



THE TORCH

Illuminating government personnel accounting efforts



DEFENSE POW/MISSING PERSONNEL OFFICE

Winter 2004

Inside

Message From Mr. Jennings 2

League of Families-U.S. Govt Briefings 2

Two Servicemen MIA in Vietnam Laid to Rest in Arlington 3

The Unsan Battlefield —A Historical Perspective 4

DNA Reference Samples-Family Members doing their part 6

U.S.-Russia Archival Conference Planned 8

Upcoming Events 8

Americans Accounted-for in 2003 9

Working to ID "Punchbowl" Unknowns 10

OdontoSearch: A new tool in IDs 11

U.S.-North Korea Strike New Arrangements on MIA Operations

In an arrangement reached on February 11, 2004, U.S. and North Korean negotiators plan to improve several areas of cooperation in operations to recover the remains of Americans missing in action from the Korean War.

For the first time, the North Korean side agreed to present their senior leaders with a proposal to establish a single point of contact to resolve reports of Americans still living in North Korea. In the past, the North Koreans refused to even broach the subject denying that any Americans missing from the Korean War are still alive in the North. "This doesn't resolve the live sighting issue in North Korea, but at least this time they agreed to discuss it and consider our request," said Jerry D. Jennings, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs.

During the talks both sides agreed to resume repatriating remains recovered during joint recovery operations in North Korea across the demilitarized zone at Panmunjom. This practice has not occurred since 1999. U.S. team members will accompany the remains into South Korea.

"I am encouraged by the level of cooperation the North Koreans demonstrated during these talks," said Jennings. "We accomplished much at no additional cost to the U.S. government, and these new procedures will streamline the process of getting our teams in and out of North Korea, and bringing our fallen heroes back home to their families."

Jennings led the talks, which were held in Bangkok, Thailand, as well as those in November, where broad terms were set for five recovery operations and a period of unilateral and joint investigations prior to the excavations. The five operations will be centered in the areas of Unsan County, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang, and near the Chosin Reservoir in the northeast part of North Korea.

The United States has conducted remains recovery operations in North Korea every year since 1996; more than 180 sets of remains believed to be those of American soldiers have been recovered. More than 8,100 are still unaccounted-for from the Korean War. ♦

Annual Korean/Cold War Government Briefings to be held this Spring

Hundreds of people are expected to attend annual government briefings in Washington, D.C. for families of unaccounted-for Americans from the Korean and Cold Wars. The briefings, hosted by the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, will be held April 30 and May 1, 2004, at the Hilton McLean Tysons Corner, in McLean, Va. Family members should contact their service casualty offices to reserve a place at the meeting,

Government officials involved in the POW/MIA accounting mission will be present to update families on the latest initiatives and to answer questions. The briefing agenda was recently expanded from a one-day to a two-day event to allow ample time for one-on-one sessions where family members can discuss the specifics of their loved ones' cases.

(Continued on page 3)

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**A Message from the Honorable Jerry D. Jennings**

As we progress into the New Year, we should all be challenged by the pace and scope of our planned accounting activities for the coming months. We started the year with a request for DPMO to assist in the establishment of a Bureau of Missing Persons in the Iraqi Provisional Government in Baghdad. The Coalition Provisional Authority asked us to share our experience and expertise in accounting for missing Americans as they help the Iraqis in their effort to account for over one million of their citizens missing since the 1980s. Our survey team just returned from a week in Baghdad, where they offered preliminary advice after being briefed on the enormity of the task facing the Iraqis.

Our activities in North Korea remain on track as we prepare to commence on a full schedule of excavations this year. I am encouraged by the results of our February negotiations with North Korean officials. We are making some progress on the live sighting issue, and we will resume repatriating remains recovered in North Korea across the demilitarized zone at Panmunjom.

We continue to realize success in Southeast Asia. Over the past few months accounting efforts continued with recovery operations in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. The Joint Underwater Accounting Activities Working Group met for the first time in Vietnam to explore the options and recommend courses of action for how best to pursue over-water losses. We also had the opportunity to meet with Deputy Prime Minister Vu Khoan, Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien, and Senior Lt. Gen. Pham Van Tra, Minister of National Defense, during the latter part of 2003.

Later this spring DPMO will sponsor the second annual Personnel Accounting Conference of government officials from around the nation who contribute to the POW/MIA accounting effort. This conference is an opportunity for us to share information, refine strategies, and plan for future initiatives in our global activities.

On April 30 and May 1 DPMO will once again host two days of briefings in the Washington, D.C. area for relatives of those missing from the Korean and Cold Wars. In June we look forward to providing government briefings at the 35th Annual Meeting of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia. I strongly encourage family members to use the Department of Defense-funded transportation to attend one of the meetings and to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss individual cases with knowledgeable officials. I look forward to a big turnout for these important events.

League of Families – U.S. Government Briefings Scheduled for June in Washington, D.C.

The 35th Annual Meeting of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, which will include extensive U.S. government briefings, will be held June 24-26 at the Hilton Hotel in Crystal City, Va. As in past years, the Department of Defense will fund air transportation to attend the briefings for two relatives of each missing American. More information on the meeting, lodging and transportation will be available from the service casualty offices in May. ♦

TWO SERVICEMEN MISSING IN ACTION IN VIETNAM ARE LAID TO REST IN ARLINGTON

Two airmen missing in action from the Vietnam War were buried at Arlington National Cemetery on the 31st anniversary of their loss. They are Air Force Maj. Richard W. Cooper, Jr., of Salisbury, Md.; and Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Charlie S. Poole, of Gibsland, La.

On December 19, 1972, Cooper and Poole were crewmembers aboard a B-52D Stratofortress bomber participating in the Linebacker II bombing of Hanoi, North Vietnam. Cooper was the navigator and Poole was the aerial gunner. At the completion of their bombing run, their bomber was struck by an enemy surface-to-air missile and crashed about six miles southwest of Hanoi. No other aircraft on the mission were able to establish emergency radio contact with the crew, and no parachutes were sighted. There was no search and rescue attempt mounted due to enemy control of the area.

U.S. officials subsequently learned that four of the crew had been captured and were being held as prisoners of war. Upon their release in 1973, they reported that Cooper had been unable to eject from the aircraft. Each of the surviving crewmen reported having seen only three other parachutes, thus accounting for all four survivors.

In 1993 and 1994, U.S. investigators found photographs, records and artifacts in a Vietnamese military museum that correlated to the crashed B-52. Later in 1994, another U.S. team interviewed Vietnamese informants, visited a purported crash site, and determined that it was most likely the site of the B-52 loss. In the fall of 1995, a joint U.S.-Vietnamese team excavated the site where they found B-52 wreckage, crew-related items, personal effects and human

remains. The crash site was so large that a second excavation was conducted in early 1996 when additional remains and personal effects were discovered.

Anthropological analysis of the remains by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command's Central Identification Laboratory, as well as mitochondrial DNA matches, confirmed the identification of these two men. ♦

(Continued from page 1)

Annual Korean/Cold War Government Briefings to be held this Spring

Representatives from DPMO, the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory, and the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command headline an impressive list of government agencies that will make presentations. Speakers will include senior policy officials, intelligence analysts and scientists.

On Friday evening, April 30, family members will have the opportunity to attend a concert by the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters at the Naval Memorial and Naval Heritage Center. The concert will be preceded by a visit to the Korean War Memorial.

POW/MIA family members may be eligible to receive travel assistance from the U.S. government to attend the meeting. The program, also known as "COIN ASSIST," provides funding for airline travel to and from the annual meeting. Family members should contact their service casualty offices to determine if they are eligible for the program. ♦

THE UNSAN BATTLEFIELD

— A Historical Perspective

In talks with DPMO and JPAC late last year, the North Koreans agreed to a full schedule of remains recovery operations for 2004. U.S. teams expect to conduct five recovery efforts, starting in early spring and running through the fall. One of the areas of continuing interest to our teams is the Unsan battlefield where so many of our forces were lost. Following is a brief description of the 1950 battle:

During the last week of October 1950, Republic of Korea (ROK) units of the Eighth U.S. Army conducted offensive movement north of the Chongchon River, deep inside North Korea, and were pushing toward the Yalu River. Earlier in the month, United Nations forces had crossed into North Korea pursuing the remnants of the North Korean People's Army, which had been defeated in the Pusan perimeter breakout and after the Inchon landings in September.

To blunt the ROK threat closing on the Chinese border, Chinese communist forces, which had secretly crossed into North Korea just days prior, struck the ROK 1st and 6th divisions in surprise attacks beginning October 25. The Chinese attacks resulted in deep penetrations in the ROK unit zones. Five days later, in response to the Chinese attacks, the U.S. I Corps rushed the 1st Cavalry Division 60 miles forward from Pyongyang to the Unsan area to bolster the South Koreans.

The lead unit for the 1st Cavalry Division was the 8th Cavalry Regiment. Its 1st and 2nd battalions moved into positions north and west of Unsan village, relieving ROK units in place. The 3rd Battalion, the reserve, occupied the Nammyon River valley southwest of Unsan. The 99th Field

Artillery Battalion, Company B of the 70th Tank Battalion, and a platoon of the 8th Engineers supported these units. In the early evening hours, the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 8th Cavalry began receiving rocket attacks and probes of their defensive line. After dark, the Chinese attacked in force with infantry in an effort to overrun these American forward units.

Earlier in the day the Chinese had cut off one of the U.S. supply routes, the southern route from Yongsongdong to Unsan. To avoid impending encirclement, shortly before midnight the division commander got permission to withdraw the 8th Cavalry Regiment using the eastern route to Ipsok. By then the Chinese had infiltrated into Unsan and the 1st and 2nd Battalions were forced



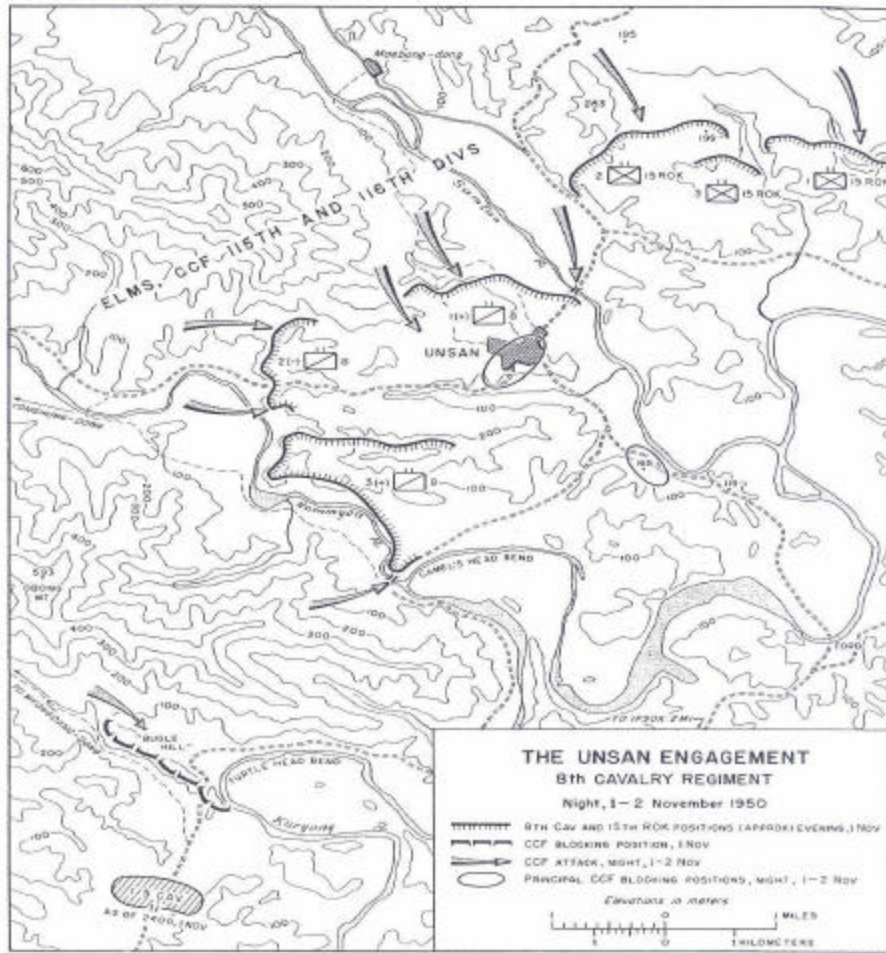
*A joint recovery team excavates a burial site in Unsan County, North Korea, July 2000.
(File Photo)*

to fight their way through the town or bypass it. The 3rd Battalion was to be used as a blocking force to allow safe passage of the 1st and 2nd Battalions, but a 3:00 A.M. raid on its command post by infiltrating Chinese severely disrupted the effort.

In spite of the chaotic melee, the regiment was able to extract the supply trains and the 1st and

2nd Battalions to Ipsok, along with most of the men from the 99th Field Artillery and the 70th Tank Battalion's tanks. Many of these units were forced to evade in small numbers, returning to friendly lines over the next several days. Much of the 3rd Battalion was cut off, but held out for four days in a small perimeter three miles south of Unsan. The 5th Cavalry Regiment attempted to reopen the southern route to Unsan and break through to the 3rd Battalion on 1 and 2 November. The relief effort was stopped by six Chinese companies heavily entrenched on a prominent hill known as Bugle Hill, overlooking the Unsan-Yongsongdong Road. In all, the 3rd Battalion suffered the regiment's worst casualties in this battle with 600 of its 800 men killed or captured.

Hostile occupation of this area since 1950 has precluded searches by U.S. graves registration units for the missing of the 1st Cavalry Division from this battle. In 1996, DPMO and CILHI (now JPAC) secured agreements with the North Koreans to conduct remains recovery operations in Unsan. Since then U.S. teams have conducted recovery operations there in 1997, and 2000-2004. Fourteen of the operations yielded remains, five of which have been identified. CILHI identified another set of U.S. remains the North Koreans turned over unilaterally in 1993. ♦



DNA Reference Samples—Family Members Doing Their Part

A question frequently asked by family members of unaccounted-for Americans is: How can I help you find and identify my loved one? The most important way is by providing a Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) reference sample. Despite advances in mtDNA technology, it is useless without the presence of a family mtDNA sample for comparison.

MtDNA has proven to be a valuable tool in the fullest possible accounting process. In many cases it provides the additional forensic evidence needed to complete the identifications of American remains missing from the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Korean War, and World War II. By itself, mtDNA does not provide scientists with an exact proof of identity. However, when used with other forensic information available on a case, mtDNA can provide compelling scientific data in the forensic investigation that can result in an identification.

In most cases, sufficient mtDNA can be obtained from recovered remains for use in the identification process. It is extremely hardy, and the interior of an undamaged tooth or bone can retain testable mtDNA for thousands of years. In identifying bones or teeth, scientists using mtDNA make comparisons between individuals and sort out possible matches with known reference samples from family members.

MtDNA can be used to confirm an identification of a particular individual while excluding others from consideration. In some cases, samples from family members of Americans who were previously recovered and identified may be needed to help narrow the field of possible identities for other cases by excluding their mtDNA sequences from that of recently recovered remains.

MtDNA is only maternally inherited. There is no transmission of mtDNA from the father at conception. Therefore, potential donors come from those with a maternal link to the unaccounted-for American.

Family members can provide samples in many different ways. A whole blood sample is preferred, although mouth swabs or blood stained cards can also be used. Scientists like to have samples from two different family members per unaccounted-for American just to confirm their comparisons.

Thousands of family members have provided samples and the process has been refined over the years to make it as convenient as possible. Although each military service has different procedures for its families to follow, no matter which service, the government will pay the costs for the sample to be taken and mailed to the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory. The

first step for families is to contact their service casualty offices. Air Force families should contact the Air Force mortuary office.

How to Provide a DNA Sample

For families of unaccounted-for soldiers, the Army casualty office will arrange for a convenient time to have one of their contracted phlebotomists come to collect the sample in the privacy of the family's home. The phlebotomist will help complete the required forms and ensure the blood sample is quickly delivered to AFDIL for processing. Army casualty can arrange to accommodate the family's desires if they prefer to go to a doctor's office or lab to have the blood drawn.

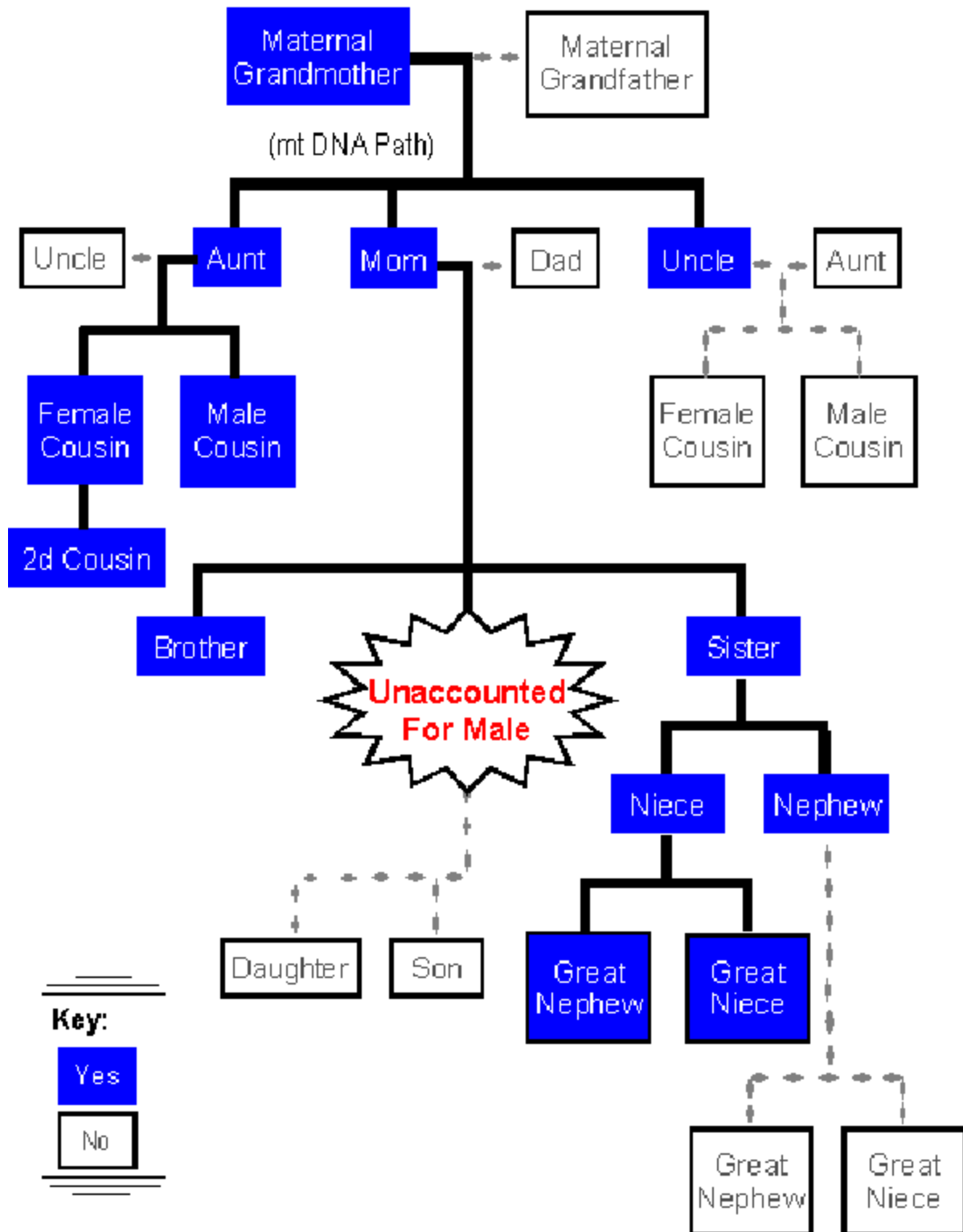
For Navy or Marine Corps families, the process is a little different. The casualty office will mail a DNA specimen kit, including the forms necessary to complete the process, directly to the family's home. Thorough instructions on the entire process, including how to be reimbursed for costs, are included. Phone numbers are provided if questions arise. Family members visit a doctor or a lab of their choosing to have blood drawn. All costs associated with having the blood drawn are reimbursable. Once completed, family members send the collection forms with the blood sample directly to AFDIL. A FedEx envelope, packing materials, and prepaid postage are provided.

Air Force families should contact the Air Force mortuary office to receive a DNA specimen kit and necessary forms. Thorough instructions are included on the entire process. Family members make arrangements with their local doctor or lab to draw their blood. The doctor's office or lab can bill the Air Force mortuary office directly for the cost of taking the sample. Once the sample is taken, family members contact the mortuary office to arrange for the sample to be picked up and sent to AFDIL. ♦

Points of Contact

Army Casualty.....(800) 892-2490
Navy Casualty(800) 443-9298
Air Force Mortuary.....(800) 531-5803
Marine Casualty(800) 847-1597

Eligible Donors of MtDNA Samples



Mark Your Calendar!

APRIL:

- 1st—Invasion of Okinawa Began (1945)*
- 10th - 17th—U.S. - Russia Archival Conference*
- 18th—Holocaust Remembrance Day*
- 20th—Operation “Little Switch” Began (1953)*
- 22nd—Earth Day*
- 30th—Korean/Cold War Family Annual Government Meeting in Washington, DC*

MAY:

- 1st—Korean/Cold War Family Annual Government Meeting in Washington, DC*
- 1st—Cambodia Campaign Began (1970)*
- 4th—Operation Restore Hope Ended (Somalia, 1993)*
- 5th—Mini-Tet Began (1968)*
- 8th—V-E Day: German Unconditional Surrender Signed (1945)*
- 9th—Mother’s Day*
- 10th—Battle of Hamburger Hill Began (1969)*
- 15th—Armed Forces Day*
- 26th - 27th—19th Plenum of the U.S. - Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*
- 31st—Memorial Day*

JUNE:

- 3rd—Battle of Midway Began (1942)*
- 6th—D-Day: Allied Invasion of Europe (1944)*
- 14th—Flag Day/U.S. Army Founded (1775)*
- 20th—Father’s Day*
- 22nd—Pledge of Allegiance Recognized by Congress (1942)*
- 25th—Korean War Began (1950)*

JULY:

- 1st—Women’s Army Corps (WAC) Established (1943)*
- 2nd—U.S. Army Air Corps Established (1926)*
- 2nd—Korean War’s only U.S. Sea Battle (1950)*
- 4th—Independence Day*
- 5th—Battle of Osan (1950)*
- 25th—National Parents’ Day*
- 27th—Korean War Ended, Armistice Signed at Panmunjom (1953)*
- 30th—U.S. Navy Women’s Reserve (WAVES) Established (1942)*

U.S. – Russia Archival Conference Planned

The Hon. Jerry D. Jennings, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs, will be hosting a 14-person delegation of archivists from the Russian Federation to participate in discussions with American archivists in Washington, D.C. from April 10-17, 2004. Among those invited are heads of archives believed critical to resolving the issue of the role played by the Soviet Union in the fates of our missing servicemen.

Mr. Jennings first proposed the idea for the conference during his September 2003 trip to Moscow, Russia. During

that visit, he went to the Central Archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense and was quite impressed with the quality and quantity of documents it contained relating to missing Americans from the Korean War.

The primary goals of the conference will be to consider ways to improve and expand American access to archival holdings in the Russian Federation, to examine procedures for declassification of documents in Russia, and current and future research initiatives in support of the Joint Commission’s work in the former Soviet Union. ♦



Main Entrance to the Central Archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense, Podolsk, Russia (left to right: Mr. Norman Kass, Senior Director, Joint Commission Support Directorate; Colonel Sergey Chuvashin, Chief, Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense; The Honorable Jerry D. Jennings, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs, and Colonel Sergey Ilyenkov, Chief, Russian Ministry of Defense Archival Service)

Americans Accounted-For In 2003

- ★Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Denis L. Anderson, USN
- ★Major Ellis E. Arnold, Jr., USAAF
- ★Warrant Officer One Paul V. Black, USA
- ★Sergeant Charles M. Bosler, USAAF
- ★Staff Sergeant John E. Brdeja, USAAF
- ★Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Arthur C. Buck, USN
- ★Sergeant Finn Buer, USAAF
- ★Lieutenant Robert A. Clark, USN
- ★Private First Class Alfred J. Clement, USA
- ★Sergeant Maurice L. Cohen, USAAF
- ★Lieutenant Commander Allan P. Collamore, Jr., USN
- ★Major Richard W. Cooper, Jr., USAF
- ★Ensign John D. Cozza, USNR
- ★Aviation Radioman Third Class Samuel L. Crown Jr., USNR
- ★Major Arthur G. Ecklund, USAR
- ★Aviation Machinist's Mate Second Class
Clarence C. Fridley, USNR
- ★Lieutenant (Junior Grade) John W. Hanlon Jr., USNR
- ★Staff Sergeant Bobby G. Harris, USA
- ★First Lieutenant James A. Henderson, USAAF
- ★Staff Sergeant Troy B. Hewett, Jr., USAAF
- ★Staff Sergeant Elmer L. Holden, USAF
- ★Colonel Lester E. Holmes, USAF
- ★First Lieutenant Richard Hurst, USAAF
- ★First Lieutenant Robert B. Jenkins, USAAF
- ★Sergeant Joseph Johnson, Jr., USAAF
- ★Staff Sergeant Leonard V. Kacprzak, USA
- ★Colonel Theodore E. Kryszak, USAF
- ★Major Erwin S. Lerner, USAF
- ★Aviation Metalsmith Second Class
Donald G. Lewallen, USNR
- ★Private First Class Ronald D. Lilledahl, USMC
- ★Sergeant James D. Locker, USAF
- ★Aviation Electronics Mate Second Class
Richard M. Mancini, USN
- ★Lieutenant Michael T. McCormick, USN
- ★Sergeant First Class Ellis G. McPherson, USA
- ★First Lieutenant Philip E. Miller, USAAF
- ★Chief Master Sergeant Harold E. Mullins, USAF
- ★Major Clinton A. Musil, Sr, USA
- ★Technical Sergeant Matthew F. Neary, USAAF
- ★Commander Delbert A. Olson, USN
- ★Lieutenant Commander Alexander J. Palenscar III, USN
- ★Aviation Ordnanceman Third Class James S. Palko, USN
- ★Aerographer's Mate Second Class Jack J. Parlier, USNR
- ★Colonel Charles T. Phillips, USAAF
- ★Chief Master Sergeant Charlie S. Poole, USAF
- ★Mr. Kent B. Potter
- ★Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Richard J. Reardon, USN
- ★Lieutenant Jack C. Rittichier, USCG
- ★Aviation Ordnanceman Second Class
Michael L. Roberts, USN
- ★Chief Master Sergeant Luther L. Rose, USAF
- ★Master Sergeant Leo P. Russavage, USA
- ★Private First Class Schley H. Russell, USAAF
- ★Aviation Electronics Technician Radio and
Radar Navigation Equipment Third Class Gale R. Siow, USN
- ★First Lieutenant Fred L. Smith, USAAF
- ★Colonel Harding E. Smith, Sr., USAF
- ★Sergeant Earl H. Spredemann, USAAF
- ★First Lieutenant Harold G. Stalnaker, USAAF
- ★Second Lieutenant Aloysius W. Steele, USAAF
- ★Lieutenant Phillip P. Stevens, USN
- ★Staff Sergeant Veachel F. Straney, USAAF
- ★Commander Donald E. Thompson, USN
- ★Aviation Machinist's Mate Jet Engine Second Class
Donald N. Thoresen, USN
- ★Major Larry A. Thorne, USAR
- ★Fireman Second Class Payton L. Vanderpool Jr., USN
- ★Chief Master Sergeant Ervin Warren, USAF
- ★Photographer's Mate Second Class Kenneth H. Widon, USN
- ★Lieutenant Walter S. Whitman Jr., USNR
- ★Captain Richard C. Yeend Jr., USAF

Working to Identify the “Punchbowl” Unknowns

—During *Operation Glory* in 1954, the Korean People’s Army and Chinese People’s Volunteers repatriated 2,944 American war dead among others from North Korea. Although they were assessed to be American, 416 service members could not be identified by name and were buried as unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, which is also known as the Punchbowl. Other unidentifiable Americans, who were recovered at sea and in South Korea, were also interred at the Punchbowl, gradually bringing the Korean War “unknown” population to 867.

Several years ago forensic specialists considered that the information in their files, combined with DNA and other improved methods at their disposal, might lead to identification of some of the Korean War unknowns buried at the Punchbowl. Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) specialists worked with DPMO Northeast Asia analysts to select candidates for exhumation that, based upon available data, offered the greatest possibility for identification.

In 1999, DPMO developed a policy authorizing Punchbowl exhumations, provided there was a high probability of identification, and based on the improved identification technologies. Two Korean War era trial exhumations in September 1999, and two more in 2001, began the process and forensic specialists initiated efforts to identify them.

Unfortunately, it soon became apparent that mortuary preparations using a powdered formaldehyde substance at the time of interment in the 1950s made mtDNA typing virtually impossible. Although they sent several bone samples from the exhumed remains to the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL), they could not extract usable DNA from any of the bones.

Nevertheless, since the analysts knew the remains were from the group returned by China and North Korea during *Operation Glory* and had other data on them, they were able to narrow significantly the list of potential candidates. In combing their files on one of the men, CIL analysts discovered a small chest x-ray that strongly resembled one of the sets of unknown remains.

Taking into consideration the x-ray evidence and using a new computer program called OdontoSearch (see details next page), forensic specialists established the identity of one of the unknowns. Last year the remains were positively identified as United States Marine Corps Private First Class Ronald Lilledahl, who was killed in November 1950 when his unit was surrounded by Chinese forces on the west side of the Chosin Reservoir.

Work continues on the other exhumed remains in hopes of developing new processes that may lead to additional identifications from the Punchbowl. ♦

HOW TO REACH US...

USAF Missing Persons Branch
550 C Street West, Suite 15
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4716
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/powmia>
(800) 531-5501

U.S. Army Human Resources Command
ATTN: AHRC-PER
200 Stovall Street
Alexandria, VA 22332-0482
<http://www.perscomonline.army.mil/tagd/cmaoc/powmia/cmaocpowmia.htm>
(800) 892-2490

Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps
Manpower and Reserve Affairs (MRC)
3280 Russell Road
Quantico, VA 22134-5103
(800) 847-1597

OdontoSearch:

A New Tool in Making Identifications

A new computer program called OdontoSearch is creating more ways for Central Identification Lab specialists to use dental charts and notes to aid in identifications when x-rays are unavailable. Ideally, CIL would have both antemortem (before death) and postmortem (after death) dental x-rays of each missing American for comparison so they could establish a match or exclusion with unidentified remains. Too often antemortem x-rays are not available and they can only base dental comparisons on written notes and charts from the missing individual's medical records.

The problem with charts and notes is that they cannot be exclusively correlated to a specific individual. For example, several people may have the same teeth filled or extracted and their treatment notes would be the same. The OdontoSearch computer program, which CIL specialists developed, provides an objective means of assessing the frequency of occurrence for dental treatment. The program works by comparing

an individual's pattern of missing, filled and unrestored teeth to a large, representative sample of the U.S. population.

Two important points about the OdontoSearch program

It is not a means to select a specific person from a database of missing. Most of the database is composed of people who participated in dental health studies. The goal is to provide a representative sample of the dental treatment of the U.S. adult population.

A possible dental association must be established between a specific person and an unidentified set of remains for the results of OdontoSearch to be meaningful. In other words, determining that an unidentified set of remains exhibits an extremely rare dental pattern is worthless unless there is some correlation to a missing individual.

Using the OdontoSearch program, dentists can recognize uncommon patterns and can

associate a frequency value with the pattern. For example, experts could determine that out of a comparison with 40,108 individuals, they saw a specific dental pattern only 48 times, or about 1 out of 833 people could be expected to have this specific pattern. Finding a match to this dental pattern between a missing person's records and an unidentified set of remains is convincing evidence for an association. CIL can use the OdontoSearch results along with other analytical information, such as skeletal evidence, to build a convincing identification to a specific missing individual. ♦

Information for this article was extracted from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command website. Additional details on OdontoSearch are available at www.jpac.pacom.mil/.

Navy Personnel Command
Casualty Assistance Division
POW/MIA Section (PERS 62P)
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055-6210
<http://www.persnet.navy.mil/pers62/POW-MIA/62P.htm>
(800) 443-9298

Overseas Citizens Services
U.S. Department of State
SA-29, 4th Floor
2201 C Street, Northwest
Washington, DC 20520
(202) 647-5470

Defense Prisoner of
War/Missing Personnel Office
2400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-2400
www.dtic.mil/dpmo



View our Web site at:

www.dtic.mil/dpmo

POW/MIA Family Members Can Now Register for Meetings Online

In an effort to improve our outreach to POW/MIA family members, DPMO's home page now features online registration for monthly Family Updates and Annual Government Briefings. By going to our Web site, families can look over the list of all our upcoming events and register for those they plan to attend. Visitors to the site can also view the *Family Member Orientation Handbook*, sample agendas for a specific event, and take a 'virtual tour' of the hotel where the meeting will be held. Links to other government agencies like the service casualty offices, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory and the Life Science Equipment Laboratory are also available.

www.dtic.mil/dpmo/upcoming.events

