

Guide to the
Allen Cates Collection

.4 Linear Feet

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Special Collections Department
The University of Texas at Dallas

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
ADDITIONAL SOURCES	4
SCOPE AND CONTENT	4
PROVENANCE STATEMENT	4
LITERARY RIGHTS STATEMENT.....	4
NOTE TO RESEARCHER	4
CONTAINER LIST	5

Biographical Sketch

Allen Cates, a Vietnam veteran, served with the United States Marine Corps from 1960 until 1966 when he was honorably discharged. From July 1966 to May 1974 Cates was employed by Air America. He also served as President of the Air America Association as well as a board member with the Air America Association for five years.

Cates was a Marine Corps helicopter pilot in Vietnam from September 1964 until August 1965. During his career he received several awards: the Distinguished Flying Cross and thirteen Air Medals. Cates resigned his commission in December 1966 while serving as a flight instructor in North American T-28s at the Naval Aviation Training Command.

Within days of resigning his commission, Cates went to work for Air America. He was sent to Bangkok, Thailand for ground school training in C-47s. Within six months he was designated command pilot in the Pilatus Porter and operated out of Saigon, South Vietnam. In June 1969 he went back to Thailand, this time to Udorn, where he was assigned to the rotary wing division. While in that division, Cates flew the UH-34D, Bell UH1D, Hughes 500P, and Twin Pac UH-34D helicopters.

Serving with Air America for more than seven years, Cates managed to log more than 7,000 hours in various types of aircraft, much of it in combat. He was involved in several rescues of downed airmen in Laos, and took part in medical evacuations, many under fire. Cates actually participated in the Vietnam conflict from September 1964 to May 1974, all but one year of that time as an Air America pilot. Flying with Air America in Vietnam, Cates performed many of the same missions in the same types of aircraft as he did while serving with the Marine Corps.

Because of the missions he and other pilots and crew flew for Air America in Vietnam, and because that airline was owned by the Central Intelligence Agency, Allen Cates feels they are entitled to veteran's status or Civil Service Credit, but believes that veteran's status is the better choice of the two. Because of this, Cates is currently working to obtain this for those who served with Air America and Civil Air Transport (CAT). He maintains that Air America employees took part in paramilitary operations with the full knowledge and approval of the CIA and other United States government organizations, and thus, deserve to enjoy the same benefits of those who openly served in that conflict.

Sources

Allen Cates Collection, Box 1, Folder 1, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections Department, McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas.

Additional Sources

CAT/Air America Archives, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections Department, McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas.

Scope and Content

The Allen Cates Collection is .4 linear feet, one legal-sized manuscript box, and consists of thirty-seven folders. This collection is the result of Mr. Cates' on-going attempt to gain veteran's status for Civil Air Transport (CAT) and Air America employees.

Included in the collection are documents of formal application for veterans status, background information on Cates, historical information about CAT and Air America, copies of contracts, rules of employment, information about the various aircraft flown by CAT and Air America, and a list of people killed in action while employed by these two companies.

Provenance Statement

The Allen Cates Collection was created, compiled, and donated to the History of Aviation Collection by Allen Cates.

Literary Rights Statement

Use of this collection is limited to scholarly research only as indicated under the Fair Use clause of the United States Copyright Code. Permission to publish, copy, digitize, or in any way reproduce portions of this collection for commercial distribution, either in print or electronically, must be obtained from Allen Cates.

Note to Researcher

The material in this collection was compiled by Allen Cates from various sources in an effort to support his position to obtain veteran's status for former CAT/Air America employees. Cates may not have obtained permission from the copyright owners to use this material. Thus, it is advised that the researcher obtain permission from the various copyright owners to use this material for other than "fair use" as described in the U.S. Copyright laws.

CA66-03 Allen Cates Collection

Container List

Box 1

<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title, Date, and Description</u>
1	Formal Application. February-October 2003. Contains correspondence to George Tenet, Director of CIA, CAT/Air America Association members, Secretary of the Air Force, and the Department of Defense Civilian/Military Service Review Board.
2	Air America History (An Employee's Perspective). A four-page document by Allen Cates briefly highlighting the history of Air America.
3	Memorial Plaque. Contains an image of the CAT/Air America memorial plaque, a list of names on the plaque, a copy of the commemoration certificate presented by the CIA and signed by George Tenet, and citations for Hugh L. Grundy and Robert E. Rousselot.
4	CAT and Korean War 1950-1951: A Chronology. A fifteen-page history of CAT's participation in the Korean War. The document is broken down by specific dates that highlight major events.
5	CIA Air Operations in Laos. An article written by William M. Leary and printed from the following website: http://www.odci.gov/csi/studies/winter99-00/art7.html .
6	The Judy Porter Photograph Collection. Contains eighteen pages of thumbnail images printed from Texas Tech University's Vietnam Archive website.
7	Air America's B-26 Night Drop Project. Five page article titled "The Blue Goose and the Steel Tiger" by Frank Bonansinga printed from the <i>Air America Association</i> website.

CA66-03 Allen Cates Collection

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<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title, Date, and Description</u>
8	<p>Air America Commendation, 23 May 1970. A commendation signed by Earl W. Knight briefly describing the action that earned Cates and others this commendation, several articles by Cates and others from the <i>Air America Association</i> website and <i>The Hook</i> magazine.</p>
9	<p>The Last Day, 29 April 1975. A five page essay by Allen Cates depicting the fall of Saigon.</p>
10	<p>Summary of Revenue Contracts 1969-1973. Copies of contracts entered into by Pacific Corporation, the holding company of Air America, and the United States Air Force and the Department of State. Includes contract numbers, specifications and conditions, contract amounts, and contract dates.</p>
11	<p>Who We Were. Contains a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation for Civil Air Transport, July 1950; articles by various authors from various sources; and a Dunn and Bradstreet Analytical Report on the Pacific Corporation including reports on Air America and Air Asia reproduced from the <i>Dave Hickler Collection</i>, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections Department, The University of Texas at Dallas.</p>
12	<p>Compensation and Rules of Employment, 29 January 1973. An Air America employee's handbook describing the company rules and compensation policies. Reproduced from the <i>Jerry Fink Collection</i>, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections Department, The University of Texas at Dallas.</p>
13	<p>Personnel Manual. Folder is empty.</p>
14	<p>Seniority List, 1946-1976. Listed in order of date of hire. List is divided as follows: Seniority List; Flight Engineers & Flight Navigators in Seniority Sequence; and Air Freight Specialists, Flight Mechanics, Air Freight Dispatchers, & Flight Attendants.</p>

CA66-03 Allen Cates Collection

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<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title, Date, and Description</u>
15	KIA's (Killed in Action). A list, Compiled by Dudley W. Foster, of men killed in action that were employed by Civil Air Transport, Air America, Air Asia, and Southern Air Transport.
16	<i>Watts v. Office of Personnel Management-Federal Court, 1987.</i> Watts filed a claim with the CIA for retirement benefits and was determined to be ineligible. This court case represents his appeal to be declared eligible. The second appeals case is <i>Marian S. Bevans v. Office of Personnel Management</i> . She is appealing her ineligibility for survivor benefits based upon her late husband's employment with a proprietary company of the CIA
17	Felix Smith Letter Regarding Training in C-119 and C-130 Aircraft. A one-page letter from Felix Smith to Allen Cates explaining his training in C-119 and C-130 aircraft.
18	Rusk Letter to Embassy in Laos, 1964. Cable from Secretary of State Dean Rusk to the United States Embassy in Vientiane, Laos discussing the use of Air America pilots in SAR (search and rescue) operations in Thailand and Laos.
19	Search and Rescue in Southeast Asia, 1961-1975. Article by Capt. Earl H. Tilford, Jr., USAF printed from the <i>Airpower</i> website, Maxwell Air Force Base.
20	Bored Over Laos. Article by LaDonne McCarthy about the rescue of two downed Navy airman by Air America helicopter pilot Sam Jordon.
21	21 st SOS Over the Fence. Article about Nakhon Phanom during the Secret War 1962-1975.
22	The Plain of Jars. Article from <i>Air Force Magazine Online</i> describing secret war operations in Laos against the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao.
23	Invaders for Covert Operations in Laos. Unsigned article about Project Mill Pond.

CA66-03 Allen Cates Collection

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24	American Diplomacy. Article copied from <i>American Diplomacy</i> website regarding a press release titled <i>U.S. Foreign Relation Series, Laos Volume (1964-1968)</i> , released by the Department of State.
25	The USAF in Thailand During the War in Southeast Asia. Article by Michael Wilson describing Air Force operations in Thailand. An online database written by Joe Leeker titled <i>The Aircraft of Air America</i> . Note: Dr. Leeker assigned the copyright to the Special Collections Department, McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas.
26	“Flight Mechanic Cates” by Allen Cates and Judith E. Porter. Article about Air America flight mechanics taken from the <i>Air America Association</i> website. The rest of the folder contains more of the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
27	Beginning of the End-Missions Flown. A brief description of the last day when Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese Army. The rest of the folder contains more of the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
28	Hughes 500. This folder contains information on the Hughes 500 helicopter and the Boeing Chinook. This information is from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
29	Air America Feature Stories-History. Contains an article by John Wiren titled “It Takes Five to Tango” taken from the <i>Air America Association</i> website and information on the North American T-28 taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
30	Helio H-395 Super Couriers. Contains information on the Helio H-395 Super Couriers taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
31	Lockheed C-130 Hercules. Contains information on the Lockheed C-130 taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.

CA66-03 Allen Cates Collection

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<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title, Date, and Description</u>
32	“The Beginning of the End” by Captain Ed Adams. An article by Captain Ed Adams about one of the last fixed-wing planes out of Vietnam, a newspaper article by Michael Doyle regarding the quest to obtain benefits for civilian pilots, and additional information taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
33	DeHavilland Canada DHC-6 Twin Otters. Information on this aircraft taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
34	“The Fall of Saigon, April 1975” by Fred Walker. An article by Captain Fred Walker depicting the last days before the fall of Saigon and information on C-47 aircraft taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
35	“A Daily Adventure on Friday, May 2, 1969” by John Kirkley. An article by John Kirkley about air drops and C-123 aircraft taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
36	Beech/Volpar Turbo Beech 18. Information on the above mentioned aircraft taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.
37	Douglas B-26/on Mark RB-26K. Information on the above mentioned aircraft taken from the <i>Aircraft of Air America</i> publication by Joe Leeker.