

Mother of MIA to receive remains

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE (AP) — The remains of a Navy pilot shot down over North Vietnam have been returned, but his mother says she still hasn't given up hope that he is still alive.

Lt. David M. Christian disappeared over North Vietnam on June 2, 1965, while flying a Navy A-4 attack jet.

After silent planeside services Wednesday at Travis Air Force Base, with color guard and honor guard, the coffin was loaded into a black hearse for the trip to the Tri-Services Mortuary in Oakland. From there they will be released to his mother, Ethel Christian of Lakeside, in San Diego County.

The body was the 10th to be identified of 21 turned over by the North Vietnamese a year ago.

Mrs. Christian said earlier Wednesday by telephone from her home that she wants the body cremated and the ashes scattered off Point Loma by a Navy plane.

"That seems appropriate. After 22 years, it has been a long, weary time."

But Mrs. Christian also said, "You can't get rid of the hope that some day he and the others may come walking out of the jungle. With God, all things are possible."

Like mothers of others among



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Colorguard passes by casket containing remains of Navy pilot.

the 2,400 servicemen missing in Southeast Asia, Mrs. Christian has tried for years to get the U.S. government to intensify efforts to account for the missing.

"I've talked a lot in the last 22 years, written a lot of letters," she said. "At this point, it's time to settle it. I've learned all there is to know. The government believes it is the remains of my son. . . . The probability is greater that it is David than that it is not. It is

time to close it."

Christian was born in California, and in the early 1960s his family moved to Kansas. Three years later they moved back to California, but Christian stayed to attend Kansas State University, then Emporia State University, where he was graduated after majoring in sociology and psychology.

Christian learned to fly Navy jets after leaving college.