Dear DUSTOFFERS,

Greetings from San Antonio! The months fly by and another year is almost gone. That means our annual reunion is just around the corner. The dates are 23-25 February 1996 at the Holiday Inn Northwest, located at the intersection of Loop 410 and Interstate 10. We hope to have the very best reunion ever and your attendance and participation are absolutely necessary. We plan to make some minor changes to our usual activities in hopes of making it more enjoyable for everyone. Our usual Friday night buffet/banquet will be replaced by an icebreaker reception with semi-heavy hors d’oeuvres and cash bar. The Chuck Mateer Golf Tournament will begin an hour earlier than in the past, promptly at 12 noon. Hopefully this will allow the golfers more time to play in the tournament and still have ample opportunity to enjoy the Friday night festivities. Our schedule for the weekend and prices are shown elsewhere in this newsletter. MAKE YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND NOW!

My apologies to any of you who received our recent “your account is delinquent” letter in error. We have made a concerted effort this year to clean up the database and to collect back dues. The letter was the vehicle to do both. Fortunately the amount of back dues (approximately $3000) we received and the number of corrections we were able to make to our database information more than offset the hate mail we received from a couple of irate members who received the letter in error. We continue to improve our position financially and the dues received from this latest balance is $13,675 and continues to slowly improve. Again, my apologies to everyone who received the letter erroneously.

As my term as President draws to a close, I want to publicly thank Bill Grimes for his outstanding work as the Association Secretary. Any successes we’ve had during the last year should be credited to Bill. He has been totally dedicated to the Association and you should all thank him for his outstanding contributions. Likewise for Joe Kralich who now, thankfully, resides in San Antonio and provides enormous assistance to the Association. Since Jim Truscott has recently taken a position in Saudi Arabia, Joe will be the editor of the newsletter in residence and Jim will continue to provide his expertise from Saudi Arabia. These three individuals – Jim Truscott, Bill Grimes and Joe "Doc" Kralich – have been absolutely unfailing in their support to The DUSTOFF Association and hopefully you will take the opportunity to thank them at this year’s reunion.

Again, I strongly encourage you to make your plans now for our reunion in February. You’ll have a wonderful time with old friends.

Sincerely,
Bob Romines
President, DUSTOFF Association

DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PRESIDENT .......... ROBERT ROMINES
VICE PRESIDENT ...... DAN GOWER
SECRETARY .............. BILL GRIMES
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ED BRADSHAW

FOUNDER
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FRED GRATES
HANK MAYEA
GREG GRIFFIN
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ASSOCIATION HISTORIAN
JOE KRALICH

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
JIM TRUSCOTT

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EDITORIAL OFFICES
c/o Jim Truscott
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APO AE 09803.1322

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 Lifetime Member.
$100.00 (One-time Fee)

____ Catch-Up Dues - $15.00 per year back dues owed to be reinstated for Life Membership eligibility.

____ Change of address.

RANK: ___________ Unit Served With
and Dates: ________________

LAST NAME ________________________________________

FIRST NAME _______________ M.I. _______________

MAILING ADDRESS __________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

SPouse's NAME ________________________________________

TYPE MEMBER: ___________ Lifeime ____________ Regular
Home Phone (______) - ________ Work Phone — DSN _________

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
DUSTOFF UNITS - LINEAGE AND HONORS

15th SUPPORT BATTALION

Although recently redesignated a divisional Support Battalion in line with the current vogue of "sameness" among the combat service support arms, the 15th Medical Battalion was, of course, for so many years and more conflicts than there is space to recount its exploits, one of the premier combat medical units of the United States Army. During and for some time after the Vietnam War, the 15th also had organic DUSTOFF aircraft.

The 15th was originally constituted in the Regular Army as the 1st Medical Squadron and, in March 1925, was assigned to the 1st Calvary Division. The command was activated in June 1926 at Fort Bliss, Texas and was later redesignated as the 15th Medical Battalion following World War II. The battalion was redesignated as a Support Battalion in 1987.

CAMPAIGNS

World War II
- New Guinea
- Bismarck Archipelago (With Arrowhead)
- Leyte (With Arrowhead)
- Luzon

Korean War
- UN Offensive
- CCF Intervention
- First UN Counteroffensive
- CCF Spring Offensive
- UN Summer-Fall Offensive
- Second Korean Winter

Vietnam
- Counteroffensive Phases VI and VII
- Tet 69/Counteroffensive
- Summer-Fall 1969
- Winter-Spring 1970
- Sanctuary Counteroffensive
- Consolidation I and II
- Cease-Fire

Southwest Asia
- Defense of Saudi Arabia
- Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

DECORATIONS

Presidential Unit Citation-Pleiku Province
Valorous Unit Award-Vietnam 1969
Valorous Unit Award-Fish Hook
Meritorious Unit Commendations-Pacific Theater, Pacific Theater 1944,
Philippine Presidential Unit Citation-October 1944-July 1945
Korean Presidential Unit Citation-Waegwan-Taegeu
Chryssou Ariston Andrias (Bravery Gold Medal of Greece)-Korea

247th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance)

The 247th was activated in June 1942 as the 57th Station Hospital and was activated at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma the next month. The unit was reorganized as the 247th Medical Detachment in 1945 and was inactivated in February 1946 in Tunis, North Africa. Over the next seven years, the 247th was activated and inactivated several times in Alaska and then Korea, but was reborn in May 1968 as the 247th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance) at Fort Riley, Kansas. The unit deployed, under the command of the venerable Don Murphy, to the Republic of Vietnam in the Fall of 1968 and assumed a far forward posture at Dong Tam with the 9th Infantry Division. The unit returned to the United States and was stationed at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland until the establishment of the Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California necessitated DUSTOFF support at that location.

CAMPAIGNS

Korean War
- UN Summer-Fall Offensive
- Second Korean Winter
- Korea, Summer-Fall 1952
- Third Korean Winter

Vietnam
- Counteroffensive Phases VI and VII
- Tet 69/Counteroffensive
- Summer-Fall 1969
- Winter-Spring 1970
- Sanctuary Counteroffensive
- Consolidation I and II
- Cease-Fire

The character in this cartoon, reprinted from the SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS, may well be speaking some of the wonder many felt with the recent acceptance of the Republic of Vietnam into the world's economic family. Those who served in Vietnam, however, will always have a healthy respect for the country and its people.
DUSTUFF...

Did you know that...

- Tommy Wayne Mayes, once the hero of Neumarkt and Augsberg, Germany, claims to have lost the posterior portion of his anatomy during the desert war?
- Bob East pioneered the dubious sport of bobbing for pork chops after again returning home late from manning the Tactical Command Post at Camp Bullis, Texas?
- The incorrigible Freddie Long is said to have been the first to initiate IFR flight in an OH13 helicopter, aided by such attitude indicators as a plumb bob, a bowl of water, and an irate feline?
- Famed “Original DUSTOFF” medic Billy Hughes has a priceless “oldies but goodies” record collection numbering in the multiple thousands?
- The venerable Freddie Jim Mills was recently spotted at Atlanta’s Hartsfield Airport with a lovely young lady who he immediately claimed to be a close relative?
- Michael Proctor all but refuses to leave his lovely lodgings in Corpus Christi, even in pursuit of the Perfect Taco?
- The commanders and staff of DUSTOFF Europe, dining in a three-star French restaurant in Saarguemines, were politely cordoned off from the more genteel clientele at the establishment after the second round of toasts began?
- Bill Bentley and Lloyd Thackston were the first 498th Air Ambulance Company aviators to depart Vietnam for R&R, traveling to Bangkok only hours after the advance party had arrived in the combat zone?
- The inimitable Bill Thresher gained fame, if not fortune, while assigned to instructor duty at Fort Sam Houston by:
  • Becoming the all-time leader in boomer-catching?
  • Flying a razorback bonnet high above the AMEDD Center and School by seemingly invisible lines anchored on the roof?
  • Asking his lovely wife Glenda to stop accompanying him to bass fishing tournaments because she caught far more and larger fish than Bill?
- The 326th Medical Battalion was forced to send Al Viani to Europe for advanced tactical flight instruction with the 421st Medical Battalion?

Desert DUSTOFF crew members rig a vital item of combat-critical material—a desert port-a-potty...for sling loading to a far forward tactical utilization point.

Oldtime DUSTOFFers will marvel at an article recently noted in the San Antonio Express-News with a dateline of Hanoi, Republic of Vietnam—

"In a sign of changing times, authorities have banned Vietnam's pedicabs from the main streets of Ho Chi Minh City,” the Vietnam News said Thursday.

The tricycle cabs, called cyclos, have long served as a 'poor man's taxi.' They are also popular as a leisurely way for tourists to view Vietnam's street life, seated on a plastic cushion wedged between two front wheels, the driver perched in the rear.

'Authorities say the cyclos get in the way of motorcycles and car in Ho Chi Minh City, formerly known as Saigon. They've been banned from 50 central streets,' the report said."

Editor's Note: In the early days of the conflict of Vietnam, cyclo races were a common and popular sport among aviators and crew members returning to their Tan Son Nhut Air Base lodgings from cultural excursions to such local establishments as "Cheap Charley’s," the "Salvador Bar," and the "Golden Cock." Sometimes the Vietnamese cyclo driver was allowed to ride during the races; however, he was often jettisoned as the race participants rushed to beat the curfew restrictions.
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETS ON 24 JUNE

Under the tutelage of current President Bob Romines, the Executive Council of the DUSTOFF Association met on 24 June to discuss vital issues concerning the Association and its membership. Those discussions are summarized in meeting notes as follows:

• ISSUE: AMEC/DUSTOFF Association Timing
  a. Discussion: The council discussed the issue of conducting the DUSTOFF Reunion in conjunction with the Army Medical Evacuation Conference (AMEC). The main advantages were: more active duty soldiers would attend, and the association could use the conferences’ audiovisual equipment. There were no disadvantages.
  b. Recommendation: Conduct the DUSTOFF Reunion in the weekend prior to the AMEC -- 23, 24, 25 February, 1996.
• ISSUE: Site/Frequency of the Reunion
  a. Discussion: The council discussed other locations to hold the Reunion. The council determined that no matter where the Reunion was held some members would be unhappy, so the determining factor should be a history of success. The Holiday-Inn Northwest has a history of good success.
  b. Recommendation: Conduct the DUSTOFF Reunion at the Holiday-Inn Northwest.
• ISSUE: Guest Speaker
  a. Discussion: The desire for a guest speaker at the Reunion Banquet was discussed. Most members of the council expressed a desire for a speaker but decided to wait for a target of opportunity before making the decision.
  b. Recommendation: COL Gower will determine if there will be a guest speaker and who it will be by 1 December, 1995.
• ISSUE: Reunion Committees
  a. Discussion: Committees were established to assist in the planning of the Reunion.
  b. Recommendation: Golf Tournament: Greg Griffen
  Saturday Night: Ed Taylor, Dan Gower, Byron Howlett
  Band: Bob Romines
  Hospitality Suite: Jerry Nolan
  Sunday Memorial: Bob Romines
  Speaker: Dan Gower
  Friday Night: Bob Romines
  Registration: Cindy Romines, Bill Grimes
  Publicity: Doc Kralich
  Note: Friday night will be a Happy Hour instead of a dinner.
  Golf tournament needs to start by noon.
• ISSUE: DUSTOFFer Newsletter
  a. Discussion:
  (1) Possible inflammatory article on a woman aviator was discussed. The members of the council had not seen the article so it could only be discussed in limited detail.
  (2) An insert was included that announced the dates of the Reunion.
  (3) Need to send copies of the newsletter to all active/USAR/NG units.
  (4) Send the newsletter first class and attempt to get the most current addresses on association members.
  b. Recommendation: Send the newsletters out.
• ISSUE: DUSTOFF Company Store
  a. Discussion: C.J. Molezun’s proposal letter was read. Basically, his proposal is that he wants to be the sole approved source of DUSTOFF memorabilia. In return he will give the association 10% of all DUSTOFF related sales.
  b. Recommendation: Before final approval, C.J. Molezun must provide the association with a written contract. The contract must state that either party can terminate the contract if unhappy with the other party.
• ISSUE: Back-dues Notification
  a. Discussion: The back-dues notification letter was read. The council agreed with the intent of the letter but suggested some minor changes. The changes included: re-word the first paragraph; include an ‘I quit’ option. The letter should be mailed by the end of July.
  b. Recommendation: Mail the letters with the suggested changes.
• ISSUE: Association’s Financial Records Audit
  a. Discussion: Bob Romines wanted another review of the association’s financial records by an association member with experience in the auditing business.
  b. Recommendation: Richard Claywell of 2792 Forest Point Drive, League City, TX 77573, will be asked to audit the financial records of the association.
• ISSUE: Treasurer update
  a. Discussion: The Treasurer update was read and the current financial status of the organization was given. Currently, the association has approximately $11,000.00 in a checking account. (Treasurer can provide exact numbers.) Members discussed transferring the money into an account that will provide the best possible interest rates.
  b. Recommendations: Treasurer will check out the possible options and report back.
• ISSUE: Open Discussion
  a. Discussion:
  (1) An update on Mike Toennis was given. He is doing well.
  (2) AAAA Magazine is dedicated an issue to Vietnam. Bob Romines has been asked to provide an article on DUSTOFF. Doc Kralich will assist.
  (3) Doc Kralich will write letters asking for Reunion sponsorship.
  (4) Lucas Aerospace Award nomination should be monitored by the association.
  b. Recommendation: None required.
• ISSUE: Next Meeting
  a. Discussion: Saturday, 2 December, 1995 was agreed on by all members of the executive council.
  b. Recommendation: Meet on Saturday, 2 December at the Holiday-Inn Northwest.
FROM BALLOON TO BLACK HAWK

From the pen of then Lieutenant Colonel David Lam, M.D., at the time serving as Commander of the Medical Department Activity (MEDDAC), Fort Irwin, CA, comes a series covering the U.S. Army’s role in the development of forward aeromedical evacuation. Originally published in the U.S. Army Aviation Digest in 1981 in four parts, the history will be reproduced beginning in this issue of the DUSTOFFer and continuing over a number of future issues. Dave Lam is currently serving as the Chief Surgeon, V Corps, U.S. Army, Europe, and has been aptly tutored by a number of senior MSC Aviators throughout his career.

Although aeromedical evacuation has been most recently brought to public attention as a result of its massive use during the war in Vietnam, it is not a new concept; in fact, its use predates the first heavier-than-air powered flight by the Wright Brothers in 1903!

As early as March 1784, following the balloon flight demonstrations of the Montgolfier brothers before the Medical Faculty of Montpelier, physicians began to consider the benefits their patients could gain from flight. Jean-Francois Picot edited the results of this first medical investigation into flight, theorizing that not only could patients tolerate flight, but they also would in fact benefit from the purer air encountered. Apparently no practical use was made of this novel theory for nearly a century. In 1870, during Busmarck’s siege of Paris, there was a 4-month period during which the Parisians maintained communications with the outside world by means of free-flying hot air balloons.

For the next 40 years, little was accomplished in the realm of air evacuation, but in late 1909, the concept took a great step forward, both in theory and practice. Captain George H. R. Gosman, a medical officer of the U.S. Army stationed at Ft. Barrancas, FL, conceived of a heavier-than-air aircraft specifically designed to carry patients. With the assistance of Lieutenant Albert Rhodes of the Coast Artillery Corps, he designed and constructed an aircraft. Although this design required the patient to lie without protection on the lower wing alongside the seat of the physician-pilot, it was a practical development. In January 1910, without an engine installed, the aircraft made a satisfactory first flight when towed aloft by a ground vehicle. An engine was installed, and the aircraft was successfully flown. Unfortunately, for widespread acceptance of the concept, this first powered flight ended when an oil line broke, and the plane crashed into a tree. Although they lacked funds to rebuild the airplane and continue testing, Captain Gosman and Lieutenant Rhodes felt that they had proved their point that aircraft could be built to carry patients.

Captain Gosman, firm in his belief that air evacuation was the wave of the future, went to Washington to present his theory to the War Department. He took the plans of his tested airplane and also plans he had drawn for a larger, more advanced plane. He claimed, "I clearly see that thousands of hours and ultimately thousands of patients would be saved through the use of airplanes in Air Evacuation." But he was unsuccessful in gaining acceptance of the concept of air evacuation from a War Department staff which with trepidation has purchased its first aircraft of August of 1909, and which was not to purchase another until 1911.

1988 UPDATE:

In the October 1988 issue of Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine, Colonel Lam published the article "To Pop A Balloon: Aeromedical evacuation In The 1870 Siege of Paris." It turns out that the manifests show that no wounded or sick were ever evacuated from Paris. This "historical fact" has been reprinted over a dozen times and dates back to Armstrong’s classic treatise Principles and Practice of Aviation Medicine (3rd edition). Later, in the first World War we did see the first heavier than air medical evacuation under fire and, several times during WWII, aircraft crews and actual battlefield casualties were evacuated by Sikorsky R-4 and R-6 helicopters in the Pacific.

The DUSTOFF Association has perhaps the most extensive collection of documents and photographs detailing the deployment and operations of Igor Sokorsky’s first helicopter designs.

Many authors have cited 1LT Carter Harmon’s first aircrash crew rescue but to our knowledge the first battlefield helicopter evacuation has never been detailed. Watch for a story in a forthcoming issue!
MEDEVAC PROPONENTY

The following is provided for the DUSTOFF newsletter. LTC Deets (ATCOM) provided the info on the "Q" update:

The UH-60Q program is proceeding on schedule with an exciting two years ahead. We in the Utility Helicopter contract with Sikorsky Aircraft shortly for Phase II of the program which consists of the integration and qualification effort required to type classify the aircraft. If follow on funding in the POM is successful, we anticipate the first UH-60A to UH-60Q modifications to take place in FY98.

The configuration of the "Q" was determined last year through numerous decision briefs between the AMEDDC&S, USAVNC, TRADOC and DCSOPS. The approved configuration includes an enhanced medical interior capable of carrying six litter, seven ambulatory or a combination thereof. Also, within the medical interior is a medical cabinet for storage of MESequipment, 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, Stormscope, Personnel Locator System (PLS), Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR), Multi-Function Displays (MFD/s), two Sincgars FM radios, one UHF radio, one NOE HF radio, and Improved Data Modem (IDM), and a Multi-Band 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, Army Mission Planning System (AMPS) and IDM Force XXI messages.

Additional systems include an externally mounted electric rescue hoist, cargo door bubble windows, a shite IR dual mode hoist searchlight, and emergency egress cockpit door windows.

As we work with the contractor throughout the next two years, we may expect some minor changes of the above configuration in order to standardize within the Army aviation fleet; however, the capabilities will remain.

AMEC Update:

Dates: 26 Feb-1Mar 96
Location: Holiday Inn NW, San Antonio
No central funding this year.

Modernization Update:

54th Med Co., Ft. Lewis - Jun 96
24th Med Co., Nebraska, NG - 3rd Qtr 97
112th Med Co., Maine NG - 4th Qtr 97
1002nd Med Co., Wyoming/Colorado NG - 2nd Qtr 98

These dates have a tendency to fluctuate and I have been trying to verify them, but have not met with any success.

AMEDD Aviator Pre-command Dates: The first AMEDD Aviator Precommand course was held at Ft. Rucker 17-28 Apr 95 with 13 attendees. The next course is scheduled for 15-26 Apr 96.

- Colonel Sexton

HAPNER UNCOVERED...

Art Hapner, widely known for his affections with various costumes and disguises at often inappropriate occasions, is rumored to have answered the following classified advertisement in the "Business Personals" --

CROSSDRESSERS ... Ms. Beverly's Glamour Tips (owned and operated by San Antonio's most glamorous transexual) will teach you everything you need to know about the art of crossdressing. Professional, discreet 555-5555.
**DUSTOFF – THE MOVIE... AN UPDATE**

The following was received from William Booth to provide the Association membership with an update on his progress on writing a movie script about Vietnam DUSTOFF –

The most common questions I am asked these days are, "Aren't you finished with that script yet?" and "Why the hell is it taking you so long with that script!?"

For those of you who have been wondering about the progress on the script, I am now about two-thirds through the complete revision. I decided to completely change the ending, which has caused me to make major alterations throughout the rest of the script.

The first draft of "DUSTOFF" was just over 200 pages long...the ideal length for a movie script is approximately 120 pages. The present length of the script is just under 130 pages. As you can imagine, I have had to edit out a lot of action and dialogue.

I have endeavored to present scenes which depict a variety of DUSTOFF missions...from the most routine of patient transfers to the landings on the hottest of LZs. I have tried my best to depict characters which represent each and every one of you in some way. Throughout the script, I have made very effort to make every line of dialogue, every action sequence, and every scene as "real" as possible.

So, in answer to the question, "Why the hell is it taking you so long with that script!?...It's because I am committed to writing the very best script that my abilities will permit me to write. And, until I am confident that "DUSTOFF" is as good as it can be, I'll continue to work on it. Those of you who created the DUSTOFF legacy deserve nothing less than my best efforts.

Again, thank you to all of the Association membership for your continued patience and support.

---

**AFTER TET**

Subtitled "The Bloodiest Year in Vietnam," this narrative, authored by Ronald H. Spector, had a number of relatively interesting items associated with the DUSTOFF mission and its growing legend.

Editor's Note: The basis for the author's casualty figures carried by DUSTOFF aircraft is not clear though he does include Spurgeon Neel's Medical Support of the U.S. Army in Vietnam and Pete Dorland's DUSTOFF: Army Aero Medical Evacuation in Vietnam in his bibliography. The most accurate figure is generally recognized to be just less than one million casualties evacuated, irrespective of nationality, understanding that a significant number of casualties were counted several times because they were moved several times. Such is the nature of the system –

The surprising ratio of fatalities to wounded was one indication of the high standard of medical care available to servicemen in Vietnam. In World War II about 71 percent of men who became casualties survived their wounds. In Korea the figure was 74 percent. In Vietnam over 81 percent of men wounded in battle survived.

In addition to the well-known innovation of aero medical evacuation or "dust-off," a number of other factors contributed to the excellent survival rate of Vietnam casualties. The lack of a moving front, or indeed any real front lines, and the static, repetitive style of warfare so frustrating to soldiers and strategists proved a lifesaving boon to medical care. Because of combat operations occurred in the same general area month after month, field, surgical and evacuation hospitals seldom had to be moved or relocated. This unusual stability of forward hospitals in Vietnam made it possible to install air-conditioning and sophisticated "state-of-the-art" medical equipment. "At present we have some items of equipment in Vietnam that equal what you have in Walter Reed," the U.S. Army Surgeon General declared in 1968.

Another factor was the ready availability of whole blood. In World War II, whole blood was rarely, if ever, available even at division- and corps-level hospitals. In Vietnam, stocks of whole blood, packaged in styrofoam containers, which permitted storage for forty-eight to seventy-two hours in the field, was almost always available in forward areas.

Yet it was aero medical evacuation that was the most important, as well as by far the most dramatic, innovation of the Vietnam War. The Korean War had demonstrated the potential of the helicopter as an air ambulance, and the Army had begun employing helicopters in Vietnam as early as 1962. In Vietnam, with its mountains, jungles and flooded rice paddies, and its poor and insecure roads, the helicopters proved an invaluable asset. Yet the tropical environment posed formidable challenges. The warmer the air, the less "lift" achieved by the helicopter rotor blades, and Vietnam's hot climate meant that early helicopter models often lacked the power to carry more than one or two patients at a time. With the arrival of the new and more powerful UH-1H in mid-1967, the medicinally had a machine that could perform well in Vietnam's demanding environment. The rugged UH-1H also was equipped with instruments for night and bad weather flying and carried skids rather that wheels to allow landings in rocky or swampy terrain.

Beginning in 1967, MEDEVAC helicopters were equipped with hoists from which a litter could be lowered up to 250 feet to pick up casualties in unusually rugged terrain. Although the hoist saved many lives, its use was always slow, nerve-racking and hazardous for the flight crews involved. The helicopter was obliged to remain almost stationary high above the jungle in easy view of any nearby enemy, while the litter was slowly lowered and raised. A color-coded cable told the aircraft commander how much cable he had extended. The last 50 feet were colored red. A detonator charge was needed to sever the steel cable should the helicopter find it (Continued on page 9)
THE BIRTH OF ARMY AVIATION—A MEDICAL PERSPECTIVE

Then-Lieutenant Colonel Ronald Huether (aka "Baby Huey") wrote the following article for publishing in the U.S. Army Aviation Digest in June 1989. Huey, always an ardent historian and student of the aeromedical art, displays herein a compelling perspective on the intertwining history of Army Aviation and its aeromedical arm. Since 1954, Lt. Rucker, Alabama, has had the proud tradition of being the home of modern Army Aviation, but the medical Army aviator is part of a tradition that dates back to the beginning of the Army flight program. For it was in 1910 that an Army aviator flew the first Army-owned airplane from a military installation. Lieutenant Benjamin Delaunau Foulois flew U.S. Army Aeroplane No. 1, a "Wright Flyer," from what is now the parade field at the home of medical aviation at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas.

It all started in December 1907 when President Teddy Roosevelt insisted that the U.S. Signal Corps appropriate $25,000 for the first heavier-than-air flying machine. The aircraft specifications stipulated that it must fly at a speed of 40 miles per hour, carry two people and be able to turn in all directions while in flight. An additional specification was added when the ground must be capable of being dismantled and loaded on a wagon. An important clause of the $25,000 grant was the stipulation that two Army officers be taught to fly the machine.

On 9 September 1908, Orville Wright began demonstrations of his aircraft for the Signal Corps and promptly established three flight endurance records with the longest flight lasting in excess of one hour. Based on evaluations conducted from September 1908 through July 1909, the Army decided to purchase a Wright aircraft and contracted with the Wright brothers to establish a temporary flying school at College Park, Maryland.

The first two Army trainees selected for flight school were Lieutenants Frank Lahm and Frederic Humphries; however, after Lieutenants Lahm and Humphries badly damaged the airplane, they were ordered back to their regular billets. This left LT Foulois, who had joined the College Park program in October 1909, to teach himself how to fly. After the Wright brothers repaired the aircraft, LT Foulois and the Wright aircraft were all that were left as the total Army's entire heavier-than-air flying force.

In December 1909, the War Department ordered LT Foulois to take his rebuilt plane to Ft. Sam Houston. LT Foulois explained "I would like to think that was chosen on the basis of intellectual and technical ability, but I found out later that it was my short stature, light weight and map-reading experience that had tipped the decision in my favor." LT Foulois and a crew of nine enlisted men arrived with the crated aircraft at Ft. Sam Houston in early February 1910. After a few weeks of reassembling the plane and erecting a catapult that would assist the plane during takeoffs, LT Foulois made his initial solo flight on 2 March 1909. It was a day of personal firsts as LT Foulois made his first solo landing and first crash. During this LT Foulois had the honor of commanding the only plane west of the Mississippi River.

LT Foulois' frequent flights before reveille bugle call managed to disturb the sleep of many of his comrades at Ft. Sam Houston. Several of them decided to take him out one Saturday night in the hopes that he would not bother them on Sunday morning. The festivities began in the barroom of the Menger Hotel where the object was to reduce the establishment's liquor supply. As dawn came and the soldiers returned to their tents to sleep off the effects of the previous night, LT Foulois rolled out his combat and buzzed over the tent tops.

Today, medical Army aviators do physical training on the same parade field that LT Foulois used as a runway. The commanding general of Health Services Command lives in a house where the old hangar used to be located. A monument to LT Foulois proudly stands where the old flight operations building once stood. Helicopters from the 507th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) still use the parade field as a heliport when they land in support of Brooke Army Medical Center.

The events of 1910 are still remembered and depicted at Ft. Sam Houston. The monument to LT Foulois on the parade field and a section in the Ft. Sam Houston post museum stand as proud tribute to the first home of Army Aviation.
ARMY PILOTS "LAND AT SEA"

Staff Sergeant Todd Oliver, 19th Theater Army Area Command Office of Public Affairs, wrote the following article for the KORUS Monthly—

It rocks, it rolls, it bumps, it jumps and it's not what you'd call an ideal place for Army aviators to land.

Yet that's exactly what 10 members of Korea's 3rd Medical Evacuation platoon from Camp Walker did. They landed aboard the USS Flint, more than 45 nautical miles west of Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea.

The training was designed to enable members of the platoon (called "DUSTOFF South") to become qualified to land on ships, according to Capt. Ed Zarzabal, platoon leader.

"It was meant to broaden our horizons," said Zarzabal, "It was an opportunity to go out there and cover other aspects of the military. There have been numerous times we've had to make sure you were at the right level of approach...not too high, not too low, not too fast and not too slow. It was a good experience (and) pretty interesting."

The Army's largest medical evacuation company, DUSTOFF South is responsible for all medical evacuation operations south of Seoul.

"Part of our mission is to evacuate all wounded soldiers within the Republic of Korea," said Lt. Col. Richard Agusta, 52nd Medical Battalion commander. "The Army is the only service in Korea that has dedicated medical evacuation."

The Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps all rely on "aircraft of opportunity" for tactical evacuations, according to Agusta.

"The Army provides medical evacuation support to Navy hospitals," explained Agusta. "We provide that support from shore to ship...from land-based hospitals to Navy hospital ships. The transportation is our responsibility."

"Navy vessels have tremendous medical capabilities," said Agusta. "The landing helicopter attack ship (helicopter carrier) and aircraft carriers can have up to five operating rooms and can hold more than 100 beds. Considering that, it's inherent upon us to have our crews trained to perform deck-landing operations.

According to the captain of the USS Flint, Cmdr. John Maclntyre, they were only too happy to provide the members of DUSTOFF with a place to practice.

"We're here to provide a platform for them to practice their 'seaborne' landing (skills), so that if they're ever required to land at sea -- on a rolling deck -- they'll be able to do so safely," said Maclntyre.

Although most members of DUSTOFF and the USS Flint seemed to agree that the seas were very calm, the training was still beneficial.

"It's a different environment for these guys to fly in," said Maclntyre. "You don't want to do a medical evacuation for the first time out here. You need some kind of experience so you can tell what to look for and how to look for it." (Oliver is assigned to the 19th Theater Army Area Command, Office of Public Affairs.)

**EDITOR'S PLEA**

Fellow DUSTOFFers! I need your assistance and input. Much of the material published in your DUSTOFFer Newsletter emanates from my files and from the research efforts of Joe Kralich and Bill Booth. I would really like to include a good deal of up-to-date material on AMEDD Aviation today and its future development; on AMEDD Aviation Active and Reserve Component units and personnel; and your letters and perspective on DUSTOFF...past, present and future. I need narratives, letters and pictures or cartoons.

Without your input, your newsletter will eventually become but a thing of trivial footnotes and will not embody the personality it richly deserves.

Please forward your input to the Association!
GREETINGS FROM THE LAND OF THE MORNING CALM

Lieutenant Colonel Rick Agosta, Commander of the 52d Medical battalion (Evacuation) provided several copies of The Battle Axe, the battalion newsletter which had several items of more than passing interest for all DUSTOFFers --

The 377th Medical Company's Year in Review

The 377th Medical Company continued a long tradition of dedicated service to U.S. Forces in the Korean peninsula this past year. The unit flew over 5,000 accident-free hours and completed over 600 aeromedical evacuation missions. The training tempo remained intense as the unit continued to emphasize night vision goggle and live hoist operations. In October 1994, flight crews from 3rd Flight Platoon in Taegu completed Deck Landing Qualifications aboard the USS Cowpens and the USS Flint, part of the USS Kitty hawk carrier battle group on exercises in the Sea of Japan.

The unit conducted several hoist rescues during the past year. One particularly noteworthy mission occurred on September 29, 1994: CW2 Thomas Rozanski, WO1 Daniel Mariscal, SSG Douglas Aldersen and SGT Rodney Myers were returning from a successful MEDEVAC mission when they received a request for a second urgent MEDEVAC. Two 2nd Infantry Division soldiers were injured when their vehicle overturned and rolled down the side of a mountain. Their unit relayed the grid coordinates of a landing (LZ) they had established on a pinnacle, 1/2 mile away from the patients. Under the demanding flight conditions of Night Vision Goggles (NVGs) and the North Korean border just a few kilometers away, DUSTOFF11 arrived at the LZ. Landing to the confined and unfamiliar LZ just after 2000 hours SSG Douglas Aldersen, the Flight Medic, was taken to the scene of the accident. SSG Aldersen, as the first medic on scene, performed his immediate and life saving steps while assessing the patients' condition and needs. Considering the extremely rough terrain, SSG Aldersen determined both patients needed to be hoisted out to prevent further and possible debilitating cervical spine injuries. Utilizing finely tuned crew coordination procedures, SGT Rodney Myers, the crew chief, prepared the rear of the aircraft for the hoist operation. The aircraft hovered perilously close to the side of the mountain and with fuel now critical, the crew used the rescue hoist to extract both patients. Both patients were transported to the 121st Field Hospital where they received definitive medical care for their injuries. The crew's teamwork and flawless execution of this mission is representative of numerous MEDEVAC missions and the unit's motto — ANYTIME, ANYPLACE, ANYWHERE — Dedicated Unhesitating Service To Our Fighting Forces — DUSTOFF.

We know the hardships of family separation are particularly difficult during the holidays. You can be proud of the job each soldier is doing to preserve the peace here on Freedom's Frontier. We are indebted to our families for the sacrifices they make on behalf of our service to the nation. Again, best wishes for the holidays to all our DUSTOFF families.

Spring Finally Arrives in The Land of The Morning Calm

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!...Summer approaches and I look around only to find that many of you are departing the command for new and exciting challenges. This year has been a banner year in the battalion and each of you has been a part of it. Together we have analyzed our evacuation mission responsibilities to the soldiers and families we support in peace. We have trained in the transition to war providing unparalleled air and ground evacuation support to that combat soldier and those commanders who so greatly depend on us.

(Continued on page 12)

CLOSING OUT THE FLIGHT PLAN

Colonel Richard Bentley, Ret., died earlier this year at age 74. Dick, a long time member of the DUSTOFF Association and a supporter of Army Medical Department aviation, had retired from the Army in 1978 after 36 years of distinguished service beginning in World War II. He served in his last two assignments as the Senior Medical Staff Officer for the U.S. European Command and as Director, Combat Developments, Academy of Health Sciences. Dick, affectionately known as "SOB" ("Sweet Old Bentley"), was a true friend and mentor to many generations of Medical Service Corps officers and his legacy is one of excellence and dedication.
We have adopted a systematic approach to training which emphasizes a crawl, walk and run philosophy that addresses protection of the force and allows for mission accomplishment at all levels. I could not be prouder of each and everyone of the members of this battalion and that part they have played in making this the best trained unit in the 18th Medical Command. Together you have formed a team that is unbeatable and have fostered a family spirit in your units which has made you inseparable.

I would be remiss if I didn’t take this opportunity to recognize the achievements of the battalion and the subordinate units that make this a banner year. Probably the most newsworthy, historically significant event that this battalion participated in was the repatriation of CW2 Bobby Hall from North Korea. Our ground evacuation crews led by SFC Maldonado of the 560th Medical Company waited anxiously and with great anticipation the return of Bobby Hall as he walked across conference row at Pamunjon. Our aircrew led by CW2 Zimmerman (aka “Z-man”) stood ready on the helipad at Camp Bonifis to carry Mr. Hall to the 121st General Hospital. In each case these crews, both air and ground, flawlessly executed the mission as the entire world watched on their televisions at home and at work. All members of the battalion can be proud that they had a part in this history-making event.

Another event of great importance to this battalion was when logistics section was selected as the Eighth Army unit to receive the Chief of Staff, Army Supply Excellence Award. CPT Ken Carter and SFC Vicki Gibbons led the way in demonstrating that “good logistics is combat power.”

FIRST TO CARE...HOO-AH!

Dear Fellow DUSTOFFers;

The OPTEMPO has been high since the publication of our last newsletter. Ya’ll have seen in the news about the possible deployment of U.S. military forces as part of a NATO peacekeeping mission into Bosnia. Part of that US force will be DUSTOFF units from the 421st Evacuation Battalion. I was in Germany several weeks ago and had the opportunity to make a short stop by the 236th Medical Company (AA). They were packing their gear headed for Hohenfels to start training with the rest of the Task Force. The Battalion headquarters was already at the training site, so I missed getting with LTC West, the Battalion Commander. I could see from their organization and professionalism that when they deploy, another great chapter will be added to the DUSTOFF legacy.

While B-H is the biggest item in the news, the rest of our super DUSTOFF units also continue operate at a high OPTEMPO. From Korea to Panama to CONUS, these units continue to provide the finest aeromedical evacuation operations in the world. And they are doing it with the greatest safety record ever. Of particular interest is the 214th Medical Detachment (HA) in Panama where they are performing split-based operations. They have 3 aircraft in Panama and 3 aircraft providing aeromedical evacuation support in Honduras. Difficult to synchronize but they’re doing great work.

Modernization of our aircraft continues, albeit slow. The 571st Medical Company (AA) in Fort Carson is receiving 15 UH-60’s followed by the 54th Medical Company (AA) in Fort Lewis starting in June 1996, with the 507th Medical Company (AA) in Fort Hood and the 82nd Medical Company (AA) in FY97. The National Guard early deploying DUSTOFF units are also being modernized; the 126th Medical Company (AA) in California has 5 UH-60s now and will receive 8 more in FY96 plus the 216th in Oregon receiving 9 also in FY96.

That’s all from Washington; looking forward to having another great Reunion in February. Sincerely hope everyone has marked their calendars. I know Bob Romines and his crew are planning another super get-together!

DUSTOFF!

Richard R. Beauchemin
Colonel, MSC
Aviation Consultant
EUROPE UPDATE · COLONEL WEST

The 421st Medical Evacuation is alive and well. Restassure that the battalion is busy flying, driving and providing the best medical evacuation and care that the AMEDD has to offer. With the numerous crises in Bosnia, Croatia, Russia, Africa, and the Middle East, our plate in DUSTOFF Europe is quite full.

Just as always, we are providing "Dedicated Unhesitating Service To Our Fighting Forces."

The 421st Medical Evacuation Battalion continues to reinforce relationships with the 1st Armored Division and 3rd Infantry Division. In September, the 45th also supported elements of the 3rd Infantry Division in Albania during a Partnership for Peace (PFP) and was involved in "Broken Body" in September.

In June, the 236th and 159th Medical Company supported the 501st FSB during CMTC in July, and all three of our air ambulance companies supported the 26th and 501st FSB during CMTC in August. In September, the 159th Medical Company was involved with Mountain Shield II. Currently, the three air ambulances are focused on the Maintain Eagle Exercise.

Once again, the battalion took the lead by bringing the Aeromedical Evacuation Officers' Course (2CF7) to Wiesbaden Air Base, Germany, in October. This will be the second time the battalion has invited the School of Aviation Medicine at Fort Rucker, Alabama, to teach this course in Germany.

We are also pleased to announce that one of our officers, CPT Steven Millward, was selected to receive the 1995 MSC Award of Excellence (AOE) in the Health Services Category. CPT Millward is an aeromedical evacuation officer serving as the Operations Officer at the 45th Medical Company (AA), Ansbach, Germany.

1995 MSC AWARD OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

We are proud to announce the five outstanding young officers selected to receive the 1995 MSC Award of Excellence (AOE). The AOE program recognizes the achievements of junior officers and warrant officers in five categories: Health Services (AOCs 67A00 and 67J00); Health Sciences (AOCs 67B00, 67C00, 67D00, 67E00, 67F00 and 67G00); Health Services Maintenance Technician (SS1670A); US Army Reserves; and US Army National Guard. The Active Army AOE Board met at the end of September and considered 50 nominations before selecting the three Active Army officers. These recipients will participate in the Junior Officer Week activities and will be honored at the MSC Award of Excellence/Retiree Luncheon on Thursday, 7 December at the Fort Belvoir Officers’ Club.

Health Services Category – CPT Steven Millward, Operations Officer, 45th Medical Company (AA), Ansbach, Germany. Less than one month after his arrival to Germany, CPT Millward was deployed to Somalia as the Officer-in-Charge of the 45th Medical Company’s deployment to support Operation Restore/Continue Hope. His unit flew 585 accident-free hours, evacuated over 300 patients and provided superior aeromedical evacuation support. Upon his return to Germany, CPT Millward’s leadership and knowledge of aviation operations were directly responsible for his platoon achieving 10 commendable ratings during a recent Corps aviation inspection. He has been actively involved in improving the combat readiness of his unit through multiple tough, realistic training opportunities at the Combat Maneuver Training Center (TC), where he has integrated aeromedical evacuation into rotations with the 3d Infantry Division’s Task Forces. An aggressive, proactive trainer, CPT Millward has coordinated and executed training opportunities with attach and lift aircraft at the Polygon Range in France and battle drills during training events for a forward support medical team during Operation Mountain Shield (Italy).

FLORIDA DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

In conjunction with Florida's 9th Annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion, Florida DUSTOFF will be holding its reunion 19-21 April, 1996 in Melbourne, Florida!

Besides having a chance to meet old DUSTOFF comrades, many activities are scheduled:

- Moving Wall
- Vendors of Military Collectables
- Music by "Britt Small and Festival" and "Martin and Holiday"
- Campsites reserved for DUSTOFF veterans
- Food

FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Don "Hoss" Caldwell (medic 50th MD [HA])
5760 University Blvd., #1096
Jackson, FL 32216
(904) 731-5037
17th ANNUAL REUNION OF THE DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION
23, 24, and 25 FEBRUARY 1996

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, 23 February
1200 - 1900  Registration - Holiday Inn Northwest, Room 4338
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  Cocktails - Mexican Buffet with chicken fajitas; featuring Mariachis
             Tickets required for entry and door prize eligibility - Atrium
2200        Hospitality Suites Open - Reunion badges required for entry
             Smoking: .......... Room 1003
             Non-smoking:.. Room 1118

Saturday, 24 February
0900 - 1200  Professional Meeting - Ballroom
1145         Van's depart for Spouse Luncheon - Holiday Inn Main Entrance
1200 - 1330  Lunch Break (Professional Meeting)
1215 - 1430  Spouse Luncheon - Location TBA
1330 - 1500  Business Meeting
1500 - 1700  Late Registration - Holiday Inn Northwest, Room 438
1500 - 1800  Hospitality Suites Open - Reunion badges required for entry
             Smoking: .......... Room 1003
             Non-smoking:.. Room 1118
1830 - 2000  Cocktails - Lobby Bar
2000 - 2215  Banquet - Tickets required for entry and door prize eligibility
2215        Hospitality Suites Open - Reunion badges required for entry
             Smoking: .......... Room 1003
             Non-smoking:.. Room 1118

Sunday, 26 February
0900 - 1000  Memorial Service - Ballroom
**REGISTRATION FORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member's Name</th>
<th>Spouse's Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Address</td>
<td>Military Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Phone</td>
<td>DSN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**PRICE:**

1. **DUES:**
   - Annual Dues: $15.00 + $10.00 (New member initial fee -- Past dues are $10.00 annually)
   - Life Member Dues: $100.00 (one-time payment)

**NUMBER ATTENDING:**

2. **REUNION REGISTRATION**
   - Member/Spouse Costs – $12.50 Each
   - Non-member/Guest Costs – $15.00 Each

3. **FRIDAY NIGHT**
   - TEX-MEX ICE-BREAKER – $10.00

4. **SPOUSE’S LUNCHEON** – $15.00

5. **CHUCK MATEER MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC**
   - $18.00 Club Member
   - $25.00 Non-Club Member
   - Golf Handicap:

6. **SATURDAY NIGHT REUNION DINNER** – $20.00
   - Cocktail Party – Cash Bar
   - Roast Prime Rib or Chicken Cordon Bleu
   - Beef #___ Chicken #___

**TOTAL PRICE**

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*Please make checks payable to The Dustoff Association.*

Refunds cannot be guaranteed for cancellations made after 17 February 1996.

Please mail this form with payment to: **The Dustoff Association**

P.O. Box 8091 – Wainwright Station
San Antonio, Texas 78208

The reunion will be held at The Holiday Inn – Northwest,
Loop 410 at I-10, San Antonio, Texas 78213, (210) 377-3900.

Hotel room reservations should be made directly with the hotel.
Ensure that you tell them you're with The Dustoff Association
to obtain our contracted room rate of $60.00!
NEW ENTRIES ON THE FLIGHT MANIFEST

Kyle D. Campbell*  
APO Korea  
Herbert A. Coley*  
Universal City, TX  
Robert T. Dingley*  
Pace, FL  
Clarance Harfield, Jr.*  
Big Spring, TX  
Thomas J. Jackson  
Southern Shores, NC  
Preston J. Klimper  
Security, CO  
Rodger A. Pickett  
Indialantic, FL.

Michael L. Pouncey  
Evans Mills, NY  
Quincy D. Sittingdown*  
Junction City, KS  
John C. Skarda  
Sherwood, AR  
Greg A. Snyder  
Fort Rucker, AL  
John E. Sullivan  
San Antonio, TX  
William D. Wright*  
APO Europe

*Lifetime Member

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