



**RELEASED BY Col. Greg Hapgood
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER**

OFFICE: (515) 252-4582

CELL: (515) 971-6385

RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

CAMP DODGE
JOHNSTON, IOWA
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IOWA WWII PILOT RETURNS HOME 70 YEARS LATER FOLLOWING DISCOVERY OF REMAINS IN NEW GUINEA

More than 70 years after completing his 89th fighter escort mission, 1st Lt. Class Louis L. Longman is returning home to Iowa.

Longman, a 26-year old Clinton, Iowa native serving with the 433rd Fighter Squadron, 475th Fighter Group, 5th Air Force, U.S. Army Air Corps, was last seen April 16, 1944 as his unit returned from a B-25 bomber escort mission over Hollandia, New Guinea. A Lockheed P-38 "Lightning" fighter pilot, Longman was on the return leg of the mission in a P-38J aircraft when his unit encountered severe weather in the Markham Valley. Longman's last reported location was in the vicinity of Bogadjim, New Guinea, as his formation broke up. The 5th Air Force lost 53 pilots and crewmen that day in what became known as "Black Sunday."

Longman was officially declared deceased on Feb. 27, 1946, but his remains were never recovered. In February 2005, the Joint Prisoners of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command - Central Identification Library (JPAC) received information of a possible aircraft crash site in Madang province, Papua New Guinea. In August 2007, human remains, as well as parts of a U.S. P-38J aircraft were recovered by a JPAC Investigation Team. Additional remains and physical evidence were also recovered in 2009 and 2010 by JPAC personnel.

In 2011, JPAC's Research and Analysis Group concluded a historical association drawn from Missing Air Crew Report #4501 and the excavation site. The location of the excavated aircraft crash site and the wreckage reported by JPAC personnel, consistent with a Lockheed P-38J Lightning, support this historical association.

Longman's brother, 2nd Lt. Richard T. Longman, a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress navigator stationed in England, was also reported as Missing in Action after being shot down in February 1944. Richard spent the next 14 months as a prisoner of war at Stalag Luft 1, near Barth, Germany, before being liberated in May 1945.

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Louis Longman was born Jan. 23, 1918 in Murdock, Minn. to George F. and Ellen T. (Cleary) Longman. He graduated from St. Mary's High School in Clinton, Iowa in 1936, and participated in a wide variety of school activities, including basketball, football (All-State honorable mention), yearbook sports editor, dramatics, and class officer positions.

Longman enlisted in the U.S. Army on Feb. 19, 1942, and transferred into the U.S. Army Air Corps in June. Longman completed his primary flight training at Cal-Aero Academy in Ontario, Calif., then completed Basic (Merced Army Airfield, Merced, Calif.) and Advanced (Williams Army Airfield, Mesa, Ariz.) Flight Training, receiving his pilot wings on April 12, 1943. He left the U.S. for duty in the Pacific theater in July 1943 and was assigned to the 433rd Fighter Squadron, 475th Fighter Group, 5th Air Force, U.S. Army Air Corps.

Among his military awards and honors is the Air Medal (with numeral "2"), American Campaign Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal (w/4 Bronze Service Stars), World War II Victory Medal and Pilot Wings.

He was preceded in death by his parents. His four brothers and four sisters are also deceased.

A memorial service and interment will be held at the Rock Island Arsenal National Cemetery, 1 Rock Island Arsenal, Rock Island, Ill. on April 12 at 1 p.m., with full military honors provided by the Iowa National Guard. Please use the Moline entrance. The public is welcome to attend the memorial service.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the family in care of Pape Funeral Home, 2308 Pershing Blvd., Clinton, Iowa 52732. Contact the funeral home with any questions at papefuneralhome@mchsi.com or phone 563-242-3344.

- Media Information for Memorial Service –

The family of 1st Lt. Louis Longman asks that the dignity of his memorial service be respected. All media please enter the Rock Island Arsenal through the Moline gate. Media may shoot photos and video at the memorial service and a multibox will be provided for audio. Media availability with the family of 1st Lt. Louis Longman will be held at the Rock Island Arsenal National Cemetery administrative building immediately following the service. Media points of contact at the funeral are the Rock Island Arsenal Public Affairs Office at 309-782-2094 or Col. Greg Hapgood cell 515-971-6385.

For questions concerning this release as well as additional information about the operations, training, and activities of the Iowa Army and Air National Guard, please contact Col. Greg Hapgood, Iowa National Guard Public Affairs Officer by email at gregory.o.hapgood.mil@mail.mil or (515) 252-4582 (office) or (515) 971-6385 (cell), or contact Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden at duff.e.mcfadden.mil@mail.mil or (515) 252-4666 (office), or (515) 480-7647 (cell).

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