



THE DUSTOFFER NEWSLETTER



DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 1991

13TH ANNUAL REUNION OF THE DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

28 FEBRUARY — 1 MARCH 1992

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS — THE HOME OF THE US ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

WELCOME HOME — DESERT DUSTOFF!

"No one had a helicopter at night. No battalion commander, no brigade commander, no anyone—Med-evac got to them. Med-evac will fly in all weather conditions any time, any place, under any circumstances."

LTC Norman Schwarzkopf, Republic of Vietnam — 1969



"DUSTOFF is the best moral multiplier a division commander has got!"

— GEN Norman Schwarzkopf, Saudi Arabia — 1991

DUSTOFF: The next generation—Desert Dustoff faced the vast expanses of the Kuwaiti theater of operations with its customary skill, courage, and dedication to the American Soldier. (Photo courtesy of the Army Combat Camera)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Time does, in fact, fly when you're having fun and it's time for the 13th Annual Reunion of the DUSTOFF Association. The year's been a very active one for the DUSTOFF Association, in terms of business being conducted, the gathering of new members, planning for the reunion, preparation of newsletters, and initiation of new programs. If anyone has the notion that the officer jobs in this organization are ceremonial, they should be invited to deal with midnight phone callers wanting to share war stories, hotel negotiations, printing and mailing schedules, a fantastic amount of worthless mail, newsletter orchestration, filing and letter writing, ordering DUSTOFF articles of memorabilia, and yes, dealing with the media. Yet, the chance to be an officer of the DUSTOFF Association is one of the most important opportunities in one's life—a chance to operate and try to improve on something you really care about. The recognition of being selected by your DUSTOFF peers is somehow more real than getting promoted or receiving a pay raise or even earning the wings of a crew member—kind of like the primary reason that DUSTOFFers do well in combat—they just have more pride in mission accomplishment and care more about their fellow soldiers than do mere mortals.

In the general vein of trying to im-

prove an already good thing while not fixing things that aren't even remotely broken, we've changed but little in the the arrangements for the 13th Annual Reunion. We're going to have live music instead of a disc jockey at the Friday night melee. Nothing at all wrong with JJ Rodriguez, the disc jockey who's served us well in the past, but we ran across a band named "Rich and Famous" and they really are too good to resist. Changed the Saturday evening dinner from a more to a less formal affair—we'll prescribe only casual dress, no tie, and barbecue will be served—to try to draw more of our large San Antonio resident membership downtown. Many have gotten into the habit of showing up for all of the Reunion except for the dinner, excusing their absence by reason of disinclination to the wearing of a tie and jacket. So we'll be more informal, hopefully comfortable, while retaining the interchange of the dinner as the focal point of the weekend. Although we'll not introduce a major "theme" for the affair—primarily to avoid highlighting Art Hapner's costume fetish—we will certainly focus on welcoming our returning Desert DUSTOFF crewmembers back into the fold. We are looking forward to a major happening. Please get your registration in to the Association and reservations to the Holiday Inn Riverwalk now.

We've had many letters and phone calls throughout the year requesting information about the DUSTOFF Association. Many, many new members have come aboard. If there's one regret about this whole business, it appears that we lose members every year simply because people forget to renew or forget to send a change of address when they move. Diligence, it appears, is the only hope and then you still lose track of some folks.

Bill Stahl has agreed to handle the dedication of the Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) helipad in honour of CW4 Tony Westbrook. Waiting until the final stages of the new hospital's construction seemed to be inappropriate—1995 is the current projection—so we'll dedicate a plaque at the current helipad site and move to the new complex at the proper time.

In an interesting turn of events, we discovered during this past year that the Association was not, in fact, exempt from Texas State taxes. We had always assumed that our federal tax exemption applied as well for Texas. Not true, it turns out, but the DUSTOFF Association barrister-in-residence, Bob Martin, turned the right switches in Austin and gained the exemption.

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

Among those items proposed for discussion at the upcoming meeting of the general membership are the following:

- Increase(s) in Association dues, initiation fee.
- Change in tenure for secretary and treasurer.
- Scholarship(s)
 - Number and amount
 - Dependents of DUSTOFF crewmembers who died during
 - Desert Storm
- Tax exemption status.



DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

FOUNDER: TOM 'IGOR' JOHNSON

DUSTOFF OFFICERS

AND

EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	JIM TRUSCOTT
VICE-PRESIDENT	ROGER OPIO
SECRETARY	BERT FLANERY
TREASURER	ROB WEEKS

MEMBERS AT LARGE:

JERE FOUST
NEIL LANKFORD
JOHN SAPANOS
ROY LEATHERBERRY
BILL KRUSE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ART HAPNER

NEW OFFICER SLATE

No real reason the general membership shouldn't know ahead of time about the DUSTOFFERS whose names will be proposed as new officers at the annual meeting. Tentatively, Ed Bradshaw will be proposed as the 1992-93 Vice President and the proposed new Members at Large will be Jim Ramsey, David Cahill, and Dave C. Jackson. As we're also planning to change the tenure of the Secretary and Treasurer from one year to two, it's necessary to offset those appointed to these difficult positions. John Bukartek will be the nominee to replace the indefatigable Rob Weeks as the Association Treasurer. Knowing ahead of time the nominee's names may allow some to propose others equally or more worthy or to prepare arguments as to why these members should not so serve. There is certainly precedent for such discussion and action. Our members are certainly not reticent in speaking their minds.



DUSTOFF REALTOR DONATES DOUGH

Don Conkright, former Association President, is now selling real estate quite successfully in San Antonio. We have, without shame or fear of criticism, accepted a donation of several hundred dollars in return for mentioning Don's business and keen desire to sell property to, among others, DUSTOFFERS who may be heading to the Alamo City. His office: 18750 Stone Oak Parkway, #200, San Antonio, Texas 78258-Phone: (512)-496-4949.

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

Received a request to provide "...love letters written by servicemen and women to their spouses and loved ones during twentieth century wars". A book, to be entitled "Love Letters From the Front", is being written by Margery Mandell and Patty Rout. Anyone desiring to contribute to this literary effort should send copies of such letters to Margery at: 17 Interlaken Drive, Eastchester, New York 10709.

DUSTOFF SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

Received a very gracious note of thanks from Jennifer Carroll, the first recipient of a scholarship from the DUSTOFF Association. If all of our scholarship selectees in the years to come are of a similar caliber, there's a great deal to be said for the parenting aspects of membership in the Association and a great future ahead for our nation. We extended honorary membership to Jennifer in her own right and not as the daughter of a member.

We should start to see the application for 1992 Scholarships arrive at Wainright Station in the next several months. Below are the essential aspects of the program for your information and for those who've not had the opportunity to be at a general business meeting in the past several years:

- The deadline for submission of applications is 1 May each year. Applications are available from the Association.
- The selection committee is composed of the Executive Committee. Members rank order the applicants. The lowest cumulative score constitutes the winner.
- The winner will be notified not later than June of each year and the results will be published in the Summer Newsletter.

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

Letter from John J. Marino, Flight Safety International in Vero Beach, Florida commenting on the July Newsletter:

"I just received my copy of the July 'DUSTOFFER', sat down and read it cover to cover.

Not only did this issue bring back a flood of great memories, but it renewed my sense of pride in what DUSTOFF was and is all about. The Desert Storm update by Ben Knisely, with whom I served, and your note regarding the Brooke General Hospital pad to be named after Tony Westbrook, with whom I flew in Korea, were very special.

Also, it was the first time I had seen the article by Pat Brady. It says it all, doesn't it?

I'm one of those DUSTOFFERS that left active duty after 10 years to pursue civilian sector opportunities. However, DUSTOFF has always occupied a very special place in my heart. Carol and I miss that many great friends we left behind.

My New Year's resolution (made a little earlier this year) is to attend the 1992 Reunion. I hope to see a lot of old friends there.

This fall, we move into the "empty nest" part of life. Both our children will be in college. So, pass the word that any DUSTOFFERS who venture to Florida had better look us up. We'll have lots of room.

Again, keep up the good work on the newsletter."

CLOSING OUT THE FLIGHT PLAN

Several of our comrades have been taken from us in the past year or so. Floyd Coddington, Herman Leach, Don Naylor, and Don Bissell have joined the ranks of those brave DUSTOFFERS who have gone proudly before. We are all diminished by their passing but our lives are enriched by having known these fine men. We shall always hold them in our hearts.

WHOSE BRIGHT (WHITE) IDEA WAS THIS ANYWAY?

United Press International release in March 1972 included the following of some passing interest—

“Saigon - Guerilla gunners shot down two unarmed American first aid helicopters . . . the US command reported Saturday.

A command communique said the two white medical evacuation (medevac) choppers were shot down Thursday afternoon while flying to pick up wounded South Korean soldiers along the central coast. There were no casualties reported in the crashes.

The communique said the bright white helicopters with four large red crosses went down in the jungles near Tuy Hoa, 240 miles northeast of Saigon.

The crewmen were lifted out by rescue choppers and the two damaged helicopters were lifted out by big CH47 Chinook choppers. The communique said one of the medevac birds was heavily damaged and the other was lightly hit. Both were expected to be patched up and put back in use.

The Army has reported a total of six medevac choppers hit by ground fire since commanders started using the distinctive white helicopters.”

HOW MANY NOVOSELS IS ENOUGH?

Associated Press story printed in the Stars and Stripes and other newspapers on a pair of our favourite heroes reads—

“Binh Thuy, Vietnam—As the orange sun melted over the Mekong Delta, Army Chief Warrant Officer Michael J Novosel, Sr, plunged his medical helicopter toward a swampy landing zone to retrieve a wounded South Vietnamese militiaman.

He never made it. The craft was 50 feet above the ground when Viet Cong gunners opened up with machine gun fire. Bullets ripped into the chopper's skids and tail shaft.

Novosel, who has been flying 29 years, the past four despite glaucoma in one eye, instinctively jerked the helicopter out of the firing line.

It was too dangerous to go back. The Viet Cong were entrenched below. Fuel was running low and, more important, Novosel had to think of the other South Vietnamese soldier they had picked up 10 minutes earlier with a bullet wound in the stomach.

“You can't win them all,” he said as he steered the chopper at top speed to the nearest medical evacuation hospital. “I hope that guy down there can hold out.”

Hours later, here at the headquarters of the 82d Medical Detachment, word came that the enemy gunners had been silenced and the wounded militiaman rescued by another medevac helicopter.

Novosel, 47, sighed in relief. There was something special about the occasion, for the co-pilot of the second evacuation chopper was a novice 20-year-old Warrant Officer named Michael J Novosel, Jr.

For the past three weeks, father and son, who make their home in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, had been flying in the same outfit. Young Novosel arrived in Vietnam three weeks ago fresh out of flight training school. His father is on his second tour in Vietnam and is due to return to the States in three weeks.

The detachment's commander has forbidden them to fly into combat zones together and the elder Novosel says: “I can understand his reasoning. If anything happened to both of us, he'd never forgive himself.”

Novosel's wife worries about both her husband and son being in the war. “She's kinda upset that both of us are over here at the same time,” young Michael says. “But she knows it's what we want to do.”

At the 82d Medical Detachment, the young pilots refer to Novosel as “Pop”, a measure of their esteem. His son joins in their admiration.

“The guys say he's the best pilot they've ever seen and I think they're right, not just because he's my father,” he said. “He given me a great deal of confidence about flying. It's the same with everybody who flies with him.”

ADMINISTRIVIA

—Still missing a lot of address changes. Whenever you see another DUSTOFFer, ask them if they're current with the association.

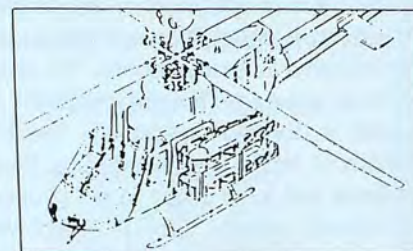
—Some members may not have received all of the materials which are normally sent upon approval of the membership application. This should include a membership certificate and card, bumper sticker, decal, and tie tack. If you've been among those not so favoured, let us know and we'll make it up to you.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Recent letter to the editor of *Aviation Digest* harkens to long, long ago -
Editor:

A recent picture “which accompanied the article, “Armed OH-58D Kiowa Warrior-The Multipurpose Light Helicopter,” in the November/December 1990 issue of the *U.S. Army Aviation Digest* can only be viewed as a blatant disregard for the high standards of health care delivery that the U.S. Army Medical Department has set for the care of wounded soldiers on the modern battlefield. The idea that we are developing an advanced helicopter system, called multipurpose light helicopter that would reduce medical evacuation capability to a level worse than that provided by the underpowered OH-13 Sioux with external litter pods is not only inappropriate but it is also incomprehensible.

LTC Victor S. Geiger, MS
Assistant Chief, Medical Evacuation
Proponency Division
Academy of Health Sciences
Fort Rucker, AL



Litter hit for the armed OH-58D.

TASK FORCE OREGON

Excerpts from a historical reminiscence of grizzled veteran Fred Long, famed raconteur, itinerant helicopter pilot, and golfing sand bagger extraordinaire:

"As our association grows with the addition of the heroics that I am sure have been and are being performed in the Gulf, I think it's important that we add to our history during the Vietnam era. I have a little bit of history to add and will refrain from telling war stories.

As we all know, the Army limited its activity to the II, III, and IV Corps for the first few years of the war. I was assigned to the 498th Med Co (AA) in Qui Nhon from July 66 till July 67. During most of this time, our combat troops were limited to fighting in II Corps only and were stopping their assaults at the mythical I Corps boundary.

Since it has been 24 years and the mind is the first to go, I cannot be sure of the exact dates but on or about 6 April 1967 I was flying first up and as usual, we were having a social hour at our club. I returned from a mission at about 2300 hours and Chuck Heath took me out back, told me that the Army was going into I Corps tomorrow and asked me if I would like to go to a place called Duc Pho to provide support. Since I did not know where it was, I said "OK—fine". He told me to depart at first light and meet the 1st Cav there in the early morning. At first light on 7 April, CW2 Bill Grauling, SP4 Pendegriff (crew chief), a medic (name I cannot remember), and I departed north. In about an hour and ten minutes, we found Duc Pho, a pimple on a hill about 400 feet high located about 5 miles off the coast. Duc Pho had been a Marine base camp consisting of a hastily built dirt runway about 100 yards long and a reinforced bunker about 15 × 15, still occupied by two Marine corpsmen. We landed among all the normal Marine trash and asked the corpsmen what was going on and when the 1st Cav was due. They knew nothing of Army troops arriving and were just waiting for a ride to Chu Lai to join their unit.

We waited and waited and waited, ate all of our "C" rations, and took all of the naps our bodies could stand. We had absolutely no communications with anyone, so at about 1830 hours, we decided to go home (another social hour was on tap and I was sure that the homecoming would be even better than the send off). The next day we departed at first light and returned to what would become our home for many days. I think Eldon Ideus was the A/C for the 1st Cav Medevac. Initially, my mission was to "back haul" patients to Qui Nhon, but this quickly changed.

A couple of days later, the 3-25 Division arrived and set up base camp at Duc Pho. The landing strip was outside of the base camp and we were having aircraft shot down in the hot refueling points and even had soldiers injured by small arms fire in the mess tent.

A couple of days after the 3-25 Division arrived, the brigade of the 101st Airborne relocated from Tuy Hoa. This is when the "war" really started but those are war stories. I had been joined at Duc Pho by another aircraft flown by Ed Mote.

Toward the end of April, we got word that Task Force Oregon was being formed and several of the separate brigades from down south were arriving and would be located at Chu Lai. I was instructed to relocate one of the aircraft to Chu Lai (a Marine heliport called Khe Ha [spelling not sure] located on a cliff overlooking the ocean). A Marine hospital was relocating to Da Nang and the 2d Surgical Hospital was on the way from An Khe. I established our operation center in one of the buildings adjacent to the heliport and established communications with Duc Pho and Qui Nhon (single side band).

An interesting side story about the Marines. They had a lot of Charlie model gun ships and I went over to see if they could support us if we ran into trouble before the Task Force fully arrived. I was told by the Operations Officer that they would be very happy to support us but would need a couple of days notice so they could clear the flights through

their headquarters at Da Nang. I will not bore you with what my reply to this was but it was vintage Fred Long.

After a couple of days, the 196th Light Inf Bde arrived from down south and established their headquarters just to the west of Highway 1 on the south side of town. They immediately called me to tell me that BG Knowles, the Cdr, wanted to see me. I jumped in my trusty helicopter and reported as ordered. His aide informed me that I was to locate my aircraft with his headquarters and would fly for his troops only. I politely informed him that I was not there to provide sole support to his troops and that I had the entire area to support to include Marines, Special Forces, and civilians and they could not get me on our frequency because I was only 3 minutes away. He did not like what I said and I did not like what he said. As I boarded my aircraft, I was told that BG Knowles would have my ass if I left and I told him he knew where I lived.

Needless to say, I got a message the next day through channels from the 44th Med Bde. I explained to Willie Dixon what they wanted and what I told them and, maybe for the first time in my career, I was told that I had made the right decision. However, I was told that maybe I could have been a little more polite and smooth with my coordination efforts but I did the best I could. I did not call them any specific names.

We got pretty busy there for a while and, until the 2d Surg got set up, the closest support was Duc Pho. We would carry patients to Duc Pho and aircraft from Qui Nhon would come forward and carry them to the 85th and 67th Evacs. This worked well for a few days but, as casualties increased, other support was needed.

All of a sudden, a Navy hospital ship (the Sanctuary, I think) just seemed to appear about 4-5 miles off shore. I got the frequency from the Marines and started taking the most serious patients to the ship. Can you image what a dumb, land-locked Army Aviator thought when I called for landing the first time and was given a "Port

TASK Continued

TASK *Cont.*

Quartermaster Approach" with relative winds? I really had to show my ignorance and ask just what they meant. That's when I learned that port was the left side (I figured out what quartermaster meant) and that all winds were given relative to the nose of the ship. As I made my approach (this was a trip shooting to a dancing pinnacle), I was welcomed as the first Army Aviator to land on their ship. If I had missed the approach, I may have been the last.

Well, I had "Navy talk" classes with all of the other pilots and we used the hospital ship frequently. I am not sure if this was the Sanctuary or the Repose since we had both hospital ships supporting us when I returned in 69 to Phu Bai. These ships were invaluable in providing medical support for head injuries and other specialized medical procedures.

By the time I was injured on 9 May 67, the 2d and 3d Platoons of the 498th had three aircraft stationed at Duc Pho and three aircraft stationed at Chu Lai. The other six aircraft were used to back haul and to provide "spares" for combat damage. I have no way of knowing the hours flown nor the aircraft damage nor the injuries during this month. I do know that we were very busy and you can ask Ed Mote what it is to log 92 hours in 30 days with no mission more than 20 minutes.

Some of the guys I can remember who were involved with Task Force Oregon were Don Poe, Tom Scofield, Ed Mote, Willie Dixon, Mendenhall, Ike Gray, Roger Weed, Dick Loucks, Ken Trotter, and a bunch of outstanding warrant officers. I just wish I could remember them all.

Task Force Oregon accomplished its mission and became the 23d (Americal) Division in September 1967 and went on to have a distinguished tour of duty. I don't know how long it was before the 34th Med Det was sent over and assumed the mission.

This information may be of importance if anyone wishes to chronicle the DUSTOFF support for that war. If not, you can add it to our history."

THE ROVING REPORTER

Local command newspaper published interviews with a number of DUSTOFF crewmembers from the 57th Medical Detachment in 1965, asking the question: What do you remember most since your arrival in Vietnam? -

— *Specialist 5 Ralph Kirby, Asheville, North Carolina* - "The morning of May 11th is one I'll never forget. We went into Song Be to medevac the wounded. Three hundred yards from where we landed, B57s were bombing and we could feel the effects of the explosions. As we left, we flew low through the valley, receiving heavy fire from all around."

— *Specialist 5 Bradley W Lorinski, New London, Connecticut* - "I could never forget the day I helped deliver a Vietnamese baby boy while we were in flight by helicopter to Cong Hoa Hospital. It was the first time I had ever helped deliver a baby on a helicopter and I hope it's the last. There just isn't that much room."

— *Specialist 5 Richard Eason, Oakland, California* - "I recall last Christmas Day more than any other. I was called to go on several medevac missions around Long An Province. We were in constant danger from VC fire whenever we went into the area. It was a heck of a way to spend Christmas."

— *Specialist 4 William J Hughes, Florence, New Jersey* - "I



R-6 Helicopter - 1944 - Sikorsky Plant, Bridgeport, Connecticut.
(Photo courtesy of Joe Kralich)

— *Specialist 5 Don R Chambers, Chicago, Illinois* - "During the recent sweep in War Zone D, we were called upon to evacuate wounded. I remember when we went into an area almost impossible to land in because of intense VC fire. We went into the area four times, receiving constant VC fire from every direction."

remember the US Embassy bombing in Saigon more than anything. I was about two blocks away when it happened and was one of the first medics on the scene. I gave first aid there, then went to the Saigon Navy Hospital to help out. I was really disturbed over all of the innocent civilians hurt."

DUSTOFF — THE MOVIE

Various members of the DUSTOFF Association have been collaborating - may not be the right word - on a motion picture proposal entitled "DUSTOFF" being written in Southern California by an intrepid screen writer named Bill Booth. From the conversations and correspondence addressing the subject, it certainly appears that this project may come close to truly capturing the DUSTOFF experience with its' myriad of feelings, impressions, and the full range of human emotion embodied in the mission. Bill's taken to writing with the letterhead of the 33d Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), located at the fictitious Cao Duong, South Vietnam. . . probably close to Doug Moore's fabled "Hotsville". He's designed a unit insignia which is pretty close to many of our units over the years, and has researched Tables of Organization and Equipment (TOEs) of the 1960s vintage to ensure the most realistic product for the silver screen. Bill understands the difficulty of adequately recreating the experience of aerial flight in combat and hope to "...give the average movie-goer a seat on that DUSTOFF chopper as it performs its mission." He indicates his feeling that "For years I have felt that the story of the DUSTOFF mission in Vietnam was one which had to be told within the format of a feature length movie. It is such an important and integral part of the Vietnam story... and one which remains virtually unknown to a great majority of Americans. Therefore, to make the American public aware of the important part of our

history is probably my primary personal goal for this film project."

A very brief description of the project follows:



"PROJECT: DUSTOFF (Working Title)

Format: Feature Film — (Drama/Action/Adventure)

This project will center on the day to day operations of a small Army

helicopter ambulance "DUSTOFF" unit serving in Vietnam in the late 1960s. Although the primary characters have not yet been firmly conceptualized, my preference would be to focus on an individual team, meaning a pilot, co-pilot, crew chief, and medic.

Specifics of the story will begin to take shape as research concludes, but the film will probably focus on the activities of the DUSTOFF team during a period of approximately three to four months, slowly building the main characters over the progression of that time. The last portion of the film might focus on in tense action taken place during the time of a major enemy offensive (possibly during Tet in 1968).

In the film, it will be essential to show the diversity of the types of DUSTOFF missions flown in Vietnam. For instance, missions might include flight into several types of hot LZs, use of the hoist, flight during adverse weather conditions, evacuation of several types of troops, etc."

Bill certainly asks the right kinds of questions in conducting his research and attempting to share the feelings of the crews, the patients, and all who were associated with the mission. Hopefully, he can join us at the Reunion. We all wish him the best of good fortune with the project. Little doubt that the story, produced as a high quality product, very much deserves sharing with the American public. All the elements are present to produce the M*A*S*H of the 1990s.

13TH ANNUAL REUNION OF THE DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

28 February — 1 March 1992

REGISTRATION FORM

Member's Name _____ Spouse's Name _____
Home Address _____ Military Address _____

Home Phone _____ DSN _____

1. Dues:

Annual dues - \$10
(If not paid earlier)

Life Member dues - \$100
(One time payment)

Initiation Fee - \$10
(New members only)

2. Reunion Registration:

Number Attending

Total Price

Member/Spouse costs - \$5 each

Non-member/guest costs - \$10 each

NOTE: Registration costs after 20 February will be \$10 each for members and spouses and \$15 each for non-members and guests.

3. Friday Night Mission Briefing (Cocktail Buffet)

Number Attending - \$10 each

4. Spouse's Luncheon

Number Attending - \$16

Oriental Barbecued Chicken with Crisp Vegetables and Rice Noodles _____

or

Chilled Seafood Medley with Vegetables and Seashell Pasta on Crisp Seasonal Greens _____

5. Chuck Mateer Memorial Golf Classic - \$10

Golf Handicap _____

NOTE: Refunds in event of inclement weather.

6. Saturday Night Reunion Dinner

Cocktail Party - Cash Bar

Dinner - \$22

Total:

Please make check payable to DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION
Refunds cannot be guaranteed for cancellations made after 20 February
Please mail this form with payment to:
The DUSTOFF Association
P.O. Box 8091 - Wainright Station
San Antonio, Texas 78208

Reunion will be held at the Holiday Inn - Riverwalk • 217 North St Mary's • San Antonio, Texas 78205 • (512) 224-2500 • Hotel reservations should be made directly with the Holiday Inn - Riverwalk - Ensure that you tell them you're with the DUSTOFF Association to obtain our contracted room rate. The toll-free number is (800) 465-4329.

13TH ANNUAL REUNION OF THE DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

Holiday Inn - Riverwalk • San Antonio, Texas

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday - 28 February 1992

12-1800 Registration Foyer, 7th Floor
13-1800 9th Annual Chuck Mateer Golf Classic Fort Sam Houston Golf Club
15-1800 Hospitality Suite Open Room, 7th Floor
19-2200 Cocktail Buffet Tarantella Ballroom, 7th Floor
 *Cash Bar
 *Buffet
 Roast Beef, Chicken Strips, Rumaki, Shrimp Eggrolls, Fruit, Vegetables, Cheese
 *Music by 'Rich and Famous'
2200 Hospitality Suite Open Room

Saturday - 29 February 1992

0900 PROFESSIONAL MEETING Tarantella IV
0900 Opening Remarks . . . Jim Truscott, President, DUSTOFF Association
0905 Aeromedical Evacuation, Operations - Desert Storm . . LTC Tommie Wayne Mayes, Commander, 326th Medical Battalion and LTC Frank Henri Novier, Commander, 34th Medical Battalion
0950 Medical Evacuation Proponency Actions . . Colonel Nicki Johnson, Chief, Medical Evacuation Proponency Division, Army Medical Department Center *FT. RUCKER*
1020 Break
1040 UH60Q Medical Evacuation Black Hawk . . . John Sohnlein, Program Manager, Sikorsky Aircraft and LTC Jim Wingate, Aviation Staff Officer, AMEDD Center
1110 Aeromedical Evacuation Officer Career Program . . LTC (P) Art Hapner, Aviation Staff Officer, Officer of the Surgeon General *VA*
1145 Closing Remarks . . . Jim Truscott
1215-1430 SPOUSE'S LUNCHEON
1330 BUSINESS MEETING Tarantella IV
1330-1340 Opening Remarks President
1340-1350 Minutes, 12th Annual Business Meeting Secretary
1350-1400 Financial Report Treasurer
1400-1415 Old Business and Report of Activities
1415-1500 New Business
 Election of Officers
 Other New Business
1500 Adjournment President
15-1800 Hospitality Suite Open
1830-2000 DUSTOFF Sociability Exercise 7th Floor Terrace
20-2200 DUSTOFF Dinner Tarantella Ballroom
2100 Remarks President
2115 Lucas Life-Saving Award Richard Murphy, Lucas Aerospace
2130 Program
2145 Recognition of DESERT Dustoffers
2150 Introduction of New Officers
2155 Closing Remarks
2200 Hospitality Suite Open

Sunday - 1 March 1992

0900 MEMORIAL SERVICE Tarantella IV

THE UH60Q — THE BEST EVER AIR AMBULANCE

Approval has finally been obtained for a separate mission design series designation for the aeromedical version of the UH60 Blackhawk. Dubbed the UH60Q, the latest DUSTOFF helicopter is a modified UH60L which provides improved patient care, increased mission capability, and significantly enhanced survivability. The mission doesn't change, only the degrees of difficulty in terms of distances, sophistication of weapons systems, and requirements for both strategic and tactical utilization in all possible environments. In addition to the evacuation of patients, movement of medical teams and equipment, and transportation of medical supplies on the battlefield, the UH60Q also has an improved combat search and rescue profile.

Improvements in patient care are provided by —

- *On-Board Oxygen Generating System (OBOGS)* - Provides crew and patient oxygen through outlets at each patient and crew station.
- *Cabin Heating and Air Conditioning*
- *Combat Litter System* - Replacing the current carousel system, provides capability of carrying 6 litter

and 3 ambulatory or 9 ambulatory patients with full access for the flight medical aidman and storage capability for medical supplies and equipment. Fold down medic seat with inertial reel harness, litter lighting, and intravenous fluid bag provisions will be included.

DUSTOFF's mission capability is enhanced with —

- *External Rescue Hoist* - Allowing maximum patient capability with all aircraft configured for hoist missions at all times. The system also provides direct communications between the aircrew and the soldiers on the ground.
- *Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR)* - Provides all weather/all mission capability with improved survivability and ability to perform combat search and rescue.



- *Avionics/Bussing* - Adapts aircraft electronics system to DUSTOFF unique avionics requirements to include Distance Measuring Equipment (DME), Enhanced Position Locating and Reporting System (EPLRS), Global Positioning (GPS), Digital Mapping Display, and a repeater communications (RETRANS) capability.

- *Dual Mode Search Light (DMSL)*

- *External Stores Support System (ESSS)* - Provides capability of self-deployment and extended ranges for all missions and additional means of transporting medical equipment.

Aircraft survivability is improved with addition of —

- *Aircraft Survivability Equipment (ASE)* - Suite including radar and laser warning systems, chaff and flares, infrared jammer, missile and voice warning systems.
- *Ballistic Blanket* - External armor kit enhances crew/patient ballistic protection while not interfering with cargo compartment loading.

We hope to have an information briefing on the UH60Q at the Reunion and, either a mockup or model available for your examination.

FORCE MODERNIZATION PERSPECTIVE

The operational focus of the US Army has, for some time, been evolving into a concept or framework referred to as Air Land Operations. If you will, the tactical mindset posits a battlefield which is nonlinear, is populated by an integration of

each of the arms and services, is characterized by advanced technology weapons and target acquisition systems, and involves vast distances and spheres of influence on the part of the ground commander. Forces are typically dispersed only to be massed for decisive combat, requiring little logistical weighting to maintain flexibility and the ability to move rapidly and with synchronicity. Many of the characteristics of the Air

Land battlefield were certainly demonstrated on the Desert Storm battlefield.

Such a battlefield has significant implications insofar as health service support is concerned. The tactical commander can't cope with large numbers of casualties weighting down his formations nor can he abide the slowing of his maneuver to accommodate the relative immobility of combat service support

Force (continued)

FORCE *Cont.*

elements. It's easy to see that the focus and the pressure is on our evacuation system and, specifically on the aeromedical evacuation elements. The operational concept for health services support then is on the rapid acquisition of wounded and injured soldiers, far forward resuscitative and stabilizing care, and rapid, probably long distance air evacuation to definitive medical care facilities. The Army Medical Department has been working for some years to develop the doctrinal, training, leader development, organizational, materiel systems to resource such battlefield support in its Medical Force 2000 (MF2K).

Many of the medical aspects of the new force were demonstrated in the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations. The medical deployment was the largest since World War II with over 24,000 Active and Reserve Component medics arrayed in a system of 44 combat zone hospitals and 154 other command and control, medical logistics, and other specialized medical units. By the beginning of the ground war, there were 239 Army air ambulances, UH1 and UH60, in the theater, almost twice the number present in Southeast Asia at the peak of the Vietnam War. Those crews were typically DUSTOFF superb, by the way. The routine DUSTOFF mission remains vastly more exciting than for any other in Army Aviation...almost all are single ship, night time, evil weather, night vision devices-required, trackless desert, unreliable communications, and often the casualties were caused by significant offensive weapons. The evacuation battalion worked very, very well and conversion of units to that organization continues.

The future aeromedical force requires some restructuring and additional resourcing to adequately support the force on that Air Land battlefield. The leadership of the Army was recently briefed on programs to accomplish the goal. There are two major aspects of requiring improvement. Firstly, the mix of utility helicopters in the force is becoming increasingly dysfunctional in terms of operational employment and logistical

logistical sustainability. While the UH1 has long been a superb aircraft, its over 30 years old and the technology of modern warfare has outstripped its capabilities. Too, with a downsized force, support maintenance units lose the battle of repair and replacement of UH1 components each and every day. As with any system that has been out of production for 20 years or so, parts and spares simply cease to exist. The second vector of our aeromedical modernization requirement is the recognized but unfulfilled requirement for a high capacity air ambulance capable of carrying some 12-18 litter patients over significant distances with a vertical or short takeoff and landing (V/STOL) capability. The aircraft program under development for their mission profile, the V22 Osprey, was cancelled by the Department of Defense. The mission requirement has not however, gone away and efforts continue to resource the need with, perhaps, a non-developmental aircraft, like a fixed wing short takeoff and landing (STOL) variety.



Captain Paul "Bear" Bloomquist, 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), receives the Distinguished Flying Cross, Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal, and multiple Purple Hearts at the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion compound, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Vietnam, 28 November 1964. (US Army Photo courtesy of Joe Kralich.)

DUSTOFF: TRIAL BY FIRE

An article which many of you may not have seen was written by former Specialist 5 John N Seebeth, as told to former Captain Robert B Robeson.

"The character of battle, like its name, is slaughter, and its price is blood."

—Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*

Tearing into a "hot" landing zone (LZ) in a medical evacuation helicopter and getting your patients out safely, while everyone in the world seemed to be shooting at you, was the ultimate challenge. There's not a word that can describe the way it felt. Whoom! Whoom! Enemy mortars and B40 rockets splashing down all around. The distinctive sounding belch of AK47 automatic rifles. The Thwack! of bullets hitting our aircraft. I quickly discovered that no one was immortal in combat. It was a daily meat grinder where our aircraft routinely dripped blood after missions—and this blood was often our own.

In August 1969 I was a 21 year old medic assigned to the 236th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance) at Red Beach in Da Nang. Only three months remained of my one year tour. Our four man crew (two pilots, crew chief and medic) were assigned to field standby duty at LZ Baldy, about 25 miles south of Da Nang along Highway 1. Farther southwest, near Hiep Duc, America Division units were engaged with an entire North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Division. We were flying 12 to 13 hours a day, day and night, picking up the dead and wounded from both

Trial Continued

TRIAL *Cont.*

During those emotional and devastating 2½ days, our "DUSTOFF" (a tactical call sign devised that epitomized these medical evacuation missions) crew forged into a team that worked under the worst conditions to save lives in combat. We flew 42 missions, 15 of which were "insecure" without supporting helicopter gunships (because so many had been shot up or shot down in the area), and evacuated 150 casualties.

DUSTOFF was the most dangerous and deadly type of aviation in that war. More than a third of our pilots, crew chiefs, and medics became casualties. Our unarmed aircraft losses to hostile fire were 3.3 times that of all other forms of helicopter missions. I learned early on as a medic, that wherever the "action is" there, also, are the dying.

We'd already taken a number of "hits" the morning before in our first aircraft. Our copilot had been locked into his shoulder harness when a round entered behind his seat, breaking the locking device. One of my patients had also been wounded again in the air. But even in combat you don't really think the worst will ever happen to you. You see it all day but it's always someone else—never you.

It was late morning on 22 August. We were coming back from a mission with an American patient when a call came over our FM radio. "DUSTOFF Six Zero Five, this is Tango Alpha Two-Four", he said. "We have an urgent medical evacuation request for one US with multiple gunshot wounds to the back. Grid coordinates for the pickup is Bravo Tango 018233. We'll mark the LZ with smoke. The LZ is very small and you'll have to hover down about 100 feet. It's also insecure. We're taking continuous fire from all directions. Recommend support. Be advised, we're also low on ammunition. Over."

These grid coordinates were in a valley that we'd gone into 10 to 15 times before. We'd received fire on nearly every mission. The LZ was surrounded, we were unarmed and the ground troops wouldn't be able to provide much covering fire.

The pilots decided to drop off our ambulatory patient at LZ Center, an artillery base located atop a towering peak about three kilometers northeast of the pickup site. Then our copilot coordinated by UHF radio with the "Firebirds", UH1C (Huey) helicopter gunships, collocated with us at LZ Baldy. He found that all Firebirds were committed to other missions.

"Tango Alpha Two Four, this is DUSTOFF Six Zero Five," our copilot

the cargo deck with my back against Mr Statt's armored seat. I was really feeling bad thinking I don't want to go down there but I know we have to.

"Bill," our copilot finally said, "we've got to go in without the guns. That's his only chance."

"Okay," Mr Statt replied, "I'll come in on the deck just above the trees, do a 'hot' 180-degree turn from 120 knots to a dead hover, then descend from there. Keep your heads down."



MSG Geoff Mankoff has turned artistic and designed a Desert Storm Dustoff bumper sticker. He'll sell you one for \$2.50 if you write him at 6802 Hillside Bluff, San Antonio, Texas 78233. The sticker's background is sand; the lettering maroon; the palm tree is green; the crossed swords are, of course, silver; and there is the central Red Cross.

said. "We're enroute to your location. Gunships will not be available for approximately one-zero minutes. Say condition of patient at this time. Over."

"Six Zero Five," the RTO (radiotelephone operator) on the ground replied, "this man is critical! In 10 minutes, he may be dead!"

As he broadcast, we could hear the intense firefight going on in the background through our FM radio.

"What do you guys want to do?" Warrant Officer Bill Statt, our aircraft commander who was flying, asked over the intercom.

DUSTOFF crews lived and worked closely together. Because every mission was a potentially life-threatening risk for each of us, the pilots often asked our opinions. For a few seconds, nobody said a word. I was smoking a cigarette and sitting on a padded armor plate on

The infantry troops popped a yellow smoke grenade and we began a diving, 4,000 foot per minute descent.

"God, go with us," I said softly, over the intercom, as we fell out of 2,000 feet. I'd never done that before. Maybe it was intuition.

We began taking ground fire and hits before we even landed. Mr Statt did a hairy flaring maneuver at the bottom and started hovering down into this tiny LZ barely wider than our rotor blades. The chatter of enemy machine guns could be heard all around as I started to get up off the deck to help load our patient. At that moment, I was grabbed by the throat and spun around onto the deck. I knew something was wrong, but didn't know what. So I started to talk over the intercom...but nothing came out. I put my hand to my throat and felt a warm, sticky substance that shouldn't

Trial Continued

TRIAL *Cont.*

have been there. My hand was covered with blood. This is really serious, I thought.

We landed in the center of the firefight, not 20 to 30 meters from the enemy force. Two hunched-over infantrymen hurried toward us and literally threw a black sergeant into our cargo compartment. They both looked at me in a weird way. I can imagine what I looked like after bullets had torn out my throat and larynx.

Our co-pilot turned around and said, "We'll get you back, John. You'll be all right," over the intercom.

Then I had an out-of-body experience. I was above the LZ, above the rotor blades, looking down at myself and the others in the helicopter. There was no pain. There was nothing. I'd taken off my helmet and bulletproof chest protector... but I could still hear all of the conversation going on in the aircraft even though my helmet was off. I knew I was going to die if I didn't fight to get back to my body. I looked out over the beautiful Vietnamese countryside. It wasn't threatening. It wasn't negative. It was peaceful, very warm and I was going... going.

Soon I was back in the cargo compartment. We did a maximum performance takeoff straight up through additional fire that ultimately shot out three of our four radios and did other damage to the aircraft.

I tried to start an IV in my arm, but couldn't because I was shaking too much. The crew chief attempted to cover the wound with gauze "4x8s", but I was having difficulty breathing and that only made it worse, I couldn't believe it was my turn. I'd been treating patients like this for what seemed like forever. I thought I was invincible-but now it was my turn. At first I denied the wound. Then I became angry because I was suffocating, since the wound had swollen so rapidly.

At that moment, I remembered a female Vietnamese civilian we'd previously evacuated. She was really screwed up. The bottom portion of her face was missing-there was just a big, gaping hole. Part of her throat was

blown away. The front of her chest was gone. She was gross-looking, but she was still alive and motioning to me with her hands that she couldn't breathe. Her wounds weren't bandaged and her face was right next to mine. Her brown eyes were bugged out of her head. Finally, she died. And when I got hit, I thought, "That mamasan is me. That's what I look like." It repulsed me. It made me angry. I used her image in my mind to keep going because I didn't want to die like she did. I believe that mama-san helped save my life.

Our helicopter landed at LZ Baldy about 10 minutes later. I pointed the waiting litter team toward the black sergeant. I knew I was dying. Somehow, I ran 70 yards into the aid station and jumped on a litter used for examinations. I knew I needed to be trached. First Lieutenant Thomas took me by the shoulders and asked me to lie down. As soon as I reclined, I started choking on my blood. So I sat up and tried motioning him with my arms... just like the mama-san had done. "I can't breathe," I mouthed.

Dr. Thomas held a scalpel. He said, "You know what we gotta do."

That's how it happened. No anesthetic! No nothing! He just took the scalpel and started splitting my throat while our co-pilot held my legs. That's when I first felt the pain. That intense, overwhelming, all-encompassing pain that was the last thing I remember. I regained consciousness as a nurse was cutting off my flight suit. They were prepping me for the operating room at the 95th Evacuation Hospital in Da Nang.

Over 21 years and 12 operations later, I still have a 100% disability from the war. Major Jerry Bell, a doctor at an Army hospital at Fort Dix, New Jersey, reconstructed my throat and larynx over a period of 17 months with a skin graft from my thigh. I wear a plastic tube (a Montgomery T-tube) in the 1½ inch by ¾ inch hole in my throat. If I want to talk, I have to plug the end of the tube. This forces air through my throat and mouth.

It took a long time, but I made it. The challenge is to hang tough during those testing times. What I've learned is that

you can't be defeated if you never give up. This goes for anyone, but especially those disabled veterans of my generation's war, previous conflicts, and those recently wounded in the Persian Gulf. As the old saying goes, "Freedom isn't free." And a nation's military personnel will always bear a bigger burden than anyone else in preserving this blessing God has bestowed on America and a number of other fortunate nations around our world.

Note: Specialist Five Seebeth was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross as was Captain Robeson, the writer, who was flying co-pilot the day SP5 Seebeth was wounded.



HEROIC LAST FLUTTER OF PLUCKED MEDEVAC BIRD

For those who've thought on the luck, or lack of it, associated with particular numbers or call signs - "Tay Ninh, Vietnam - When a Medevac bird lifted out of Tay Ninh, none of her five man crew could know it was the last time she'd ever fly.

Hours later, when the crew arrived back at the 15th Medical Battalion Aid Station in Tay Ninh, visibly shaken, bruised, and on another bird, the whole story of how the medevac chopper had died unfolded.

The bird must have passed whatever luck she had left in her, before she went down, to WO Richard Leonard and the rest of the crew.

The luck turned out to be quite a lot. Throughout the history of the 1st Calvary Division in Vietnam, Medevac crews have gone into contact areas, even with the shooting still going on, to pick up the wounded. This was not going to be any exception. Leonard radioed the

Heroic Continued

HEROIC *Cont.*

soldiers on the ground as he made his final approach. "We are coming to your location at this time, so give us everything you've got."

The medic aboard the ill-fated bird with the big red crosses was a man who could make light of situations that would break lesser men. "Well," said Specialist 5 Bill Keller, who had 30 days left before going back to San Gabriel, California, "those AKs talked to us all the way in and their big brother just flat-out told us to get out of the neighborhood."

As the medevac bird moved into contact area, it started receiving small arms fire. Just after Leonard put in to hover - the thick jungle necessitated using the hoist - a Blue Max Cobra pilot flying aerial rocket artillery support radioed, "Medevac! Medevac just got a direct hit with a B40!"

The B40 is a recoilless rifle rocket grenade and is what Specialist Keller termed "the big brother."

The B40 hit above and behind the medevac's crew chief, Specialist 5 Rodney Wiley, Alexandria, Louisiana, in the transmission housing. The steel gearbox not only kept most of the shrapnel away from the crew, but also prevented the fuel cells from becoming ruptured and ignited. "I saw the round coming toward me, but all I had time to do was duck my head, then I was thrown out of the ship," Wiley recalls.

Specialist 4 Dave Parks, Caldwell, Idaho, a Silver Star-holding door gunner on the medevac, said, "I just did a lot of praying."

Once the stricken ship slammed to the ground, however, and the crew got out, Parks was manning his machine gun on the hasty perimeter with the infantrymen. "I'm a machine gunner and, just because my gun looks a little bit different from a grunt's '60 doesn't mean it won't work on the ground."

Keller immediately checked out the crew and then went around to the wounded from the ground company, D Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Calvary, and treated them.

Another medevac, this one from Phuoc Vinh, tried to come into the same area, but it also received heavy enemy

gunfire. Leonard waved it away because "we were already too crowded down there."

The second medevac bird took hits on the way out, enough to force it to land in a nearby clearing. A third medevac carried out its crew.

A few hours later, in the pitch darkness of the jungle, stumbling out into a small clearing were a medevac crew, some wounded infantrymen on stretchers, and an escort of 14 infantrymen. This time, there were no complications with the medevac mission.

Back in Tay Ninh, Keller looked at Leonard and said, "You know something? It took about a week and a half to get through this one afternoon, but tonight it takes only a millionth of a second to relive a nightmare."

"Yes, we sure were lucky today," sighed the commander of the bird whose tail number added up to 13."

MIDWIFERY AT 2500 FEET

One of the famous DUSTOFF medics, MSG Charles Allen, USA-Ret, added to his growing reputation in 1965 on a mission reported by the United Press International.

"The baby was coming and I knew I had to do something, so I did," explained SSGT Charles K Allen, a medical evacuation aidman with the 57th Med Evac Co here.

Sergeant Allen established a different kind of "first" for his versatile, lifesaving unit when he delivered a healthy five pound baby boy aboard a med evac helicopter flying at 2500 feet.

His unique chore began at 8 AM, March 25, when the 57th received a call from a small village in the dense mangrove swamps about 20 miles southeast of Saigon. The American advisor in the village notified the medics that a wife of a Vietnamese soldier was in advanced labor with possible complications.

A ship, commanded by the 57th's commander, Maj Howard A Huntsman, Jr, and piloted by Capt Douglas E Moore, was immediately dispatched.

Arriving at the village 20 minutes later, they circled until smoke signals and radio contact with the advisor was established. This area is one of the trouble spots due to Viet Cong infiltrators.

Upon landing, Sergeant Allen coaxed the Vietnamese woman onto a litter and, assisted by the chopper's crew chief, SP5 Bradley Lorinski, the patient was loaded aboard the aircraft.

The woman's soldier husband also climbed aboard, nervous in the traditional fashion of fathers-to-be everywhere. About 10 minutes after takeoff, Sergeant Allen saw the woman convulse with labor pains and, from her expression, he felt, "something was happening." He immediately started to remove the covers and clothing from the woman but her husband, now nervous and flabbergasted, insisted on covering his wife.

Finally, Sergeant Allen, assisted by Specialist Lorinski, was able to prepare the expectant mother. "And," as Sergeant Allen related later in still surprised tones, "within two minutes there was the baby, healthy and breathing."

Sergeant Allen cut the infant's umbilical cord and tied it off; then presented the new beaming father with his new son, wrapped in the green blouse of the Army Sergeant.

Five minutes after the baby's birth, the helicopter arrived at Saigon's Cong Hoa Hospital. The new father leaped from the craft and, not having any cigars, immediately saluted each member of the crew individually.

Latest report on mother and child is "all is well". Sergeant Allen, who has since become the godfather of the baby, has two boys of his own.

**"When I Have
Four Wounded"**

DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION HISTORIAN

We have taken the liberty of naming Joe Kralich as Historian for the Association. The position, which is very demanding and pays nothing but satisfaction, is not addressed in the constitution and its incorporation is ongoing. Joe is an accomplished historian and researcher. His own experiences as a medic in Vietnam add greatly to the perspective and talent he brings to the job. The description of the position of historian indicates that he or she will be responsible for promoting the objectives of the DUSTOFF Association, focusing on the preservation of materials and documents of historical importance to the heritage and mission of Army aeromedical evacuation. Among specific duties of the historian are:

- Providing access to historical materials and reference services on Army aeromedical evacuation to DUSTOFF Association members.
- Maintaining selected archives for documents, printed materials, and photographs so as to facilitate access by interested parties.
- Providing assistance to military and civilians personnel and DUSTOFF Association members in areas of historical reference as may be needed for unit or individual research for official or academic purposes.
- Maintaining an active bibliography of published materials on aeromedical evacuation with a focus on the role of the US Army.
- Providing a report to the DUSTOFF Association at its annual business meeting.
- Maintaining liaison with such agencies as the Center for Military History, National Archives, US Army Medical Museum, and AMEDD Regimental Historian.

So... Joe's on the case. Please use his talents and services and share with him any and all printed or pictorial material

you may have of a real or potentially historical nature. He's to be found at PO Box 1267, Ranchos, New Mexico 87557 and by phone (505) 758-5460.

POSITION REPORT FROM NAVASOTA

CW2 John Konek, (USA-Ret), the DUSTOFF Association's representative in the Texas State Prison in Navasota, wrote to comment on his membership and to explain somewhat about the manner in which his life has evolved since his time in Vietnam. The following are extracted from separate letters to Jim Ramsey, the local 1st Cavalry Division father figure, and to the Association:

"How does one thank someone for their sponsorship into a family of such distinction as DUSTOFF? Thank you seems such a small word for such a heavy emotional release as I look at the DUSTOFF logo... "Dedicated Unhesitating Service to our Fighting Forces". The heavy emotional relaxant that the logo implants as I think (and hear) the sound of that frightened "RTO" on 43.0 "DUSTOFF, DUSTOFF—I have four whiskies in need of medevac." The times I sat in that chopper and cried because the LZ was too hot and I felt as if I let those men down.

More than anything in this world, I miss being needed. I have a sense of mission unfinished... unfinished because I've been afraid of meeting some veteran who suffered because I couldn't get into the LZ due to heavy fire... the doubts I have to this day. Could I have made it if I had tried a little harder?

The Association is a homecoming for me. A comradeship of fellow care-providers and one of fellow combat veterans of the 1st Team.

For some, Vietnam was a 12 month nightmare. For me, well, I grew up in Vietnam.

As a child, my father would tell me: John, when you do a job, regardless of what that job is, do it in a way that you would be proud to sign your name to it and let the world know it was you that did the job.

I have always believed that when one joins an Association, he is always proud to be a part of that family. DUSTOFF has always been a family unit, one of caring, love of a stranger, dedicated service, and, in my opinion, never rejection, just acceptance.

In my life of crime, I'm proud to say that I never hurt anyone. I never made one dime.

My crimes are a result of my being addicted to adrenalin. Some would say that I use Vietnam as an excuse for the crimes I have committed. *Not so.* I take full responsibility for my actions as a man. Upon my return from Vietnam, Life was bland. I missed being needed and missed putting my life on the line for those that needed me.

I did a burglary once in front of a cop just so I could get him to chase me. What a thrill that was! 1st time... two years, second time... three years, third time... six years... and now, life...

Some would say... "What a waste"... not so! I don't serve time... time serves me. I am working with younger cancer patients at a local hospital, that's not a waste. I worked with young children at a local church located in Spokane, Washington. That's not a waste.

I want to thank the Association for their acceptance of me and I hope to make all of you proud of me as a member of this family."



7TH MEDICAL COMMAND AVIATION CONFERENCE — 1991

The annual conference for DUSTOFF aviators in Europe was held in Sonthofen, Germany from 2-6 December 1991. Much of the formal agenda addressed support provided to Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and Provide Comfort. DUSTOFFERS worldwide can certainly draw a measure of pride from the accomplishments of DUSTOFF Europe in the past 18 months or so. In a first-ever for Army Aviation, the 45th Medical Company self-deployed from Central Germany through Italy, Greece, the Mediterranean, Egypt, and across the Red Sea into Saudi Arabia. Later, the 236th joined the 45th in supporting US and coalition forces in the tremendous successes against Sadaam Hussein's Iraqi military. In the aftermath, the 159th Medical Company self-deployed to the Turkish-Iraq border to assist in the lifesaving efforts for hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees in Operation Provide Comfort. At this writing, 159th air ambulances are still supporting US Forces remaining in the Gulf area. Of course, routine DUSTOFF Europe activities have continued throughout the period, including medical evacuation support of all Army Forces in the theater and contingency response missions such as hostage release missions, disaster relief for such beneficiaries as Soviet Armenian children, and movement of critically-needed medical supplies, equipment, and personnel. LTC Ray Keith, Commander of the 421st Medical Battalion (Evacuation), has certainly experienced, as have his predecessors, the heights of challenge and achievement during his tenure with the command. Major General Mike Scotti, Commander, 7th Medical Command, and a Vietnam-era associate of Pat Brady, opened the conference and is a very ardent supporter of Army aeromedical

evacuation and its role in battlefield health service support. Other DUSTOFFERS in critical positions in Europe include COL Tom Scofield, Chief of Staff, and COL Ed Bradshaw, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, both of whom attended the conference.

The DUSTOFF Association has historically provided monies to support an association social gathering in conjunction with the conference. This year's was a superb affair, appropriately lively and replete with tales of derring-do, loves left and lost, and heat-seeking missiles of many persuasions. From some of these deliberations were concluded three basic truths of the 1991 meeting -

- Never fry bacon naked.
- Never try to give a bear a marshmallow with your lips.
- Never try to catch a bowling ball with your head.

.... You had to be there.

Best Wishes, Little Guy

Craig Shergold is a gutsy 7 year old boy with a brain tumor whose time is growing very short. Please take the time to send him a card wishing him well. Craig can be reached through Suite 100, Children's Wish Foundation, 3200 Perimeter Center East, Atlanta, Georgia 39246.

Ode to Aircrew Members

Author unknown, the following brief thought seems most appropriate for many of our fellows -

"To all the US airman - few in numbers, great in spirit, the seekers, the pathfinders, the builders, they dared the heights, and saw beyond their times."



H5 Helicopter with litter pods, Republic of Korea, early 1950's. (Photo courtesy of Joe Kralich)

TRACKING DOWN VIETNAM DUSTOFF PILOTS

John Konek has carefully researched the rolls of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot's Association for DUSTOFFERS who may not have been availed of the opportunity to join the DUSTOFF Association. The names of those pilots are below with their Vietnam unit and years served. We're asking John if he can obtain current addresses for the purpose of sending them membership information. Any information anyone may have on these gentlemen, especially as pertains to their whereabouts, would be valuable in this effort. We've tried to research for names of previous members, but some of the past data is a tad cloudy, so some bearing-with may be called for. Spelling may not be exact as the information is second-source.

NAME	VIETNAM UNIT(S)	YEAR(S)	NAME	VIETNAM UNIT(S)	YEAR(S)
Adams, Martin			Francis, John	283d	70-71
Andrew, William	498th	70	Frank, Paul	498th, 159	67-68
Arval, John	571st	69-70	Fulton, Robert	498th	70-71
Avina, Alfonso	326th	70-71	Garza, David		68-69
Baenziger, Wayne	254th		Gebryel, James	68th	67-68
Baker, Michael	247th	68	Gilbert, Thomas	498th	68
Bash, Robert	498th	70-71	Gilpin, Richard	498th	68-69
Beam, Rick		69-70	Gipson, T	283d	65-67
Becker, Frederick	498th, 54th	68-70	Golden Zweig, Bernie	82d	71
Bell, Louie	45th, 54th	67-68	Gomez, David	237th, 57th	69-70, 72-73
Beson, James	159th	69-70	Grady, Taylor	159th	69
Bonner, Edward	54th	69-70	Graff, Conrad	159th	70
Boyd, Daniel	15th	68-69	Grant, Charles	498th	65-66
Brady, Robert	236th	70-71	Grass, Jack	57th, 82d	70-71
Bannon, Jay	57th, 247th	65-66, 69-70	Gray, Otis B	15th	
Brooks, Larry	571st	71-72	Greene, William		67-68
Brown, Barry	15th	70-71	Grove, Tom	15th	68-69
Brown, Charlie	254th	68-69	Grubb, Thomas	159th	70
Bruce, Michael	326th	69-70	Hailes, Sherman	247th	69-70
Caldwell, Don	15th	67-68	Hansen, Christopher	236th	70
Campbell, Edward	498th	69-70	Hanson, Donald	254th	65-66
Carson, Keith	498th	65-66	Harris, Jim	571st, 237th	68-69
Chaney, Steven	15th	67-68	Hefter, Gene	57th	65-66
Colgrove, Tyrone	254th, 247th	70-71	Hill, John	57th	67-68
Culveyhouse, James		71	Hilliard, Michael	82d	68-69
Daily, James	159th	68-69	Hogan, Charles	45th, 254th, 283d	70-71
DeGeest, Gordon	254th	65-66	Holmes, Tom	283d	69-70
DeLoach, Frederick	326th	71	Horrell, Tim	159th	70-71
Derber, Dennis		69-70	Horvath, John	237th	73
Desveaux, Angus	254th	66	House, Phillip	498th	70
Dick, Charles	498th	68-69	Jacobs, Art	15th	67-68
Dingley, Robert	498th, 254th	69	Jahn, William	498th	70-71
Dipboye, Richard	326th	70-71	Johnson, David	159th	71-72
Douglas, Jackie	54th, 326th	70-71	Johnson, Raymond		65
Dozhier, Joel	237th	70-71	Johnson, Wayne	283d	69-70
Dunn, Joseph	15th	70-71	Killker, Gary	50th, 57th	67-68, 70-71
Dvorak, William	498th	68-69	Kinsey, Jerry	45th	69-70
Ellsworth, James	45th, 159th	67, 69	Kirkland, Joseph	571st	69-70
Fairchild, Charles	498th	66-67	Kraby, David A	45th	68-69
Farrance, John	283d	70-71	Kuranz, Joseph	50th, 498th	67-68
Fitzgerald, Ed	498th		Laird, Richard	82d	70-71
Found, Richard	68th	68-69	Land, Henry	15th	67-68

NAME	VIETNAM UNIT(S)	YEAR(S)
Lefebvre, Pierre	498th	67-68
Lindekens, Richard	254th	68-69
Livingston, Del	82d	68-69
Marvin, Nester	15th	66-67
McClure, Hugh	15th	68-69
McKeegan, Robert	237th	69-70
McKinley, Lawrence	57th, 82d	71-72
Mock, Gary	45th	68-69
Mueller, James	326th	
O'Connell, John	283d	69-70
O'Connor, Stephen	498th	70-71
Ogle, William	498th	70-71
Padilla, Bob		69-70
Pagan, Joe		
Palombo, Louis		66
Pascoe, Robert	236th	70-71
Payne, William	236th	70-71
Perales, Frank	247th	70-71
Perrine, James	15th	68-69
Peterson, Graig	54th	70
Pleasant, James	254th	67
Ploetz, Frederick	247th	72-73
Price, Barry		69-70
Radigan, Randy	45th	68-69
Reeves, Edward	54th, 236th	68-69
Reynolds, James	15th	66-67
Riendau, Ted	283s	67-68
Rinehart, Michael	283d	69
Roberts, Craig	498th 69-70	
Robinson, Charles	15th	69-70
Rollins, Donald	498th	70-71
Rominger, Michael	45th	68-69
Rosen, Lawrence		70-71
Russo, Dennis	45th	69-70
Salmon, Ron	45th, 254th	69-70
Schexnayder, Chuck	57th	64-64

NAME	VIETNAM UNIT(S)	YEAR(S)
Schmidt, Dennis	15th	69-70
Schwartz, Greg	54th	67-68
Scotfield, Gary	498th	67
Seagroves, Ed	498th	67-68
Sharkey, Daniel	498th, 236th, 571st	70-71
Shelby, David	571st	71-72
Simko Edward	571st	70-71
Slade, Richard	57th	70-71
Slagle, Thomas	54th, 236th	68-69
Sparks, Daril	45th	70-71
Specht, Edwin	498th	71
St Hilaire, Thomas	45th	70-71
Stone, Samuel	498th 283d	69-70
Strande, Michael	54th	69-70
Tanner, Richard	15th	69-70
Tiffany, William	498th, 236th	66-67, 69-70
Tuohey, Jim	159th	71
Turkoski, William	15th	71-72
Tuttle, Gary	498th	
Tymeson, John	247th	68-69
Vandever, John		67-68
Walsh, Alan	45th	70-71
Warner, Kenneth	571st	71-72
Weaver, Tom	247th	72-73
Whitten, Arthur	45th, 247th	68-69
Williams, Harry	498th	68-69
Wollinger, William	498th	69-70
Woodyard, Billy	237th	68-69
Worsham, Scott	498th	70-71
Wright, Harold	498th	66-67
Wynne, Boyd	45th	67-68
Yost, George	283d	68-69
Yost, Tim	236th	70
Ziemba, Richard	45th	70
Zuvela, George	237th	68-69



Desert DUSTOFF medic Sergeant Randy E. Simington, 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), treats a small Bedouin boy picked up from a camp in Iraq on 28 February 1991. The patient, obviously in pain from a gunshot wound through the wrist, stopped crying when SGT Simington administered several peices of candy and typical DUSTOFF caring attention. The boy's mother had been evacuated earlier, also the recipient of a gunshot wound-probably fired by fleeing Iraqi troops. Captain Randy Anderson, who acted as pilot on the mission, furnished a copy of the picture to Barbara Bush, who's intimately involved in a number of international children's relief programs. Mrs Bush replied, "It is so true that one picture can express a thousand words. Bless our children all over the world. It is comforting to know that dedicated soldiers like you and Sergeant Simington are there to help. Reaching out to children in need is a special quality...and the members of our armed forces are indeed special people. The President joins me in sending our gratitude and very best wishes." (Photo courtesy of Randy Anderson)

REMEMBERING A SPECIAL SOLDIER

Wayne Simmons was the first enlisted DUSTOFF soldier to die in the Vietnam War. His story was briefly told in an article entitled "Tiny is Dead... He Put Others Before Himself" published in the Stars and Stripes in 1965.

"Tan Son Nhut - They called him 'Tiny', because he was so big-standing about 6 feet, 2 inches with arms the size of the average man's legs.

He didn't know the meaning of fear and, more than one time, demonstrated this in the line of fire.

Specialist 5 Wayne Simmons never talked about death, either; if he thought about it, he probably had the attitude that the Viet Cong would never get him.

They did, though, and it's hard to imagine that Tiny is gone.

Simmons, attached as a helicopter crew chief to the 57th Medical Evacuation Unit - the helicopter ambulances of Vietnam - was found shot in the head and shoulder next to the man he died trying to save.

It was an action near the town of Duc Hoa some 20 miles west of Saigon. Med

Evac was sent to pick up a seriously wounded American and Major Thomas C Christy, executive officer of the 57th who was piloting the aircraft, described the area as the worst he has flown into in his 10 months in Vietnam.

"When we got on the ground, six motars went off - three of them behind us and three of them in front of us. There were about six .30 caliber enemy machine gun positions a few hundred yards away. Just as we sat down, an American captain was shot and killed. I heard him yell and looked over and saw him on the ground.

"The wounded man we went in for was in a ditch a short distance away and two of the four Vietnamese carrying him were shot and killed as they tried to make it to the helicopter. When the medic got to him, he was dead.

"I guess about six people were killed trying to get to the helicopter... it was the roughest thing I've ever been in."

Simmons, trying to get a wounded American to the helicopter, was separated from the craft by the heavy fire. He went with the rest of the patrol.

Only one American - a radio operator whose equipment was knocked out by a Viet Cong bullet - made it out alive.

They found Simmons the next morning.

"He was always the first man out of the chopper," Christy recalled. "I remember one time he ran across a field with bullets flying everywhere to pick up a wounded man.

"He was always dependable and he didn't fear anything."

Tiny was in Vietnam for six months and was due to be released from the Army at the end of his tour in this country. He planned to become a representative for a helicopter firm after leaving the service.

They presented him with 13 medals at his funeral in Springfield, Massachusetts - the highest number of awards ever to be presented to a soldier in a single day to the best of the US Army's recollection.

The awards were the Silver Star, the Bronze Star with a V for valor, the Purple Heart with one oak leaf cluster (he was wounded in the hand in an earlier action in Vietnam), and the Air Medal with six oak leaf clusters.

Simmons was quite a guy. He survived close to 200 missions, helping wounded soldiers. And he died on the last - trying to help; to do his part."

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_____ Initial Membership and 1st Year's Dues - \$20

_____ Yearly Renewal - \$10

_____ Lifetime Membership - \$100

Members electing to renew membership annually will have their membership converted to Lifetime after 15 consecutive years. Renewals are due no later than the first day of each calendar year. Please make checks payable to the DUSTOFF Association and mail to: The DUSTOFF Association, Wainright Station, PO Box 8091, San Antonio, Texas 78208.



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