



News Release

Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)
Washington, DC 20301-2900

Phone: (703) 699-1169

Fax (703) 602-4375

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 4, 2012

SOLDIER MISSING FROM KOREAN WAR IDENTIFIED

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

Sgt. Joseph A. Bowen, 19, of Augusta, Ga., will be buried Jan. 7 in Hephzibah, Ga., near his hometown. On Nov. 30, 1950, he was assigned to the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT) in North Korea. Elements of the 31st RCT were attacked and encircled by Chinese People's Volunteer Forces along the east side of the Chosin Reservoir. The team, also known as Task Force Faith, regrouped and worked southward to more defensible positions near Hagaru-ri, while enemy forces continued to amass in the area. Bowen, killed by enemy fire on at a base camp within the Sinhung Perimeter, was among more than 1,000 soldiers reported as killed, missing or captured during the course of the battle. In the days that followed, the 31st RCT and other friendly forces set out to withdraw from the Chosin Reservoir to the port of Hungnam, where they were evacuated by the U.S. Navy.

In 2001, joint U.S. and Democratic People's Republic of Korea teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted two excavations of a mass grave near the Chosin Reservoir. The site correlated closely with defensive positions held by the 31st RCT at the time of the Chinese attacks. The teams recovered remains believed to be those of 11 U.S. servicemen.

Among forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used dental comparisons and mitochondrial DNA – which matched that of Bowen's sisters—in the identification of the remains.

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.

-end-