

A native of Southern California, Randy Mains's life reads like a fast-paced adventure thriller. At 22 years old, Mains flew 1042 combat hours during his one-year tour in Vietnam, where he was awarded, twenty-seven Air Medals and the Bronze Star Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

His 13,000 hour, forty-three-year aviation career first took him to the Australian Outback where he lived on a 1632-square-mile cattle ranch herding cattle by helicopter and delivering meat by small fixed-wing aircraft to Aboriginal settlements in the Northern Territory. It was while cattle mustering that he survived a fiery helicopter crash.

In Australia he and his boss bought, sight unseen, a Cherokee 6 airplane that had crashed in the remote Simpson Desert where they rebuilt her where she lay, flying her out like a scene out of the movie *Flight of the Phoenix*.

Mains has flown seismic survey in the Bell Jet Ranger and heli-rig work in the S-58T over the sweltering jungles of Papua New Guinea.

Mains took a job as a senior instructor pilot teaching instructors to be instructors for Bell Helicopter International in Iran for two-and-a-half years prior to the Islamic revolution and managed to flee the country on the last commercial charter flight out of the country.

Back in the States for only a few hours he was hired on to become one of the early pioneers of HEMS in America trying to prove to a doubting public and skeptical medical community that the helicopter could be used in peacetime to save lives like he'd seen it done so successfully in the battle field in Vietnam.

In 1980, he was sent to San Diego by his company to set up University of California San Diego's Life Flight program where he flew for five years. While there the program became the first single-pilot IFR HEMS program in America operating from a hospital helipad.

While flying HEMS in San Diego, Mains acquired his California Emergency Medical Technician certification after seeing a need for an extra pair of hands at the accident scenes to which he flew the medical teams.

In 1982, Mr. Mains was selected to receive the first annual Golden Hour Award, recognizing him for his contributions to furthering the helicopter air ambulance concept in America.

Following his deep passion to become a writer, while working full time as chief pilot for Life Flight, Mains attended San Diego State University full time, earning a degree in Journalism and a minor in English Creative Writing.

Mains's first published article Life and Death—an EMS Pilot's Viewpoint won Rotor and Wing magazine an award for editorial excellence - the first literary award the magazine had ever won.

In November, 1984, Mains was asked to join the faculty of the American Society of Hospital Based Emergency Aeromedical Services to speak on a panel of EMS pilots, The Go No Go Symposium, during the annual HEMS convention held in New Orleans that year.

In December 1984 Mains was offered a job in the Sultanate of Oman as a uniformed Major in the Royal Oman Police Air Wing to set up a country-wide HEMS system. Mains lived and worked in Oman for thirteen years flying as a line pilot and head of their flight training department.

Desperate to get the word out that if something was not done to stop the terrible HEMS accident rate back in America to put an end to more flight crews losing their lives, shortly after leaving San Diego to take the job in Oman, Mains set about writing his first book, a novel entitled The Golden Hour, published in 1989.

In 1989, while working in Oman, he began writing what would become his highly successful second book entitled, *Dear Mom I'm Alive—Letters Home from Blackwidow 25* detailing his one-year tour in Vietnam as a combat helicopter pilot that has now been optioned to be made into a movie.

An avid sailor since we was 12, Mains retired from his job in Oman at age 51 to go sailing for a year on his 42' cutter-rigged sloop *Ocean Spirit*.

Mains was brought out of retirement two years later when he was recruited by a friend to fly a twenty-place Bell 214ST as a HEMS pilot for the king of Saudi Arabia in Jeddah off the kings 500' yacht which he did for three years.

Mains left Saudi to take a job with Abu Dhabi Aviation where he currently works a six-week on six-week off schedule, flying men and equipment to offshore oil fields in the Persian Gulf. He is also a company type rating instructor and flight examiner and operates the 412 EP flight simulator in Dubai training and examining pilots for the company.

Mains has recently completed his third book entitled, *Journey to the Golden Hour*, a sequel to *Dear Mom I'm Alive* the story picking up where *Dear Mom I'm Alive* left off. The book takes the reader on the journey Mains took beginning the first day he leaves the Army in 1971, 14-months after coming home from Vietnam, to becoming a pioneer in America's HEMS industry in what has officially become the most dangerous job in America.