Cates, Allen E.

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on October 12, 2017.
English (eng)
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

First revision by Patrizia Nava, CA. 2017-09-20.
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</table>
Summary Information

Repository: Special Collections and Archives Division, History of Aviation Collection.
Title: Allen E. Cates Papers
ID: CA066-03
Date [inclusive]: 1999-2008
Date [bulk]: 2003-2006
Physical Description: 3.8 Linear Feet (Two manuscript boxes, one framed item)
Language of the Material: English
Language of the Material: Collection is in English.
Abstract: Allen Cates served with the United States Marine Corps from 1960 until 1996. After his discharge he joined Air America as a pilot from July 1966 to May 1974. During his eight years with Air America he logged 7,000 hours in various aircraft both fixed-wing and helicopters. He was active in Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam, and flew rescue missions and evacuations, many under fire. Allen Cates also served as a President of the Air America Association, as well as a board member for five years. Allen Cates is currently working to obtain veteran's status for those pilots who served with Air America. Much of the material in this collection represent items he collected as support for this goal.

Citation

Allen E. Cates Papers, Document name or type, Folder number, Box number, Series number, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections and Archives Division, Eugene McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas.

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Biographical Sketch

Allen E. 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 and a board member 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 which was in combat. He was involved in several rescues of downed airmen in Laos, and took part in medical evacuations, often 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.

Due to the nature of the missions he and other pilots and crew flew for Air America in Vietnam, and because the airline was owned by the Central Intelligence Agency, Allen Cates feels they are entitled to veteran's status or Civil Service Credit, believing 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.

Source

"Allen E. Cates Papers", Box 1, Folder 1, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections and Archives Division, Eugene McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas.
contracts, rules of employment, information about the various aircraft flown by CAT and Air America, a list of people killed in action while employed by these two companies, and other materials that were created and/or collected by Allen E. Cates in his on-going attempt to gain veteran's status for Civil Air Transport (CAT) and Air America employees. The framed item was commissioned by Allen E. Cates. The Allen E. Cates Papers are housed in two manuscript boxes and one framed item totaling 3.8 linear ft.

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**Series Description**

This collection is arranged on the folder and item level by topic.

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**Administrative Information**

**Publication Statement**

Special Collections and Archives Division, History of Aviation Collection.

800 West Campbell Road, MC33
Richardson, Texas 75080-3021
LIBSPCO@utdallas.edu

**Revision Description**

The first revision was a conversion to ArchivesSpace. 2017-09-20

**Provenance**

The *Allen E. Cates Papers* were donated to the History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections and Archives Division, Eugene McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas, in multiple accessions by Allen Cates from 2003 through 2012.

**Literary Rights Statement**

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. The copyright to the framed item remains with the aviation artist Joe Kline.

**Access Restrictions**

Materials in this collection are open for research.

Additional Sources

For more information about the entitlement to veteran's status view the *Fred Walker Papers* CA010-07, the *Dave Hickler Papers* CA054-03, the *Jerry Fink Collection* CA002-93, and other collections within the CAT/Air America Archives. A second copy of the framed item is at Texas Tech University, The Vietnam Archives.

Controlled Access Headings

- CAT/Air America Archives
- Air America.
- United States. Marine Corps.
- Curtiss CW-20 (Transport plane).
- Choctaw (Military transport helicopter)
- Sikorsky helicopters.
- Cates, Allen E., Mr.

**Image ID**

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Images in this collection are identified by a unique number that provides information about the format, record group, collection, series, box, folder, and image numbers. Please use this number when ordering reproductions of images from this collection.

Record Group Code

1 = CAT/Air American Archives
2 = Doolittle Archives
3 = Lighter than Air Archives
4 = George H. Williams, Jr., World War I Aviation Library
5 = History of Aviation Archives
6 = University Archives
7 = HAC Stacks
8 = WPRL Stacks
9 = Cecil H. and Ida M. Green Collection
10 = Belsterling Collection
11 = Closed Stacks
12 = Unidentified
13 = Chance Vought Archives
14 = Twirly Birds Archives

Image Format Code

P = Photograph/Postcard
S = Slide
N = Negative
T = Positive Transparency
B = Black and White
C = Color

Example: 1AC-1-1-PC1
Images archived in plastic image holders may also have a location code in the format: 1/TL. In this example, the number is the sheet number and the letters indicate the top left position on the sheet. Position indicators are T = top, L = left, R = right, M = middle, and B = bottom. Position indicators may be combined to describe the position on the sheet, as shown in this example.

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<th>Title/Description</th>
<th>Instances</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Formal Application, 2003-01-2003-10</td>
<td>box 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date [inclusive]: 2003-01-2003-10</td>
<td>folder 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> 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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air America History (An Employee's Perspective), Undated</td>
<td>box 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date: Undated</td>
<td>folder 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> Document written by Allen Cates briefly highlighting the history of Air America.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Plaque, 2003-11-08</td>
<td>box 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date: 2003-11-08</td>
<td>folder 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> 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</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
George Tenet, and citations for Hugh L. Grundy and Robert E. Rousselot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Physical Description</th>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAT and Korean War 1950-1951: A Chronology, Undated</td>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>Narrative highlighting the history of CAT's participation in the Korean War. The document is broken down by specific dates that highlight major events.</td>
<td>box 1</td>
<td>folder 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Judy Porter Photograph Collection, 2003-05-21</td>
<td>2003-05-21</td>
<td>Printed thumbnail images from Texas Tech University's Vietnam Archive website.</td>
<td>box 1</td>
<td>folder 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air America's B-26 Night Drop Project, 2003-05-13</td>
<td>2003-05-13</td>
<td>Article titled <em>The Blue Goose and the Steel Tiger</em> by Frank Bonansinga printed from the Air America Association website.</td>
<td>box 1</td>
<td>folder 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air America Commendation, 23 May 1970, 2003-05-08</td>
<td>2003-05-08</td>
<td>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 Air America Association website and The Hook magazine.</td>
<td>box 1</td>
<td>folder 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Last Day, 29 April 1975, Undated</td>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>Essay by Allen Cates depicting the fall of Saigon.</td>
<td>box 1</td>
<td>folder 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Revenue Contracts 1969-1973, Undated</td>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>box 1</td>
<td>folder 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who We Were, 2003-09-16</td>
<td>2003-09-16</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>box 1</td>
<td>folder 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analytical Report on the Pacific Corporation including reports on Air America and Air Asia reproduced from the *Dave Hickler Papers*, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections and Archives Division, Eugene McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas.

Compensation and Rules of Employment, 29 January 1973, Undated

**Date:** Undated

**Physical Description:** An Air America employee's handbook describing the company rules and compensation policies. Reproduced from the *Jerry Fink Collection*, History of Aviation Collection, Special Collections and Archives Division, Eugene McDermott Library, The University of Texas at Dallas.

Personnel Manual

**Physical Description:** Folder is empty.

Seniority List, 1946-1976, Undated

**Date:** Undated

**Physical Description:** Listed in order of date of hire. List is divided as follows: Seniority List; Flight Engineers and Flight Navigators in Seniority Sequence; and Air Freight Specialists, Flight Mechanics, Air Freight Dispatchers, and Flight Attendants.

KIA's (Killed in Action), 2003-06-27

**Date:** 2003-06-27

**Physical Description:** 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.


**Date [inclusive]:** 1987-1990

**Physical Description:** 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 *Marian S. Bevans v. Office of Personnel Management*, where Bevans appeals her ineligibility for survivor benefits based upon her late husband's employment with a proprietary company of the CIA.

Felix Smith Letter Regarding Training in C-119 and C-130 Aircraft, 2003-08-12

**Date:** 2003-08-12

**Physical Description:** Letter from Felix Smith to Allen Cates explaining his training in C-119 and C-130 aircraft.

Rusk Letter to Embassy in Laos, 1964

**Date:** 1964

**Physical Description:** 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.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Physical Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bored Over Laos, Undated</td>
<td>Undated</td>
<td>Article by LaDonne McCarthy about the rescue of two downed Navy airmen by Air America helicopter pilot Sam Jordon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st SOS Over the Fence, 2003-08-12</td>
<td>2003-08-12</td>
<td>Article about Nakhon Phanom during the Secret War 1962-1975.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plain of Jars, 1999-06</td>
<td>1999-06</td>
<td>Article from Air Force Magazine Online describing secret war operations in Laos against the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invaders for Covert Operations in Laos, 2003-08-12</td>
<td>2003-08-12</td>
<td>Unsigned article about Project Mill Pond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flight Mechanic Cates by Allen Cates and Judith E. Porter, 2003-09-19</td>
<td>2003-09-19</td>
<td>Article about Air America flight mechanics taken from the Air America Association website. The rest of the folder contains more of The Aircraft of Air America publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Beginning of the End-Missions Flown, 2003-09-13
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Physical Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-09-13</td>
<td>A brief description of the last day when Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese Army. The rest of the folder contains more of <em>The Aircraft of Air America</em> publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hughes 500, Undated</td>
<td>This folder contains information on the Hughes 500 helicopter and the Boeing Chinook. This information is from <em>The Aircraft of Air America</em> publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 28</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Air America Feature Stories-History, 2003-09-19</td>
<td>Contains an article by John Wiren titled &quot;It Takes Five to Tango&quot; taken from the <em>Air America Association</em> website and information on the North American T-28 taken from <em>The Aircraft of Air America</em> publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 30</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lockheed C-130 Hercules, Undated</td>
<td>Contains information on the Lockheed C-130 taken from <em>The Aircraft of Air America</em> publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Beginning of the End&quot; by Captain Ed Adams, 2003-09-19</td>
<td>An article 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 <em>The Aircraft of Air America</em> publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeHavilland Canada DHC-6 Twin Otters, Undated</td>
<td>Information on the above aircraft taken from <em>The Aircraft of Air America</em> publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Fall of Saigon, April 1975&quot; by Fred Walker, 2003-09</td>
<td>An article by Captain Fred Walker depicting the last days before the fall of Saigon and information on C-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box 1 folder 34</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
a aircraft taken from The Aircraft of Air America publication by Joe Leeker.

"A Daily Adventure on Friday May 2, 1969" by John Kirkley, 2003-09-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: 2003-09-19</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**Physical Description:** Article by John Kirkley about air drops and C-123 aircraft taken from The Aircraft of Air America publication by Joe Leeker.

Beech/Volpar Turbo Beech 18, Undated

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date: Undated</th>
</tr>
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**Physical Description:** Information on the above mentioned aircraft taken from The Aircraft of Air America publication by Joe Leeker.

Douglas B-26/on Mark RB-26K, Undated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: Undated</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**Physical Description:** Information on the above mentioned aircraft taken from The Aircraft of Air America publication by Joe Leeker.

Group Application for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status Eligibility – Folder 1, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: 2004</th>
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</thead>
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**Physical Description:** Material collected by Allen Cates to support application for status. Contains cover letters, Operations Plan for Laos, and narrative of the Fall of Site 85.

Group Application for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status Eligibility – Folder 2, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: 2004</th>
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Group Application for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status Eligibility – Folder 3, 2004

<table>
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<th>Date: 2004</th>
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</table>


Group Application for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status Eligibility – Folder 4, 2004

<table>
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<th>Date: 2004</th>
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**Physical Description:** Material collected by Allen Cates to support application for status. Contains CHECO SAR Operations in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reconsideration of Request for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status Eligibility, 2005</td>
<td>box 2</td>
<td>folder 5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong> 2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> Material collected by Allen Cates to support application for status. Contains cover letters, Truman Doctrine speech, chapters one and two of <em>The Pentagon Papers</em>, CHECO Report: Fall of Site 85, and CAT/AAM Combat Losses in China and Southeast Asia.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsideration of Request for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status Eligibility – Addendum Evidence, 2006</td>
<td>box 2</td>
<td>folder 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong> 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> Material collected by Allen Cates to support application for status. Contains cover letters, <em>The Greatest Airlift</em>, <em>The Story of Combat Cargo</em>, <em>The CIA's Secret War in Laos</em>, <em>Shadow War</em>, letter from D. Larry Fraser, excerpts from <em>At War in the Shadow of Vietnam</em>, letter from Mike LaDue, article and photographs by Hubert Van Es, photos taken by Judy Porter.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebuttal to Dr. Wolf's Comments on Reconsideration of Request for Active Service Determination and Veteran Status, 2006</td>
<td>box 2</td>
<td>folder 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong> 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> Material collected by Allen Cates to support application for status. Contains information rebutting and criticizing the claims of Dr. Richard Wolf of the Air Force Historical Studies Office.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Air America's Use of UH-34D, H-53 in Laos, 2002</td>
<td>box 2</td>
<td>folder 8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong> 2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> Excerpts from <em>The Aircraft of Air America</em> publication by Joe Leeker.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence, 1974-05</td>
<td>box 2</td>
<td>folder 9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong> 1974-05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> Correspondence between Allen E. Cates and Air America, Inc. regarding termination, due to reduction-in-force, and letters of recommendation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air America Sikorsky (S-58) UH-34D Choctaw H-53 helicopter rescuing a downed United States military pilot in Laos., 2008</td>
<td>object 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date:</strong> 2008 <em>(approximate)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Description:</strong> 37x25x1 painting by aviation artist Joe Kline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>