



THE DUSTOFFER

NEWSLETTER



DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

FALL 1996

DUSTOFF at Tan Son Nhut

*John D. Wehrle
U.S. Army Photo Inc.*



*Dustoff Park Dedication Honoring Major General Patrick H. Brady
Courtesy Ft. Hood and the Darnall Army Community Hospital*

The Dustoff Park

The Dustoff Park is dedicated to all air ambulance units that proudly and honorably serve our great nation in times of war and peace. The Park is a place to reflect on the acts of those who put their lives in harm's way to save the lives of others.

Major General (Ret.) Patrick H. Brady epitomizes the courage and dedication of the entire Medical Department, but in particular those who have flown under fire.

1997 REUNION REGISTRATION PAGE 15
Holiday Inn Northwest—San Antonio, Texas

Greetings from San Antonio —



President's Message

Time has surely flown by since this summer's newsletter. In the midst of the normal "hair on fire" episodes at work, your officers and the executive committee have been working to make the Association better. Plans are well underway for the reunion which starts on 21 February 1997. One of our goals was to increase membership. Since the last reunion we have over 50 new members including the 13 since June 1996. We have located several "lost" Life Members as well. Our presence with the units has been advertised and we are anxiously awaiting the flood of nominations for the

Dustoff Rescue of the Year and the Dustoff Crewmember of the Year. Those selections will be made on the 9th of November. Along with the presentation of those awards at the Saturday Night banquet we will have another very special presentation in honor of Major Charles L. Kelly. You don't want to miss this event; I am truly excited about it. See you in February. In the meantime if you have concerns about our Association, please communicate them to me and we'll seriously attempt to address them.

DUSTOFF! Dan Gower

DUSTOFF APPLICATION NEW MEMBERSHIP AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS

☐ I wish to join the Association as a Member \$15.00 (Annual Fee)
 \$10.00 (Initial Fee)
 \$25.00 (TOTAL)

☐ I wish to join as a Life-Time Member. \$100.00 (One-time fee)

☐ Change of Address

RANK _____
 LAST NAME _____
 FIRST NAME _____ M.I. _____
 MAILING ADDRESS _____

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

TYPE MEMBER _____ Lifetime Home Phone () _____

_____ Regular Work Phone — DSN _____



DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 8091 — Wainwright Station
San Antonio, Texas 78208

DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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VICE PRESIDENT **CHARLIE WEBB**
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Tom "Igor" Johnson

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Newsletter Editor

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Vinnell Areble—Unit 61322 — Box 1583

APO AE 09803.1322

Assistant to the Editor

Joe "Doc" Kralich

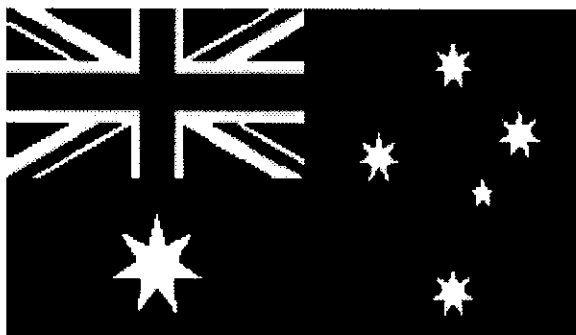
Technology Provided By





AUSTRALIAN MEDICS SEND GREETINGS TO DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

Thanks to "Electronic Mail" DUSTOFF has received communication from two Australian Army medics who served in Vietnam and were attached to our 45th Medical Detachment (AA) and 247th in 1968-70. Hopefully, some of you will recall these Aussies and perhaps send in some photographs or stories. Each has been sent several back issues of our newsletter and a DUSTOFF cap courtesy of the enlisted crewmen of our association.



Date: Fri, 13 Sep 1996 23:13:27 +1100
From: Mike Byron yron@ozemail.com.au
(email address)
To: DUSTOFF@gnn.com
Subject: Dustoff - vietnam 1969

Saw your page - I flew Dustoff (as a medic) with both 45 Air Amb and the 247 Air Amb. I was an Australian soldier based in Nui Dat in Phuc Tuy in III Corp. At that time Australia was asked to provide medics to support Dustoff in the Phuc Tuy area. I was one of the first sent to Long Binh for training. It was supposed to be a two week training course and then back to Nui Dat to fly on a roster basis with what ever crew was based in Nui Dat that week. Instead, five months later I got back to Nui Dat with just four and a wakey. The net result - 400 hours in combat missions in 68 - 69. A friend in those days was an American - Harvey Baker. If you know of him, please put me in touch. Otherwise, I would love to get email about dustoff. (Mike continues in his second message) Thanks for your reply — I would be delighted to get newsletters and a Cap. It was rather suprising to hear that some sort of cohesion of vets exists. We had a welcome home nearly ten years ago for Vietnam veterans and it was the first time most of us had been together since 68,69,70. Since then, each ANZAC Day

(our vets day) my original unit (8 field Ambulance) is lucky to front 10 people to march. Six million people live in Sydney now. Some years we have marched under a medical corps banner with medic veterans from the Korean war, Borneo and Malaysian emergencies just to make up the numbers. Yet you people had a group

especially for Dustoff. The Waltzing Matilda was a nice touch - Sorry I don't know the words to something equally touching for you - You've probably had the "Yellow Rose of Texas" done to death.

Yes, the postal address:

Mike Byron
15 Wells Street
Granville NSW 2142, Australia

Regards Mike
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"Waltzing Matilda"

A.B. "Banjo" Paterson

Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong,
Under the shade of a coolibah-tree,
And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy boiled,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?
Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"
And he sang as he watched and waited till his billy boiled,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"

IN TRIBUTE TO OUR BROTHERS IN BATTLE

Dustoff EMail :-)

TRYING TO LOCATE

Anyone wishing to contact
Bruce C. Zenk

Branch of Service: Army
Unit was: 57th and 82nd Med
Det (DUSTOFF), 119th Air
Mobile

Where served:

Soc Trang, Saigon, Vietnam

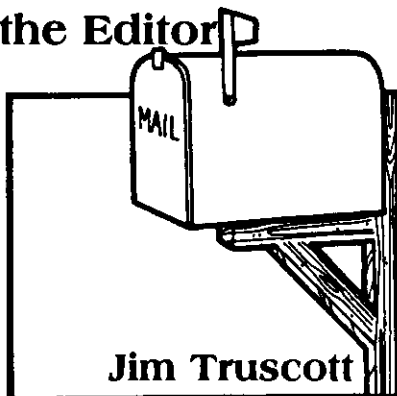
When served: Jan 1964 to
Jan 1965

Anyone wishing to contact my father
Bruce is invited to write me at the E-mail
address below. Dad has had an interest
in finding some of his old military
friends lately. Bruce served as a
commissioned officer in the Army from
62 - 68. He was a helicopter pilot in
Vietnam from Jan 64 to Jan 65. He
started in Vietnam with the 119th Air
Mobile group and was transferred to the
57th Med Det (Dustoff) in July and later
to the 82nd Med Det when it entered the
country in August. Dad flew until
suffering a back injury in 1966 when he
became a pharmacist until he left the
Army in 68.

Please contact: Patrick A. Zenk —
13217 James Ave S — Burnsville, MN
55337

Or send email to Patrick A. Zenk mail
to: dkhart@wyoming.com

Letters to the Editor



Doc:

Although I saw a lot of my friends
disappear in a Dustoff, the image I will
take to my grave is a single few minutes:
I was in Co B, 2/12 1st Cav. On 31 Jan
1966. We were near Bong Son during
Operation Masher/White Wing. We
had been hit pretty hard in the afternoon
and had pulled back to secure a
perimeter for Medivac and resupply. It
was after dark when the last Dustoff
picked up wounded. I don't remember
if it came in just as it got dark or landed
while we put out suppression fire, but it
landed safely. Upon takeoff streams of
green and white tracers from .51 cal
heavy machine guns seemed to push the
Huey into the black sky. How it
managed to fly through all that fire is
beyond me. At that point we all truly
believed that if we ever had to take that
ride those pilots would do whatever it
took to get it done.

Al Zeller

Doc:

As an RTO for the 187th AHC in Tay
Ninh in late 70 and early 71, I had the
opportunity to work quite a bit with a
medivac crew that was attached to us. I
cannot remember their actual unit
designation, but they were always ready
to go.

I held them all in very high regard. I
don't think they ever took off their
nomex out of fear having to get dressed
would delay a call. They were in some
hooches next to ours that were hit by
sappers after I got home, but I don't
think they were wounded.

They had their own PRC-25 and would
monitor radio traffic in the event we
would get a call and one of us would not
let them know about it quickly enough.
That's how committed these guys were.
They seemed constantly tired,
constantly ready, and always generous

with us. They were sent on innumerable
dustoffs while I was there.

A grunt whose shoulder had been blown
off by a grenade. A squad that had been
ambushed a week before Tet when it
was trying to take a prisoner. A firebase
being overrun (Firebase Blue). There
was never a mission they turned down.

They told me about one mission when
a firebase was still undergoing a ground
attack but there were multiple wounded
who needed immediate care. If memory
serves, Puff was hosing down an area
outside and in the wire and the NVA had
partially broken through. Flares were
popping into the night sky. They had to
make two or three attempts to get in to
pick up wounded, undergoing some
intense fire each time, but didn't give up
until they were able to do their job.

Monte Olsen

This next item is one of remembrance,
of Eagle DUSTOFF, 326th Medical
Battalion, 101st Airborne Division. It's
about friendship and a bracelet. It was
taken with the author's permission from
the Vietnam Veterans Homepage on the
Internet.

Davey and Eddie

Davey Johnson and Eddie Williams.
Two of the best in one of the best units:
Eagle Dustoff. Both were crew chiefs.
Our hooch consisted of them, their
respective medics (who I haven't
remembered yet, just faces but those are
clear) and myself. Eddie was the typical
all American kid; blond, blue eyes, had
that look that mothers loved and fathers
hated. Easy with a smile and showed no
fear. We had all our plans set for when
we got out. Each was going to go home
for a couple weeks to see the folks. Then
I was going to his home town where he
had a friend that sold motorcycles
cheap. After that we were off to see
America via the old route 66. You know

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Davey and Eddie

continued from page 4

the plan, work small jobs, party every night, break all the young ladies' hearts.

Eddie was a good crew chief, treated that huey like a man in love with his machine. His last pilot drove him a little crazy because he liked to bush hop, but Eddie had faith in that machine and his own skills. And Eddie liked to show me things. He showed me how to cinch your strap so when you stood on the skids you could get just the right angle to lean out and be able to see what the rescue hoist was doing. He showed me the Budda in the valley for the first time.

Eddie never seemed to let things get him too much, but I know that was just surface. If things had gone bad, a rescue had turned out futile; he got that glazy look that many had; but with Eddie there was always that smile and laughing words.

On that last night, Eddie and I sat listening to his music talking our plans just three months off. Eddie, f*** you and route 66. Davey Johnson was a big man. Had that walk that many big men have; you know, that kind of stiff legged walk where his whole body seemed to swivel from side to side. The only thing bigger than his body was his heart. Davey knew that my family never wrote and his family was one of those really close knit ones. First, he got his mother writing to me and sending ME my very own care packages. Then his sister starts writing me and then all her girl friends at the university. Mail got to be a good time.

Davey liked to wrestle, I guess cause he was so big and could. I remember the one day he started to wrestle with me. I didn't really want to but Davey never did hear too well when he wanted to do something. After a few minutes of pain, I decided enough. I got Davey up on

my shoulders and then dropped him. Never piss off a bear. Davey picked me up, tossed me through the ammo box shelves and stomped off. Guess he didn't like the airplane ride. After Eddie's death, Davey cut up the tail rotor chain from Eddie's ship and made each of us a non-removable bracelet. I know that may sound a little disrespectful, but believe me it wasn't. The chain had been a part of Eddie's ship, and that machine had been a part of Eddie.

About a year ago, I decided to try and find Davey; the time was right. Someone told me that if I contacted the army for a roster of my unit, got Davey's SSN, that I might be able to trace him. I did, and I did. Fate had decided that Davey should join Eddie and the two medics (guys forgive me, I do remember you). When next we meet, don't laugh at how old my body got, my memories are still young. Now my soul? That has gotten older than God, himself.

Guys, look down and meet some new friends of mine. There's gene'o and C4, h, mo and druid, doghandler and carol, mike, trixie, monte, brazilla, habu, demaj, saint, snake, art, parson, ken and some others. They knew you guys, you knew them. F*** ya all and pass that bottle.

Dick Sweet

The incident on February 6, 1970 resulted in the loss of Captain Jesse Wisdom, WO1 Gary Thatcher, Crewchief Morris Edward Williams, and Flight medic Richard Walton. On May 26, 1970 WO1 Edward O'Brien, WO1 Bruce E. Graham, Crewchief David Keith Johnson and Flight Medic William E. Hawkins were killed when their helicopter was hit by an RPG on a hoist mission.



Help Author with book and preserve the DUSTOFF tradition!

Dear Editor:

I started collecting flight helmets a couple years ago and have since begun a project to publish a book on U.S. military flight helmets. A kind of photo-documentary of all types and especially those with unique squadron insignia and ornate markings painted or applied in reflective tape. I want to have as many squadrons and units represented as possible for the book.

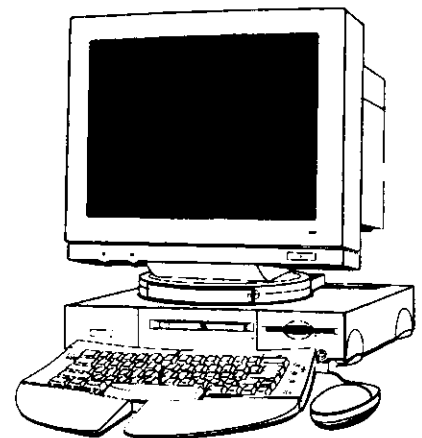
I have traveled to a few AFB, USCG, NAS, and ANG units to photograph the flight helmets of the resident squadrons. Also have visited a few museums to photo their collections.

Do you or someone you know have any close-up photos of flight helmets, or close-ups of pilots wearing their helmets?

Thank you for your help.

Tim Daugherty

Route 1 Box 147 — Pryor, OK 74361
Send DUSTOFF a copy and we will print it!



**MEDEVAC
PROPONENCY**

From the Wiregrass

by Colonel Randy Sexton

In the last newsletter I left a few items hanging and promised that I would provide an update of those issues in this newsletter. I will attempt to honor that promise and provide an update on some other issues.

The 1997 Army Medical Evacuation Conference (AMEC) is scheduled for 24-28 February 1997 at the Holiday Inn Northwest in San Antonio. Registration will take place on 23 February with a two hour icebreaker set to begin at 1800. Funding has been provided for the conference and our office is in the process of determining how many folks can be centrally funded. Funds are not as plentiful this year as they were last year. The letter announcing the AMEC has been mailed and if you haven't received a copy yet please contact us by calling area code (334) 255-1166/1170/1179 or DSN 558-xxxx. Hope to see you there.

An initiative mentioned in the previous newsletter was the request to grant a one-time waiver for an additional five months of Total Operational Flying Duty for Credit (TOFDC) to all 67Js who attended the AMEDD Advance Course between 1 January 1991 and 1 July 1996. The intent was to lessen the workload on the office responsible for granting the waiver by submitting a consolidated request as opposed to handling individual requests from the field for the waiver. We were not successful in our effort. However, if an individual needs this time to meet a "gate", he/she can submit a request for a waiver. The request should be routed through the chain-of-command to PERSCOM.

Mention was made in the last newsletter of a possible change in the "gate" system. Section 616 of the FY96 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) reduced the operational flying

requirement for entitlement to continuous Aviation Career Incentive Pay (ACIP) from 9 to 8 of the first 12 years of aviation service. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) policy is that any aviator, on or after 10 February 1996, who performs 8 years or more of operational flying (before, on, or after 10 February 1996) within the first 12 years of aviation service, will be qualified for continuous ACIP through 18 years of aviation service. Prior to 10 February 1996, aviators must perform at least 9 years of operational flying within their first 12 years of aviation service in order to qualify for continuous ACIP through 18 years of aviation service. Contact your local message center for a copy of the message if you do not have it.

The DTG is 191237Z Aug 96 and the subject is "Policy on Reduced Operational Flying Requirement for Entitlement to Continuous Aviation Career Incentive Pay (ACIP)" or contact us and we can fax you a copy. On the issue of the proposed changes to the 15-aircraft company TOE, it appears there is some good news. The process is not complete but it looks as if there will be an increase in TIs, fuel handlers and maintenance officers (WO). This is a very lengthy and sometimes grueling process and more information will be passed along as it becomes available. We still plan to address this during the AMEC, probably in a workshop.

Finally, an update on the UH-60Q. The UH-60Q program is proceeding on schedule and within cost. The Utility Helicopter Project Manager's Office (UH PMO) signed a contract with Sikorsky Aircraft on 9 February, 1996 for Phase II of the program which consists of the integration and qualification effort required to type classify the aircraft. The Tennessee National Guard delivered the



Colonel Randy Sexton

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ONE OF A KIND

The OH-6A light observation helicopter was used in Vietnam in many different ways: scouting, observation, gunship, and emergency medevac. It was a very fast-moving little aircraft and could maneuver into and out of tight places very quickly. The 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) operating in northern I Corps had some of the most rugged terrain (mountain jungle) to cope with, and getting their wounded out was a most dangerous matter. Eagle Dustoff of the 326th Medical Battalion provided support to the ground troops and was pulling numerous hoist missions that resulted in getting many aircraft shot up and crew members wounded. Therefore, a better and faster way to evacuate the

wounded was of great concern. After many months of trying to obtain an OH-6 light observation helicopter to reduce the number of hoist missions, Eagle DUSTOFF did obtain an aircraft from the divisions 3rd Brigade. The new aircraft (67-16254) was obtained in about July, 1969 and was used in support of the 3rd Brigade. On August 17, 1969 the aircraft was shot down while on a mission.

OH-6A Statistics: missions flown - 20
patients evacuated - 18
reduction in hoist missions - 9

*Captain George Louis Miner, MSC (DUSTOFF 905)
and WO1 Gerald Lewis Caton were lost on this mission.*

From the Wiregrass

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first aircraft in mid-September to Sikorsky for modification under Phase II. Modifications are underway and the first test flight is scheduled for May 1997. The second aircraft will be delivered in mid-October 1996 and the third aircraft in April 1997. The approved configuration includes an enhanced medical interior capable of carrying 6 litter patients, 7 ambulatory patients or a combination thereof. Also within the medical interior is a medical cabinet for storage of MES equipment, an on-board oxygen generating system (OBOGS), an integrated suction system, NVG compatible lighting system and crashworthy crewmember seats that can be repositioned within the interior during flight to enable patient treatment while remaining restrained. An environmental control system (ECS) will maintain the cabin temperature within a range conducive to patient treatment. Enhancements to the navigation/communication equipment package include: Doppler with embedded GPS, TACAN,

Personnel Locator System (PLS), Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR), Multi-Function Displays (MFDs), two SINCGARS FM radios, one UHF radio, one NOE HF radio, an Improved Data Modem (IDM), and a VHF-AM/FM radio capable of working on maritime and civil frequencies. The heart of the navigation/communication package is a MIL-STD 1553B data bus which allows integration of all navcom radios. The bus allows easier upgrades/modifications in the future including Tele-Medicine and Aviation Mission Planning System (AMPS). Additional systems include an externally mounted electric rescue hoist, cargo door bubble windows, a white/IR dual mode hoist searchlight and emergency egress cockpit door windows. Many of the "Q" enhancements are envisioned to be part of the modernized BlackHawk or be able to be integrated into the production line in the future. These enhancements will allow the BlackHawk fleet to fight and survive on the modern, digitized battlefield.

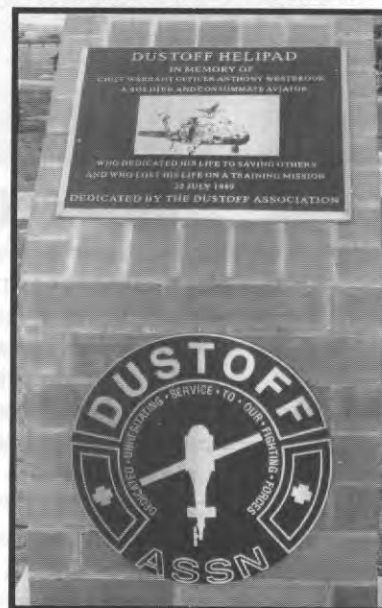
From DUSTOFF DEDICATION CEREMONY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ROY ANTHONY WESTBROOK

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ROY ANTHONY (TONY) WESTBROOK WAS BORN OCTOBER 2, 1946 IN POTEET, TEXAS. THERE HE ATTENDED GRADE SCHOOL AND LATER ATTENDED HIGH SCHOOL IN LUBBOCK, TEXAS. HE WENT TO McMURRY COLLEGE IN ABILENE WHERE HE RECEIVED A BACHELOR OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN 1969. LATER THAT SAME YEAR TONY ENTERED THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

FROM 1971 TO 1986 CW4 WESTBROOK FLEW AS A DUSTOFF PILOT. HE SERVED TWO TOURS WITH THE 377TH MEDICAL COMPANY, KOREA, TWO TOURS WITH THE 421ST MEDICAL COMPANY, GERMANY, AND TWO TOURS WITH THE 507TH MEDICAL COMPANY, FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS. HIS LAST ASSIGNMENT WAS HIS ONLY FLYING POSITION OUTSIDE OF THE MEDEVAC FIELD, WITH THE 1ST OF THE 6TH CAVALRY. TONY SPENT 17 YEARS ON FLIGHT STATUS AND SERVED AS AN INSTRUCTOR PILOT AND INSTRUMENT FLIGHT EXAMINER.

ON JULY 22, 1989, TONY FLEW HIS LAST FLIGHT. HE WAS KILLED ON A TRAINING

MISSION AT THE NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER, FORT IRWIN, CALIFORNIA. HE IS SURVIVED BY HIS WIFE VICKI, CHILDREN TRACY, STEPHANIE, AND GLENN.



This memorial is dedicated to Chief Warrant Officer Anthony Westbrook.

From the Fall 1996 Issue of the Blade & Wing Florida DustOff Newsletter:

Farewell to Alan Morris

I regret that I have to begin this newsletter on a sad note. I got word last weekend that one of our brothers has passed on to a much better place. I met Alan Morris three reunions back. Art and I were just getting ready to leave for home when this big old car comes flying into the camp site. Alan jumps out of the car asking, "Where are these DustOff guys?" I said, "You've found 'em." After that I almost got squeezed to death. It was Sunday and he had just heard about the Florida Dustoff Association and the Vietnam Veterans Reunion and had been driving all day to get there. He looked hot and tired. On his back a note was pinned that read, "ANYBODY FROM THE 45th DUSTOFF." He was so excited, his face was red and his breathing heavy. You could also tell that this man was in pain. He was wearing a large back brace that wrapped his torso. as he calmed down we talked some more. He explained that he had been in the 45th in

Nam and had spoken with "Doc" Kralich out in San Antonio, Texas, who had told him about us. He had told him to go to the reunion and ask for "Hoss". He must have asked the right person, as he had been directed to the camp site. Over the next three years I feel that I got to know and respect Alan. He was one of the more active members who attended our winter reunions, too. Alan was active in the Veterans for Peace movement in Gainesville, Fl., and thought enough about us to bring some of his friends with him to the reunion before last. Alan had some strange politics and he had the courage to voice them, and I think that we all respected him for that. I received a call from Alan just about a month prior to the last reunion. He expressed some concern about attending the reunion because he had not been feeling very well, and he didn't think some people appreciated his views and opinions. I assured him that it didn't matter what

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AUSTRALIAN MEDICS SEND GREETINGS TO DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

*continued from page 3***OUR SECOND MESSAGE:**

Date: Sat, 31 Aug 1996 23:21:07 +1100
 From: Glen Mylne gmylne@onthenet.com.au
 (email address)
 To: DUSTOFF@gnn.com Subject: DUSTOFF

I flew with 45 Medical Company (Air Ambulance) out of Long Binh 1970. I am an Aussie and was attached to 45th. Served in Tan An, Tay Ninh, Kartoum, Long Binh, Nui Dat and other places I have long forgotten. Regards Glen Mylne gmylne@onthenet.com.au

Glen Mylne also sent in a letter and asking about membership and how he can locate men he served with!

Glen & Dominique Mylne
 1 Inlet Drive Tweed Heads 2485
 Australia
 (7) 5599-8746 (telephone not part of address)

Some information on Australian Army and other Forces in Vietnam:

AUSTRALIAN FORCES IN VIETNAM 1962 - 1972
 All battalions have had their share of fighting, but D Company of the 6th Battalion, on it's first tour in 1966-67, earned the high honour of being awarded the U.S. Presidential Unit Citation. Of about 50,000 Australians who have served in Vietnam more than 1000 won awards for their services.

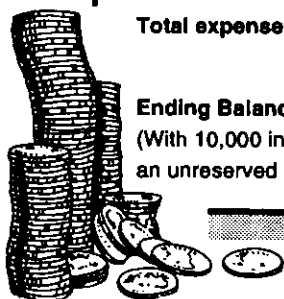
CASUALTIES

Casualties suffered by Australian forces in Vietnam were:

- Killed in action: 423
 (including 4 RAAF, 4 RAN)
- Wounded in action: 2398
 (including 30 RAAF, 20 RAN)
- Missing: 2 RAAF
- Non-battle casualty deaths: 71
 (including 8 RAAF, 4 RAN)

Financial Statement Fall, 1996

Balance on 7/1/96		\$19,759.83
Income:		
	Sikorsky Donation	\$1000.00
	Dues	\$705.00
	Fundraiser	\$168.00
	Interest	\$54.85
	Sales for Ads	\$25.00
	Sales for coins	\$51.00
Total Income		\$2,003.85.
Expenses:		
	Newsletter	\$1385.83
	Operating	\$ 311.66
	Sales Charges	\$349.00
	Sales for hats	\$222.50
Total expenses		\$2,268.99
Ending Balance, 7/17/96		\$19,494.49
(With 10,000 in CD) leaving an unreserved balance of		\$9,494.49



Alan Morris

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what anyone thought. He had EARNED the right to express those views and opinions in Southeast Asia saving lives like the rest of us. I am sure we can all respect the courage he exhibited in Vietnam and his courage at home. God be with you Alan Morris.

*Alan Morris passed away on
 May 16th, 1996.*

BY: Don "Hoss" Caldwell
 Editor Florida DUSTOFF
 50th MD (HA) Vietnam



MEDEVAC in the Alaskan Bush

*Story and Photos by Donna Miles
reprinted from SOLDIERS magazine*

IT was a hairy day for the Fort Wainwright, Alaska-based 283rd Medical Detachment. The emergency call came in to Spec. Andrew Williams at the flight operations desk; Ronald Loustau, a community member, had slipped while cutting his winter supply of firewood with a chain saw. His leg was almost completely severed from his body, and he was gushing blood.

Whisking Loustau off to a hospital might have been a relatively straightforward operation at Fort Campbell, Ky., or Fort Lewis, Wash. But in Alaska — where many residents, like Loustau, live in the “bush” and have post office boxes rather than street addresses — medical evacuations present a whole new series of challenges.

Loustau lives 30 miles from the nearest road or community, and the best directions the frantic caller could provide were that the cabin was beside a lake south of a branch of the Tanana River.

CWO 4 Gregg Mustered’s crew was on standby for just such a call. As the only air ambulance unit in Alaska, the 283rd Med. Det.’s fleet of six UH-1 aircraft supports seven to 12 Military Assistance to Safety and Traffic missions every month.

MAST missions, in which military aircraft crews provide medevac support to the civilian community, have decreased throughout most of the United States, explained Maj. W. Ross Newcombe, the 283rd Med. Det. commander. They’ve been replaced by civilian aircrews who serve specific geographic areas.

Not so in northern Alaska. There, where much of the population lives in remote areas with limited helicopter access, medevac support is still undertaken largely by the Army.

The 283rd Med. Det. supports a 63,000-square-mile area north of the Alaska Range, and routinely conducts MAST missions as far as 150 miles from both Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely.

Military medevac support is critical to Alaskans in the bush, Newcombe explained. “With medical emergencies, it’s really important to take advantage of what’s called the ‘golden hour,’” he said. “If you can get treatment for an injury within an hour, your chance of survival goes up dramatically.”

After Loustau nearly cut off his leg, Mustered and his crew were en route to the site — or what, based on the vague directions they had, they thought was the site — within 10 minutes to maximize the golden hour rule.

Flying over what Mustered described as “the middle of nowhere,” the crew surveyed the designated area but found nothing. They widened their search area, flying north of the river, until they spotted a woman waving her arms toward the Huey. The crew hovered overhead, desperately searching for anything in the heavily wooded area that could serve as a landing site.

Then Mustered spotted a beaver dam near the lakeside. He slowly lowered the aircraft until one skid balanced on the dam, while the other hovered just over the lake’s edge. “It was pretty interesting,” he said.

As the aircraft teeter-tottered on the dam, Sgt. Jody Homan and Sgt. Ricky Cook jumped to the ground and hurried toward Loustau. They checked his vital signs and strapped him onto a litter to load him into the helicopter, administering first aid as Mustered raced toward the hospital.

Newcombe said the rescue demonstrates the unique nature of MAST missions in Alaska. “It shows the initiative our pilots have to use every single time they go out on a call,” he said. “There are ever-changing scenarios, and pilots have to be able to think quickly and independently when they’re under a lot of pressure.”

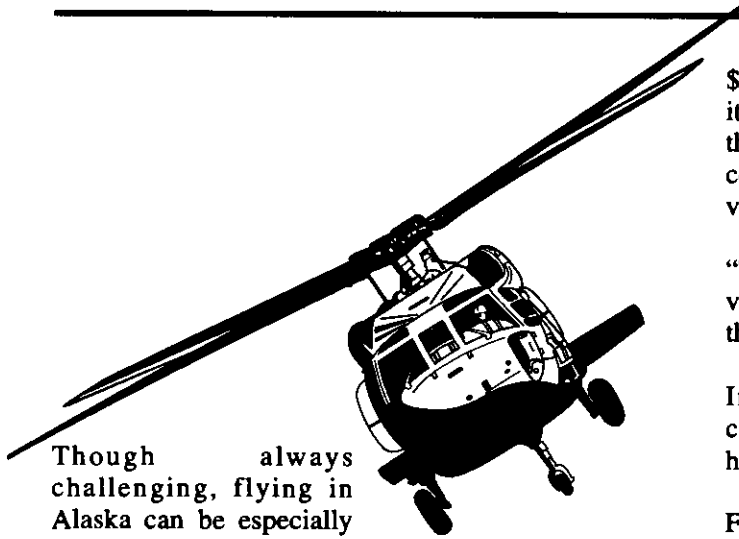
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“It shows the initiative our pilots have to



MEDEVAC in the Alaskan Bush

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Though always challenging, flying in Alaska can be especially difficult during the long winter months.

After his recovery, Loustau had only praise for the skills and initiative demonstrated by his rescue crew. "If it wasn't for your MAST rescue team, I might have lost my leg, or worse, my life!" he wrote in a letter of thanks.

He credited Mustered with landing the helicopter "where few would have the skill" to land, and praised Homan and Cook for keeping him from going into shock, which he said "had a lot to do with saving my leg."

"The men who flew in to my rescue are true heroes," Loustau told the crew's commander. "If these men are the measure of your command, our country is truly fortunate."

Not every MAST mission comes with such accolades, but serving on a MAST crew does have its advantages. All crew members receive Emergency Medical Technician training at skill level one, and some advance to levels two and three. Because soldiers receive this training specifically to support their MAST missions, the civilian community pays for their educational costs.

But the community shows its appreciation in other ways, too. The Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, which operates the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, donated a

\$10,000 defibrillator to the 283rd Med. Det. to support its MAST missions. And Alyeska has a standing offer that any military aircraft that runs low on fuel while conducting a MAST mission may fill up at one of the various pumping stations that dot the pipeline.

"That's pretty typical," Mustered said. "Civilians rely very heavily on us, and they know they need us. So they support us 150 percent."

In addition to educational opportunities and community support, MAST crews get valuable hands-on training that could prove valuable in combat.

Flying MAST missions means responding to a tremendous range of medical emergencies: from cases of hypothermia to snowmobiling, hunting and automobile accidents. "They get it all, car accidents, childbirth, heart attacks and bullet and knife wounds," said Newcombe. "It's probably the most realistic training they will get outside of combat."

In some cases, medics face scenarios similar to those in their Expert Field Medical Badge tests; Pvt. 2 Gary Brown recalls schlepping through about 75 feet of muck to reach one patient, sinking up to his calves with every step. During another mission, his crew was "up to our chins in water with the litter over our heads trying to carry him out."

Mustered said MAST pilots get valuable combat training, too. "In wartime, not only would you get the same variety of injuries, but you'd also get the same kind of location information, like, 'he's somewhere back there'," he said.

But CWO 4 Jerry Watson said the biggest gratification of being on a MAST team comes from knowing that any mission may make the difference between life and death. "The idea that maybe this is the mission that's going to save a life is reward in itself," he said.

Former SOLDIERS staffer Donna Miles works for the Armed Forces Radio & Television Service in Alexandria, Va.

use every single time they go out."

DUSTOFF

We have received several dozen copies of awards from our membership and will be featuring these in forthcoming issues. So far citations have been received from Fred D. McKellar (1st CAV), Ernie Sylvester (57th), Ronald C. Sherman, Steven B. Hook (54th), Charles E. Williams (1st CAV), Joe K. Dawson (45th) and Fred Behrens (101st Airborne). The first one is a posthumous award of the Silver Star Medal (OLC) and another award from the first person to submit their copies. Many who submitted awards also sent in other documents and comments. All material received has been requested to remain in a file at the Army Medical Department Museum at Fort Sam Houston.

**FOX, REINIS W3159717 (SSAN 261-84-8121),
WARRANT OFFICER WOI
54th Medical Detachment, 74th Medical Battalion
APO 96325**

Awarded: Silver Star (First Oak Leaf Cluster)



Date action: 1 October 1968

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For gallantry in action against an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Warrant Officer Fox distinguished himself by intrepid actions on 1 October 1968 while serving as the pilot of a dustoff helicopter

with the 54th Medical Detachment. On that date, Warrant Officer Fox was engaged in the medical evacuation of 14 injured men in the vicinity of the Thien Phouc Special Forces Camp. On the first attempt to evacuate the wounded men, Warrant Officer Fox's aircraft was shot down by hostile fire and he was evacuated from the area.

Completely disregarding his own safety, Warrant Officer Fox volunteered to return to the area and attempt to complete the mission. With the help of supporting gunships, he succeeded in landing his aircraft and remained on the ground long enough for nine of the casualties to be loaded on to the aircraft. Once airborne, his aircraft continued to receive fire from the insurgents and sustained several hits, putting it into a tailspin and causing it to crash land. Upon impact, the aircraft burst into flames and in the ensuing holocaust, Warrant Officer Fox was seriously burned over a large portion of his body. Warrant Officer Fox' personal heroism, professional competence, and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect a great credit upon himself, the Americal Division and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the President under the provisions of the Act of Congress, approved 9 July 1918.

**FOX, REINIS W3159717 SSAN 261-84-8121 WARRANT OFFICER W1
United States Army, 54th Medical Detachment, 67th Medical Group,
44th Medical Brigade, APO 96384**

Awarded: Silver Star

Date of action: 26 September 1968

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For gallantry in action while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Warrant Officer Fox distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 26 September 1968

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***WOI Renis Fox died of his injuries
at the 106th General Hospital in
Japan on 7 OCT 1968. DUSTOFF
maintains a biography in its archives.***



AWARDS

MC KELLAR, FRED D. 05416419 CAPTAIN MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS

United States Army headquarters & Support Company, 15th Medical Battalion

Awarded: Distinguished Flying Cross

Date Action: 19 June 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For extraordinary heroism, and gallantry while participating in aerial flight. Captain Mc Kellar distinguished himself by heroism in action on 19 June 1967, while serving as aircraft commander of a medical evacuation helicopter during an evacuation mission in support of a combat operation near Bong Son, Republic of Vietnam. Upon receiving a request for evacuation of seriously wounded personnel, Captain Mc Kellar's aircraft was dispatched to the area to make the pick-up. As the aircraft was about to land, it received intense automatic weapons fire, wounding Captain Mc Kellar, the pilot and the crewchief. Although severely wounded, Captain Mc Kellar attempted to fly the aircraft out of the area, however, the pilot had to take physical control of the helicopter as Captain Mc Kellar's upper arm was shattered and bleeding profusely. Despite being in danger of going into severe shock, Captain Mc Kellar directed the treatment of the severely wounded crew chief and also directed the pilot in the flying of the aircraft. Although the aircraft had received over 30 hits, Captain Mc Kellar's actions and timely advice aided the pilot in returning to a safe landing. Captain Mc Kellar's display of personal bravery and devotion to duty is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects a great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the President, under provisions of the Act of Congress, approved 1926.

This happened after about 11 1/2 months in the country. My pilot was my replacement, Cpt. Kurt Kuhns who had been in the country about 2 weeks (some introduction to the job). He received some fragment wounds at this time, but was flying after about 2 weeks. Sadly, he and a total crew were lost later on. At this time my crewchief Sp. Donald Troyden was his so bad, he died a few hours later. These are the people who need their story told. Those who gave the ultimate so that others might have a chance to live. - FHB

RENIS FOX, WO1

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as pilot of an ambulance helicopter near Tam Ky. A platoon was pinned down in a rice paddy and suffered several casualties from intense fire placed by a North Vietnamese Army battalion occupying positions on two small hills only fifty meters away. An extraction helicopter, a gun ship and a light observation plane which were supporting the unit had been shot down by enemy fifty caliber machine gun fire. Moments after Mister Fox reached the area, a Marine jet went down in flames. Mister Fox was informed that a forty man relief force was attempting to reach the trapped platoon and secure a landing zone, but was unable to cross the bullet-swept rice paddy. Circling within range of the enemy machine guns, he located the platoon and decided upon the best route to the landing zone. He then skillfully maneuvered through the hostile fusillade, to which he was vulnerable for approximately two hundred meters of low level flight, and evacuated seven critically injured men. After safely exiting the area, he sped his patients to a hospital for lifesaving treatment. Warrant Officer Fox's gallantry in action was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects a great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the President, under the provisions of the Act of Congress, approved 9 July 1918.



**18th ANNUAL REUNION
OF THE DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION
HOLIDAY INN NORTHWEST – SAN ANTONIO
21, 22, and 23 FEBRUARY 1997**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, 21 February

1200 - 1900	Registration - Holiday Inn Northwest, Room 438
1200 - 1700	Annual Chuck Mateer Golf Classic Fort Sam Houston Golf Course
1500 - 1800	Hospitality Suites Open - Reunion Badges Required for Entry Smoking Room 1003 Non-smoking Room 1118
1900 - 2200	Texas Bar-B-Que Buffet & Cocktails - Texas Casual Dress
2200 - 0200	Hospitality Suites Open

Saturday, 22 February

0900 - 1200	Professional Meeting
1145 -	Vans depart for Spouse Luncheon - Main entrance Holiday Inn
1215 - 1430	Spouse Luncheon on Riverwalk
1200 - 1300	Lunch Break (Professional Meeting)
1330 - 1500	Business Meeting
1500 - 1800	Late Registration Room 438
1500 - 1800	Hospitality Suites Open - Smoking Room 1003 Non-smoking Room 1118
1830 - 2000	Cocktails - Lobby Bar
2000 - 2215	18th Annual Banquet - Tickets Required For Entry & Door Prizes Menu: London Broil or Stuffed Shrimp - w/ Red & White Wine at table Salad
2215 - 0200	Hospitality Suites Open - Smoking Room 1003 Non-smoking Room 1118

Sunday, 23 February

0900 - 1000	Memorial Service
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**18th ANNUAL REUNION OF THE DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION •
21, 22, and 23 FEBRUARY 1997 REGISTRATION FORM**

Member's Name: _____ Spouse's Name: _____

Home Address: _____ Military Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ DSN# _____

DUES			PRICE
	New Member Dues	\$15.00 & \$10 Initial Fee	\$ _____
	Annual Dues	\$15.00	\$ _____
	Past Dues (Catch-Up)	\$15.00 year	\$ _____
	Life Member Dues:	\$100.00 (one-time payment)	\$ _____

NUMBER ATTENDING

2. REUNION REGISTRATION

Member/Spouse Costs - \$15.00 each x _____ \$ _____
Non-Member/Guests Costs - \$20.00 each x _____ \$ _____

NOTE: Hotel reservations are to be made through the hotel reservation desk, (210) 377-3900.

3. FRIDAY NIGHT

TEXAS BAR-B-QUE/ICEBREAKER \$15.00 x _____ \$ _____

4. Spouse's Luncheon - \$15.00 x _____ \$ _____

5. CHUCK MATEER GOLF CLASSIC

\$18.00 FSH Club Member x _____ \$ _____
\$25.00 Non-Club Member Military x _____ \$ _____
\$31.00 Non-Club Member Civilian x _____ \$ _____

6. SATURDAY NIGHT REUNION DINNER - \$25.00 x _____ \$ _____

Cocktail Party - Cash Bar

Menu: ☐ London Broil or ☐ Stuffed Shrimp - **Indicate number of plates needed**

7. DUSTOFF MEMORABILIA (Order form on Reverse) \$ _____

TOTAL PRICE: \$ _____



DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 8091 — Wainwright Station
San Antonio, Texas 78208

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 3017
SAN ANTONIO, TX



The following items can be paid for now and picked up at the Reunion:
(Embroidered Logo on Maroon colored caps and Shirt)

DUSTOFF Ballcaps \$10.00 X _____ \$ _____
DUSTOFF Golf Shirts \$20.00 X _____ \$ _____

size: __Small __ Medium __ Large __Extra-Large **Total \$** _____

Mail Orders please add \$5.00 per order and send to DUSTOFF Association
Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery as these items are custom made.

NEW ENTRIES ON THE FLIGHT MANIFEST

Harold Abner—Converse, TX

Clifton Adams—St. Joseph, MI

Timothy Barr—Shelbyville, IN

David Comer—Ponca City, OK

Dane Gambill—Indianapolis, IN

Wayne Goggans—Enterprise, AL

Kenneth Hamilton—Toms River, NJ

Harvey Hueter—New Braunfels, TX

Robert Jensen—Oklahoma City, OK*

Michael Kelly—Lilburn, GA

Samuel Koonce—Carthage, NY

Greg Reese—Poquoson, VA*

Melissa Stanfa—Fayetteville, NC*

**Life Member*

Annual Membership Dues should be sent in on 1 January, 1997.