



# Historical & Archaeological Society of Fort Riley

FEB 2018

Greetings HASFR Members!

After a successful and fantastic fall season that included a fascinating historical chat about the 1917-1918 Spanish Flu pandemic that began here at Fort Riley and our HASFR signature events of Apple Day, Ghost Tours and the Tour of Homes, we are anticipating a wonderful spring. As a Board, we are planning historical chats, digging into the historical archives at the Geary County Museum, working on our spring footprint project and looking forward to conducting more historic tours of beautiful Fort Riley as the weather warms up. If you volunteered for Apple Day pie making, Apple Day festivities, Ghost Tours, or Tour of Homes please look for a survey to be emailed to you in the coming weeks. We would like to get your perspective of your experience and what was done well and what you believe could be improved upon. Would you like to take a more active role in HASFR, wear historical costumes and have fun?? Sign up for the 2018-2019 HASFR Board! The Board transition occurs in late April, with the Board year running from May 2018-April 2019. Look in the newsletter for more details. I look forward to seeing you at future HASFR events and do hope that you will consider in helping HASFR continue to preserve our rich Fort Riley history by becoming an invaluable Board member.

Yours truly,

Shauna

From the President



***Our Mission: We are privileged to preserve, protect, and maintain Fort Riley's heritage.***

***You can be a part of increasing the public's awareness of Fort Riley's unique place in history by becoming a member, supporting community events by volunteering, or through donations.***

***Want to be involved?  
Stay connected by visiting us at  
[www.fortrileyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.fortrileyhistoricalsociety.org)***



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# Who Lived in Your House?

By COL Mark MacDougall



Fort Riley and the Big Red One have played an important part in the history of our nation. The houses of Fort Riley's Historic Main Post bore witness to much of that history. We recognize the names of some who called Fort Riley home: Custer, Stuart, Patton, Wainwright, Arnold. Along with names well known to many of us are others, less known perhaps, but still with a compelling story to tell. Many of us who reside on Historic Main Post walk by our home's historical plaque every day, never pausing to look at the names inscribed therein. Taking a moment to learn about those who once occupied your home can open your eyes to history.

My wife Jane and I reside at 20-B Sheridan Avenue. Our occasional internet searches of former residents yielded a future Major General whose daring exploits on the field of battle during World War II were overshadowed by his court martial following the loss of classified materials during the Cold War. Others included the Captain of the last U.S. Army Olympic Equestrian Team, and an enterprising young officer who traveled to New York and returned with the socialite widow of one of New York's wealthiest businessmen.

While passing our home's plaque recently, I felt the urge to search another randomly selected name. In doing so, my eyes were opened to a little-known battle late in the Vietnam Conflict and the fascinating Medal of Honor recipient who lost his life while extricating his badly outnumbered Soldiers from certain annihilation.

Lieutenant Colonel Andre Lucas, the son of a French mother and American father attended high school in France before enlisting in the United States Army in 1948. He graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1954. Lucas and his French-Swiss wife Madeleine spent much of his career in Europe, where he attended the French War College and served with NATO in Paris before commanding a battalion in Germany. The couple were reportedly known for their love of fine wine and cuisine and their exceptional parties, some of which undoubtedly took place in our home.

Lucas was awarded the first of his two Silver Stars while serving as an advisor to the South Vietnamese Army. His novel use of helicopters to repel a numerically superior enemy force led some to credit him with creating the concept of the helicopter gunship.

LTC Lucas served at Fort Riley as the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division G-3 from 1969-70 before volunteering to return to Vietnam in command of the 2d Battalion, 506th Infantry "Currahees" of the 101st Airborne Division. According to his USMA class webpage, Madeleine was overcome with a deep sense of dread.

During July, 1970 on a hilltop known as Fire Base Ripcord, the 2d Battalion endured a 23 day siege during the last major engagement of U.S. forces in Vietnam. Surrounded by two North Vietnamese Army divisions and experiencing heavy casualties, the situation grew more ominous when a CH-46 was hit by rocket fire and crashed into the base's ammunition supply, causing major explosions which destroyed not only the ammunition, but 22 of the 23 artillery pieces. With little defensive capability and mounting casualties, Lucas succeeded in evacuating his unit from the hilltop during an intense firefight that included bombing sorties by B-52s. He was killed while boarding the last helicopter to leave the fire base. During the July 1-23, 1970 battle of Fire Base Ripcord, LTC Andre Lucas performed multiple acts of extraordinary heroism which are recorded in his Medal of Honor citation. He is buried at the United States Military Academy. An elementary school at Fort Campbell, Kentucky is named in his honor.



# Scenes from Tour of Homes 2017



## Volunteer Opportunities

### ***Open Board Positions for the 2018-2019 Board year:***

- |           |                 |
|-----------|-----------------|
| President | Vice President  |
| Treasurer | 2 Co-Pie Queens |
| Historian | Newsletter      |
| Publicity | Parliamentarian |

Volunteering for HASFR - Volunteering for HASFR is a unique opportunity. HASFR is run solely by volunteers, thus making volunteers an invaluable resource. We need many volunteers throughout the year to makes our events successful! To inquire about and volunteer for HASFR contact [hasfrvolunteering@gmail.com](mailto:hasfrvolunteering@gmail.com).

## Did you know??

You can rent the CUSTER HOUSE for your next social gathering...

The Historic Custer House is available for rental; make your next event memorable by hosting it in this historic setting.



Rental fees are as follows:

\$25 for HASFR members

\$50 for non-members

*\*both require a \$50 refundable deposit*

Please contact Kari Post as early as possible. The Custer House is sometimes booked as early as six months out! Kari can be reached at: [custerhouserental@gmail.com](mailto:custerhouserental@gmail.com)



**HASFR takes pride in preserving the rich history of Fort Riley. As part of the preservation, the Plaques chair maintains and updates the plaques in the historic homes on main post. Each house is designated a plaque with a listing of all previous residents dating back to the early 1900s, and a few as far back to the late 1880s.**

**Furthermore, the Plaques chair receives orders for plaque copies for \$15 as per resident request. This includes a parchment paper copy and a photo copy of the historic home.**

The HASFR Plaques chair and can be reached at: [hasfrplaques@gmail.com](mailto:hasfrplaques@gmail.com)

## Museum Closures

Complete remodels have been approved for the US Cavalry and the 1st Infantry Division Museums. These are both huge projects and the museums will be closed for two years. They will be occupying a much smaller and temporary location during the closures. The gift shop will remain open for the immediate future. For updates and more information, you can visit their website at <http://www.riley.army.mil/AboutUs/Museums.aspx>.

