

May 2008

ALAMO SCOUTS

Newsletter

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

ALAMO SCOUTS ASSOCIATION



Tucson, AZ

"We were in between Bataan and Corregidor when we called off the mission. It was hairy! Manila was on fire and the whole sky was lit up. We were getting tracer fire coming in from Bataan and Corregidor. That's the only mission the Alamo Scouts ever averted, but it would have been suicide." William Blaise

<http://www.alamoscouts.org>

Alamo Scouts Reunion, 2008

The 2008 Alamo Scouts Association Reunion was held on March 13-16 in San Antonio, Texas and was a rousing success as some 50 Scouts, family members, friends, and guests assembled for the 18th gathering since the inception of the ASA in 1980. Despite having only four Scouts in attendance, the affair was magical as old friendships were reaffirmed and new ones forged. The following is a brief account of the week's event:

Wednesday – As usual, Terry Santos was the first to arrive, ushering in yet another Alamo Scouts reunion. But this time the ASA got two Terry's for the price of one. Terry's daughter, Terry Ann, accompanied her father and added a touch of class and a whole lot of brainpower to the affair. The day was spent greeting arrivals, registering guests, and admiring the Menger Hotel, our digs for the week, and a fixture in San Antonio since 1859. The hotel has a distinguished history and boarded the likes of Babe Ruth, Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders, Bill Clinton, and scores of other notables. Better yet, the hotel was literally an empty beer bottle's throw away from the Alamo, which is undoubtedly what some of the Rough Riders did from the side door of the bar which faces the landmark, and was selected as one of the Top 10 Historic Bars in the United States.

For many who arrived early, most of the day was spent exploring beautiful downtown San Antonio with its lovely River Walk, and sampling the delicious array of provincial and ethnic foods. Some even managed to retrace Davy Crockett's last few steps at the Alamo before the long lines of tourists descended on the city for St. Patrick's Day weekend.



ASA Historian Lance Zedric addresses the group at the dedication ceremony.

Thursday – Following breakfast on our own, everyone boarded a charter bus and private vehicles for the 80-minute ride to Fredericksburg, Texas for the

dedication of the Alamo Scouts Memorial Plaque at the National Museum of the Pacific War. Despite bone chilling winds, the dedication was a hot affair as a 20" x 20" plaque honoring the Scouts and former ASA Director and co-founder, Robert Sumner, warmed more than a few hearts. A 21-gun honor guard salute and the playing of Taps concluded the moving ceremony. Afterwards, the sun came out and everyone was happy, warm, and free to tour historic Fredericksburg on their own or to tour the outstanding museum. Also on hand for the ceremony were John Holder and George Cummings from Oceanic Explorations, who filmed the event, and who later that evening gave a fine presentation to ASA members in the hospitality room detailing their organizations multi-dimensional efforts to locate and explore land and sea wreckage of WWII planes and ships in the SWPA; to advance the history of U.S. forces in the Pacific; and to offer SCUBA diving opportunities to disabled veterans as part of the Warrior Wounded program. The impressive duo was warmly welcomed into the ASA fraternity and we hope to see them at future reunions.



ASA Executive Director Russ Blaise says a few words about Robert Sumner at the plaque dedication.

Friday – Left the hotel at 10 a.m. and traveled "all the way with LBJ"—to his ranch, that is. The seasoned group of ASA members was too large to accommodate in one tour, so everyone elected to wait for next one. During the lull the cagey vets persuaded the bus driver to take us to Lady Bird's seed farm—which was more of a homemade food and

gift shop with some tasty treats and a strategically placed bar and soda fountain. After 30 minutes there, we returned to the Ranch and boarded a tour trolley. The 45-minute tour include stops at the Texas White House, a reconstructed boyhood home of the late President, and a panoramic view of Hereford cattle, buffalo, and a presidential aircraft runway. Sadly, with excitement near fever pitch, we had to go home. Thirty-one brave souls boarded the bus and were 39 miles north of San Antonio when the real fun began. With temperatures near 90 degrees, the bus broke down. But everyone made the best of it, taking the opportunity to talk,



The four Alamo Scouts that attended the plaque dedication at the National Museum of the Pacific War: (L-R) Bob Buschur, Jack Geiger, Terry Santos and Bill Barnes.

nap, and generally enjoy the unscheduled stop. The backup bus arrived at 4:40 and we were on the road ten minutes later—making Russ seem like the smartest person at the reunion for opting NOT to go on the tour! Despite the short turnaround time, everyone made it to the reunion banquet on time to enjoy the delicious chicken and steak entrées. The meal was finished off nicely by an informative impromptu update on the war in Iraq by George Eaton, who has firsthand knowledge of the war both as a soldier and as a civilian working for the Army. Nice job, George!

Following dinner and several individual and group shots, Ching Zedric herded everyone into the parlor of the hotel for a wonderful group photo. Afterward, the party moved to the hospitality room where many said their farewells. But true to form, George and Lance were the last to leave, cutting deeply into Russ's sleep with exciting, sitting-on-the-edge-of-your-seat tales of military history. Russ had no trouble sleeping that night, but George likely had difficulty getting up to catch a 5 a.m. flight thanks to copious amounts of wine and spirits.



Ann Sumner and Valerie Sumner Morales, the daughters of the late Robert Sumner, pose in front of the plaque dedicated to their father.

and that its coffers are at a comfortable level. A motion was passed that the ASA would provide seed money for the production of an Alamo Scouts Challenge Coin, the proceeds from which will go toward furthering historical research and for the funding of the reunion and other projects benefiting the Association. Russ explained several options and design suggestions were solicited from all in attendance, with a final design to be determined no later than the end of the year.

Lance, the ASA Historian, reported that several research projects are currently in progress including a push to locate more graduates of the ASTCs to increase membership; an ongoing search to find a home for a permanent Alamo Scouts display; and a drive to raise \$3000 for an extended research trip to the National Archives to examine Sixth Army holdings in depth. In a one-morning trip to the Archives in 2006, Lance netted the names of 32 graduates who were formerly unidentified, along with numerous archival documents from the ASTC. But since that was NOT part of the family vacation, Ching nixed additional days, but okayed a return trip to the Archives sans her and Ariel.

The Business Meeting adjourned at 11 a.m. and it was agreed that the members would reconvene en masse in Rock Island, Illinois at a date and time to be determined. Afterwards, some headed home while others stayed another night and further enjoyed one of Texas's most beautiful cities. As the hometown of General Walter Krueger and one of the most revered landmarks in America, the setting was as warm, wonderful, and thoroughly enjoyable as the people who congregated there in the name of the Alamo Scouts. A special thanks to Terry and Terry Santos, Russ Blaise, and

Saturday – Breakfast was on our own followed by the Business Meeting. The first order of business was to select a location for the 2009 Reunion. And the winner is...Rock Island, Illinois. And the host will be--George Eaton, with assistance from Lance, who lives in nearby Peoria, and from Audrene and Terry, who are only 8 and 4 hours away by air, respectively. Audrene issued the Treasurer's Report and happily announced that the ASA is solvent,



George Eaton, next year's reunion host speaks about the war in Iraq at the banquet dinner.

Audrene Hall for their tireless work and for adding yet another special memory to the Alamo Scouts collective. Thanks guys! See you next year.



John Holder (Standing) and George Cummings (sitting just right of screen), give a slide presentation in the hospitality room.

The following is a list of those who attended the reunion. If we left anyone off, we apologize.

Alamo Scouts & Family Members: Bob & Rita Buschur and Nick (son) & Jeanette Bushcur; and Mary (sister to Bob Buschur) & Jack Barga; Terry Santos & Terry Ann Santos (daughter); Bill & Helen Barnes; John Geiger & Betty Geiger; Susie Watts & Richard Whitaker (daughter/son-in-law of Milton Beckworth); Linda & Nathan McNamara (daughter/son-in-law of Milton Beckworth); Evelyn Branson & Lynn Immel (widow/daughter of Alva Branson); Christine McGowen (widow/John McGowen) and John McGowen, Jr. (son) and Matthew McGowen (grandson); Gena Watson (widow of Bob Watson); Audrene & Jim Burress (daughter/son-in-law of Aubrey Lee Hall); Jack & Kathi Henderson (son-in-law/daughter of Zeke McConnell) and Les McConnell (son of Zeke); Ann Sumner & Valerie Sumner Morales (daughters of Bob Sumner); Russ Blaise (son of Bill Blaise); Jerry & Laurie Littlefield (son/daughter-in-law of Wilbur Littlefield); and John Shullaw (son of Bob Shullaw).

Friends - George Eaton; Eunice Carvajal; Virginia Weatherall; George Cummings; John Holder; Glenn & Annette Groen; Jerry & Sally Nolls; Dennis Hinman; Phillip Enbody; Mario Gonzales; and Lance, Ching, and Ariel Zedric.

PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE:

Check out some of the reunion photos at Ching Zedric's Blog at: <http://www.Chingphoto.com>. If you're an ASA member and would like a free raw image of a photo, just let Ching know. If you want a print, she can do that too, but they cost.



A photograph taken by Ching Zedric from one story up in the lobby of the Menger Hotel.

RESEARCH TRIP PLANNED TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

The ASA is pleased to report that it is nearing the half way mark toward raising \$3000 for an extensive research trip to the National Archives in Washington, D.C. this summer. Lance Zedric and Russ Blaise are planning to spend a week together looking for more documents, photos and film footage that relate to the Alamo Scouts. We do know that there is film footage of the McGowen's first mission and of John Dove the day after the raid on Cabanatuan. Lance and Russ are working on an Alamo Scouts documentary and using actual footage would make it that much better. If you'd like to contribute funds to their project you can send a check made out to the "Alamo Scouts Association" and contact Russ Blaise for the address where to mail your donation: asa@alamoscouts.org

All contributions are appreciated. Our goal is to tell the story of the Alamo Scouts with the help of the Scouts and their families. Thanks to everyone who has donated thus far!

STATUS REPORT:

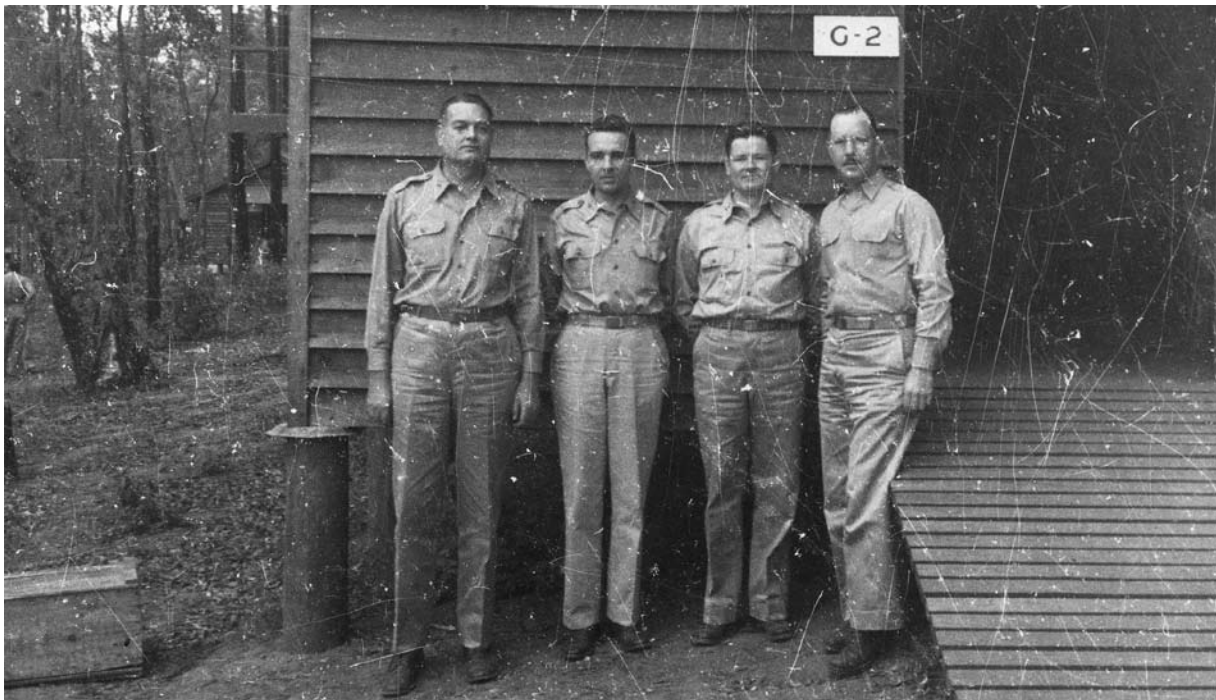
As of 1 May, Lance has received and catalogued the historical effects of four Alamo Scouts. A special thanks to the families of John McGowen, Bill Nellist, Bob Shullaw, and Bob Sumner for allowing us access to the hundreds of photos and documents, and for having the privilege of serving as a repository for so much memorabilia.

HELP!

Do any ASA members know Dutch or know someone who knows someone who knows someone who can/will translate two articles?—gratis, of course! Lance has unearthed a report of the Oransbari prison camp raid and a report of the rescue of Javanese and Indian prisoners in the Vogelkop (Littlefield Team) written by Louis Rapmund, the Dutch officer who was the guide for the Oransbari Raid and who operated from Roemberpon Island. Contact Lance if you do.

Time is running out to get in the Oral History of the Alamo Scouts! Lance still needs copies of any/all medal citations, copies of any letters written, and/or diaries maintained while an Alamo Scout or while in training. Email or call Lance for more info. "Alamoscouts@aol.com".

PHOTO FIND!



G2 Section (L-R), Col. Horton V. White, LTC. Fred W. Bradshaw, LTC Horace L. Beall, Jr., Sylvester P. Smith. Beall died at Cape Cretin (New Guinea) on 3 Sep 1943. Apparently it was a non battle death (NBD). He is buried in Hawaii. So the photo was likely taken in the summer of 1943 (maybe in Hawaii).



John Shullaw, the son of Bob Shullaw of the Lutz Team, has designed a flag for the Alamo Scouts. John will be taking pre-orders and hopes to have enough commitments for a price break. Please contact him via email:

flag@alamoscouts.org

Flags are 2' x 3' and made of 200 Denier, Solarmax protected (Solarmax helps resist sun & chemical deterioration) white Dacron. The image is heat set into one side using only the highest quality UV protected inks. Each flag has a stitched perimeter hem and two grommets for flag pole use.

There are two flag options: Single-sided or Double-sided. The single-sided features a transfer on one side only, and has a show thru of the reverse image on the back at about 60%. On the double-sided flag the full image appears on both sides (2 flags with the image and then a liner sewn in between the flags to prevent show thru) and is much heavier than the single-sided (but does fly well in wind above 10 mph).

Prices:

Single-sided, \$69.50 each (if ordered in qty of 20 or more) + Shipping (est. \$5)

Double-sided, \$108.00 each (if ordered in qty of 24 or more) + Shipping (est. \$5)

If ordered singly the cost is \$150.00 each (shipping included).

If anybody is interested, and we get enough pre-paid orders to meet the quantity discount for either style, John would be willing to place the large order and then mail the flags to each individual.

ASA Membership Dues Reminder

If you haven't paid your 2008 ASA membership dues yet, it's not too late! Make check payable to: **ALAMO SCOUTS ASSOCIATION.**

Contact Russ Blaise for the address where to mail your dues: asa@alamoscouts.org

Note: THE FOLLOWING SYNDICATED COLUMN APPEARED IN THE HAMMOND TIMES (INDIANA) 10-1-1945, AND MENTIONS AN UNNAMED ALAMO SCOUT. ANY IDEAS?

Army Drops Old Sarge McLemore
By Henry McLemore

EVERY ENLISTED man has dreamed a thousand times of holding his honorable discharge paper in one hand and flattening a four-star general with the other. Every enlisted man has dreamed too of concealing the discharge emblem on his shirt and then committing an act which would cause an MP to get tough with him and try to run him in.

Every enlisted man has also dreamed of how once he was out of khaki he would hire a hall the size of Madison Square Garden and tell the assembled multitude exactly what he thought of the United States Army and the sort of life he lived while in it.

I KNOW ABOUT these dreams because I dreamed all of them, and the dreaming of them helped me through some very tough days; especially those days when the democratic spirit which you have heard is such a part of our army, had gotten up on the wrong side of the bed.

So what happens when the day of days arrives and the GI gets his honorable discharge?

He is too darned stunned to do anything much, except to sit and admire the paper which makes him a free man, and to rub and polish the little gold button which makes him, theoretically, at least the equal of any other citizen of the United States of America.

Along with a hundred or so others, I was discharged at Camp Blanding, Florida the other day. I know the exact time. It was 11 minutes, 22 seconds, after 10 o'clock.

I WILL ALWAYS remember that time, just as I have always remembered the exact time of the first step I took as a baby, my first kiss, my first bite of a combination cheese and nutburger in Hollywood, my first encounters with a charging warthog on safari, and my first appearance as a groom aged 9 years in a mock wedding held for the purpose of raising money for a church building fund.

The discharge ceremony took place in a pine-plank building. The building was very remindful of a barracks, and most of us unconsciously looked at it with an eye as to how long it would take to scrub it down with GI mops and brooms. There was soft, canned music, "America the Beautiful" was playing when we came in and sat down. A captain was in charge.

THE CAPTAIN, referring to his notes only every two or three seconds, although he had been handling this same ceremony for weeks, talked to us. He spoke of the Four Freedoms. He talked of the Three Bears. He discussed Two Many Cooks. He told us of One-Way Traffic.

Behind him on the wall the big photographs of President Truman, General Eisenhower, General Marshall, General MacArthur, and other big brass, seemed to nod, just as we were nodding. The captain kept on. He was working, no doubt, on a war department directive, and he was obeying orders.

We itched and shuffled. We scraped our feet. We coughed. We silently practiced not saying the word, "sir."

Then the captain started calling the roll. As our names were called we marched front and center, saluted, received our honorable discharges, shook hands with the captain, and returned to our seats.

WHEN THE LAST man had been given his discharge, the captain said: "For the last times as soldiers of the United States, "Attention!"

We stood and braced.

The Star Spangled Banner was played. The hackles rose on our necks. We walked out of the building. A big sergeant, an Alamo Scout who wore the Silver Star and the Purple Heart on his chest, turned to me and said:

"Bud, I'm glad I went through it, but I'm glad it's over."

We all went our ways, civilians, but I believe that all of us felt that the real honorable discharges belonged to those of our comrades who will never come back to get them.---

RECENT FINDS:

NECROLOGY

Frank Feola

24 March 2008

Verified: Lt. Robert J. Borg, graduate of 4th Class at ASTC Hollandia.

Verified: Capt. Paul E. Wood, graduate of 4th Class at ASTC Hollandia.

Director

Colonel Robert S. Sumner (Ret), *pro perpetua*

November 15, 1921 - August 3, 2004

Executive Director

Russ Blaise

Secretary

Terry Santos

Treasurer

Audrene Hall Burress

2009 Reunion Host

George Eaton

Historian

Lance Zedric

Membership

Russ Blaise

Alamo Scouts Association

Co-founders: Colonel Robert S. Sumner (Ret)

Command Sergeant Major Galen C. Kittleson (Ret)

Alamo Scouts Website

www.alamoscouts.org

Co-founders: Russ Blaise and Lance Zedric