

Sunday 2nd May

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World War II: Eight U.S. airmen laid to rest after 66 years

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B-24 heavy bomber.

WASHINGTON – The remains of eight U.S. air force members shot down on Sept. 1 1944 during World War II have finally been identified and returned to their [families](#) for burial.

The eight had been declared missing for 66 years when their B-24J Liberator heavy bomber was shot down by enemy fire near the Republic of Palau south of Philippines.

“The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced today that the remains of eight U.S. servicemen, missing in action from World War II, have been accounted-for and returned to their families for burial with full military honor,” said a statement by the Department of Defense.

“The group remains of Lt. Jack S. M. Arnett, Charleston, W.V.; [Flight](#) Officer William B. [Simpson](#), Winston-Salem, N.C.; Tech. Sgt. Charles T. Goulding, Marlboro, N.Y.; Tech. Sgt. Robert J. Stinson, San Bernardino, Calif.; Staff Sgt. Jimmie Doyle, Lamesa, Texas; Staff Sgt. Leland D. Price, Oakwood, Ohio; and Staff Sgt. Earl E. Yoh, Scott, Ohio, and the individual remains of Lt. Frank J. Arhar, Lloydell, Pa. were buried today in [Arlington National Cemetery](#),” said the DOD.

“The individual remains of Arnett, Yoh, Doyle and Stinson were buried earlier by their families,” DOD said.

“On Sept. 1, 1944, their B-24J Liberator bomber was shot down while on a bombing mission of enemy targets near the town of Koror, Republic of Palau,” the defense department said.

“Crewmen on other aircraft reported seeing Arnett’s aircraft come apart in the air and crash into the sea between Babelthuap and Koror islands. Two parachutes were spotted, but none of the 11-man crew ever returned to friendly territory. An aerial search was unsuccessful, and more thorough recovery operations could not be conducted due to Japanese control of the area,” it said.

Relying on post-war Japanese documents officials were able to establish that three crew members survived but died while they were prisoners of the Japanese.

All 11 were declared missing in action and non-recoverable.

“In October 2000, a team from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command mounted several investigations on Babelthaup island to attempt to locate several reported mass burial sites,” it said about the complex investigation.

A team returned in November 2001, but their excavation did not recover any material or biological evidence indicating a mass burial.

They went back on January 2004, and shortly before the team completed their excavation, they were contacted by a private wreckage hunting group called the “Bent Prop Project” which had discovered the wreckage of a B-24 on the ocean floor four miles northeast of where a diagram from U.S. records indicated a crash site.

The JPAC team examined the wreckage and recovered remains.

Divers from JPAC and the U.S. Navy examined the underwater site again in 2005 where they recovered more remains and material evidence. After stabilizing the underwater site for safety reasons, the joint JPAC-U.S. Navy team dived on the site again in early 2007 and recovered additional remains. The joint team returned again in 2008 and recovered more remains and evidence.

Mitochondrial DNA analysis from the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory, the biological profile of the remains, dental records, material evidence including machine gun serial numbers and identification tags of Arnett, Doyle and Yoh, enabled JPAC scientists to establish the identifications.

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