

CHAPTER 12 – GIBBY COMES HOME

CHAPTER 12

DISCOVERY DEBRIEFING

Michael Mee, DPAA, met with Donna Beaumont at her home in Durham, NC, on February 20, 2025. Much information was given along with a very detailed 82-page document including –

- Medical Examiner's Summary Report – covering background and identification information and a summary opinion.
- Full Historical Report – covering the loss incident, past accounting efforts, research and field efforts and an analytical summary.
- Forensic Anthropology Report – containing a full autopsy of the remains and circumstances/causes of death.
- Biological Profile – including physical characteristics, extensive mitochondrial/DNA analysis data.
- Forensic Odontology Report – comparisons of recovered remains to prior dental records.
- Miscellaneous Records – Antemortem (before death) dental and physical records, MACR contents and all post-mortem communications between Jeanne Rauh, sister, and Gertrude and Julius Rauh, parents.
- Death Certificate – interesting marked as a 'Homicide' not and 'Aviation Accident'

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH (OVERSEAS) Acte de décès (D'Oùtre-Mer)			
NAME OF DECEASED (Last, First, Middle) Nom du décédé (Nom et prénoms)		GRADE Grade	BRANCH OF SERVICE Armée
RAUH, Gilbert Andrew		2nd Lieutenant	USAAF
ORGANIZATION Organisation		NATION (e.g., United States) Pays	DATE OF BIRTH Date de Naissance
436th Bomb Squadron, 7th Bombardment Group		United States	25 May 1915
SEX Sexe		SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER Numéro de l'Assurance Sociale	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MALE Masculin		O-738787	
<input type="checkbox"/> FEMALE Féminin			
RACE Race		RELIGION Religion	
American Indian or Alaska Native / Indien Américain ou Natif de l'Alaska		PROTESTANT Protestant	
Hispanic or Latino / Hispanique ou Latino		OTHER (Specify) AUTRE (Spécifier)	
Asian / Asiatique		CATHOLIC Catholique	
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander / Natif Hawaiian ou autre Islandier du Pacifique		JEWISH Juif	
Black or African American / Noir ou Afro-Américain			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> White / Blanc			
MARRIED Marié		DIVORCED Divorcé	
WIDOWED Veuf		SEPARATED Séparé	
NAME OF NEXT OF KIN Nom du plus proche parent		RELATIONSHIP TO DECEASED Parenté du décédé avec le sué	
STREET ADDRESS Domicile à (Rue)		CITY OR TOWN AND STATE (Include ZIP Code) Ville (Code postal compris)	
MEDICAL STATEMENT Déclaration médicale			
CAUSE OF DEATH (Enter only after reading part 1) Cause de décès (Indiquer une cause par ligne)		INTERVAL BETWEEN ONSET AND DEATH Intervalle entre l'attaque et le décès	
DISEASE OR CONDITION DIRECTLY LEADING TO DEATH ? Maladie ou condition directement responsable de la mort ?		Multiple Injuries	
ANTECEDENT CAUSES Symptômes précurseurs de la mort		MORBID CONDITION, IF ANY, LEADING TO PRIMARY CAUSE Condition mortelle, s'il y a lieu, menant à la cause primaire	
OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONS ? Autres conditions significatives ?		UNDERLYING CAUSE, IF ANY, GIVING RISE TO PRIMARY CAUSE Cause fondamentale, s'il y a lieu, ayant conduit à la cause primaire	
MODE OF DEATH Condition de décès		CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING DEATH DUE TO EXTERNAL CAUSES Circonstances de la mort suscitables par des causes extérieures	
NATURAL Mort naturelle		Injuries sustained in an aviation incident while engaged with enemy forces.	
ACCIDENT Mort accidentelle			
SUICIDE Mort par suicide			
NAME OF PATHOLOGIST Nom du pathologiste		DATE Date	
Christopher J. Gordon, MD, Lt Col, USAF, MC		23 August 2024	
SIGNATURE Signature		AVIATION ACCIDENT Accidente Avion	
GORDONCHRISTOPHER.J.1374537276		<input type="checkbox"/> YES Oui <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO Non	
DATE OF DEATH (Month, day, month, year) Date de décès (Mois, jour, mois, année)			
1 December 1943			
PLACE OF DEATH Lieu de décès			
Vicinity of Yodayadet, Burma			
I HAVE VIEWED THE REMAINS OF THE DECEASED AND DEATH OCCURRED AT THE TIME INDICATED AND FROM THE CAUSES AS STATED ABOVE. J'ai examiné les restes mortels du défunct et je conclus que le décès est survenu à l'heure indiquée et à la suite des causes énumérées ci-dessus.			
NAME OF MEDICAL OFFICER Nom du médecin militaire ou du médecin sanitaire		TITLE OR DEGREE Titre ou diplôme	
Christopher J. Gordon, MD, Lt Col, USAF, MC		MD	
GRADE Grade		INSTALLATION OR ADDRESS Installation ou adresse	
Lt Col / O-5		DPAA, JBPHH, HI	
DATE Date		SIGNATURE Signature	
23 August 2024		GORDONCHRISTOPHER.J.1374537276	
		Digital signed by GORDONCHRISTOPHER.J.1374537276 Date: 2024.08.23 12:02:30 -0400	
1 State disease, injury or complication which caused death, but not mode of dying such as heart failure, etc.			
2 State condition contributing to the death, but not related to the disease or condition causing death.			
3 Precise the nature of the disease, the injury or the complication which contributed to the death, but not the manner of death, such as heart failure, etc.			
4 Precise the condition which contributed to the death, but not the manner of death, such as heart failure, etc.			

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Recovered but Unknown for Seventy-Seven Years -

... and now you know the rest of the story. - Paul Harvey

The problems and activities in repatriating the dead from the vast Pacific area were extraordinary, beginning with the central Pacific and ending on the mainland of Asia. The plan to return the war dead to the United States for permanent burial met with general approval. A sizable majority of the next of kin expressed their preference for repatriation rather than for overseas interment. Of approximately 86,000 remains recovered through June 1951 from the Pacific area commands and the Asiatic Mainland, a total of 54,692 would receive final interment in their native soil.

Later in 1945, when the War Department indicated its intention to repatriate World War II deceased according to wishes of the next of kin, immediate efforts were begun to hasten recovery work in the India-Burma and other Theaters. In consequence of the shortage of graves registration personnel, the 24th Ordnance Maintenance Company was activated and filled by volunteers for search and recovery operations. It undertook a complete investigation of plane crashes and other isolated mishaps in Assam and Burma, while the 970th and 971st Quarter Master Supply Detachments moved war dead from temporary cemeteries into the two major concentration points at Barrackpore and Kalaikunda in West Bengal, India.

Estimates of Unrecovered Dead in India-Burma Theater		
Area	Cases ¹²	Remains
Assam	44	161
Bengal	55	197
North Burma	213	753
South Burma	41	277
Siam	1	1
Malay	6	27
French Indo-China	9	40
Sumatra	3	20
Java	9	111
Borneo	17	115
Celebs	9	59
Lesser Sundar Islands	2	2
	409	1,763

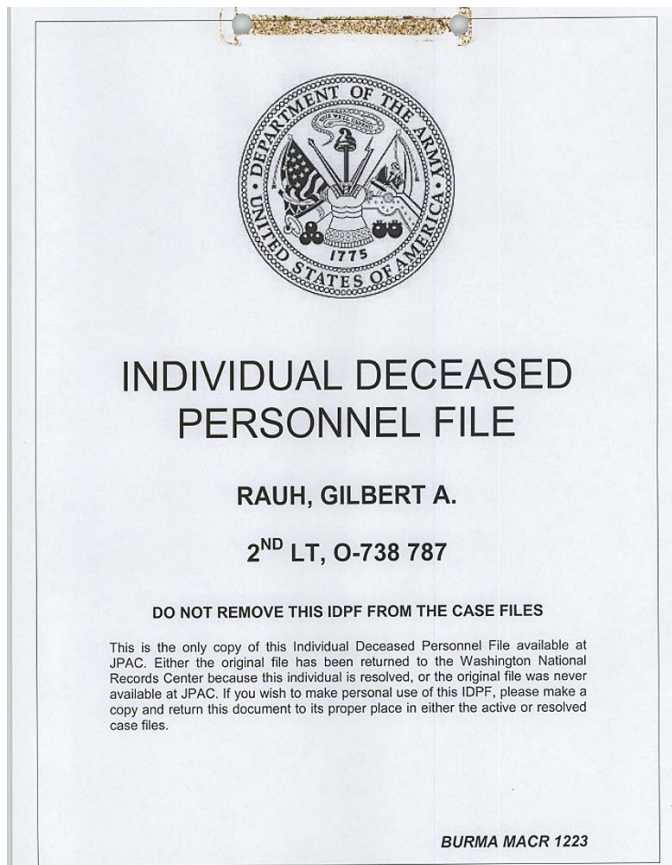
By May 1947, the collection and survey of Pacific records had uncovered sufficient data to warrant the formation of extensive search and recovery expeditions, the plans for which had been built up rather gradually. The decision to carry out such an undertaking resulted from careful thought on the matter. The formulation of an Army Graves Registration/Pacific (AGFPAC) plan, entitled "The Operations Plan for Search and Recovery of Isolated Burials, AGFPAC Area," dated 8 March 1947, marked an important step in the preparations preceding the expeditions.

¹² A "Case" represented one problem for a search and recovery team, such as the removal of all bodies from one plane crash or one cemetery.

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When searching began in earnest in 1947, two avenues were pursued, each with the same goal but with entirely different approaches. The first involved searching for crash sites and once found, searching for possible remains. The second was a more direct approach with searches targeting known and suspected grave sites.

Before the Discovery Debriefing, I found there were active official “Individual Deceased Personnel Files” (IDPF) files kept on all missing deceased individuals in World War II. It contains everything about the individual that might be useful in their recovery and identification – dental and medical records, blood type, hair color, eye color, height, weight and so on. It also contains summaries of everything that had been done or recorded to date, attempting to locate the individual’s remains, and whether or not the case was permanently closed.

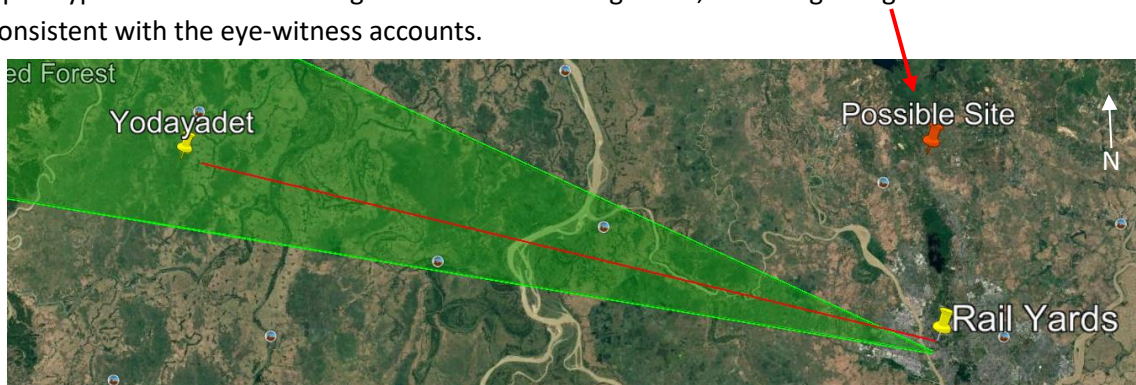


As a read through this file, I saw in April of 1948, 3 years after the war, there was a review surrounding the circumstances of the disappearance of the McLaughlen crew. At that time, they found that there was insufficient evidence available to establish where the crash might have been. They also stated, “a thorough and systematic search in the area in which the aircraft was reported missing, failed to reveal any trace of the crew or wreckage of the plane.” I did not know that, and I wondered where they had looked.

The Governing Board of Officers that issued this report, concluded that, “no further attempts be made to find the subject decedents remains.” The decedents were “Declared Non-Recoverable.”

Looking at the Discovery Debriefing documentation, it appears the search was done in and around the following coordinates-

17° 07' 30" N, 096° 06' E. Referring to my earlier estimate of possible crash sites, these coordinates imply the Apocalypse had turned 180 degrees and was heading north, returning along its inbound route. That is inconsistent with the eye-witness accounts.



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One year before the search for the Apocalypse crash site was abandoned, progress in graves registration matters in Burma by the end of April 1947, including search and recovery efforts during the period since 15 August 1946, showed approximately 230 remains had been recovered, of which 162 were awaiting medical processing. It was estimated that identities would be established for 50 percent either as individuals or as groups.



Case # 505 - Based on knowledge of a possible nearby aircraft crash site, one expedition went to the Burmese village of Yodayadet, west of Rangoon, forty-miles short of the coastline. While interviewing villagers, they were told there were two gravesites containing the remains taken from a crash site. There were no survivors. Villagers reported that Japanese personnel removed Identification Tags and personal articles from the remains and that some reportedly had "upside down stripes" on the sleeves of their clothing (five of the crew were sergeants). The local villagers counted "eleven (11)



dead", which the Japanese made the villagers bury in two large graves. With only four-years transpiring since the burial, the villagers were clear on the location of the graves and they were easily found.

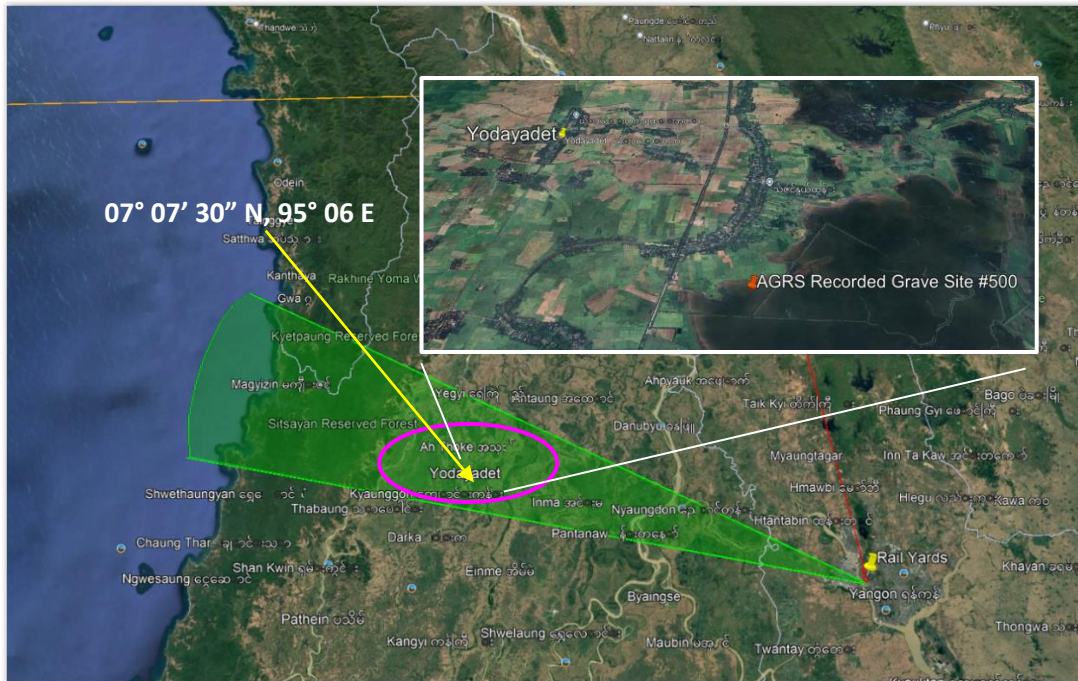
Eight sets of remains were exhumed from two large "indiscriminate" burials. the skeletal elements from the first and second graves were collected in two separate, respective bags. No identifying media was found in either grave. Investigators in the 1940s made no connection to the Apocalypse and believed that the crash associated with the remains had occurred in November 1943.

The remains were taken by air for temporary storage at the mausoleum at Barrackpore, India, one of five main concentration point for war dead recoveries. As was done for all unidentified recoveries, the eight individuals from Case # 505 were assigned "X" files – specifically X-505A, X-505B, X-505C, X-505D, X-505E, X-505F and X-505G. These numbers were unique and permanently assigned to individual remains.



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Looking back at the projection of possible wreck site locations for Gibby's B-24J as derived from eyewitness accounts and other assumptions when George Hofmann's book was printed in 2016, it is of interest to see that the village of Yodayadet falls within those projections. In fact, the coordinates reported in the debriefing documents confirm that location.



In November 1947, after several months' interruption because of the monsoon season, search and recovery operations based on cases for which specific information was available, were resumed. Six teams departed to recheck specific cases and to work on others that offered hope for recovery of remains. Five teams recovered 29 remains during December. Except for parts of the Netherlands East Indies, the search and recovery mission in the Pacific Zone had been completed, and it formally ceased on schedule at the close of 1947.

By the end of the following January, 1,352 cases had been closed as unrecoverable. Some involved those who had drowned at sea enroute to India or in rivers while stationed in the Zone. Others had perished in air crashes in remote and inaccessible regions. A few deceased lay in known locations, but attempts to recover them were abandoned because of natural or political dangers to the safety of searchers.

On 31 March 1948, the overall graves registration program, too, terminated, bringing to a close in two years and one month an operation which generally had been estimated to consume three or more years. During its existence, search teams had re-covered 1,182 remains. A total of 1,449 deceased were declared unrecoverable by a Board of Officers appointed by AGRS Headquarters.

Overseas Cemeteries - At the close of World War II, the War Department made apparent its intention to repeat its World War I policy of establishing permanent overseas cemeteries, where the Nation's honored, but unrepatriated dead might rest eternally. The plan, issued on 8 September 1945, contained a list of proposed overseas cemeteries which included only two for the Pacific war theaters-Honolulu, in the

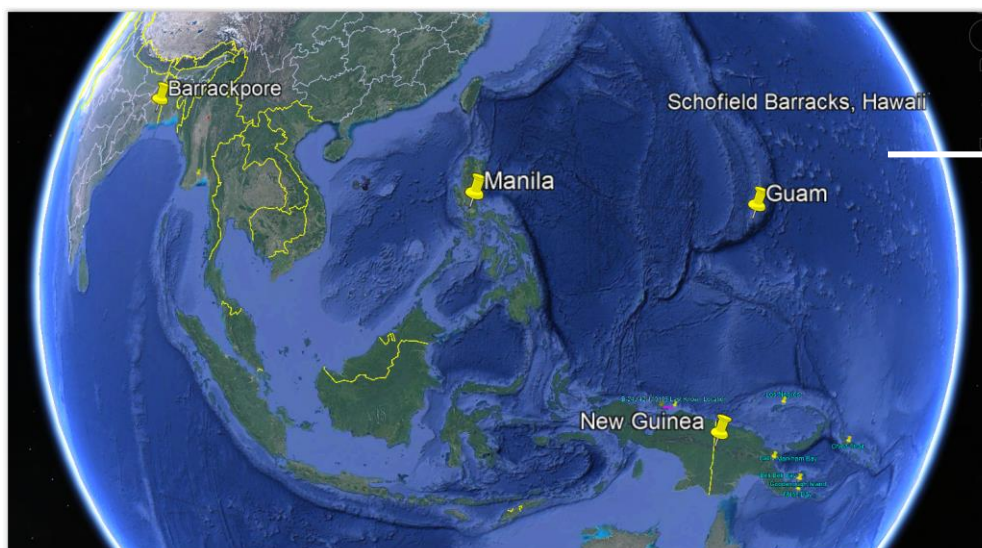
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Hawaiian Islands, and Bataan, or another suitable site near Manila, in the Philippines. The War Department did not believe that the comparatively small number of dead in China, India, Burma, the Malayan Peninsula, or the Dutch East Indies warranted the creation of cemeteries in those areas. Most interested officials favored the disinterment and repatriation of the war dead from these regions or their final interment in better-located, permanent overseas burial grounds, according to the wishes of their relatives.

Concentration of all Pacific war area deceased into five centralized points and accompanying search and recovery efforts were a massive multi-year undertaking. They were the first step closely linked with the creation of permanent overseas burial grounds to accommodate those remains recovered from isolated resting places.

These five locations served as recovery and identification hubs where remains were initially interred or stored temporarily before being moved to permanent overseas cemeteries or returned to the United States. The five main centralized locations were:

1. **Schofield Barracks, Hawaii** – One of the most significant hubs, located on Oahu, it was used for storing remains temporarily and served as a processing center before final burials at Punchbowl (National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific) or repatriation to the U.S.
2. **Barrackpore, India** – Barrackpore served as a recovery point for remains from Burma and surrounding areas in Southeast Asia. After initial processing here, remains were often sent to Schofield Barracks or other locations.
3. **Manila, Philippines** – The Manila American Cemetery became a major point for the recovery and processing of remains from the Philippines and nearby islands. It is now one of the largest American cemeteries overseas.
4. **Guam** – A critical location for remains recovered from the Northern Pacific area, including the Mariana Islands. Remains from operations such as the Battle of Saipan were processed here.
5. **New Guinea** – This location handled the remains of servicemen who were killed in action in the South Pacific region, especially from the campaigns in Papua New Guinea and nearby island chains.



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These hubs were essential in managing the large-scale efforts to identify and repatriate remains from the Pacific Theater. Remains were often stored temporarily before being permanently interred, either in overseas cemeteries or returned to their families in the United States for burial.

While Gilbert Rauh and his crewmates rested at Barrackpore, raging debates were underway regarding the ultimate locations of the few overseas sites to be the final resting places for the dead. They would remain at Barrackpore until November/December 1947 when the dead would be exhumed and taken by ship to Schofield Barracks Cemetery on Oahu in the Hawaiian Territories. They would be kept in above-ground facilities pending their ultimate resting places in either the US Mainland or at what would eventually become Punchbowl Cemetery. Still not identified, Gibby and his crewmates would be laid to rest in “Unknown Soldier” graves.



The National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific - The first proposals for a national cemetery in the Territory of Hawaii date back to the years between the two world wars. Hawaiian veterans of World War I, spearheaded by the American Legion, waged an active campaign for such a site. The first concrete results of their efforts came late in 1941 with the approval of legislation appropriating \$50,000 for the establishment of a national cemetery in Hawaii, provided land was made available at no cost to the Federal Government.

Within a month after passage of this legislation, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, signaling American entrance into World War II. In the months that followed, bickering arose over the question of the actual location of the proposed cemetery. In August 1943, the Office of the Quartermaster General (OQMG) took the matter out of the hands of the Hawaiian Department by its statement that the War Department had no intention of establishing a national cemetery in Hawaii during hostilities.

When World War II ended, the Quartermaster, Army Forces Middle Pacific (AFMIDPAC), suggested continued inaction in the matter, even though the \$50,000 was still available. His attitude evidently reflected the disfavor with which local Army Headquarters then regarded the so-called Punchbowl (the crater of an extinct volcano which lay on the outskirts of Honolulu), as a possible cemeterial site and the prevailing official sentiment which seemingly supported a policy of waiting until after the repatriation program had begun. Several factors guided AFMIDPAC thinking. In the first place, firm requirements for permanent overseas burial grounds could not be accurately determined until after the next of kin had been polled on their preference as to final disposition of remains. Secondly, the formal establishment of a

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national cemetery required Congressional action, which had not as yet been forthcoming. Finally, the War Department favored a careful study of cemeterial sites and the selection of only a limited number.

Later in 1945 and during the early part of 1946, officials in Memorial Division, OQMG, and in HQ, AFMIDPAC, gave further thought to the establishment of a permanent burial ground near Honolulu, but took no positive steps in that direction. On 2 April 1946, however, The Quartermaster General apprised the Commanding General, ASF, that "in a study being conducted by the War Department for a selection of permanent cemeteries, the site being considered for Hawaii is on the Island of Oahu, T. H., within proximity of crater of Punchbowl, Honolulu."

By August 1946, Col. H. R. McKenzie, Quartermaster, AFMIDPAC, concluded that Honolulu would definitely become the site of an overseas national cemetery. Based upon the number of temporary burials in the MIDPAC area, he estimated that about 5,000 remains would rest there - a figure far short of the number finally interred. Since he and other MIDPAC officials then contemplated beginning repatriation operations in the Hawaiian Islands during March 1947, Colonel McKenzie urged The Quartermaster General to take immediate action toward establishing the cemetery. But exchanges of correspondence between Washington and Honolulu resulted in no immediate choice of a site. By the end of 1946, the full magnitude of the oncoming repatriation program thrust itself upon AFMIDPAC officials, and Headquarters, AFMIDPAC, dispatched an urgent radiogram to OQMG requesting funds for an Engineer Survey of the Punchbowl area and an early appropriation from Congress for its development.

Early in February 1947, as a result of this pressure for action, OQMG contacted the Office of the Chief of Engineers, which in turn, quickly authorized the Western Engineer Division to formulate plans for the proposed cemetery. During this same period, the Department of the Army began efforts to secure Congressional approval of the project. In Honolulu, meanwhile, the Punchbowl site received growing support from such local organizations as the City Planning Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, veterans' organizations, and other groups. Nevertheless, there was last minute pushback on the total expenditure of \$1.5M, uncertainty in the number of dead to be interred, the environmental impact and opposition groups painting a picture of an elevated city of the dead overlooking a city of the living, Honolulu.

Planning for the return of deceased servicemen from Pacific Ocean areas and the Asiatic mainland began long before 1947. While the controversy raged, Army authorities, somewhat disconcerted by the unfavorable action of the Congressional appropriations committee, feared that a permanent overseas burial ground would not materialize soon enough to play any important role in the swiftly approaching repatriation operations. The War Department devoted considerable attention to this part of the program, placing particular emphasis upon repatriation, outlining the general policies to be followed, and stressing as the guiding principle the wishes of the next of kin as to final disposition of remains.

This attitude grew despite the Hawaiian delegate's prompt introduction of another bill for the establishment of a national cemetery in Hawaii. In any case, on 1 August 1947, OQMG queried AGFPAC on the cost of adapting or expanding Schofield Barracks Post Cemetery for use as a temporary burial ground. AGFPAC officials were only lukewarm to this suggestion, preferring above-ground storage of remains until a national cemeterial site became available. They did not believe that such storage would cause any unfavorable public reaction. The War Department, taking cognizance of their attitude, soon

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dropped all plans for temporary burials in Schofield Barracks Cemetery and approved above-ground storage pending final disposition. Thus, that became the pathway to Punchbowl for the remains of Gibby and his crewmates.

In the early autumn of 1947, a group of Congressmen from the House Armed Services and Appropriations Committee visited the Hawaiian Islands. After surveying possible burial grounds, they approved the Punchbowl rather than Schofield Barracks as the site for a national cemetery. This highly favorable development, coupled with an obvious preference for the Punchbowl on the part of Memorial Division officials, practically settled the issue.

During the ensuing weeks, the final skirmishes of the campaign for the Punchbowl site took place on Capitol Hill. In February 1948, the Appropriations Committee approved necessary funds for the establishment of a national cemetery in the Punchbowl, but disapproved a similar project on Guam. Instead, the Committee recommended the merger of the proposed Guam and Hawaiian burial grounds into the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Honolulu (Punchbowl) and allowed a total of \$1,172,000 for the task. This recommendation was enacted into law.

Since earlier estimates as to the numbers of war dead who would lie permanently in Pacific cemeteries had been based on the supposition that three burial grounds would be available, the action of Congress rendered these figures meaningless. The Chief, Operations Branch, Memorial Division, OQMG, immediately proposed that the estimated total of Pacific overseas burials - 38,022. The following two years of above-ground storage in Hawaii proved them correct in this assumption.

In Punchbowl, Honolulu, 40% of knowns in area	6,695
Add token unknowns	400
40% from Guam Area	8,834
Total estimated burials at Punchbowl	15,929
In Fort McKinley, Manila, 40% of knowns in area	13,906
All Pacific unknowns less 400 in Hawaii	7,593
Total Estimated Burials in Manila	21,499
40% of cremated remains in Pacific	594
Total estimated burials in Pacific	38,022

Construction of the Punchbowl Cemetery finally started in August 1948 and, for all practical purposes, was completed in September 1949. The task was accomplished in four phases under the supervision of the Honolulu District Engineer. The first phase consisted of clearing, grading, and preparing the site, and installing a drainage system; the second, construction of water and electrical systems, retaining walls, sidewalks, and preliminary work on roads. The third phase included the building of entrance pylons, the flag-pole and observation point, the completion of roads, top-soiling and grassing, and lastly, the general landscaping and construction of the superintendent's lodge, administration and utility buildings.

While construction activities were in progress, graves registration officers considered which methods and procedures should be followed in making final interments. After studying the construction schedule, the

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District Engineer recommended the period from 10 January to 28 February 1949 for the first phase of interments. As the end of 1948 approached, graves registration officials realized that burials could begin as early as 4 January 1949. By then, the subsoil water distribution lines, sewer lines and manholes and electric primary cables would have been installed and work begun on the fine grading and base course of the roads and on the curbing.

With the date for starting interments now determined and with work specifications written, the necessary directives were issued. Interments in the new cemetery commenced on 4 January 1949 with the reading of a burial service over the casket of an unknown serviceman who lost his life during the attack on Pearl Harbor. One hundred and eight others were buried that same day. The interment of these war dead shaped the general procedure followed during subsequent interments in the Punchbowl. Military chaplains of each of the major faiths professed by the decedents conducted appropriate rites, which were followed by the traditional firing of three volleys and the sounding of taps.

During the first phase of operations, covering the period from 4 January to 25 March, some 9,940 deceased received final burial. Interments occurred on 49 working days, with 8 days lost because of heavy rains. Those buried during this time came from such widely scattered localities as China, Australia, India, Burma, Saipan, Guam, Okinawa, and Iwo Jima, as well as the temporary Hawaiian Island cemeteries from which the remains had been disinterred more than a year previously and placed in above-ground storage. Those ten thousand included 2nd Lt Gilbert A. Rauh and the seven additional sets of remains temporarily stored at Schofield Barracks. The remains were separated as carefully as possible and placed in eight caskets. They were reinterred, two caskets to a gravesite, in Section Q, Grave Sites 129 through 132 at Punchbowl.



The cemetery's official name is the **National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific**. However, most people know it simply as Punchbowl Cemetery. Effectively, the cemetery is the equivalent of Arlington National Cemetery, just in the Pacific. The Punchbowl Cemetery is also unique in that it is the only National Memorial Cemetery located on top of a mountain, actually in the center of an extinct volcano, about two miles from Waikiki, 4.3 miles from infamous Diamond Head, 4.5 miles from the Honolulu International Airport, 1.5 miles from Honolulu port, and 7 miles from Pearl Harbor National Memorial.

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The most common Native Hawaiian name for the mountain where the cemetery is built is Puowaina (Poo-oh-wah-ee-na). This extinct volcanic crater was the location of many ancient Hawaiian rituals, including Human Sacrifice. Once the Kingdom of Hawaii was established, King Kamehameha placed a pair of saluting guns atop the mountain to welcome foreign dignitaries. The crater eventually ended up in the hands of the Hawaii Territorial guard, which has facilities in the crater. During WWII, there were plans to use the Punchbowl as a location for shore batteries to defend Honolulu Harbor in the event of invasion. Tunnels were dug into the crater rim for the guns and observation positions. However, these plans were never completed. While there had been thoughts of making Punchbowl crater into a cemetery as far back as the late 19th century, such plans were not popular. It was not until WWII that plans were set in motion to establish a National Cemetery with Punchbowl Crater as the location.



Grave Sites 129 through 132 were located just off of Outer Drive. The area was beautifully manicured and stunning as are most venues in Hawaii.

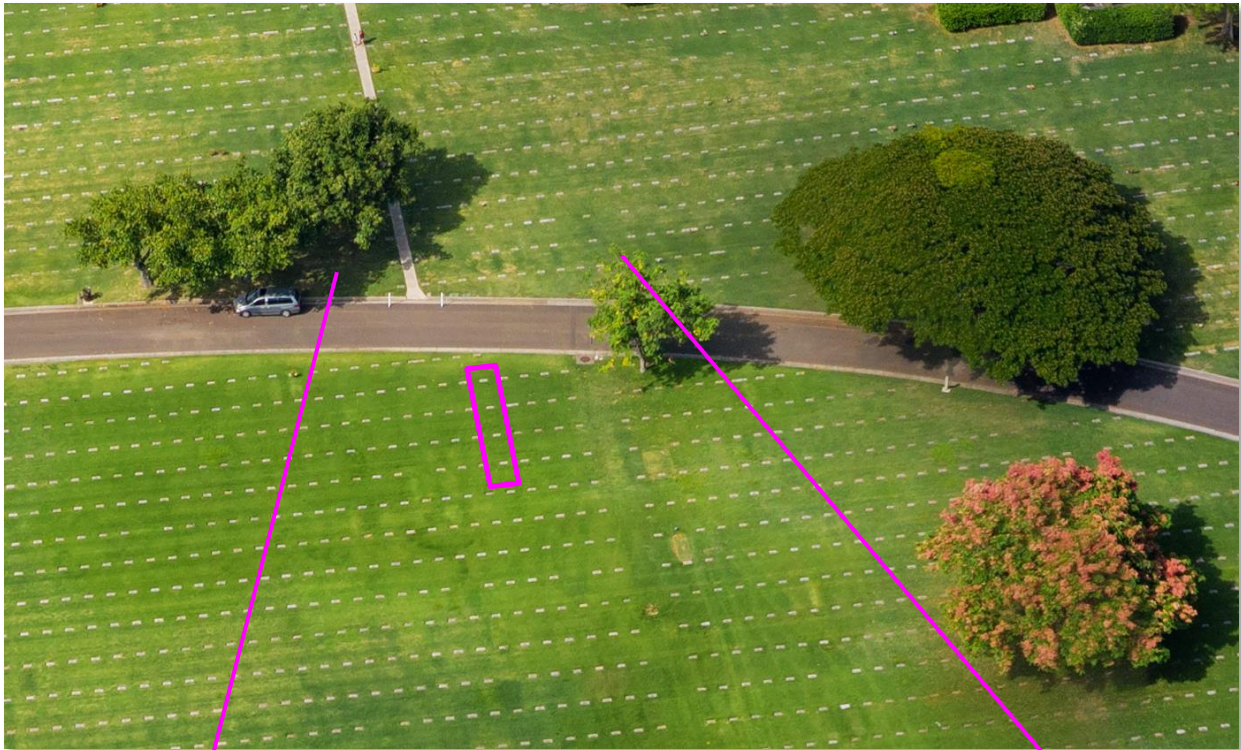


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The grave markers read “Unknown”. There they lay in peace for seventy-three years.



Prior to 2020, those grave sites had been undisturbed since 1949.



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RENEWED INTEREST

It is not clear just what stimulated the resurgence of interest in the crash of the Apocalypse and the loss of its crew, but taking Jeanne Rauh's bold sample and other events of 2014 are more than coincidental.

From 9 to 10 May 2014, during Joint Field Activity (JFA) 14-3BM, an investigation team traveled to Insein Township, Yangon North District, Yangon Region, Myanmar (formerly Rangoon, Burma) to investigate MACR 1223, the Missing Air Crew Report of the Apocalypse. The team interviewed various individuals near the Insein Railroad Yard (47Q JU 91855 68817, World Geodetic System 1984 [WGS-84]) and the Hlaing River Bridge, but none of those individuals provided information regarding aircraft losses during World War II. No material evidence, identification media, or possible remains were recovered. The investigative team also canvassed the National Archives of Myanmar and various other sites such as churches and Buddhist monasteries around Yangon for additional information pertaining to MACR 1223 or other American losses. Those investigation efforts did not yield any information pertaining to American losses during the war.



In 2019, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) received a family disinterment request for Unknowns X-505A-H, based on past AGRS attempts to associate the remains with the unresolved losses of MACR 31, which documented the loss of a B-24 in southern Burma. MACR 31 documented the crash of B-24D, S/N 41-2374, on July 2, 1943. This aircraft was also with the 10th Air Force, 7th Bomb Group and 436th Bomb Squadron and had flown on a mission to Rangoon from Bishnupur, India.

After reviewing the Unknown files, DPAA researchers believed a more likely association for the remains was with MACR 1226. MACR 1226 documented the crash of B-24J, S/N 42-73222, on December 1, 1943. With several B-24s lost in late 1943 in southern Burma, the association initially considered was based on geographic proximity following analysis of discrepancies in how the recovery location of X-505A-H was documented in the Unknown X-files. It turns out, including the Apocalypse, this was the 'Bugs Bunny', one of the five B-24 lost that day and the very plane Richard Kaufman had missed due to malaria (see pages 108 & 134).

Although the village of Yodayadet was referenced consistently across reports of the recovery in the Unknown files, two different coordinates for the site of recovery were reported in conjunction with the place of recovery: 17° 07' 30" N, 096° 6' E; and 17° 07' 30" N, 095° 6' E. Although the first of these two coordinates appeared more frequently in the X-505A-H files (and subsequently may have been the focus of AGRS investigators), DPAA research concluded that the second set of coordinates was more likely to be

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accurate. Located approximately 65 miles west of the first set of coordinates, 17° 07' 30" N, 095° 6' E was more consistent with current-day geographic resources placing the site of recovery of X-505A-H within a few miles of the village of Yodayadet, Myanmar (Burma), at 17° 07' 60" N, 95° 4' 60" E. (See the map on page 195).

The Department of Defense approved the DPAA recommendation to disinter X-505A-H from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) in January 2020. In October 2020, DPAA personnel exhumed X-505A-H from four graves in Section Q at the NMCP. Each grave contained two caskets, with each casket containing a single Unknown. DP AA personnel exhumed: X-505A and X-505B from Grave 132; X-505C and X-505D from Grave 131; X-505E and X-505F from Grave 130; and X-505G and X-505H from Grave 129. Although the eight Unknowns were initially accessioned into the DPAA Laboratory as CIL 2020-098, CIL 2020-099, CIL 2020-100, and CIL 2020-101, after reviewing the evidence and historical background, scientific staff consolidated all of the remains into one accession (CIL 2020-098) for tracking purposes.

Pictured today from Outer Drive at Punchbowl, where the caskets were interred in 1949, only new grass remains where Unknown Soldier markers once identified the resting places of the crew of Apocalypse.



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As scientific analysis of X-505A-H progressed, DNA testing revealed that the remains were not consistent with incident MACR 1226. In considering other possible associated incidents involving B-24s lost in the broader region of southern Burma in late 1943, MACR 1223 was proposed as a possible association. As described, although U.S. forces did not witness the crash of B-24J #42-73196, its last sighted location is consistent with the recovery site of X-505A-H.

Even without the accounts of the three Japanese fighter pilot who pursued the Apocalypse towards the coast, DPAA analysts came to the same conclusion I did in 2016 before seeing the Discovery Debriefing report.

“Other USAAF Aircrew members last saw B-24J #42-73196 entering a cloud bank, hit by anti-aircraft fire, near Insein, Burma. Although Insein is located about 70 miles [east] southeast of Yodayadet, given the B-24's ability to fly over 300 miles in an hour, it would have been very possible for a B-24 to have traveled that distance in a relatively short amount of time, even with damage.

The route from Insein to Yodayadet also would have been consistent with the direction a B-24, like #42-73196, would have sought to fly in an attempt to return to U.S. forces (or increase the possibility of rescue), from a mission on Rangoon.

Other historical factors considered in recommending the unresolved crew of MACR 1223 as possible associations for X-505A-H rested on the aircraft type, the loss date, and the number of unresolved crew. Historical evidence for X-505A-H suggested that any potentially associated incident would need to: have at least eight crew members still unresolved (based on the number of individuals believed to be present in the remains); involve a USAAF B-24 (based on witness statements and AGRS investigation of the crash site); and most likely be linked to late 1943 (based on an AGRS report that the crash likely occurred around November 1943).

The loss of B-24 #42-73196 on 1 December 1943, and the unresolved status of all 10 of its crew members met these conditions.”

2nd Lt Gilbert A. Ruah's remains, Xfile X-505B, now removed from Grave Site 129 in Section Q at Punchbowl, were accessioned into the DPAA Central Identification Laboratory in Honolulu, HI as CIL 2020-098-I-02. Identifying individuals from broken and scattered fragments is a difficult and time-consuming process. For the unskilled, recognizing and reassembling, estimation of height weight and build, exhaustive tissue testing and detailed analysis of the last moments of the individual who lost their life over eighty-years ago is a daunting task. It is most likely somewhat daunting even for the skilled anthropologist, but the amount of information they extract is nothing less than extraordinary.

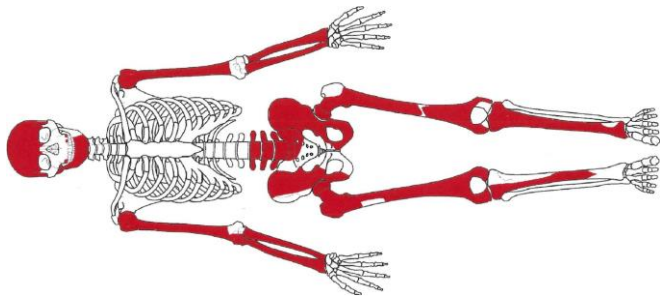
The detailed Forensic Anthropology Report was completed and published on June 27, 2024.

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FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY REPORT – Kyle McCormick, PhD

Based on the pelvis and pubic skeletal structure, the remains were of a male of 23+ years. The probable ancestry was European as determined by the structure of the jaw and linear measurements of the long bones.

As seen in the sample X-file report Form 044b shown on page 199, after eighty years and multiple interments and dis-interments, only parts of the skeletal structure remains.



The skeletal remains represent an incomplete skeleton in good condition. Present elements include portions of the calvarium, maxillae, and mandible, with associated dentition (skull, jaw bones and teeth); the 2nd through 5th lumbar vertebrae and the sacrum (lower spine); the left and right humeri, ulnae, radii (upper arm and forearm bones), ossa coxae (pelvic bones),

femora, and tibiae (upper and lower leg bones). The right humerus, ulna, and femur; and the left femur and tibia were reconstructed using a combination of an acetone-soluble adhesive and dental wax to facilitate analysis. The right humerus, ulna, and femur were subsequently deconstructed to facilitate trauma analysis.

Overall, the remains exhibit extensive and wide-spread perimortem (at the moment of death) high energy, blunt force trauma, consistent with a deceleration event, such as an aircraft crash. All skeletal structures exhibited multiple fractures. Fortunately for the crew, death was instantaneous on impact.

There were a few, but not many, postmortem findings, most probably from extraction from the wreckage, hurried and, most likely, careless initial burial, subsequent multiple interment/dis-interment events and destructive laboratory analysis. And, with Gibby's remains, there was also one very obvious antemortem traumatic injury consistent with Japanese eye-witness reports.

Two of the three Ki-43 Japanese fighters that followed the smoking Apocalypse into the clouds claimed to have exhausted all of their ammunition into the crippled jet. The third pilot, Yasuhiko Kuroe, returned for the final coup de grace and delivered more following the Apocalypse to the ground (see description on pages 103-104). By late 1943, armaments on the Ki-43-II Hayabusa ("Oscar") fighter were upgraded and by the end of 1943 they were equipped with Ho-103 12.7mm machine guns. They fired 12.7×81mmSR Ho-103 cartridges, which were lighter than the U.S. .50 BMGs but had a higher rate of fire. Even though lighter and smaller than the munitions used by the allies, their effectiveness was multiplied by the mixed of armor piercing, explosive and incendiary rounds - they penetrated, they exploded and started fires!

Although gunners on the Apocalypse knocked the lead fighter, Japanese ACE Yasuhiko Kuroe, out of formation early in the fight, with over one-thousand rounds of explosive cartridges ripping through the aircraft over the last fifteen minutes they were airborne, they eventually became a totally defenseless target. Most likely, everyone was dead or wounded before impact.

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Gibby's remains demonstrated an antemortem oblique penetrating projectile wound through the upper point of the humerus in his upper right arm. That wound had all the characteristics of an explosive 12.7x81mmSR round. Gibby had not escaped the carnage either.

The right humerus shows a complex combination of projectile and blunt force trauma . There is a keyhole defect to the lateral surface of the proximal 1/4th of the diaphysis, consistent with a tangential general distal to proximal impact. An incomplete radiating fracture extends proximally from the defect. The humerus bent anteriorly, resulting in a crushing defect anteriorly and a complete fracture of the proximal humerus from transverse fractures radiating from the keyhole defect. An incomplete compressive radiating fracture extends proximolaterally from the crushing defect towards the incomplete radiating keyhole defect fracture. The complex pattern of trauma to the proximal humerus is likely the result of the projectile impact in combination with blunt forces.

In summary,

The remains designated CIL 2020-098-I-02 represent a male of probable European (to include Hispanic) ancestry, at least 23 years of age (Gibby was 28), with a stature of 63.6-70.2 inches (Gibby was 67 1/2 inches tall). The remains exhibit perimortem trauma consistent with a rapid deceleration event, with projectile trauma to the right humerus.

COMPREHENSIVE MITOCHONDRIAL DNA ANALYSIS – DPAA Laboratory

Specimen samples were taken from eight different areas of the skeletal remains. The mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) sequence information obtained from the specimens is consistent with the mtDNA sequence information obtained from Jeanne H. Beaumont, sister of Gilbert A. Rauh, in 2024 and stored at The Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains (AFRSSIR) - DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Delaware.

FORENSIC ODONTOLOGICAL REPORT – Kevin R. Torske, DDS

The dental remains of CIL 2020-098-I-02 consist of three maxillary (upper jaw) fragments, a partial mandible (lower jaw), and loose teeth. Specific dental characteristics include the following: articulated teeth #1-#3, #12, #15, #16, #20, #22, #27-#29, and #32; loose teeth #9 and #11; open and unhealed sockets for teeth #21, #23-#26, and #30 which indicate they were lost perimortem/postmortem (i.e., at the time of or after death); and healed bone in the areas typically occupied by teeth #4 and #31, which would suggest they were missing antemortem (i.e., prior to death). Dental restorations (i.e., fillings) are evident in multiple teeth. The dental remains are in a fair state of preservation.

Based upon the correlations between the antemortem and postmortem dental evidence, to include antemortem missing tooth #4 and #31; restored teeth #2, #3, and #15; unrestored teeth #1, #9, #22, #27-#29, and #32; and the presence in life of teeth #11, #12, #16, #20, #21, #23-#26, and #30, it is my opinion that the dental remains of CIL 2020-098-I-02 are probably those of - *Second Lieutenant Gilbert Andrew RAUH, O-738787, U.S. Army Air Forces*

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MANILA AMERICAN CEMETERY TABLETS OF THE MISSING – ROSETTE PLACEMENT

At the Manila American Cemetery in the Philippines, the names of 36,285 missing U.S. Armed Forces personnel from World War II are inscribed on the Tablets of the Missing, which are large limestone walls surrounding the cemetery's memorial. These individuals were Missing in Action (MIA), lost at sea, or otherwise unrecovered.

When the remains of a previously missing service member are recovered and positively identified, a rosette is placed next to their name on the Tablets of the Missing. The rosette—a small, circular mark—symbolizes that the individual has been accounted for and is no longer missing. This practice serves as an official and permanent recognition of their recovery.

The use of rosettes to indicate recovered individuals is a tradition maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), the organization responsible for maintaining overseas American military cemeteries. The practice dates back to the establishment of these cemeteries after World War I and World War II, ensuring that the sacrifices of fallen service members are honored with accuracy and dignity. As DNA testing, historical research, and forensic advancements continue to improve, previously unidentified remains, like the crew of the *Apocalypse*, are recovered and identified, allowing rosettes to be added to the names of those once listed as MIA.



Once Gibby's remains were fully identified and the next-of-kin notified then debriefed in late February 2025, Vicente Paolo Lim IV, the Director of the Manila American Cemetery, was notified by the DPAA. The process began immediately and in early March, Mr. Kim, with whom I had been communicating, was kind enough to send me the following photographs of the installation:



RATON FRANCISCO	CPL	57 INF REGT (PS)	PHILIPPINES
RATTNER SIDNEY M	PVT	192 TANK BN	TEXAS
RAUCH RUSSELL L	1 LT	491 BOMB SQ 341 BOMB GP (M)	OHIO
RAUH GILBERT A	2 LT	436 BOMB SQ 7 BOMB GP (H)	NEW YORK
RAUH THEODORE A	1 LT	394 BOMB SQ 5 BOMB GP (H)	MASS
RAUHAUSER GLENN M	CPL	60 CA REGT	WASHINGTON
RAUSA ROBERTO	PVT	57 INF REGT (PS)	PHILIPPINES
RAVELO JUAN	PFC	12 SIG CO (PS)	PHILIPPINES
RAVINA PEDRO	PVT	14 ENGR REGT (PS)	PHILIPPINES
RAWLEY JAMES X	2 LT	372 BOMB SQ 307 BOMB GP (H)	MICHIGAN
RAWSON WENDELL P	2 LT	321 BOMB SQ 90 BOMB GP (H)	MINN
RAY CLAUDE A	S SGT	320 BOMB SQ 90 BOMB GP (H)	KANSAS

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INTERMENT WITH HONORS