

## Gov. Terry E. Branstad orders flags at half-staff to honor World War II veteran repatriated Missing in action

Written by Office of the Governor of the State of Iowa  
Tuesday, 15 July 2014 12:43

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After remaining missing for 69 years, Moulton, Iowa, native to return home Saturday to final resting place at Sunset View Cemetery in Moulton

(DES MOINES) – Gov. Terry Branstad has ordered flags to be flown at half-staff in Iowa from 5 p.m. Friday, July 18, 2014, until 8 a.m. Monday, July 21, 2014, in honor of U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Robert “Bobby” E. Howard, formerly of Moulton, Iowa. [A photo of Staff Sgt. Howard may be found here](#)

Howard, a 21-year old serving with the 450<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron, 322<sup>nd</sup> Bomber Group, Medium, 9<sup>th</sup> Air Force, U.S. Army Air Corps, was last seen April 16, 1945, as his unit was conducting a bombing mission over Germany. His flight was shot down and crashed near Wittenburg, Germany. Only one of the six crew members was able to parachute from the aircraft and was taken prisoner by German forces. Howard and four other crewmembers were declared deceased, but their remains were never found.

In 2012, the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command – Central Identification Laboratory (JPAC) received information from German Officials of human remains found within a burial site located close to the possible aircraft crash site. In 2014, JPAC’s Research and Analysis Group concluded a historical association drawn from Missing Air Crew Report #14463 and artifacts and human remains recovered at the excavation site. Mitochondrial DNA testing positively identified part of the remains belonging to Staff Sgt. Howard.

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Robert Howard was born December, 19, 1923, in Moulton, Iowa. He graduated from Moravia Public School in Moravia, Iowa, in 1941, and participated in marching band, orchestra, concert band and dramatics.

Howard enlisted in the U.S. Army on March 19, 1943, and transferred into the U.S. Air Army Air Corps. His military awards and honors include the Purple Heart, Air Medal (with one silver and two bronze Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal (with three bronze service stars), World War II Victory Medal and Enlisted Crew Wings.

Howard is survived by brothers Harold and Dennis, both of Des Moines, sisters Evelyn Lewin of Indianola, Janie Ballanger of Coatsville, Mo., and Evelyn June Nance of Tulsa, Okla., and by many nieces, nephews and extended family members. His parents and his sister, Betty Howard Harvey are deceased.

The Governor's directive applies to all U.S. and state flags under the control of the state. H.R. 692, signed in 2007, requires federal government agencies in the state to comply with the Governor's Executive Order that the U.S. flag be flown at half-staff in the event of the death of a member of the Armed Forces.

A memorial service will be held at Sunset View Cemetery in Moulton, Iowa, on July 19, 2014, at 11 a.m., with full military honors provided by the Iowa National Guard. The cemetery is located north of Moulton, at the northeast corner of highway 202 and 535<sup>th</sup> Street. The memorial service is open the public.

Flags will be at half-staff on the State Capitol Building and on flag displays in the Capitol Complex, and upon all public buildings, grounds, and facilities throughout the state. Individuals, businesses, schools, municipalities, counties and other government subdivisions are encouraged to fly the flag at half-staff for the same length of time as a sign of respect.

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