January 2012

ALAMO SCOUTS Newsletter

The U.S. Sixth Army Special Reconnaissance Unit of World War II

ALAMO SCOUTS ASSOCIATION, Inc.

Tucson, AZ

http://www.alamoscouts.org

"In the Alamo Scouts it didn't matter who we were with or where we were--we just enjoyed ourselves."

-William R. Watson, Reynolds Team

2012 ALAMO SCOUT REUNION and Business Meeting, Seattle, Washington, June 20-24

Reunion Host: Kathi Henderson

HOTEL: RED LION HOTEL **SEATTLE AIRPORT**
18220 International Blvd.
Seattle, WA 98188
(206) 246-5535

Reservations: 1 (800) Red Lion (733-5566) or (206) 246-5535
CODE: ALAM0620 (Note: ALAM are letters and 0620 are numbers)
(Kathi's personal note: You may want to add an additional day to your stay!)

Please reserve your room(s) **now** if you think you may be coming, you will have 24 hours prior to your arrival time to cancel Without Penalty if you need to!

Arrival Information: Get your luggage; follow the signs to "Courtesy Vehicle Pick-Up" located in the Parking Structure. Your FREE transportation to the Hotel is the "Master Park Van" it runs every 10 minutes, 24/7!

Room Costs (plus taxes): These prices are good Sunday, June 17th through Tuesday, June 26th!
$99.00 - Single-Double per night (2 Queens or 1 King)
$109.00 - Triple per night (2 Queens)
$119.00 - Quad per night (2 Queens)

There are **Two Packages** this year, PLUS an "**Optional**" **Seattle Tour!**

#1-FULL PACKAGE: $100.00 Each Person
Includes: Registration Fee, Hospitality Room all 4 days, Ft. Lewis Bus Trip (transit time 45 min.) to Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) the Army side, with Military Briefs, touring, Lunch, and the Ft. Lewis Military Museum, Membership Business Meeting, Banquet Buffet featuring Grilled Salmon and Prime Rib, Wine, Sparkling Cider, and last but not least, our Mystery Guest Speaker!

#2-BUSINESS MEETING/BANQUET PACKAGE: $60.00 Each Person
Includes: Registration Fee, Hospitality Room (for June 23rd only), Membership Business Meeting, and Banquet.
Note: Additional Hospitality days can be purchased at the Reunion for $5.00 per day, per person.

MONEY DEADLINE: for the Full Package and Business Meeting/Banquet Package is, **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!**

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OPTIONAL" SEATTLE TOUR: $70.00 Each Person (Lunch is on your own)

Go to the top of the Space Needle for an **additional** $17.00 Adults, and $11.00 Youth (ages 11-14)
This Tour promises to be well worth your time and money! For those that want to sit back and leave the driving to them, this is the ideal choice; instead of taking the "Light Rail" from the Airport to Seattle and exploring on your own! There will be two (2) major stops for approximately 1.5 hours each, "Pike Place Market" and "Seattle Center" (site of the 1962 World's Fair), Kathi will be taking the tour with you.

NOTE: The "Optional" Seattle Tour is optional. You do not have to take part in it to come to the reunion.

MONEY DEADLINE: for the Full Package and Business Meeting/Banquet Package is, **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!**

MONEY DEADLINE: for the "Optional" Seattle Tour is Thursday, **10 May 2012**

Please make checks payable to the: **ALAMO SCOUTS ASSOCIATION**.

Where to mail check to: Email: russ.blaise@alamoscouts.org

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: (Please visit these websites: visitseattle.org, soundtransit.org, kingcounty.gov)

Wednesday, 20th:	Check-in with the Hotel, then the ASA Registration Desk in the Lobby. Our Hospitality Room will be open that evening.
Thursday, 21st:	Bus Trip to Ft. Lewis, depart at 9:30 am, total time 8 hours.
Friday, 22nd:	"Free To Do What You Want Day!" or "Optional" Seattle Tour (total time 8 hours).
Saturday, 23rd:	Membership Business Meeting: 9:30am-11:00am, Banquet: 6:00pm-10:00pm.
Sunday, 24th:	Check-out . . . . Or Not! The Hospitality Room will be open until 11:00am.

War Horse (Dreamworks Pictures) is a cinematic and historical onion. Peel back one layer and another appears. Going into the movie expectations were high. After setting a lofty bar with Schindler's List, Saving Private Ryan, Band of Brothers, The Pacific, and others how could they not be? Nobody has brought military movies to the silver screen better than Steven Spielberg, and his record proves it. But I also had my doubts. For decades Spielberg has enthralled millions with his creative genius and ability to tell a good story, but I could neither exorcise the equine demons of "My Friend Flicka," "National Velvet" and "Francis The Talking Mule" nor wrap my head around the premise of a horse being the star of a war movie. Armed with a large tub of buttered popcorn and a battalion of skepticism, I hopped on War Horse and went for a ride.

War Horse begins in pre-World War I England where Ted Narracott (Peter Mullan), a hobbled, financially strapped, and often-drunk farmer attends an auction to buy a workhorse to plow his stony field, but instead gets into a booze-inspired bidding war against his snooty landlord and buys Joey, a spirited thoroughbred, who is ill-suited for fieldwork. The farmer's teenage son Albert (Jeremy Irvine) is smitten with the horse, and prevents his father from killing him when he is unable to pull the plow. Young Albert then trains Joey to do so and temporarily saves the farm but the tension between father and son is clear.

Albert's mother, Rose (powerfully portrayed by Emily Watson), reveals to Albert that his father was wounded in the Boer War and still carries emotional scars from it. She then gives Albert his father's tattered regimental pennant that he had hidden in the barn. The pennant is crucial to the story and serves as a symbolic and emotional thread that weaves the characters together past and present.

That summer the war begins, and just as the turnip crop is ready to harvest, it is ruined by heavy rains and Narracott is forced to sell Joey to Captain Nicholls (Tom Hiddleston), an honorable British officer who promises to return Joey to Albert after the war is over. Albert is devastated, but dutifully ties his father's pennant to Joey's bridle and sends him off to war.

Shockingly, Nicholls is killed in his first battle and Joey, along with Topthorn, another officer's horse, is saved by two young brothers serving in the German Army. The younger boy is soon ordered to the front while his older brother,

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Gunther, remains in the rear to care for the horses and to help transport wounded soldiers. Fearing that his younger brother will be killed, Gunther snatches him from the ranks on horseback and the boys escape and hide out at a French farm, but they are quickly found and shot for desertion. The horses, however, are left and discovered by Emilie (Celine Buckens), a young ailing French girl who lives with her grandpa, brilliantly played by Niels Arestrup. Like everyone else, Emilie is smitten by Joey, who brings happiness to her and her grandpa, but after a short time the horses are recaptured by the Germans.

For the next few years, Joey and Topthorn must pull heavy artillery pieces, and with the help of a horse-loving handler, Joey survives the brutal tasks but Topthorn dies. Shortly afterward, during an attack, Joey runs away and becomes trapped in no man's land where he becomes hopelessly entangled in barbed wire. British and Germans troop watch from opposing trenches as Joey struggles. Under a flag of truce a soldier from each side emerges from their trench and helps free the horse, all the while sharing a few moments of friendship.

Albert Narracott, played by actor Jeremy Irvine, with War Horse, (Joey).

Joey is safely returned to British lines but a field doctor determines that he must be put down because of his wounds. In typical Hollywood fashion, all is saved when a temporarily blinded Albert, who has since enlisted and who miraculously hears the interchange from his hospital bed. Just as a sergeant is about to shoot Joey, Albert rises from his bed over a hundred feet away, parts the crowd, and identifies Joey's markings, thus convincing a doctor to spare the horse.

Most directors would have ended the movie here, but not Spielberg. He added yet another twist of the emotional knife deftly illustrating how military bureaucracy, the same of which has existed in every army everywhere since the beginning of time, raises its ugly head and decrees that Joey cannot return to England with Albert and again must be sold at auction. Despite a hefty collection taken from the men of the unit, Albert is outbid and Joey is ultimately purchased by Emilie's grandpa, who is devastated by the death of his granddaughter and buys the horse because of the love she held for it. Enter the pennant, which Albert identifies as his father's. The grandfather realizes that the horse did belong to Albert and is so moved that he gives the horse to him.

The movie concludes in a breathtaking display of cinematography reminiscent of David O. Selznick's, Gone With The Wind, with a touch of Frank Capra's It's A Wonderful Life heart wrenching sentimentalism thrown in for good measure. Young Albert returns home upon Joey and reunites with his parents in a touching scene that any serviceman or their loved ones can appreciate. It was here that I about fell out.

Militarily, War Horse doesn't disappoint. It fills a cinematic void in the realistic representation of battle conditions in World War I. Namely, mud and more mud. Barbed wire. Trench warfare. Gas attacks. Deadly artillery. And in one of the movies' more dramatic scenes, British cavalry hidden in a wheat field, mounts a spirited charge at a German garrison wielding sabers reminiscent of the charge of the light brigade, only to be mowed down by German machine-gun fire like the wheat from whence they came. This scene, more than any other, represented the transition from the antiquated warfare of 19th century Europe to the horrors of the modern battlefield. Equally impressive was Spielberg's choice to give the film a Eurocentric flavor, which more accurately represents the essence of World War I and provides American audiences with a relatively cursory look at the war from German, British and French perspectives. But one bullet does not a musket make.

War Horse has all the elements of a great movie but the whole is not the sum of its parts. Though formulaic and often predictable, War Horse had enough of the right stuff to connect to viewers on several levels. The human element is strong. The acting, both human and horse, is superb. And the battle scenes are well-choreographed and visually stunning. The ageless father-son conflict coupled with the greater message of enduring love and loyalty resonate and drive the movie. But it has too many ingredients and does not suspend disbelief. Watching War Horse, which ran 146 minutes, was like eating a double stuffed supreme pizza smothered in extra cheese (or corn). One leaves the theater viscerally gorged and emotionally satisfied, but intellectually wondering what they just ate. Worth seeing. 3 out 4 stars.

Mutiny on the Bounty

by Bill Littlefield

Editor's Note: Future Alamo Scout Wilbur F. "Bill" Littlefield had a brush with Hollywood stardom at age 12/13 when he appeared in the classic film, Mutiny on the Bounty, starring Charles Laughton and Clark Gable. The film won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1935 and was voted #86 on the all-time best movie list by the American Film Institute. Like the film, "Bill" has only gotten better with time and remains a national treasure. The following is his account:

How I got chosen to be a drummer boy in the original movie Mutiny on the Bounty was a little bit interesting. About 12 drummers from different boy bands went down to MGM Studios. They looked at us, took our names, and said they would let us know. I think we each got $1.50 for going to the studio.

A few days later I got a phone call that I had been chosen and the studio gave me a date to get my uniform measured at Western Costume Company and the date to go to Westmore Beauty Shop to be measured for a wig. By summer I got a call to go to a water taxi landing to go to the isthmus at Catalina Island where they were shooting the movie. There was a second drummer boy whose name was Jim Wallace, and we roomed together. Later on, Jim and I attended UCLA at the same time, and we both went to law school after the war. He quit the practice of law after about five years and went to divinity school.

In the first part of the movie we were in a small boat going from ship to ship in the harbor where a man was getting flogged for striking an officer. When we came to the Bounty the man was "dead." When Captain Bligh asked why he wasn't being flogged, one of the men in the boat reasoned "the man is dead, sir," and Bligh responded "go on with the flogging."

When they weren't "shooting" us in the little boat, we got to go aboard the Bounty. When we were on the Bounty, Charles Laughton talked to us and introduced us to Clark Gable, who asked if we lived on the island, where we went to school, and some other questions. It was really nice that a couple of big movie stars would take their time to talk to a couple of kids.

After the shooting at the isthmus, I got a call a couple of months later to go to the studio to one of the soundstages, and that was where the photo was shot. It was toward the end of the movie as Captain Bligh was searching the ocean for Fletcher Christian and the other mutineers. Bligh's ship had hit some rocks and was sinking, and I was the drummer boy beating the drum to "abandon ship." Then a sailor grabs me and that was the end of that scene.

I was soaked to the skin. They had a small piece of a ship on rollers that went up and down, a background of a stormy sea, a wind machine blowing water all over me, and a sailor that rescued me. I think I got $15 for that day. The money is long gone, but the memory of that experience has stayed with me for over 75 years. It was my 15 minutes of fame.

Note: The ASA wants your stories! Please share!

Bill beats his drum in Mutiny on the Bounty (1935). Photo courtesy of MGM and Bill Littlefield.

Bill Littlefield taken during WWII. Ironically, he even looks like Clark Gable. Coincidence? You be the judge!

NOTE: The following letter was written by Frank Rawolle, Asst. G-2, 6TH Army, to Col. Frederick Bradshaw. It is a request for McGowen Team one week prior to the first mission and refers to Bradshaw's reluctance to leave the Scouts to return to G-2 for the planning of further operations for 6TH Army. Furthermore, it touches on the possibility of using natives with Scout teams. The letter is of significant historical relevance providing a time reference for the Los Negros mission, which was the first operational Alamo Scouts mission, but also suggests that perhaps a different mission was planned. The letter was found in the National Archives during the latest ASA research trip.

HEADQUARTERS ALAMO FORCE
Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2
APO 712

22 February 1944.

Dear Brad:

Just received your letter of the 17th and an answering radio to our request for a team this afternoon. The General is anxious to use his scouts and I do believe that the job we have in mind is not too difficult and will provide excellent experience for the team used.

Have just finished talking over the Angau man and Native boys situation with Maj MacMullen - the man he has in mind is supposed to be an excellent bushman and according to him just what the doctor ordered. The Native Police Boys are selected and waiting.

An idea has occurred to me and I'm wondering what you'll think of it. Would it be feasible to train one or two natives with each team over a period of time so that each team could have a couple of dependable natives which could be taken on the job, provided the situation warranted it. Experience alone of course can tell how this will work out. Believe I can get you additional Police Boys if you think you can use them.

Solly has just been over to see Col Price on Red's promotion at this point. Believe we will have to wait until the boss gets back in order to get it pushed.

By this time I believe you are straightened out on the LCMs and LCVs. The overhead personnel are also on the way. Col Reichelderfer is also sending you two SCR 284s to work with. Tryouts with these should give you a good idea as to their feasibility on point to point contact. Have just checked with Walt Bess and he says he is waiting for your operators to try and break into some of our nets for practice in case we ever have to put in something similar to an AIB party. Let us know what difficulties they are having in attempting this or perhaps they haven't as yet.

Can understand your reluctance to leave FERGUSSON and if you could have seen this headquarters during the last week you would have considered yourself very lucky to have been where you are. No kidding, we have been grinding out plans, estimates and terrain studies for several operations practically simultaneously - first one thing would be top priority and then another until we were all running around in ever decreasing concentric circles. However, we put out everything we were asked for and I think did a good job of it. We have of necessity had to compartmentalize things a little more. That is, we have made certain officers responsible for terrain, enemy

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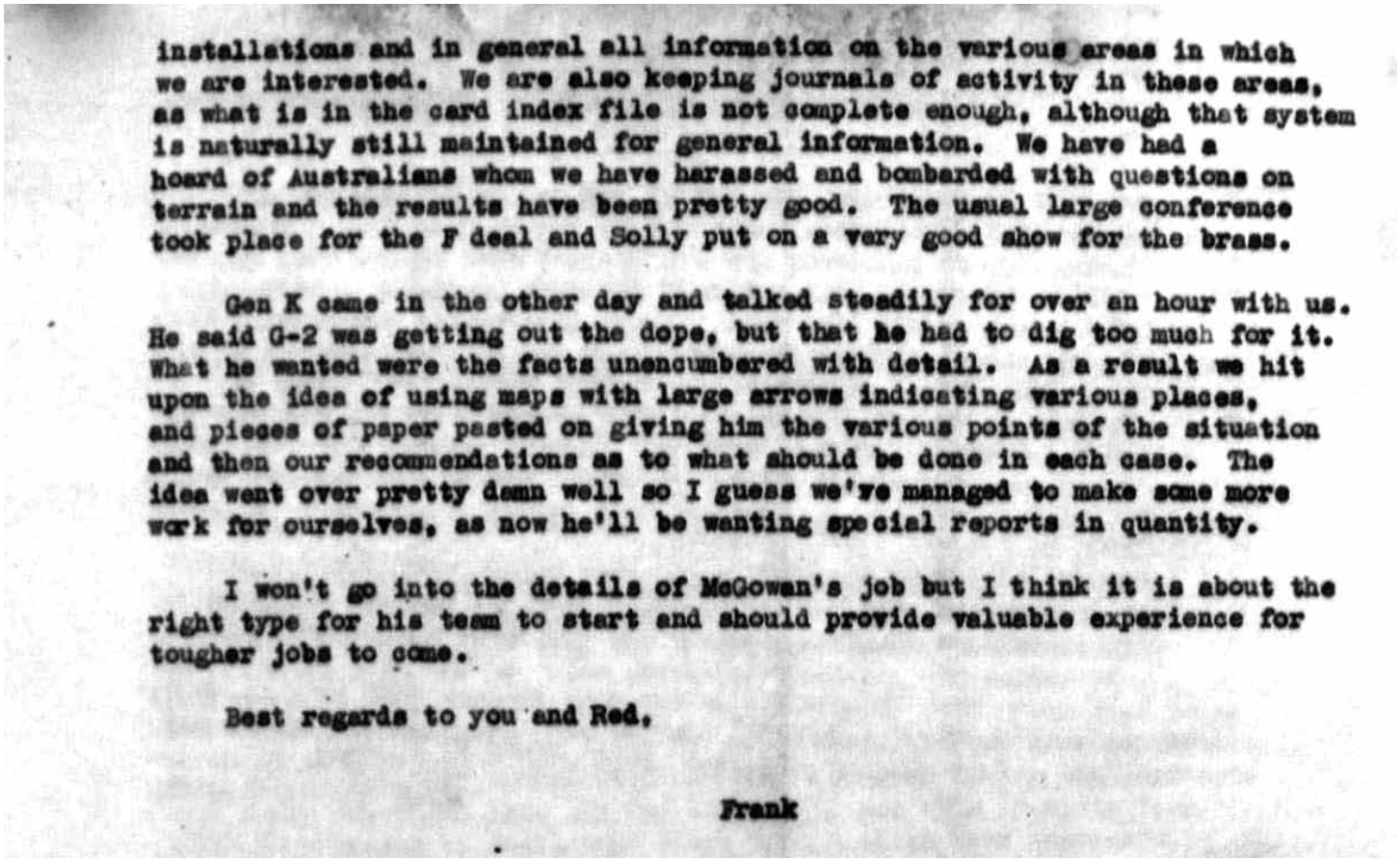

installations and in general all information on the various areas in which we are interested. We are also keeping journals of activity in these areas, as what is in the card index file is not complete enough, although that system is naturally still maintained for general information. We have had a hoard of Australians whom we have harassed and bombarded with questions on terrain and the results have been pretty good. The usual large conference took place for the F deal and Solly put on a very good show for the brass.

Gen K came in the other day and talked steadily for over an hour with us. He said G-2 was getting out the dope, but that he had to dig too much for it. What he wanted were the facts unencumbered with detail. As a result we hit upon the idea of using maps with large arrows indicating various places, and pieces of paper pasted on giving him the various points of the situation and then our recommendations as to what should be done in each case. The idea went over pretty damn well so I guess we've managed to make some more work for ourselves, as now he'll be wanting special reports in quantity.

I won't go into the details of McGowan's job but I think it is about the right type for his team to start and should provide valuable experience for tougher jobs to come.

Best regards to you and Red,

Frank

Open Letter to the Historian (July 2011)

Dear Lance,

The article in the Historians Corner of the [January 2011] newsletter brought back some good memories. As I might have mentioned earlier, I went overseas on an escort aircraft carrier which dumped us off on Manus Island in the Admiralties. From there we were transported by LCI to Hollandia, New Guinea. From there we were moved to Mios Woendi. All of these islands were inhabited by black folks as shown in your article. We were entertained quite often by native children singing songs that they had been taught by the missionaries. We decided that "You Are My Sunshine" should have been declared the New Guinea national anthem. We were also treated to many Christmas carols. They didn't know what they were saying but they knew it made us happy.

When my squadron moved up for the push on the Philippines, I was left behind in the hospital with an ear infection, which is another story. When I finally moved up I was taken to the city of Tacloban. While there, I was sent with a group of four other guys to scout the abandoned village of Bobon up a lagoon on the island of Samar to see if the village appeared to be a good site to build a PT boat base. At the village we were met by a small contingent of guerrillas. We were told that when the Japs invaded Leyte the priest in Bobon herded the whole village up into the mountains and he remained there until word got to them that we had taken over the village.

There was only one wooden building in the village and it was decided that it could be used as a refuge for our boat crews from all of the noise between patrols. The villagers were told that when the war was over the village would be returned to its original state, and in the meantime, we would occupy just the living room of the house for a temporary dormitory. One problem was that there was an extremely pregnant young lady in the family that owned the house, and they had to be assured that she would be given complete privacy. This was assured. From the beginning it seemed that they should all have been done by Alamo Scouts, but the deal was made and PT 17 Base Force moved into the village and built what was to become the main PT base in the South Pacific Theater. We later learned that the villager had observed the entire invasion from the mountaintop and had stayed there until the guerrillas confirmed that it was safe for them to return. It was also agreed that when the young lady went into labor, one of the guys sleeping in the next room would run for the priest, who perform the delivery and bless the newborn. There is a high mortality rate among newborns in those days, so a new mother was to get the baby to the priest for baptism as soon as possible.

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One afternoon while I was sat down in the house which, by now, seemed more like a cheap hotel, I was suddenly awakened by some boys having a scuffle just outside the front of the house where I was trying to sleep. After trying for a while to ignore them, I went out to break up the fight. It turned out that one of the boys was very light complexioned and the other thought it was great fun to tease him about it, even though he was very well liked by all of his classmates. The boy saw me as a "knight in faded blue jeans."

Crew members of PT-379. Fuga Island mission, Dove Team, July, 1945

That same evening as I was sitting on the front stoop smoking a cigarette the little guy showed up. It turned out that his family that was only about 60 feet from the house. A conversation ensued. He told me his name was Servilliano Gaylon, but he was to be known as "Sebe." I learned that he was a very religious boy and also very intelligent. Afterwards, I would occasionally drop by the chaplain's office and pick up stateside magazines for him to read. I noticed that he was always pretty shabbily dressed but clean, which was not too unusual. I gave him all of my white uniforms, which were of no use to me, and told him to have his mother make them into clothing for him. He suddenly became the best-dressed kid in school. He asked me if he could be my houseboy. This was a very common practice at the time and was a way of helping the family out without making beggars of them. His mother offered to do any selling that I'd need to do and his sister offered to do all of my laundry. All of these services probably cost me about five dollars a month, if that. Whenever I spent the night at the house I would be wakened in the morning by a slight noise just outside the door near where I had my cot. I would throw my helmet out the door and by the time I had gotten dressed, Sebe would be standing outside the door with a towel, a bar of soap and my helmet for water. One evening while we were talking, he suddenly said, "Jesus Christ." I was really shocked. I asked in quite a rough tone why he had said that and explained why it was not the thing to do. I found that he didn't see it as swearing but I had quite a time explaining it. He had heard other GIs saying it, so he thought that it must have been the right thing to do.

Sebe and I became quite close. One time he and I were swimming near the center of the lagoon and realized that an LST was bearing down on us and apparently had no idea that we were on a collision course. It was really close! Another time when Sebe and were sitting on the stoop of my shack, one of the many "Washing machine Charlie's" flew over and the air raid alarm was sounded. I reached behind me and grabbed my helmet and a carbine and took off for a foxhole. About half-way there I realized that Sebe was not with me. His villagers had been hiding out in the mountains all through the war and had no idea about what to do in this case. The two of us ran for the hole which was made for one. I crouched down and had him between my knees and put my helmet on him.

Ralph Kleeberger - PT 379

Shortly after that, as we were again sitting on the stoop, I broke into conversation and said, "Sebe, sometime I'll come back." He stood up, threw his arms around me, turned and ran home. I learned later that he had gotten up at 4 AM the next morning, walked quite a distance out to a point overlooking the lagoon, and stood there waiting until our boats were out of sight.

As it turned out, we did return just after the war ended, which seemed like the best way to end the story, but the bad part going over the same goodbye scenario again. Sixty years later, after much correspondence, and after we both had college educations and had raised our families, we met in Manila for a week-long visit. When Lee and I visited them a few years ago I asked if he remember those incidents. He was visibly embarrassed by my telling these stories and made some very touching remark that I can no longer remember but reflected his feeling toward me. Sadly, a few years ago Sebe and his wife died, but I'll never forget the friendship we shared.

-Ralph Kleeberger

[Ralph Kleeberger passed away recently, 16 Dec 2011]

National Archives Trip 2012

The ASA needs your help to send Russ and Lance back to the National Archives in July 2012 to uncover more of the illustrious history of the Alamo Scouts. Your donation will help defray transportation and lodging costs and help the ASA fulfill its ongoing mission of historical research and public education. If everyone pitches in a little it could lead to a lot. Information where to send your tax deductible donations. Please email: russ.blaise@alamoscouts.org

Thank you!

Challenge Coins & Lanyards

Alamo Scouts challenge coins and lanyards are still available.
For information, please email: russ.blaise@alamoscouts.org

ASA Membership

The ASA peaked at 114 paying members in 2011. There are 8 people that went with the 10-year option, and 63 people went with the five-year plan. Those who need to renew for 2012 can still take advantage of the extended membership options. Current annual dues are $15.00. The five-year membership is $60.00 ($15.00 savings) and the 10-year membership is $120.00 ($30.00 savings). The membership application is included with this newsletter for those members whose dues are due for 2012. Also, remember, an ASA Membership makes a great gift.

Past Newsletters Needed

The ASA Archive still needs the following ASA Newsletters to complete its files: **May 1989, Nov 1992, Nov 1995, May 2000, Nov 2000, May 2001.** Anyone who has one or all, please contact Lance.

Don't Forget!

Your charitable gift to the ASA 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

Norman S. Boschert	Robert Beattie	Ralph Kleeberger
October 11th, 2011	March 4th, 2010	December 16th, 2011

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

Executive Director/ Board Chairman	Secretary	Treasurer	Historian	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)

2012 Reunion Host
Kathi Henderson

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