

Missouri Couple Grateful After Using a Steak Knife on WWII Mortar

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Jefferson County, Missouri Routine yard work turned very interesting when Pamela Coffey stumbled upon a small metal object sticking out of the soil. She brought it inside and rinsed it off before noticing it had Japanese writing on it.

Coffey's husband, Sam, stepped in to help out by scrapping it with a steak knife. "We're trying to figure out what the heck this thing is," he said, "when from the kitchen she yells, 'Stop! I think that might be a bomb!'"

Using an image recognition app, they discovered it might be a WWII Japanese Navy mortar. Jefferson County Sheriff's deputies responded and were later joined by federal officials with the ATF, the St. Louis Regional Bomb and Arson Unit and EOD personnel from Scott Air Force.



It was indeed determined to be a WWII Japanese mortar. Technicians x-rayed the device and determined it was live. It was then handed over to Scott Air Force Base for a safe disposal operation.

As for future yard work plans, Pamela said, "We are now buying a metal detector before we get started." It is unclear how the mortar became lodged in the steep hillside of their yard, but it is believed that people that lived on the property a decade ago used the area as a junk yard. Sam Coffey told the local news station he was "incredibly grateful" to still have "all of my limbs still attached" after their discovery. "This is why women live longer than men because here I am, scraping a bomb with a steak knife when my wife makes me stop and call the sheriff's department!"