



**News Release**  
**Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)**  
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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AIRMEN MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR IDENTIFIED**

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

They are Col. William H. Mason, Camden, Ark.; Lt. Col. Jerry L. Chambers, Muskogee, Okla.; Maj. William T. McPhail, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Maj. Thomas B. Mitchell, Littleton, Colo.; Chief Master Sgt. John Q. Adam, Bethel, Kan.; Chief Master Sgt. Calvin C. Glover, Steubenville, Ohio; Chief Master Sgt. Thomas E. Knebel, Midway, Ark.; Chief Master Sgt. Melvin D. Rash, Yorktown, Va.; and Senior Master Sgt. Gary Pate, Brooks, Ga., all U.S. Air Force. These men will be buried as a group Thursday in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. The individually-identified remains of each airman were previously returned to their families for burial.

On May 22, 1968, these men were aboard a C-130A Hercules on a nighttime flare mission over northern Salavan Province, Laos. Fifteen minutes after the aircraft made a radio call, the crew of another U.S. aircraft observed a large ground fire near the last known location of Mason's aircraft. Search and rescue attempts were not initiated due to heavy antiaircraft fire in the area.

Analysts from DPMO developed case leads with information spanning more than 40 years. Through interviews with eyewitnesses and research in the National Archives, several locations in Laos and South Vietnam were pinpointed as potential crash sites.

Between 1989 and 2008, teams from Laos People's Democratic Republic (L.P.D.R) and Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.), led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), pursued leads, interviewed villagers, conducted 10 field investigations and four excavations in Quang Tri Province, S.R.V. The teams recovered aircraft wreckage, human remains, crew-related equipment and personal effects.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA – which matched that of the crewmembers' families – as well as dental comparisons in the identification of the remains.

Since late 1973, the remains of 927 Americans killed in the Vietnam War have been accounted-for and returned to their families. With the accounting of these airmen, 1,719 servicemembers still remain missing from the conflict.

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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