

# 2010 BSA Centennial LAAC Challenge Coin **Limited Collector Edition\*** Available now!



Magnificently crafted by Symbol Arts®, the “Rolls Royce” of challenge coin manufacturers, these 1½ inch diameter coins come individually packaged in a special protective case. Each coin bears its own unique number from 1 to 1000. The debut for these coins is December 5, 2009 at the LAAC University of Scouting.\*\*\*

Grab one for yourself and several as gifts or awards to Scouts and Scout Leaders in your unit. You can request a special number - say your unit number - or a series of numbers, if available. This is a sure sellout so get yours now! All profits go to Los Angeles Area Council Centennial Committee to offset expenses incurred for LAAC Centennial Celebration events in 2010.

## Priced at only \$10.

\*This edition is limited to 1000 coins; each is numbered on the lower portion of the obverse.

\*\*Pre-production coin artwork as presented by Symbol Arts® is shown slightly larger than actual coin size; numbering is not shown. Actual coin may vary slightly.

\*\*\* If you miss the debut contact Lou Smith at [MrLionels@aol.com](mailto:MrLionels@aol.com) or see the back of this flyer for ordering information.

**What is a Challenge Coin?**

A challenge coin is a coin or medallion bearing an organization's insignia or emblem and is carried by the organization's members. They are used to prove membership when challenged and to enhance morale.

**Challenge Coin History** (compiled from several sources)

Like many aspects of military tradition, the origins of the challenge coin are a matter of much debate with little supporting evidence. A number of organizations claim to have been the originators of the challenge coin, but the most commonly held view is that the tradition began in the United States Army Air Service (the forerunner of the United States Air Force).

Air warfare was new during World War I. When the Army created flying squadrons they were manned with volunteer pilots from every walk of civilian life. Early pilots came from the working class or rural backgrounds; some were wealthy college students who were lured by the adventure.

As the legend goes, a wealthy lieutenant, while serving in France in 1918, ordered small, bronze medallions struck, which bore the squadron's insignia. He presented them to the other pilots as mementos of their service together. One of the pilots in the squadron placed it in a leather pouch he wore around his neck for safekeeping. Later, this pilot's aircraft was heavily damaged by ground fire (or per other stories, in an aerial dogfight), forcing him to land behind enemy lines, thus allowing him to be captured by the Germans. The Germans confiscated his personal belongings, but they didn't take the leather pouch from his neck. Enroute to a prisoner of war facility he was held overnight in a small German-held French village near the front. At night, the town was bombarded by the British, creating confusion and the pilot escaped.

Avoiding German patrols by donning civilian attire, he crept across no-man's land and made contact with a French patrol. But all of his identification had been confiscated so he had no way to prove his identity. Unfortunately for him, the French had been on the lookout for German saboteurs dressed as civilians. The French mistook the American pilot for a German saboteur and immediately prepared to execute him.

Desperate to prove his allegiance, the pilot pulled out the coin from his leather pouch and showed it to his French captors. One of the Frenchmen recognized the unit insignia on the coin and delayed the execution long enough to confirm the pilot's identity.

Safely returned to his squadron, it became a tradition for all members to carry their coin at all times. To ensure compliance, the pilots would challenge each other to produce the coin. If the challenged couldn't produce the coin, he was required to buy a drink of choice for the challenger; if the challenged could produce the coin, the challenger would purchase the drink.

**Uses for challenge coins**

While the BSA does not condone consumption of any alcoholic beverages, especially by Scouts, the coins can be used for other purposes. They can be used as rewards or awards. They can be used to build Unit, Den or Patrol camaraderie and morale. This LAAC Challenge Coin is a great memento of BSA's first 100 years!

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**2010 BSA Centennial LAAC Challenge Coin Order Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of coins wanted: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pick up: \_\_\_\_\_ (free) or Ship: \_\_\_\_\_ (add \$5 for 1 to 5 coins shipped to same address.

If ordering more than 5 coins please email [MrLionels@aol.com](mailto:MrLionels@aol.com) for shipping cost)

Special number requests (subject to availability): \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate number requests: \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping address, if other than above: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send this order form and payment (please make checks payable to LAAC-BSA) to:

*LAAC BSA Centennial Coin  
c/o Louis Smith  
8528 California Ave.  
Whittier, CA 90605*