



## News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### U.S. AIRMAN MIA FROM WWII IS IDENTIFIED

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

He is Tech. Sgt. Walter A. McClellan, U.S. Army Air Forces. He is to be buried Friday in his hometown of Pensacola, Fla.

On April 17, 1945, McClellan's B-17 Flying Fortress was struck by enemy fighters while on a bombing run against a rail depot in Dresden, Germany. Following the war, U.S. teams attempted to locate the remains of the crew but because the area was under Soviet control, no further searches could be conducted. The U.S. Army was forced to declare the remains of the "Towering Titan's" crew to be non-recoverable.

Two reports from German citizens in 1956 and 2007 indicated that the remains of a 19-year-old were buried as an "unknown" in a local church cemetery in Burkhardswalde. Church records revealed that the grave held the remains of a young American flyer who had parachuted from his aircraft over the town of Biensdorf, was captured and killed by German SS forces near Burkhardswalde. He was first buried in the town's sports field, but exhumed by the townspeople after the war and reburied in the church cemetery.

In September 2008, a recovery team of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) exhumed the grave in Burkhardswalde, recovered human remains and other artifacts including a silver Army Air Forces identification bracelet bearing the emblem of a qualified aerial gunner. The biological profile of the remains and McClellan's dental records enabled JPAC scientists to establish the identification.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at [www.dtic.mil/dpmo](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo) or call (703) 699-1169.

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