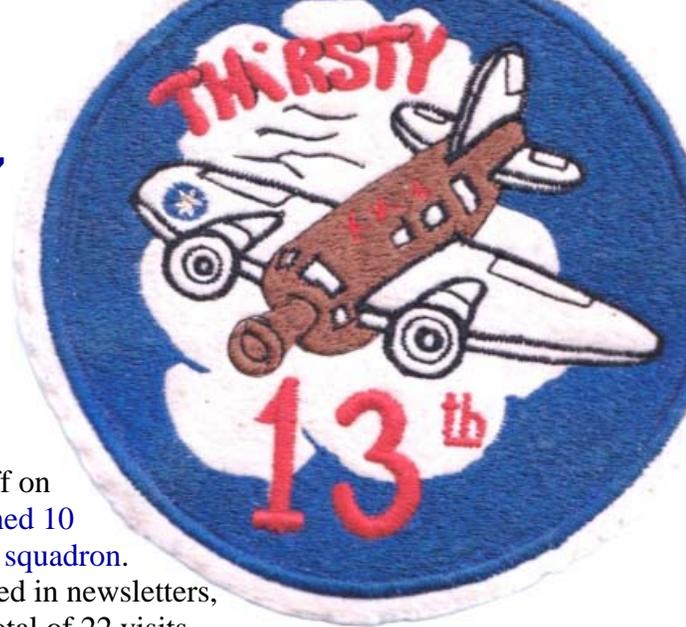


September 2017 Newsletter



Dear Thirsty 13th members, relatives, and friends,

Eleven days after the newsletter, July 23, 2017, I set off on a 21-day car trip out East for Thirsty 13th research. I scanned 10 new collections of letters, orders, and photos related to the squadron. I rescanned 5 collections previously seen, two not yet shared in newsletters, all resulting in new details, and made 7 other stops, for a total of 22 visits.

The results from this trip will be shared over three newsletters. This letter shares items from the first 8 days, which had 9 visits. Two were non-scanning visits, one was rescanning items previously emailed to me and shared in a newsletter, and 2 had items that need more research before sharing, so this letter presents results from 4 of these visits. The visits themselves are described in the second section, Members and Relatives.

As noted on the book's page 37, on September 21, 1942, the squadron received orders that the air echelon was to depart September 22, 1942, for California, starting its journey to the South Pacific. Today is the 75th Anniversary of the engines cranking up in Lockbourne, Ohio, and the air echelon flying to Scott Field, Ill., and the next day (75 years ago tomorrow) crossing the U.S. to Sacramento. Here's to all of the members of the 13th Troop Carrier Squadron at that time and their facing the challenges and accomplishing the tasks set before them.

Thank you for your interest in The Thirsty 13th.

Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian
September 22, 2017

75th Anniversary of the
13th TCS Air Echelon Departing Ohio for California
September 22-23, 1942 - 2017

Contents

1.	Additional History	2
	a. 1941-1942: Items of J. Virgil Sherrill, Crew Chief, 8/41-10/42.....	2
	b. 1942-1945: Items of Walter C. White, Jr., Supply Officer, 6/42-3/45	3
	c. 1942-1945: Items of William B. Bond, Mailroom and Photographer, 6/42-9/45.....	8
	d. 1943-1945: Letters of George W. "Bill" Alexander, Pilot, 12/43-1/45.....	10
2.	Members and Relatives	13
	a. Eastern US Scanning Trip	13

This is the newsletter for the U.S. Army Air Corps 13th Troop Carrier Squadron, 1940-1946, nicknamed "The Thirsty 13th." This is prepared by Seth P. Washburne, the son of John C. Washburne, navigator 11/42-7/43. Please direct any comments to him at: (212) 289-1506, sethgw1@gmail.com, or 5200 Meadowcreek Drive, Apt. 2060, Dallas, TX 75248.

Page numbers referred to are in the book "The Thirsty 13th" unless otherwise stated.

All contents are copyrighted and the property of the originator. No items may be reproduced without permission.

To enlarge the PDF to fill the width of your screen, press the CTRL key and "+" at the same time.

Please click the hand symbol to make it easier to scroll down.



CLASS B PASS 13th Transport Squadron AFCC
 March 12, 1942
 REPORT LOSS NON-TRANSFERABLE
 Organization: DREW FIELD
 Pfc. J. V. Sherrill, Jr.
 Grade: 34117761 Name: [blank]
 SERIAL NUMBER: [blank]
 Has permission to be absent from his organization and station from recall to 1:30 A. M. when such absence does not interfere with his duties.
 PHOTO (PASSPORT TYPE)
 JOHN C. BENNETT JR., Capt. AG
 Commanding
 Pfc. J. V. Sherrill Jr.
 SIGNATURE OF SOLDIER



1. Additional History

a. 1941-1942: Items of J. Virgil Sherrill, Crew Chief, 8/41-10/42

Sherrill joined the squadron in 1941 at its second U.S. base, Drew Field, in Tampa, Fla., above, in the location on the book's pages 7-8, the first two being him. He had the Class B pass above dated March 12, 1942, to be absent from the base until 1:30 a.m. He had the membership card at right for an Enlisted Mens Service Club in Tampa (but the location is not stated). These were while the 13th was still a transport, not troop carrier, squadron.

2138 MEMBERSHIP CARD 1940
 Enlisted Mens Service Club
 Tampa, Florida
 The Bearer of This Card:
 J. V. Sherrill Jr. NAME RANK
 1st Lt. ORGANIZATION
 WHOSE SIGNATURE APPEARS BELOW, IS ENTITLED TO ALL PRIVILEGES OF THE ENLISTED MENS SERVICE CLUB OF TAMPA, FLORIDA.
 J. V. Sherrill Jr. SIGNATURE OF MEMBER

In 1941-42 some men went for training after joining the squadron, rather than before, and this was the case for Sherrill. From Tampa he was sent to Delgado Trade School in New Orleans for two months, and returned to Drew Field as a corporal and C-47 crew chief.

The squadron then moved to Pope Field, NC, to the camp on the book's page 18, also below and at right, of Sherrill. His diary notes he was a crew chief in the 13th TCS jumping paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne.



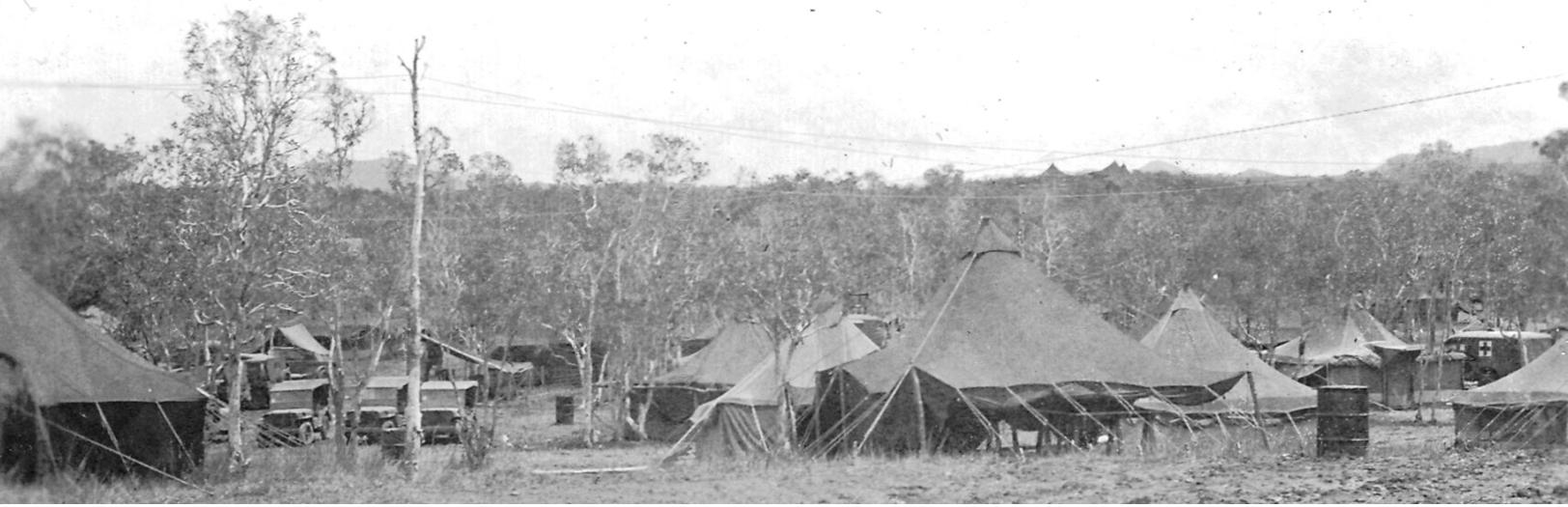
Adj. PASS CARD FORT BRAGG, N. C.
 Issued to J. (I.O.) V. Sherrill Jr.
 Sgt. 34117761
 Grade ASN (Do Not Show Orgn.)
 5/27/42
 Date of Issue Sig. of Soldier
 Issued Under the Provisions of Post Regulations, 1941.
 L. C. LITTLE, Commanding, 1st Lt. A.C.



The book on page 114 has Sherrill as one of only 3 non-air crew members assigned to fly the first planes to New Caledonia. He had the pass at right from Hamilton Field that he was "authorized to enter the Hangar and Flying Line areas and to pass to...C-47 #41-18559." I never found a record of him overseas, and his diary, below, cleared this up, as he noted at Hamilton Field he received orders to stay there and await orders to attend Officers Candidate School.

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS, HAMILTON FIELD, CALIFORNIA
 Office of the Provost Marshal
 The holder of this pass (Date and hour of issue)
 5/27/42 J. V. Sherrill Jr. is authorized to enter Hamilton Field including Hangar and Flying Line areas and to pass to airplane designated below.
 5/27/42 J. V. SHERRILL JR. By order of Colonel SMITH:
 (Signature)
 C-47-41-18559
 (Airplane type and No.)
 Clifford V. Oje
 CLIFFORD V. OJE,
 1st Lieut., Air Corps,
 Provost Marshal.

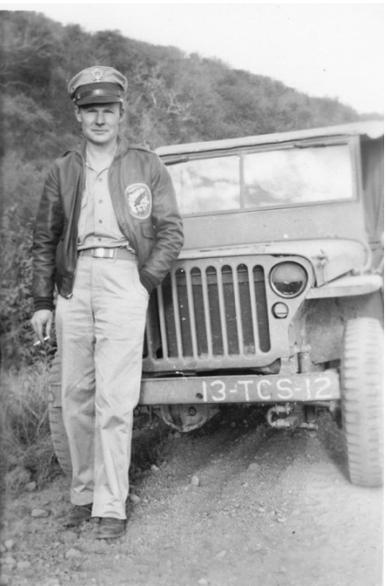
Left in Sept 42 for Hamilton Field, San Francisco Air Echelon
 Headed for the Solomons as Crew Chief
 C 47 October 42 at Hamilton Field received orders to stay at Hamilton to await further orders to attend O C S at Miami Beach
 The Air Echelon left for "Down Under"



b. 1942-1945: Items of Walter C. White, Jr., Supply Officer, 6/42-3/45

Walter White was one of the 8 core ground officers, and one of the five who were overseas almost the entire time. He was head of supply, for the squadron and the planes, perhaps the most important function. When he left in March 1945 he received a commendation from the commanding officer. He was born 11/12/06, and in 1942 was 36, second oldest in the squadron to executive officer Duffy, who was 39. He was from Massachusetts, and is pictured at right.

At the New Caledonia camp, above is the view west from the officers' hill, of the officer's club tent in the middle, and behind it the main road into the camp (left to right), with the motor pool on the left, estimated in December 1942 while setting up this camp. The barren hillside tents are in the distance. Below, estimated in June 1943, are the officers' native-built huts. Below these are White, the narrow part of the road to Thio (page 247), and a P-38 escort.



CONFIDENTIAL
 HEADQUARTERS
 LOCKBOURNE ARMY AIR BASE
 COLUMBUS, OHIO
 October 6, 1942.
 SPECIAL ORDER)
 No.107)

 8. The following named Officers, 13th Troop Carrier Square held from further assignment and duty of this station will be reported to the following:

Davis, Chester E.	35114413	Pvt.
Davis, William D.	33272309	Pvt.
<u>Dawson, Lawrence W.</u>	<u>36067180</u>	<u>Pvt.</u>
Finnelli, Dominic J	13079024	Pvt.
Franklin, Ernest H.	33183686	Pvt.
Fuselier, Claude R.	14080025	Pvt.
Gallagher, James F.	13045761	Pvt.
Gates, Eschol N.	36322512	Pvt.
Germerhausen, Fred J	12038684	Pvt.



Documents

White had about 140 unique photos, including many of setting up the Biak camp, for which he likely procured all the materials. He also had documents which provided great details, including:

- **Lockbourne Army Air Base Special Order 107, October 6, 1942.** Cullum had orders with the names of the air crew members who flew to San Francisco in September 1942. **This order, above left, is for the 172 ground crew.** They are listed on the next page. This order:
 - Provided for Larry Dawson a middle initial and serial number. In 2008 my first contact Jerry Bernhard told me he tented with Dawson, who went back after a few months, and he wondered how he got discharged. I never found a single reference to Dawson, but included him in the roster on page 58, and he was one of the only 21 men not identified. Now I was able to identify him, and then found his relatives. White also had a photo of Dawson, above right, on the left, at Tontouta. His daughter-in-law told me the reason he left the squadron abruptly was due to a burst appendix, from which he almost died.
 - Moved estimated start dates up from 1943 to 9/42 for Barker, Belto, Wilkerson, Yeager.
 - Provided 7 new names of Aruta, Gallagher, Kuhl, Lamothe, Revis, Setliff, and Schied. They may have left in California (Setliff did), so will not be added until verified as overseas.
 - Moved estimated start dates back from 1942 to 1943 for Barrow, Darnell, DeAmbra, Geier, L. Walsh. Founding members D. Lange and Mahacek were not on either this or Cullum's list, but appear overseas, so their transport to New Caledonia is unclear.
- **Troop HQ S.F. 425 November 16, 1942, list of 12 officers who boarded the ship.** This explained how pilot Nelson travelled. It also included a new officer, Charles C. McGill. A 13th TCS 12/23/42 order #44 stated Charles C. McGill was relieved as personnel officer, confirming he was overseas, so he was added to the overseas roster.
- **All 17 issues of the Klipfontein (ship over) newspaper, 'Westward Blow'** – These included a description of the Kingdom of Neptune ceremony exactly as described by Szafir on page 128. The newspaper account and diagram are below:

“At 0900 King Neptune, accompanied by his entire retinue, including his Queen and the Royal Baby came over the side as the transport passed over the equator without even a bump. Awed and hushed multitudes of Pollywogs watched tremblingly as offenders against the Majesty of the Deep were dragged before a stern and glittering court to be tried and punished in accordance with the inexorable and merciless Laws of the Equator.

“Among the first of the culprits were Naval officers, who heretofore had not crossed the line, and most of the ranking officers on board. The sentences of King Neptune's Court were dire – but colorful. Many a haughty officer had to bend and kiss the Royal Baby's bottom, or take a bite out of an ancient mackerel that could be smelled two decks above. Other punishments were unprintable and can best be left to memory or imagination. After their chastisement, the exhausted victims were thrown to the sharks.

“Never before had the eyes of many of the Pollywogs seen such splendor as that of the Royal Court. The passengers of this vessel have attained to a higher social rating, and are a better part of the race as a result of becoming members of the Royal Marine Order of Shellbacks.” Punishments depicted at right include: taking a bite of a smelly fish, a water hose stuck in the back of the pants (“Royal Flush”), dunked in the water tub (“baptism,” or “rocked in the cradle of the deep”), and kissing the Royal Baby's diaper.



Lockbourne Army Air Base Special Order 107, October 6, 1942
I Troop Carrier Command Shipment 4696 and 4696-A
U.S. Army Air Corps 13th Troop Carrier Squadron Ground Crew
Shipped to the San Francisco Port of Embarkation (Camp Stoneman)

(A link to this order has been added to the Thirsty13th.com website at the end of the Welcome section.)

Officers (15)

Burgess M.
Dewey Jr. E. K.
Duffy R. C.
Givens R. E.
Lyle J. R.
McGill C. C.
Nelson L. W.
Norfleet M. B.
Norris S. G.
O'Connor W. J.
Schauer J. R.
Strode E. C.
Szafir E. V.
White W. C.
Yeomans W. C.

Enlisted Men (157)

Amert E. R.
Anderson C. L.
Angle W. E.
Aruta
Bacon E. O.
Bakken M. O.
Barker O.
Bass W. H.
Beacom D. F.
Belto E. D.
Bernhard J. J.
Biedenbach C. J.
Bond W. B.
Bowen H. G.
Boyko W.
Bradford J. R. Jr.
Brouse R. R.
Byrd W. W.
Cameron R. J.
Carruthers W. E.
Chapman W. H.
Christie N. J.
Coker J. T. Jr.
Collart H. A.
Cummins J.
Davis C. E.

Davis W. D.
Dawson L. W.
DeHaan J. G.
Delaney J. A.
Deppe V. L.
Eastburn A.
Eatmon J.
Eaton W. L.
Elam R. K.
Enfield C. D.
Fabish M.
Ferguson J. B. Jr.
Ferguson M. B.
Finelli D. J., Jr.
Foster R. C.
Franklin E. H.
Franklin L. E.
Fuselier C. R.
Gallagher J. F.
Gates E. N.
Gee W. W.
Germershausen F. J. Jr.
Geuther W. J.
Goessl M. E.
Goodwin W. C.
Gordon F. R.
Granger G. E.
Harper D. R.
Hays C. S.
Hladczuk J. V.
Holbrook J. V.
Hopkins J. P.
Kimball M. E.
Korty E.
Kuhl G. L.
Labeledz C. A.
Laine C. O.
Lamothe
Larger H. F.
Lawrence E. F.
Leblanc N. J.
Lee G. T.
Lord F. M.
MacLeod J. D.

Marks K. G.
Martinaga J.
Matela F. R.
Mazzone G. J.
McAllister F.
McDade F. J.
McNulty J. P.
Mello M. A.
Melton R. E.
Meyers C. M.
Mika J. F.
Miller G. J., Jr.
Mlynek F. J.
Moore J. R.
Morgan S. W.
Morin R. A.
Myers R. S.
Myres D. L.
Nogaj S. R.
Oehm E. R.
O'Shea J. C.
Palmer W. D. Jr.
Pasco V. F.
Paucek J. L.
Persen A. T.
Petricola J.
Petry B. E.
Phipps W. A.
Pierce J. W.
Podolsky E. H.
Powell D. L.
Power J. K.
Price W. L.
Rapp A. C.
Reddick R. H.
Revis G. J.
Reynolds G. E.
Riskey J. E.
Robertson D. C.
Robertson E. G.
Samiran A. R.
Schertz C. W.
Schied P. T.
Schmidt C. L.

Schmitz J. D.
Schroth A. K.
Scott W. M. Jr.
Scruggs J. T.
Setliff O. E.
Shearer W. J.
Sidelko S. W.
Sinclair R. D.
Smith O. E.
Sodergren E. W.
Souder L. W.
St. Pierre R. L.
Stainback A. M.
Stallings D. C.
Steele D. H.
Stiers B. P.
Storbeck H. W.
Storms C. W.
Sturgis B. N.
Sydnor K. W.
Taylor R. C.
Termini R. L.
Thaute L.
Thompson D. C.
Thweatt O. D.
Tustin W. W.
Tutella R.
Uhl D. C.
Vallely B. X.
Van Ness O. K.
Wade W. C.
Wallace J. T.
Wallace K. D.
Waller E. A.
Weekley R. B.
Wells R. S.
Whitehead J. W.
Wicks R. M.
Wilkerson H. F.
Windham E. T.
Wiseman B. H.
Wozniak M. S.
Yeager E. E.

- Amert
- Barker
- Beacorn
- Belto
- Byrd
- Cohen I.
- Collart
- Davis A.S.
- Dewey Jr.
- DiTullio
- Eatmon
- Eckenga
- Edelstein
- Evans
- Ferguson J.
- Ferguson M.
- Foster R.C.
- Foster Russ
- Franklin L.
- Fuselier
- Germershausen
- Giglio
- Gray W.
- Grubbs
- Jenkins T.
- Johnson D.
- Kilzer
- Knoll
- Korty
- LaLonde
- Lamb
- Langlois
- Lawrence E.
- Martinaga
- McAllister
- McClendon
- McNulty
- McWhorter
- Mellinger
- Myers R.S.
- Painter
- Pasco
- Petry
- Reberry
- Riskey
- Robertson
- Samiran
- Sandler
- Staggs
- Stentzel
- Stiers
- Swatzell
- Taylor J.D.
- Taylor R.C.
- Termini
- Wade
- Waker
- Walsh L.P.
- Wells
- White W.
- Windham

• **Dates for COs, moves, and other:**

- COs (from a Qualification Card as Supply Officer) - listing Remaklus taking over 6/30/43 (vs. 7/7/43 on page 50) and Wilson 11/13/43 (vs. 11/26/43 in the book).
- Moves: Dumbea 11/26/42, PDG 12/4/42, Tontouta 12/23/42, Espiritu Santo 11/19/43 (left Tontouta by ship 11/11/43), Biak 12/1/44 (left Espiritu 11/29/44 by air).
- Campaign credit: Western Pacific ending 3/4/45, Southern Philippines 10/17/44-3/4/45.
- SCAT: 11/26/42 to about 10/10/43 with the Marines, continuing until 8/1/44 (the book on page 482 has 12/12/42-7/4/44). 13th TCS assigned to the 403rd about 10/10/43 (vs. 8/22/43 on page 348). Under 13th AF since about April 1943, FEAF about 8/1/44.

- **403rd Special Order 209 11/4/43** – Ralph Melton on page 397 says the 13th TCS officers at Espiritu Santo had their own mess hall and he was assigned as their cook, and this is the order which moved him and 9 others to that mess hall: Melton and McDade as cooks; Cameron, Sidelko, Souder, Stiers, Sydnor and Thweatt on KP, and Phipps and D. Steele. This order provided the occupation codes for Walter A. Phipps as a parachute rigger, and Cameron as an engine mechanic, reducing the number of men with unspecified roles to 19.
- **403rd Special Order 227 11/28/1943** – assigned White and Duffy, and four from the 63rd and 403rd to a 403rd Officers' Mess Fund, suggesting the 13th, 63rd, and 403rd officers at Espiritu Santo shared the same mess hall, because their barracks were close.

- **403rd Special Order 180 9/22/44** – provided names of 61 men, at left, who had been at Biak estimated setting up the camp, being transferred back to Espiritu Santo, probably to close that camp. This also provided the date the 10 duty soldiers at right joined the 13th TCS, including recently-found Campos.

Name	
Cpl 521 Gonzalo Figueroa Jr	38144284
Pvt 590 Glenn L Yeager	18168509
Pfc 590 Frederick W Schultz	36189716
Pvt 590 Theodore J Anderson	33201429
Pvt 590 Juentino Campos	38360665
Pvt 590 Ben Carpenter	35334964
Pvt 590 John E Carr	12080887
Pvt 590 Gilbert Garrasco	18201359
Pvt 590 Florencio L Medina	39274301
Pvt 590 Harold E Hirst	33240472

• **A March 1, 1945, lost-item report with the name and dates of the supply ship to Biak**

The book on page 515 notes when the squadron moved from Espiritu Santo to Biak many supplies were taken by ship, and took five months, arriving 2/15/45. The note below provides the ship name as the SS Belle of the West, and that it departed Espiritu Santo (APO 708) 11/25/44, and was unloaded at Biak (APO 920) 2/16/45.

DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCES:
 The above items of Army Air Forces Property were lost or stolen from boxes or crates containing property of this squadron on board the S S Belle of the West, which left APO 708 on 25 Nov 44, and was unloaded at APO 920 from 16 Feb 45 thru 22 Feb 45.

• **War Department General Order #12 defining Western Pacific campaign eligibility.**

The 403rd Troop Carrier Group, and the 13th TCS as part of it, was awarded credit for this battle, and on page 469 I note this was probably for moving 13th AF bomber units to bomb the Marianas. This booklet defines the combat zone as outlined at right, and is west of the 150° longitude line, from the equator to 22° N, but excluding the Philippines. The shaded area includes Palau and was not eligible after 1/8/45. The other outlined area was not eligible after 2/18/45. It still is not clear what the 13th TCS did, but this is the combat area.



XV. WESTERN PACIFIC.—1. Announcement is made of units awarded battle participation credit under the provisions of paragraph 21b(2), AR 260-10, 25 October 1944, in the Western Pacific campaign.

a. Combat zone.—That portion of the Central Pacific Area lying west of longitude 150° east, less the main islands of Japan, the Bonin-Vulcan, and the Ryukyu Island chains, and the immediately adjacent waters.

b. Time limitation.—17 April 1944 (Air) ; 15 June 1944 (Ground), to 2 September 1945.

- Adams Jr.
- Baldry
- Benedetto
- Bergstrom
- Blackwell
- Bradford
- Bridges
- Burden
- Burder
- Cairns
- Davis, A.S.
- Dean
- DeClerck
- DeLoss
- Dewey E.
- Donovan H.
- Drago
- Drake
- Fabish
- Fatula
- Ferguson J.
- Ferguson M.
- Finelli
- Fraser
- Gee
- Geuther
- Hall
- Harp
- Holbrook
- Houpt
- Johnson A.
- Knoll
- Labedz
- LaLonde
- Laming
- Lawyer
- Lesh
- Lord
- MacDonald
- McCullough
- Melton
- Mlynek
- Myres
- Norfleet
- Oliveros
- Pasco
- Petty
- Preston II
- Seeley
- Small
- Smith J.
- Stiers
- Stiver
- Tustin
- Tutella
- Valley
- Versdahl
- Waller
- Watkins
- Wells
- Wentworth
- Windham
- Wysong
- Zdon

Later Documents

- White had reunion letters providing dates for reunions in 1967 (8/11-13), 1969 (8/15-17), 1975 (8/8-10), 1977 (8/12-14), 1981 (8/7-9), and 1983 (8/12-14), to add to those on page 750.
- He had a list of the 1983 reunion's 64 attendees, at left.
- First overseas CO Cullum wrote White in a letter 7/8/84 wrote: "The 403rd coming over is the main reason I cut out before they arrived." In a letter 9/4/85 he wrote that the hat on page 751 was distributed by John Cairns, who was the "honcho" for the 1985 reunion. In a letter 10/30/85 about dedicating the plaque at Wright Patterson AFB in Ohio referred to the plaque location as a "permanent home" for the squadron:

Although the Sqdn has been out of existence for almost 40 yrs. I feel it now has a permanent home. Also feel that Allen, Nelson, Saltsman, Rinaldi and Stratton are no longer lost in the Pacific. They are also at home now at Wright Field.

- Navigator Donnelly wrote about the 1977 reunion that each person was given one hour to talk:

Each person is given at least one hour to embellish upon his heroism from Australia and New Zealand through Fiji, Espiritu Santos, Guadalcanal, Munda, Bougainville, the Admiralty Islands, New Guinea and the Philippines.

- Donnelly in a December 2, 1966, letter wrote that he tented with Dalmann, Judd, and Groesbeck. He mentioned the 1967 reunion responders (I was happy to see my dad listed, at right, as hoping to attend; he died 6 weeks prior to that reunion).

Washburn

- White had an original and previously not seen Baxter sketch of the Old Boulder, below. The song with lyrics "Bloody big wheel" was sung to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." "O.D." on the sleeve means the squadron's "Officer of the Day." "Early to bed and early to rise" may refer to the pilots such as Baxter sometimes having to wake up at 4 a.m. to fly missions, as described by Bill Alexander on pages 10-12 herein.

EARLY TO BED, EARLY TO
RISE, MAKES YOUNG MEN

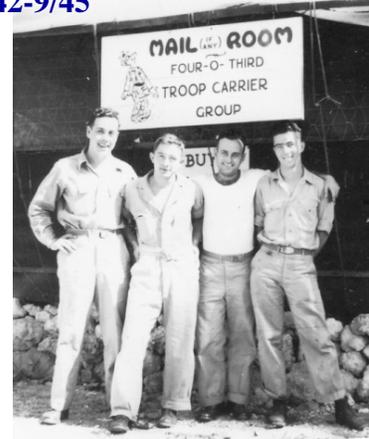


Baxter



c. 1942-1945: Items of William B. Bond, Mailroom and Photographer, 6/42-9/45

Bond was the squadron photographer, and we are indebted to him for many of the official photos in the book. His personal collection included others from all the overseas bases. His most unique ones were from New Hebrides. That above is the first view of the entrance to the enlisted men's mess hall (also on page 374-375) on Espiritu Santo, the squadron's second overseas base. At right is the "Mail (if any) Room" of the 403rd group, with Bond on the right.

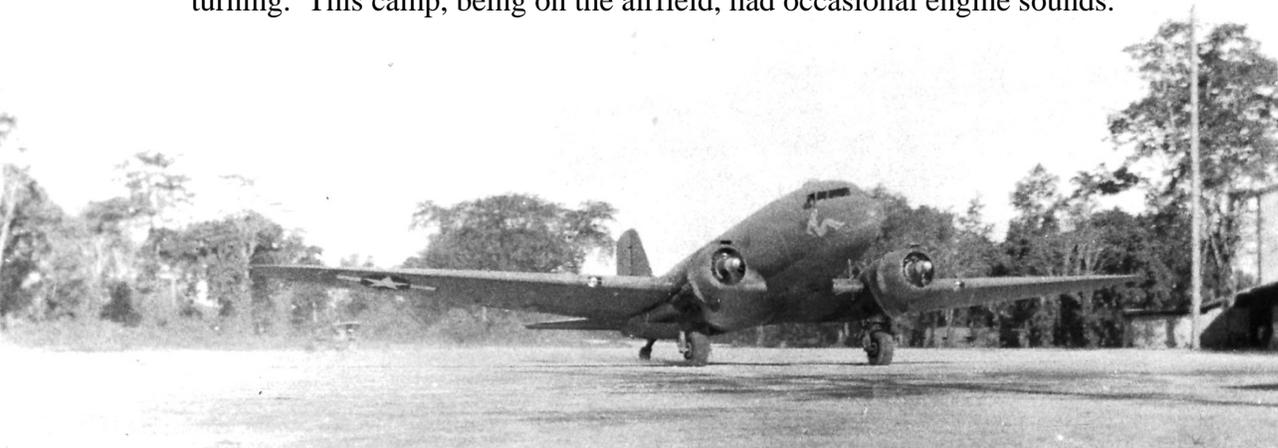


At the beach in New Hebrides below left are Bond, McDade, Oehm, Goessl. Also in New Hebrides is Bond sailing titled "Do I look green?" Below right is estimated on one of the squadron's three boats (per page 396) in New Hebrides.



At right in New Hebrides is USO performer Larry Adler, titled "Billy got the greatest thrill hearing Larry Adler play harmonica."

Below is Flyin' Jenny crossing the parade ground on page 414 with the propellers turning. This camp, being on the airfield, had occasional engine sounds.

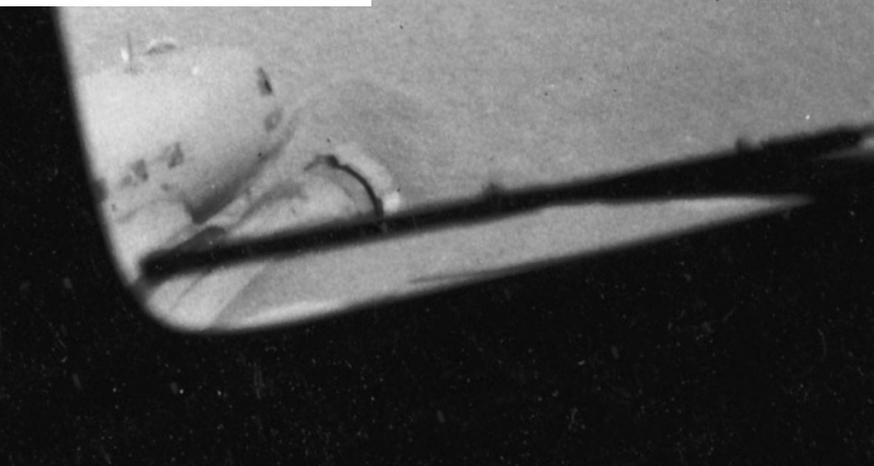




Formation Flying

The book on page 445 notes on July 5, 1944, the squadron practiced formation flying, and these photos appear to be from this time.

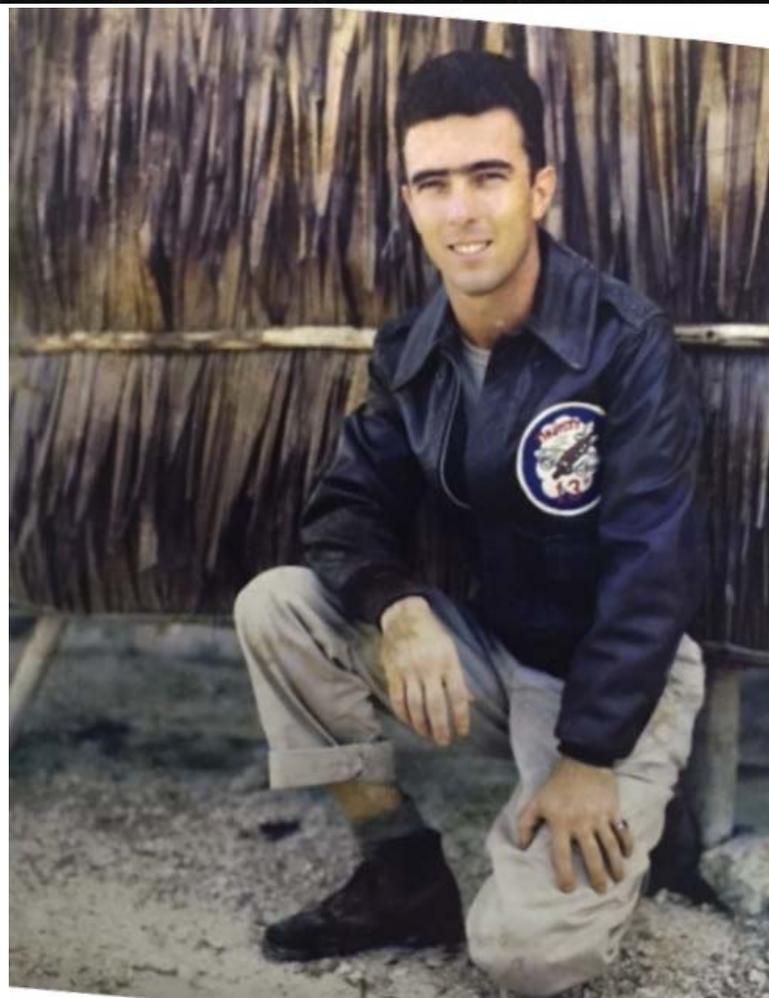
Below in a three-plane formation estimated near Espiritu Santo is C-47 42-23943, with the squadron star above the number, named "The Wolf." The right side nose art is not yet recognized.



Color Photo of Bond by Biak Chapel Door

At right is Bond in front of the Biak chapel door on page 544. It is great to see a color photo in the Biak camp. His Thirsty 13th patch certainly is bright white and looks great.

Thank you to Bill Bond as photographer for the squadron for taking so many great photos, which were in the squadron reports and already fill the book. Thank you for the additional items shared.



d. 1943-1945: Letters of George W. "Bill" Alexander, Pilot, 12/43-1/45

Pilot Bill Alexander wrote letters to his wife almost every day, and these were divided up among his three daughters. In May I visited daughter Cherry in Spokane and found great details, included in the May 2017 newsletter. On August 4, 2017, I visited a second daughter, Pattie, in South Carolina. I scanned 114 letters (440 pages), and reviewed these September 7-8. I transcribed parts of 76 letters, creating 17 pages of single-spaced squadron-related stories. Below are some highlights.

Alexander, G.W. (Pilot, 12/43-2/45): 2/22/44: "Today the automatic pilot wasn't working and we had to fly every mile by hand, and that's really a job on a long run like today [Auckland]. I have a headache from eye strain, and I'm tuckered out. [He had the driving permit at right, dated 2/25/44, showing he stayed at the Waverly Hotel, this below right, from DeLoss].

3/15/44 [at Espiritu Santo]: "Today I had to go to code class. Tomorrow I have some classes in navigation. They keep up working on everything we have to use at different times checking us again and again. **When we aren't on flights we're studying something else, or practicing something.** Keeps us sharpened up.

4/16/44: "Honey, I have to be up at 4:00 in the morning again.

4/23/44 [on rest leave in Auckland]: "One of the boys in the crew knew of a place where he could get rooms for us in a private home, and it's pretty nice. My room is a second story, overlooking a lake or bay, and the view is quite pretty. The woman who runs it has a boy flying heavy bombers from England. Her husband was a government big shot, but isn't living now. She is here by herself, and enjoys having boys stay here, especially since they like this quiet district of town. We get our meals next door [estimated at Kia Ora] where a lot of fellows stay while they are here. Tonight we had a roast chicken and all the trimmings. In that same place they have sort of a club room, much like the officers club in Ft. Wayne. I sat in front of the fireplace [on page 303], and baked my shins while I watched them dance.

4/26/44 [estimated on the way to Norfolk Island]: "We'll get part way home today, but not all the way. I sure don't like the place we'll have to stay, either. Mosquitoes by the millions, and a guy can't keep from getting a few bites. I am writing this in the airplane.

5/6/44: "I'm going to tell you the names of two books which I read and enjoyed since I came over here: 'Lorna Doone [1869],' [and] 'A Tree Grows in Brooklyn [1943].'

6/15/44: "Today I found out I'm now a flight leader. The job calls for rank of captain, which no one ever seems to get except a choice few. **I was at 14,000 feet today for quite a while without oxygen, and that really poops a guy out.**

6/29/44: "I went to a show tonight and it was 'Twin Beds [1942]' and it was really good. It will sure seem odd to sit in an American theater again when someone isn't always stopping the sound track to announce in the middle of the show: 'Lt. So-and-so, report to the O.D. immediately,' etc., or they have the show run in one continuous stream instead of having interruptions while they change reels. And there will be soft seats, too, instead of coconut logs with ridges on them or boards with cracks in them that make a guy's fanny sore. There won't be any moon to shine on the screen and make the show very dim, or rain to rain down a guy's neck.

FORM No. 2 **1943-44**
License to Drive a MOTOR-VEHICLE No. 2296
Issued by the AUCKLAND CITY COUNCIL
GEORGE WILLIAM ALEXANDER
of US ARMY WAVERLY HOTEL OFFICE
(ADDRESS) (OCCUPATION)
Class/es of Vehicle/s:
1. PRIVATE MOTOR CAR (including LIGHT TRADE MOTOR)
2. HEAVY TRADE MOTOR
3. MOTOR-CYCLE
4. TAXICAB
5. MOTOR-OMNIBUS
6. TRACKLESS
7. PASSENGER-SERVICE VEHICLE
8. ROAD-MAKER
This License applies only to
This License is subject to the conditions endorsed hereon.
PERIOD OF LICENSE: Date of issue/1st JULY 1943, to 30th JUNE, 1944
LICENSE FEE 5/-
Date of issue: 25 Feb 44
Signature of Licensee: George W Alexander
Signature of Issuing Officer: HCBell



7/8/44 [on rest leave in Sydney]: “Do you know where I spent the afternoon? I spent it in the guard house. It seems leather jackets aren’t allowed down here, but of course I didn’t know that. A couple of MPs picked me up , and took me to the guard house to wait til the provost marshal came, so I sat there from 1:30 til 4:30. Finally the provost marshal came, and he told me I’m not allowed to wear my leather jacket, and that I’d have to buy another coat if I didn’t have one with me, so I had to buy a coat. This rest leave is turning into as much or more work than staying home. Sure will be glad to get back to a warm climate.

7/15/44 [back at Espiritu Santo]: “Getting back here was almost like coming home to you, I was that glad to get back, and get mail from you. I guess my rest leave was good for me after all, ’cause for the first time I almost like this place. It’s true.

6/7/44: “Honey, a short time ago they assigned each ship to a first pilot, and at the bottom it said this was so that first pilots could paint pictures and names on the nose of the ship if they liked. If the fellows wanted to put a name on a ship they did it anyway, so I can’t see the difference. Anyway, I never put any name on a ship before, but I think I’ll get ambitious and do it now, while we aren’t doing much. My ship is a brand new one.

“Imagine that. I laid out ‘Tootsie’ with chalk on the nose, and it doesn’t look so good. It’s too long a word for the nose of this ship, so I tried ‘Lady Fay.’ with the Fay lower, and slightly to the right. Looks pretty good, too. As soon as I can, I’ll get the sign painter to fix it up and then I’ll send a picture of it to you [no photos found yet of Lady Fay or Tootsie].

7/17/44: “I’ve only been in five bombings, and bombings aren’t bad if a guy gets in his hole where he belongs. I have been shot at three times that I know of, and any time they even come close a guy knows it. I was shot at once by Japs, and twice by the U.S. Navy.

“We were getting an air medal for a hundred combat flying hours. Combat hours is time spent flying in places where enemy fire is known to be, and is expected. In other words, they could shoot at you if you aren’t careful, but all a guy has to do is stay just outside A.A. range. And don’t worry, we know exactly where those A.A. guns are. So it isn’t a bit dangerous if a guy thinks a little bit. We always have plenty of fighter cover whenever we are in a place where there might be enemy planes. I have actually landed and unloaded, or loaded the plane, only a mile from the Jap lines, but they couldn’t possibly shoot at me because you can’t see a hundred yards through the jungle, much less a mile.

“Our work is dangerous out here, but only slightly more so than in the states, but it isn’t Japs that make it dangerous. You look at war’s dangers as shooting and bombing, and those things are dangerous to fellows in certain outfits. But there is something which is more dangerous to airmen than that, and that danger is bad weather. I am more afraid of that than I am of being shot at or bombed. In weather flying, all it takes to keep your neck is experience and carefulness, and these two words are my first and middle names.

7/20/44: “They had a band at the 403rd officers club last night, for the official last night of business [before moving from Espiritu Santo to Biak].

“Jim [Moyle] and I and the other ‘Rover Boys’ live in that shack we built. Actually live in the same house, and yet last night was the first time I saw Jim in two months, that’s how little time we are there. Jim came in yesterday afternoon, and I went out this morning, so even at that we were together only a few hours. Oh, it’s a great life.

7/27/44: “I’m so tired I’m about to drop, and I have a headache. I’ve listened to these engines droning so much today that little airplanes are still flying around in my head. Remember the Sat night when I flew til 1:00, and then met you at the gate? My ears were ringing so badly that everything you said you had to repeat so I could hear it. The noise in my ears isn’t quite as loud tonight, or quite as sharp, but still it’s about to drive me nuts.

8/5/44: “We are listening to the ‘Hit Parade,’ and they just played ‘Goodnight Wherever you Are.’ Now they are playing ‘Long Ago and Far Away.’

8/23/44: “I flew a P-38 this morning. I’m still a confirmed transport boy, and I wouldn’t transfer if I could. We have a P-38 in the squadron for us to take up and blow off steam once in a while. It’s good for moral. That sure is one sweet airplane to fly, especially after flying something as big as a 47 for so long. They are fast, but very smooth, and sweet as a dream.

“I sat in the cockpit for about 15 minutes this morning while they told me how to fly it, then started the engines and took it off. My only trouble was that the first time I came in for a landing I couldn’t get it slowed down enough, so I pulled up the wheels and went around. The next time I did get it slowed down and made a good landing. I’m going to get a little more time in it before I go home.

9/3/44: “When I came in this evening I was really pooped out. I took off here at 5:00 this morning, and landed at 5:00 this evening. That’s a long day for anyone, and especially since we flew all the way at 10,000 ft.

9/4/44: “We never listen to Tokyo Rose anymore, since we have our own radio stations out here in the islands. When we had no radios of our own we used to listen to her over the radios in the planes. Then the army started setting up stations on the different islands.

9/30/44: “Yesterday was another one of those ‘work like the dickens’ days, since I had to navigate, and I had a green co-pilot. The winds were so strong that I could hardly believe that my navigation was right. It took us six and a half hours to go down, and only four hours and 10 minutes to come back. Our ground speed was 190 knots coming back, which is 220 miles per hour. That’s travelling, you know, for a C47. And boy, am I getting hot on this over-water navigation. An hour and a half before we got in last night, I told the radio operator what time we’d get in, so he could radio it to the field, and by golly we came wheeling over the end of the field just 32 seconds after I said we would.

9/26/44 [at Los Negros]: “Boy will I be glad when we get moved so we can eat at our own mess hall. Right now we are eating with the 63rd, and I’m slowly starving to death. **The 13th does have good cooks; I can say that for them.**

10/9/44 [at Wakdel]: “The old ocean has sure been rumbling today, some of the breakers ten or fifteen feet high. One fellow said he felt a little earthquake down at Hollandia last night, so maybe that has something to do with it. If it keeps up we may not have a home, because it was washing part of the bank away today, and our tent sits only about ten feet from the edge of the bank. We’ll have to watch it.

10/26/44 [at Biak]: “There are four of us in the tent, Aos, Moyle, a navigator, and myself. Aos and Moyle expect to get their stateside orders by the end of the month, and the navigator is on six weeks d.s. with another outfit, so I’ll probably have the whole place to myself next month.

“We are getting combat whiskey rations now. Each time we come back from a combat flight we go to the medics and collect 2 ounces of whiskey. That doesn’t sound like very much, but my gosh, it’s two pretty good drinks. I was feeling silly as could be before supper.

11/27/44: “One fellow brought back some dye from Sydney, and today about six fellows started dying things. Each one dyed a pair of undies red, one blue, one yellow, and one green – real bright colors. And some of them dyed a towel each color. So there’s a bright colored clothes line right next to me. Those towels look pretty darn sharp, too.”

Thank you to Pattie and her sisters for allowing me to scan these letters and share these quotes. I hope to also visit the third sister, Billie, in Colorado.

2. Members and Relatives

a. Eastern US Scanning Trip

During the last year I have found relatives of more Thirsty 13th members. I always ask if the relative has any letters, orders, or photos from the member's time in the squadron, and was excited to find many collections.

I planned a 3-week car trip starting in Dallas to the locations at right. My 89-year-old mother said she would enjoy coming along, if she could do most of the driving, to feel useful, and this freed me to make calls to confirm appointments and book hotels. We therefore added personal stops, to a friend in Seneca, SC., my mother's sister in Chevy Chase, Md., her cousin in Woods Hole, Mass., my sister in Ann Arbor, Mich., my dad's grave in Chicago, and the total solar eclipse near Carbondale, Ill.



There were 22 Thirsty 13th stops: 10 to scan new collections, 5 to scan collections previously seen (two not yet shared in newsletters), and 7 other stops - to meet two members for the first time, meet two sons of members, meet Air Force historian George Cully, visit a museum in Fort Wayne, and visit a Thirsty 13th grave in Michigan. The first 9 visits are described below.

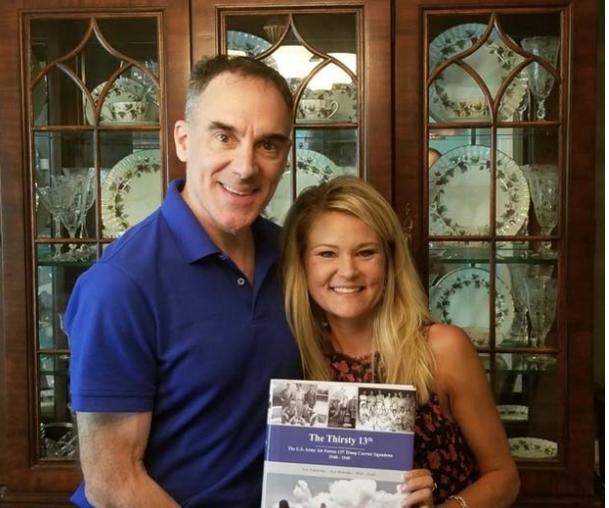
Day 1 (8/3): Drive from Dallas to Demopolis, Ala.

Day 2 (8/4) Visit 1: For years I have relied upon George Cully in Montgomery, Ala., for Air Force research. I met him in 2011 at Maxwell AFB in the research library, and he has found countless items for us. I have wanted to meet him again and thank him in person. He and his wife Margaret were wonderful to let my mother and I visit them in their home, then give us a tour of Maxwell, and go to lunch with us. He is pictured at right in the same room where we first met. Thank you again for all of your great help, George!



Day 3 (8/5) Visit 2: Pilot Bill Alexander's daughter in Spokane in May shared with us wonderful letters her dad wrote, and said her two sisters each had an equal number of letters. On this day we visited with daughter Pattie, in Summerville, SC. I made 450 photographs of letter and other items from 11:07 a.m. until 2:09 p.m., 24 seconds per image. I recently bought a "Tryone Gooseneck Cellphone Stand" shown below to be hands-free, and set my phone to take photos when I said cheese, capture, shoot, or smile. My mother, Nancy, was great to take the letters out of envelopes and put them back in. Afterwards I reviewed the book with Pattie, to show her exactly where her dad was, and to where he flew. It was a wonderful visit, and provided 16 pages of stories, three pages of stories included herein. We made a quick drive through of Charleston, had dinner looking over aircraft carrier Yorktown, and started north.





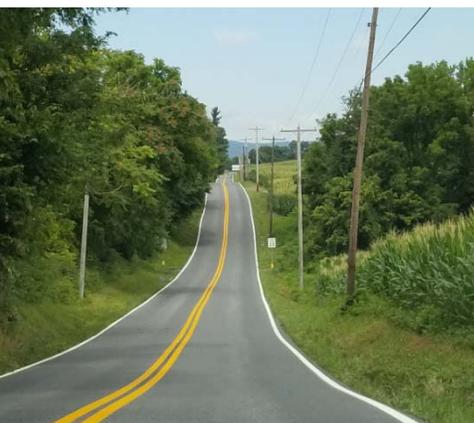
Day 4 (8/6) Visit 3: We drove three hours north from Orangeburg, SC, to north of Charlotte, NC, to visit J. Virgil Sherrill's granddaughter, Amanda, above left, who had all of his photos, being probably 500 photos, in two large hat-sized boxes. He was in the squadron only in the U.S., then was the Adjutant in the 98th Bombardment Squadron, from where were 95% of the photos, but he still had many helpful ones of the 13th TCS at Drew Field and Pope Field. Thank you, Amanda! Late in the afternoon we drove to Chatham, Va., to see my mother's high school.

Day 5 (8/7) Visit 4: We drove to Norfolk, Va., to meet the son Larry, pictured above center, of the second overseas commanding officer, Phil Remaklus. His dad flew over on the C-47 Billie, named for Larry's mom, which is the one I purchased. He shared newspaper clippings about his dad, treated us to lunch, and gave us a tour of Norfolk, including pointing out a General MacArthur museum. I pointed out the quote in squadron yearbook "Two Years" about his dad, which he had not seen before: "Phil (How we lo-o-ved dat man) Remaklus."

Day 6 (8/8) Visit 5: The first visit this day from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. was in Leesburg, Va., NW of Washington, DC, with Craig Bond, pictured above right. His dad was the squadron photographer, and an editor of "Two Years," and Craig was wonderful to have out on his dining room tables many photos. I scanned 166 photos. Thank you, Craig!

Visit 6: Next we next drove west to Charles Town, WV, to visit the daughter, Valerie, of 1944-45 pilot Martin Hamasian, and her husband, Will. It was a beautiful drive, below left.

On December 5-6, 2016, Valerie and Will were wonderful to scan her dad's items and email them to me, and these were included in the December 2016 newsletter, so this visit was to rescan a few photos and say hi. In the process I found the photo, below center, of his wife, who Valerie resembles, upon which is written he kept it with him at all overseas bases, hence the weathering. He had a newspaper article saying he participated in 10 airborne operations in the 13th TCS, suggesting paratroopers, but might mean drop missions. He had the photo of the funeral July 29, 1945, on page 694, and noted he was the second pallbearer on the left. Valerie, below right, was wonderful to share so many items with us in December. She also had the handsome box at right made up with her dad's many medals. Thank you for sharing so many photos, Valerie!





Day 7 (8/9) Visit 7: George Miller was a crew chief in the squadron from June 1942 until September 1945, for 3.25 years. His daughter, Janet, in Bensalem, Pa., north of Philadelphia, was great to let me stop by on this morning, upon short notice, from 9 a.m. until almost noon. She had many items out, as shown above left. I scanned 47 photos, and all were interesting, but I have not been able to identify some of them yet, and so will hold off on including them. She also had his flight record, and he flew a lot, but this was in the new format that does not show destinations, so I will wait to present that. It was an honor to show her where her dad was in the book.

Visit 8: After a drive through places familiar to my mother and I in northern NJ, we crossed the Hudson, and arrived in Avon, Ct. at 6 p.m. to meet the daughter, Katherine, above center, of 1945 glider pilot Rogers. She was great to treat us and two friends with the New England Air Museum to a delicious dinner, so I tried to get the scanning out of the way first, above right. Katherine previously shared photos of her dad's uniforms and Eisenhower jacket, and these were in the April 2017 newsletter. It was a thrill to hold the uniforms in person. I scanned 48 photos, but some were from a prior outfit, and others I have yet to figure out, so will share them later.

Day 8 (8/10): This was a personal day to take my mother to Plymouth and Cape Cod.

Day 9 (8/11) Visit 9: Walter C. White's daughter, Joyce, I found earlier this year, and she has been amazing to send me care packages of New England products, e.g. maple sugar candies! I have been eager to meet her and her husband Bob in Lunenburg, Mass. They treated my Mom and me to a big lunch, and later a huge dinner from Olive Garden. Her brother, David, below, joined us. Joyce had a large box of her dad's Thirsty 13th items. I scanned 216 images from 1:15 to 4:30 p.m., visited Walter's grave nearby, and after dinner photographed 272 documents from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. I was embarrassed to be there from 11:35 a.m. until 9:40 p.m. but it was a thrilling day, with an incredibly warm and wonderful daughter, of one of the most important Thirsty 13th men. Thank you, Joyce.



To be continued in the next newsletter.

