



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Army Air Corps POW finally laid to rest more than 70 years after his death

By Staff Sgt. Daniel Gagnon, 134 Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee National Guard honored a World War II POW who was laid to rest July 15 at Mountain Home National Cemetery in Mountain Home, Tenn., following the identification of his remains nearly 74 years after his death.

U.S. Army Air Corps Pvt. Evans Overbey, a native of Wise County, Va., was a member of the 93rd Bomb Squadron, 19th Bomb Group during World War II. He died at the age of 25 on Nov. 19, 1942, at POW Camp Cabanatuan in Luzon, Philippines, after suffering from pellagra, a disease associated with niacin deficiency and malnutrition.

Overbey fought in the Battle of Bataan, was captured, survived the Bataan Death March, and participated in the Philippine Island Unit Campaign prior to being captured in the Philippines.

He was initially buried in Common Grave 717 at Camp Cabanatuan Cemetery. His remains were intermixed with 10 other Soldiers and were reclaimed by the U.S. at the close of World War II. At that time, the remains of all 10 Soldiers were interred in an unknown Soldiers' grave in San Francisco, Calif.

During ongoing reclamation efforts, DNA testing recently connected Overbey's remains to his family in Erwin. He was reinterred at his final resting place, Section UU, Site 14 at the cemetery near Johnson City, Tenn. Military honors, including a firing detail, were provided by the Tennessee Army National Guard; as well as a flyover provided by the Tennessee Air National Guard's 134th Air Refueling Wing, from Joint Base McGhee-Tyson in nearby Knoxville, Tenn.

Overbey was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Prisoner of War, American Defense Service with Foreign Service Clasp, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign with one Bronze Service Star and the World War II Victory Medals. He also received a Presidential Unit Citation with two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Philippine Defense Ribbon with Bronze Service Star and the Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation. His niece, Grace Erwin, accepted the awards on his behalf.

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CAPTIONS



Staff Sgt. Brian Slover with the Tenn. National Guard Military Funeral Honors team posthumously presents the internment Flag of WWII POW Army Air Corps Pvt. Evans E. Overbey to Grace Erwin, Overbey's niece July 15, at Mountain Home National Cemetery near Johnson City, Tenn.



State Representative Rusty Crowe speaks at WWII POW Army Air Corps Pvt. Evans E. Overbey's funeral July 15, at Mountain Home National Cemetery near Johnson City, Tenn.



A KC-135 Stratotanker from the 134th Air Refueling Wing, Joint Base McGhee-Tyson, flies over WWII POW Army Air Corps Pvt. Evans E. Overbey's funeral July 15, at Mountain Home National Cemetery, near Johnson City, Tenn.



U.S. Representative Phil Roe, M.D., posthumously presents the state flag to Grace Erwin, niece of WWII POW Army Air Corps Pvt. Evans E. Overbey's at his funeral July 15, at Mountain Home National Cemetery, near Johnson City, Tenn.



Staff Sgt. Brian Slover (L) and Sgt. Donovan Leon (R) from the Tenn. National Guard Military Funeral Honors team carry the casket of WWII POW Army Air Corps Pvt. Evans E. Overbey July 15, 2016 at Mountain Home National Cemetery, near Johnson City, Tenn.

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