



## Remains of CIA pilot are buried in mother's grave

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EUGENE, Ore. (AP) — A grave left unmarked for decades now has two names on it. CIA pilot Robert "Bob" Snoddy has been laid to rest in his mother's grave 53 years after he was killed in an aerial ambush by Chinese communists.

"He's home, and it's not a time to be sad anymore," Roberta Lee Cox, Snoddy's daughter and only child, said following a funeral Friday at Rest-Haven cemetery.

A last wish of Snoddy's mother, Myrtle Boss, was that no marker be placed on her grave until her son came home.

Military investigators recovered some of Snoddy's remains last year in China and returned them to Ruth Boss and Cox earlier this week after exhaustive testing to positively identify them.

Ruth Boss, Myrtle's daughter and Snoddy's only sibling, said their mother died before the truth about her son's last mission was revealed, and she never gave up hope that he might still be alive.

At the funeral, Boss fulfilled her promise to her mother. A new stone with the names of both mother and son will mark the long-delayed reunion.

Snoddy was 31 when he was shot down on a clandestine mission in Manchuria in 1952. He had been a Navy pilot in World War II, and joined a company called Civil Air Transport after the war to fly supplies to anti-communist forces in China.

The company was later purchased by the CIA and shifted operations to helping forces trying to unseat China's communist government. On his last mission, Snoddy and fellow pilot Norman Schwartz were leading a night flight to pick up what they thought was an anti-communist operative in what was then Manchuria, near the North Korean border.

But the operative apparently was a double agent, who alerted communist forces. They opened fire from hidden gun emplacements as Snoddy and Schwartz came in low over the pickup spot, and the two pilots died when the plane burst into flames and crashed.

Two CIA men aboard as passengers survived and were held more than 20 years in Chinese prisons before being released. One of them, John Downey, attended the funeral for Snoddy.

The service included a 21-gun salute by the Navy honor guard and a flyover by a single A-6 Intruder jet, dispatched from the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in Washington state. Several high-ranking Navy officers also took part.

"It's been a long time," Downey said afterward. "He was a great man and an outstanding flier."

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