

EAGLE

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Platoon Sergeant: PSG Lowell W. Bell

1 July 1969

DUST OFF

Air Ambulance Platoon
326th Medical Battalion
101st Airborne Division

Going home is . . .

Finally getting your orders to leave and finding you're stationed a mere 1,500 miles from home.

Time to quit flying in the Valley and sticking to milk runs..

Getting a letter from your girl, whom you haven't seen in more than a year, and discovering she has mononucleosis.

Paying a little attention to the "love handles" you've been growing around your stomach.

Finding it harder to get up and go to work in the morning.

Not complaining too much about bunker drill.

In fact, seriously considering moving inside the last two weeks.

Being unable to sleep when the guns of Navarone are going off.

Wondering why the days now have 48 hours instead of 24.

Finally getting on a Freedom Bird and leaving (as the sun sets in the West).

Getting home is . . .

First of all, unreal.

Getting used to bathtubs and hot and cold water—at will.

Eating and drinking all you want to anytime you want to.

Dressing up in different looking clothes every day.

Driving a car.

Sitting under the good old air conditioner.

Seeing all the people you've wanted to see for a year.

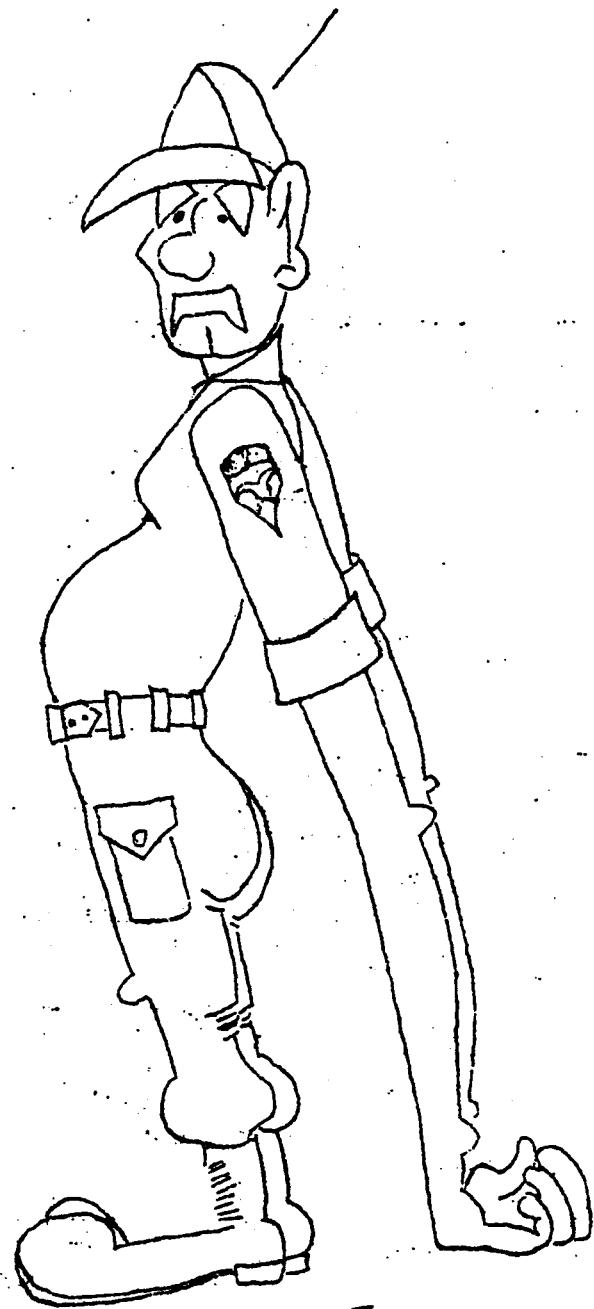
Watching the war on tv instead of being there.

Not running to a bunker every time you hear a siren.

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This issue is dedicated to the great number of people from this unit going home in the next three months. (SHORT)

I GOT THIS WAY FROM
HAILING SANDEAGS, LIKE
I SAID, THEY'LL GET
YOU TO EXTEND ONE
WAY OR ANOTHER.



June was construction month---the heliport, and the hooches. We finally got the pad penta-primed (whoopee), no small feat, and to do that we had to move the revetments which wasn't exactly easy either.

For several of the enlisted men the hooches were rebuilt to accomodate ten men apiece.

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Three people DEROSed and another was discharged from the service in June:

CW2 Max E Tucker--to the 587th Med Detachment, Camp Zama, Japan.

SFC Thomas L Ross--to Madigan Army Hospital, Tacoma, Washington

SP4 Stephen B. Francis--REFRAD

SP5 Larry Wagoner, who was on an emergency leave, was discharged.

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Four replacements came our way:

WO1 Barry Barker--a pilot from the States

WO1 John T. Schey, Jr--pilot, also from the States

SP5 Gordon B. Brown, IL--a medic from our parent HQ & Support Company

SP5 David L. Cosper--a crew chief from HHC, 3rd Brigade

* * *

Three men went on a 30 day special leave back to the World:

SP5 Barth T. Cutler

SP4 Phillip A. Gibson

SP4 Gary D. Runge

* * *

Taking advantage of the Army's R&R and leave program were:

CPT Otis D. Evans--Hawaii

1LT Thomas M. McCrary--Hawaii

CW2 Robert B. Black--Hawaii

SP5 Gregory A. Brown--Singapore

SP5 Richard L. Oberg--Hong Kong

SP4 Joseph H. Campbell--Sydney

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There was one promotion that we omitted last month--Otis D. Evans, from 1LT to Captain.

In addition, this month the following were promoted:

George L. Miner, from 1LT to CPT

Francis H. D. Hichens, III, from WO1 to CW2

Irvin C. Reid, from WO1 to CW2

David M. Reed, from PFC to SP4

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

SP5 Anthony T. Burdo

BRONZE STAR

SP5 Lawrence Harris, Jr.--1st OLC
CPT Robert D. Sawyer
CW2 Irvin C. Reid
SP5 Richard L. Oberg
SGT David N. Pritt
SP5 Karl T. White
SP4 Thomas E. Collins

AIR MEDAL "V"

39th OLC MAJ Robert R. Cloke
1st OLC SFC Thomas L. Ross

AIR MEDAL

2-14th OLC CW2 Michael L. McKenna
6-8th OLC SFC Thomas L. Ross
1-8th OLC 1LT Gerald M. Torba
1-3rd OLC SP5 Michael J. Outwater
2nd OLC SP4 Stephen B. Francis
BAM SSG Keith E. Forrester
BAM SP5 Darrell L. Stewart
BAM SP5 Karl T. White
BAM SP4 Thomas T. Lounsberry
BAM SP4 Robert H. Paul
BAM SP4 Gary D. Runge

POSTHUMOUS AWARDS

1LT Jerry T. Lee Bronze Star
SP4 James A. Margro Bronze Star
and Good Conduct Medal
SP4 James R. Walters Bronze Star
and Good Conduct Medal

A FEW WORDS FROM DUSTOFF 96

We are still in the process of making changes and initiating many new projects such as preparing our new hangar for occupancy, completing our heliport and improving our living conditions. Right in the middle of all this we have also been preparing for the annual Adjutant Generals Inspection so everyone has been putting in many extra hours. Our area of operations has been relatively quiet lately, so at least the enemy has given us a little more free time to accomplish these tasks. We are also in the process of initiating a more vigorous training program for newly assigned crew chiefs and medics as we will be losing quite a number to DEROS within the next 90 days. With the monsoon season approaching within the next couple of months, increased emphasis will be placed on simulated instrument flight training for all assigned aviators. The lack of any instrument rated pilots other than myself still remains a problem area we are in hopes of alleviating before the really bad weather arrives.

I am disappointed in having to report we have yet to acquire the LOH we have been promised. Although our hoist missions have dropped during the last month due to the lack of enemy activity, we are still pulling many hoist missions where we could otherwise utilize the LOH. We have transitioned 3 of our aviators in the aircraft and are only awaiting its arrival.

Again, my best to all friends and relatives of Eagle Dustoff.

MONTHLY STATISTICS

Patients Evacuated:

US	816
VN Civ	136
MEDCAP	2
ARVN	71
POW/SUSP	10
OTHER	7
TOTAL	1042

Day/Night Patients:

Day	849
Night	193

Missions:

Day	586
Night	101
TOTAL	687

Hoist Utilization:

Missions	59
Patients	95
Hours	63

Flight Time:

Day	592
Night	81
TOTAL	673

AVG NO AVIATORS FSNT FOR DUTY 24

High Time	93
Low Time	11
Average	28

ACFT COMBAT DAMAGE 3

Lest anyone be uninformed, you can trust me now. I'm under 30—thirty days, that is!

I won't say I'm unhappy at the prospect of going home. I don't have it in me to be that hypocritical.

Ahead is the World, variously referred to as the Land of the 24 Hour Generator . . . or the Land of the Big PX . . . or any of the various vulgar terms which we won't go into here.

Behind is Vietnam which is most assuredly a land of blood and sweat.

When I first came here, I had several talks with "short-timers" about the country, their experiences here and so forth. One had the opinion that Vietnam was a hell to be endured for a year before you could then go on to better times. He may have had in mind the loneliness, the separation from his family, and most undoubtedly the terror, which everyone feels at times.

Yet, I feel sure that these emotions he forgot within a short time after seeing his wife. I sometimes wonder just what did stay with him . . . just what will stay with me?

For most soldiers, who are young when they arrive, this country becomes a land of firsts. It is the first time that you see violence, organized and directed at you in a most prejudiced way, simply because you are the enemy. This hits you the first time you are on a dustoff mission and make a pickup of a seriously wounded man. Maybe he has been shot through the leg, maybe he has no leg. It hits you that the little yellow, slant-eyed fellow out there in the boondies is playing for keeps.

Most medics must treat the seriously wounded for the first time. It is a time you realize that guy's life depends on you, brother, and you fight to keep him breathing, you fight to keep him from going into shock. There are no plastic dummies here, but guys who need help so they can go home, too.

A crew chief has to learn to work with a hoist—chances are he never heard of one before he came to Vietnam.

Yet, he's out there keeping the pilot "in the trees" during a hoist, watching everyone and everything and hoping to God those guys on the ground hurry up and load the patient.

The pilots are out there flying in all sorts of weather and all times of day and night and in the whole range of "tactical situations" and in locations only God keeps track of.

For these, if they talk about it at all, it'll be a world of "remember when we picked up the guy that" or "I didn't think we were ever going to make it out of there the way that . . ." But even if they don't talk, they'll still have their memories.

I think I'll remember, most of all, the people that did the flying, the risking. They'll take a long time to forget.

What more can I say?

EAGLE DUSTOFF
is a monthly publication of the Air Ambulance Platoon, 326th Medical Bn
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