ALAMO SCOUTS
HISTORICAL
FOUNDATION, INC.

http://www.alamoscouts.org Clearwater, Florida 33765

October 2012 – Newsletter

Volume I, No. 1

Effective July 16, 2012, the Alamo Scouts Association (ASA) was dissolved and reconstituted as the Alamo Scouts Historical Foundation (ASHF). For 30 years our beloved and comfortable ASA has ebbed and flowed, shrunk and grown, and dutifully and nobly served its founders' raison d'être—namely, to assemble Alamo Scouts of World War II and their families every year or two, to revisit friendships forged in war, to cement them in time of peace, and to perpetuate and illuminate the legacy of one of America's smallest and most accomplished military units. It has done that and more. But as a great bard once wrote, "What's in a name?" Is this name change "much ado about nothing," or have we simply "lighted the way to a fool's dusty death" or fomented the irrevocable butcher of a sacred cow? "Methinks not."

The Alamo Scouts Historical Foundation, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, is an evolutionary step forward with the primary mission of funding historical research efforts, perpetuating a complete and accurate legacy of the Alamo Scouts through ongoing educational programs, and ensuring the inclusion and appropriate portrayal of the Alamo Scouts in national level museums. The initial goal of the ASHF is to raise $100,000 through corporate and private gifts and through the sale of Alamo Scouts merchandise to achieve established aims. Given the poor economy the past few years, it is believed that the name change projects a more established organization with a clearly defined and dedicated mission. Moreover, the name change makes us more competitive with similar organizations and more attractive to prospective donors, lending credence to "that which we call a rose [Association] by any other name would smell as sweet."

However, there might be some who still like the old name. Ah, and "there's the rub!" In 1980 when the Alamo Scouts Association was formed, regular gasoline was $1.19 a gallon, a first class postage stamp cost .15 cents, the average price of a loaf of bread was .53 cents, and the Alamo Scouts were credited with about 60 missions. A few years later, VCR tapes were the rave and cell phones were slightly smaller than a World War II Walkie-talkie, and the tally of Alamo Scouts missions had increased to about 70. Today, a cellphone fits in our palms, takes mega-million pixel photos, opens our garage door, and holds more data than the computers that put man on the moon. Our gasoline is now unleaded and runs about $4 a gallon; the cost of bread and stamps has tripled; and nobody respects their parents anymore! But at the same time, the Alamo Scouts are now credited with around 112 missions. True, the world has changed—for the good and for the not so good. But we too have changed. For the most part, Lake Wobegone has dried up, and we must face facts. The hits of our youth are now the oldies and as much as we deny it, "times, they are a changin."

The metamorphosis from the ASA caterpillar into ASHF butterfly has just begun, and there will be bumps and growing pains along the way, but in the long run, with the passing of time and the attrition of its core members, the ASA had to either evolve or "simply fade away." One of the world's preeminent philosophers, Yogi Berra, once quipped that "the future ain't what it used to be." No, Yogi, it's better. But as with anything, it's all how one looks at it. *–Lance Zedric*

A long Hot Summer

Due to my move from Tucson, Arizona to Clearwater, Florida, I had to put off producing the newsletter until I was finished moving. I spent three weeks in August looking for a house to buy in the Tampa Bay area. Found one at the last minute. While I was there I also found a nice place to have the 2013 reunion. Holiday Inn Harbourside on Indian Rocks Beach. The hotel sits on the intercoastal waterways a short walk for the beaches on the Gulf of Mexico, which is an ideal place for our reunion and a vacation. Continue on to the next page for more reunion information. *–Russ Blaise*

A Review of the 2012 Reunion

by: Lance Zedric

Those old enough to remember the theme song (sung by Perry Como) from the television program, "Here Come the Brides," from the late 1960s could appreciate the 2012 Alamo Scouts Association reunion. For five days (despite two days of rain), all in attendance could attest that, "The bluest skies you've ever seen [were] in Seattle." Kathi and Jack Henderson truly pulled out all the stops and hosted a grand event, which was the second such affair to be held in their home city—the first being in 1983. Now—like then—history was made.

Reunion Host Kathi Henderson gets everybody ready for the bus ride to Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

Day 1 - Wednesday was check in at the cozy Red Lion Hotel conveniently located near the airport. Kathi had arranged a wonderful 3-room hospitality suite--replete with all the goodies and libations that everyone has come to expect at Alamo Scouts reunions. By the time most guests had arrived, Jack and the hotel staff had gleefully loaded the bathtub with beer, soda, water, ice and everything else they could stuff in there reminiscent of a college bash. But none of the guests-nor the author of this story--would know anything about that. Wink, wink.

One of the highlights of check-in was the arrival of everyone's favorite British sweetheart, Christine McGowen, who since last year, had reinvaded England to stay, followed by Lee Anne Kleeberger, Russ Blaise, Tim and Megan Thompson, and others, only to be joined later by Audrene, Jo, and others later that night. A full listing of attendees appears at the end of the article.

Day 2 - Thursday. Whoever ordered the weather got it right! A comfortable high of 75 degrees, no humidity, plenty of sunshine, and a cool breeze to top it off. The day got off to a roaring start with a trip on a full size yellow school bus, the likes of which many had not ridden since the Kennedy administration or before. Twenty-three hardcore "reunion goers" piled on with Mary, our driver, and journeyed south to the former Ft. Lewis, since renamed Joint Base Lewis-McChord, where we were greeted by Capt. Allison Aguilar, the 1st Special Forces Group (1SFG) Public Affairs Officer (PAO) and inaugurated into the daily workings of the 1SFG. Our first stop was a hands-on tour of the Stryker Vehicle, the 3 million dollar U.S. Army infantry attack vehicle produced by General Dynamics. After crawling in, over and around the several types of vehicles and targeting each other with laser guided, heat sensing weapons, and other high-tech features, we were ushered to the Green Beret chow hall for a delicious lunch, which included, among other things, a Soul Food Special replete with half a fried chicken, breaded pork chops, black-eyed peas, cornbread, greens, and the rest of the garden, all lovingly cooked in grease. Delicious! But even more enjoyable was that the group had the pleasure of sharing a meal with several active duty Special Forces soldiers who serve all over the world. A nice touch.

Stryker Vehicle

After lunch we were met by Capt. Aguilar's husband, Capt. Anthony Auguilar, and by Capt. Noel Sioson, grand- nephew of Alamo Scout Rafael Ileto, and by SSG Aubrey Rundle, the 1SFG photojournalist who was Aubrey on the spot all day. Then was it off for some heavy weightlifting at the world-class 1SFG gym, a remarkable complex where wounded warriors receive physical therapy and where active duty SF soldiers train to deploy all over the world. Our next stop was the nearby 1SFG Memorial, where we were joined for a meet and greet with Col. Brian Vines, the Group Commander and scheduled speaker at the ASA banquet. Vines then presented the Alamo Scouts in attendance with a 1SFG coin.

ASHF Treasurer Audrene Hall Burress inside checking out the Stryker Vehicle.

For many, the best was saved for last. We were treated to a wonderful demonstration by the 1SFG Dog Unit starring the bilingual Rico from Holland--who has served in Afghanistan

[Continued on next page]

and sniffed out roadside bombs and IEDs while saving American lives and having fun all for the mundane reward of a green tennis ball. Capt. Ileto concluded the guided part of the tour and presented a 1SFG coin to Alamo Scout Bob Buschur, guerrilla Eunice Carvajal, and to a family member of each Scout thus represented, including Lee Anne Kleeberger, widow of Ralph Kleeberger from PT-379.

But that wasn't all. The group was then shuttled off to the Ft. Lewis Museum and enjoyed more climbing over, on, and around WWII era tanks, halftracks, missiles, trucks, helicopters and other various and sundry war trophies. Following a stop at the local Circle K for snacks, we reboarded our yellow submarine and bounced, shook, and shimmied back to the hotel with beautiful Mt. Ranier to our right. The rest of the afternoon and evening was spent in and around the hospitality room and trying to process all that we had seen and done during the day.

Capt. Noel Ileto (right) presents a 1SF unit coin to Les McConnell. Jerome Ward looks on.

1SFG Dog Unit starring the bilingual Rico from Holland.

Day 3 - Friday was a free day. Some visited family, a few toured the Boeing plant or went on a day-long tour with Kathi to various Seattle attractions, while others enjoyed the hospitality room, caught up on sleep, and enjoyed the melodic droll of Seattle's top product--rain. But what is Seattle without rain? The "greenest hills you've ever seen" don't get that way just on sunshine. Naturally, the hospitality suite was the center of activity—with enough mixed nuts, hors d' oeuvres, and various and sundry finger foods and drinks to feed a battalion.

Young Gabriel Carvajal looks through the scope of an M50 sniper rifle.

Day 5 - Saturday kicked off with the annual business meeting where general business was conducted, old business rehashed, new business introduced, and Patty Frisk's delicious lemon curd thoroughly enjoyed. The motion was made and passed that next year's reunion would be held in the Tampa area hosted by none other than Russ Blaise, who "slipped the surly bonds" of Tucson for the more moderate clime of the Sunshine State. Afterwards, family caught up on visiting, took short day trips, and prepared for the signature event of the week--the Saturday banquet, which was kicked off with the traditional Director's Reception, followed by several quick photo ops with Scouts, family, and friends, including an appearance by Ollie Roesler and his wife, Babe, and their daughter. As with most everything, the banquet meal was excellent and featured steak in mushroom gravy, red mashed potatoes, bleu cheese salad, salmon in cream sauce, vegetable medley, peach cobbler, fruit, and other goodies.

The lion's share of reunion attendees enjoy a photo op with soldiers of the 1st Special Forces Group. Alamo Scout Bob Buschur is seated in the front row.

Colonel Vines punctuated the evening with a lively slideshow on Special Forces operations in the Pacific and the role of Special Forces around the world. Afterward, guests snapped last-minute

[Continued on next page]

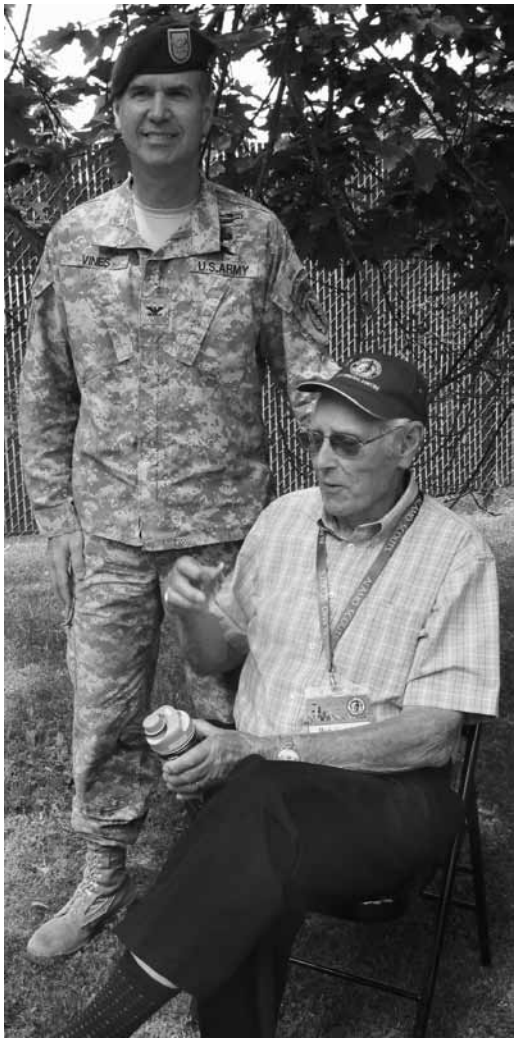
photos and hobnobbed before re-ascending to the hospitality room for another two hours of merriment and goodbyes until physical and mental energies gave out

Day 5 - Sunday was a travel day. Some left early while others shared a last breakfast and enjoyed a few more laughs to tide them over for next year. Everyone left Seattle with something, but old Perry said it best (and feel free to sing along), when he crooned, "Like a beautiful child, growing up, free an' wild--Full of hopes an' full of fears, full of laughter, full of tears --Full of dreams to last the years, in Seattle. . . in Seattle!" See everyone next year! *– Lance Zedric*

Colonel Vines giving his slideshow presentation during the banquet.

Alamo Scout Ollie Roesler

Lance is targeted by Audrene on the Stryker Vehicle weapons system.



Buschur and Vines--Special Forces past and present.

Christine McGowen and Noel Ileto discuss the finer points of scouting.

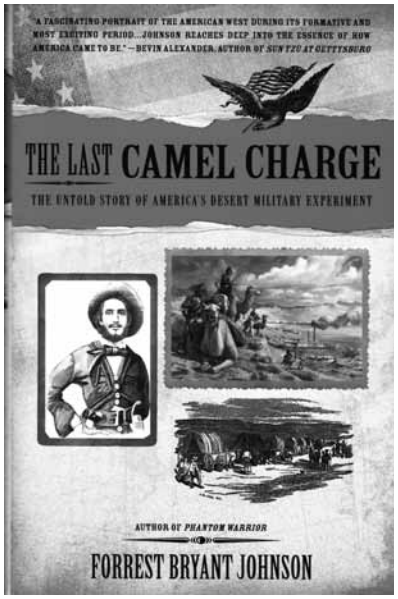
1983 Seattle Reunion

A flashback photo from the 1983 Seattle Reunion. L-R front: Mayo Stuntz, (UI), (UI), Zeke McConnell, Bob Sumner, John McGowen. L-R back: (UI), Hal Hard, (UI), Gil Cox, Bill Littlefield, Irv Ray. Can anyone help ID some of UI Scouts? Some of the other attendees were Pete Vischansky, George Derr, Roy Donnette, Tom Siason, Herb Ott, Red Williams, Will Wismer, Glenn Heryford, Roy Corpuz, and Ollie Roesler.

THE LAST CAMEL CHARGE
Book Review
By Lance Zedric

The Last Camel Charge: The Untold Story of America's Desert Military Experiment by Forrest Bryant Johnson (Berkley, 2012), is everything you wanted to know about American history from 1820 to the Civil War wrapped around the U.S. Army Camel Corps like a pig in a blanket. That's right—Camel Corps!

Born from the need to explore and traverse the wild, dangerous and unforgiving deserts of the American Southwest and the Utah Territory in the mid-1800's, the U.S. military undertook a bold and radical experiment and purchased camels to bear the burden of transporting men and materiel across the Mojave, and other inhospitable areas, and to serve in battle when needed, which they did into the Civil War (tiny spoiler alert). These exotic (and dirty) beasts were better suited to desert travel than horses or mules and were virtually sun resistant. The trick was getting a horse-loving military establishment to buy into the idea.



Forrest Johnson, noted author of *Hour of Redemption* and *Phantom Warrior,* among others, sinks the hook into the reader from the first page with a masterful twist, and seasons each chapter with a lively blend of American heroes and infamous villains that create an eye-popping page turner that every American will learn from and enjoy. Camel Charge is history at its finest—not a staid retelling of dry facts, but an historical oasis teeming with interesting characters and an amazing central story that quenches and satisfies to the last drop.

After reading the book, the reader will have a new appreciation, and perhaps a grudging respect, of the role camels played in the taming of America. *The Last Camel Charge* is a great read, and without reservation, is a literary horse of a different color. Get the book! Gen/Gen. Five stars! Copyright© by Lance Zedric, 2012.

NOTE: Forrest Johnson is a long-time friend of the Alamo Scouts and is the author of *Raid on Cabanatuan, Hour of Redemption, Phantom Warrior,* and other fine books.

RED TAILS
Movie Review
By Lance Zedric

Red Tails (20th Century Fox, 2012) is Hollywood at its worst. Seventy years ago the best, brightest, and most highly qualified black candidates volunteered to become army aviators and to prove that they were equal to their white counterparts. Through outstanding academic performance, technical skill, and moral and physical courage in the face of racism in America, and in brutal combat in the skies over Europe, the Tuskegee Airmen of the 99th Pursuit Squadron; the 332d Fighter Group; and the 477th Bombardment Group, known later as "Red Tails" and "Red Tails Angels," because of the painted red tails on their aircraft, helped pave the way toward desegregation in the armed services and equality in America. It is a shame that Hollywood could produce nothing better than Red Tails to showcase one of America's outstanding military units and to suitably honor the men who constituted its ranks.

The film, running approximately 2 hours, was a cinematic crucifixion. And executive producer George Lucas (Star Wars et al) and crew, held the nails and hammer. The first glaring deficiency of Red Tails is a lack of a suitable introduction that puts the history of the unit into context and (pardon the pun) pilots the movie. Red Tails begins with Allied bombers getting plucked out of the sky by German fighters, which magnifies the need for competent fighter escorts, but it does little to illustrate the creation of the unit or focus on the quality of the men and what they went through to earn their wings. Rather, the movie segues into an excruciatingly, disconnected 30-minute mélange of characters that appear buffoonish, unprofessional, and cartoonlike. That's fine if viewers think a Pee Wee Herman movie is good history or that the Tuskegee Airmen were a collection of jiving, inarticulate, hip-hop flyboys who never rendered a salute to a superior officer or maintained military bearing within their own unit. Such representation not only discredits the real Tuskegee Airmen, but also insults veterans everywhere.

The bulk of the action in Red Tails occurs while the unit is stationed in Italy and focuses on its struggle to get meaningful missions and to establish itself as a legitimate combat unit while fighting resistance and racism at home and in the army. It is here that the characters begin to evolve and the movie becomes marginally bearable. Predictably, one of the pilots falls in love with a beautiful Italian girl, which exposes the more sensitive side of the Tuskegee airmen, but which also illuminates the studio's transparent ploy to sell tickets to women. While the love interest does add needed texture to the story and is central to the sad, but unmistakably apple pie ending, it lacks enough meat and potatoes to carry the meal.

The bitter historical gumbo of Red Tails is further thickened by contrived, unrealistic, and downright corny dialogue calmly uttered by Red Tail pilots while German ME-262 jet fighters, piloted by arrogantly despicable Nazis, are on their "red tails" whistling white hot rounds into their cockpits. Despite bandoliers of cheesy clichés, the CGI dogfight scenes are relatively entertaining, especially those depicting the ME-262s, which have not been well represented in the movies up to this time. So kudos to Lucas and the boys for that tasty table scrap. But an ort of fat does not a meal make. Not even Cuba Gooding and Terrence Howard, both fine actors, could breathe spark into this dud. Both lacked presence and conviction in their performances but should not be judged solely by this work. Even Babe Ruth struck out once in a while.

The most disturbing aspect of Red Tails (besides the plot and dialogue) is the specious history that it propagates, i.e., the claim that the 332nd never lost a bomber to enemy action and that it even sunk a destroyer. Those claims alone are highly controversial, and recent scholarship augmented by eyewitness accounts, strongly suggests that some 25 bombers were lost while under escort by the unit. But such debates should be left up to historians, and regardless of whatever new evidence is unearthed, the Tuskegee Airmen compiled an outstanding combat record that saved countless lives and contributed substantially to the overall victory in Europe. Moreover, the unit and its men stand as shining examples of what sustained excellence and perseverance can overcome regardless of race. That is beyond debate. While shoddy historical research may embellish or misrepresent the facts, it rarely shoots down a good story. Only a poor movie with the power to reach and affect millions of viewers in one withering volley can do that, and sadly, Red Tails is right on target. Pvt. E-1 out of General. No stars. No stripes. Copyright ©Lance Zedric

National Archives Trip 2013

Lance and Russ' National Archives trip that was to take place this last July was put off until the summer of 2013. Due to the high cost of airline tickets, and Russ' move from Tucson, Arizona to Clearwater, Florida. We thought it would be a bit too much on our plates. But the ASHF still needs your help to send Russ and Lance back to the National Archives in summer of 2013 to uncover more of the illustrious history of the Alamo Scouts. Your donation will help defray transportation and lodging costs and help the ASHF fulfill its ongoing mission of historical research and public education. If everyone pitches in a little it could lead to a lot. Tax deductible donations may be sent to the ASHF in care:

Alamo Scouts Historical Foundation, Inc.
c/o: Russ Blaise
Address is in the mailed newsletter version.

Make check payable to: Alamo Scouts Historical Foundation, Inc. *Thank you!*

VERY IMPORTANT!!

NOTE that I, Russ Blaise have moved to Clearwater, Florida. Be sure that anything you mail to the ASHF is to the new address in Clearwater, Florida. My new address is in this newsletter that was mailed out to all ASHF members. My phone number will remain the same for now.

–Russ Blaise

New ASHF MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Since the ASA is now the ASHF. New membership cards are inside the envelope for paid up members.

Don't Forget!

Your charitable gift to the ASHF is now tax deductable! To make a donation to the historical research fund or for more information, contact Russ, Audrene or Kathi. Thank you for your ongoing support.

NECROLOGY

Wilmot B. "Buddy" Ouzts, Jr.
June 27th, 2012

Wilbur F. Littlefield
June 9th, 2012

Charles E. Forrester
May 16th, 2012

Franklin A. Bachrach
May 6th, 2012

Paul F. Rogers
May 2nd, 2012

Harold J. Bingaman
Januray 29th, 2007

Director
Colonel Robert S. Sumner (Ret), *pro perpetua*
November 15, 1921 - August 3, 2004

Executive Director/ Board Chairman	Secretary/ Board Member	Treasurer/ Board Member	Historian/ Board Member	Ambassador	Membership
Russ Blaise	Kathi Henderson	Audrene Hall Burress	Lance Zedric	Terry Santos	Russ Blaise

Alamo Scouts Association
Co-founders: Colonel Robert S. Sumner (Ret)
Command Sergeant Major Galen C. Kittleson (Ret)

2013 Reunion Host
Russ Blaise

Alamo Scouts Website
www.alamoscouts.org
Co-founders: Russ Blaise and Lance Zedric