previously, in 1988, the S.R.V. turned over remains they attributed to an American serviceman, however, the name did not match anyone lost or missing from the Vietnam War. The remains were held by JPAC pending improved technology which might have facilitated an identification later.

In the mid-2000s, JPAC's laboratory gained increased scientific capability to associate the 1988 remains to the correct loss. The Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) tested these remains against all those servicemembers who were MIA from the Vietnam War with negative results. In 2009, AFDIL expanded its search to make comparisons with previously-resolved individuals. As a result of AFDIL's mitochondrial DNA testing, JPAC scientists determined that these remains were associated with four of the six airmen from the 1972 crash.

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.