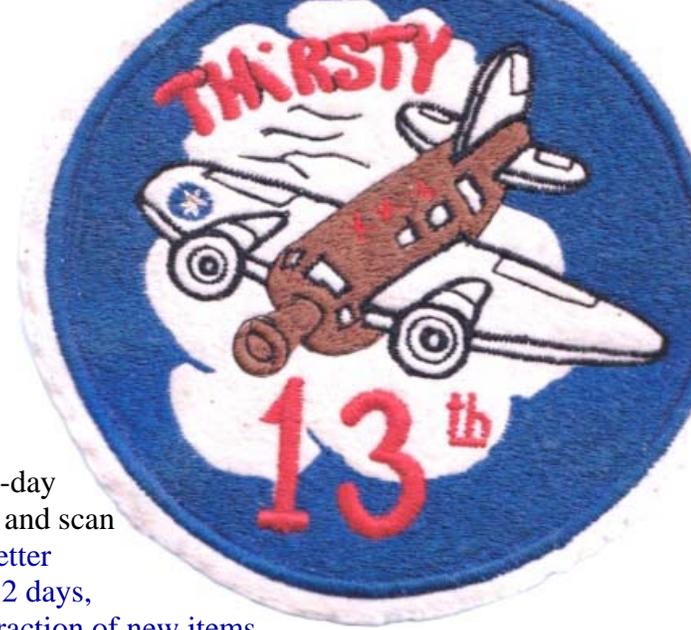


October 2017 Newsletter



Dear Thirsty 13th members, relatives, and friends,

The letter September 22, 2017, noted I completed a 21-day car trip in August to visit squadron members and relatives and scan items, and presented findings from the first 9 days. [This letter presents wonderful new history learned from just the next 2 days, August 12-13, from 4 more visits. As always, it is just a fraction of new items.](#)

As noted on the book's page 114, in the excellent writing by 13th TCS pilot Gilbert Zieman, on October 4, 1942, at 2:30 a.m., the 13 C-47s of the Thirsty 13th took off at 2 minute intervals from Hamilton Field, north of San Francisco, to Hawaii (and from there to New Caledonia), beginning the squadron's overseas service. [This was a 14-hour flight, until 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time, and so all day today is the 75th Anniversary of this historic event.](#)

Thank you for your interest in The Thirsty 13th.

Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian
October 4, 2017

75th Anniversary of the 13th TCS Air Echelon
Departing California for Hawaii
October 4, 1942, at 2:30 a.m., flying for 14 hours

Contents

1. Additional History	2
a. 1942-1945: Items from Stanley W. Sidelko, Motor Pool, 5/42-9/45.....	2
b. 1943-1944: Items from Harold O. Dewey, Navigator, 11/43-2/44.....	8
c. 1944-1945: Items from Willard A. Evans, Mail and Communications, 11/44-8/45	9
d. 1944-1945: Items from Gerald I. Getter, Radio Repair, 4/45-9/45.....	13
2. Members and Relatives	14
a. Eastern US Scanning Trip – Part 2 of 3.....	14

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.



1. Additional History

a. 1942-1945: Items from Stanley W. Sidelko, Motor Pool, 5/42-9/45

On August 12, in Rome, NY, near Rochester, I met the granddaughter, Kerri, of Stanley W. Sidelko, at right. He joined estimated at Tampa in May 1942, and was at all the camps, in the motor pool. I was amazed to find unique items no one else had, and many “gems.”

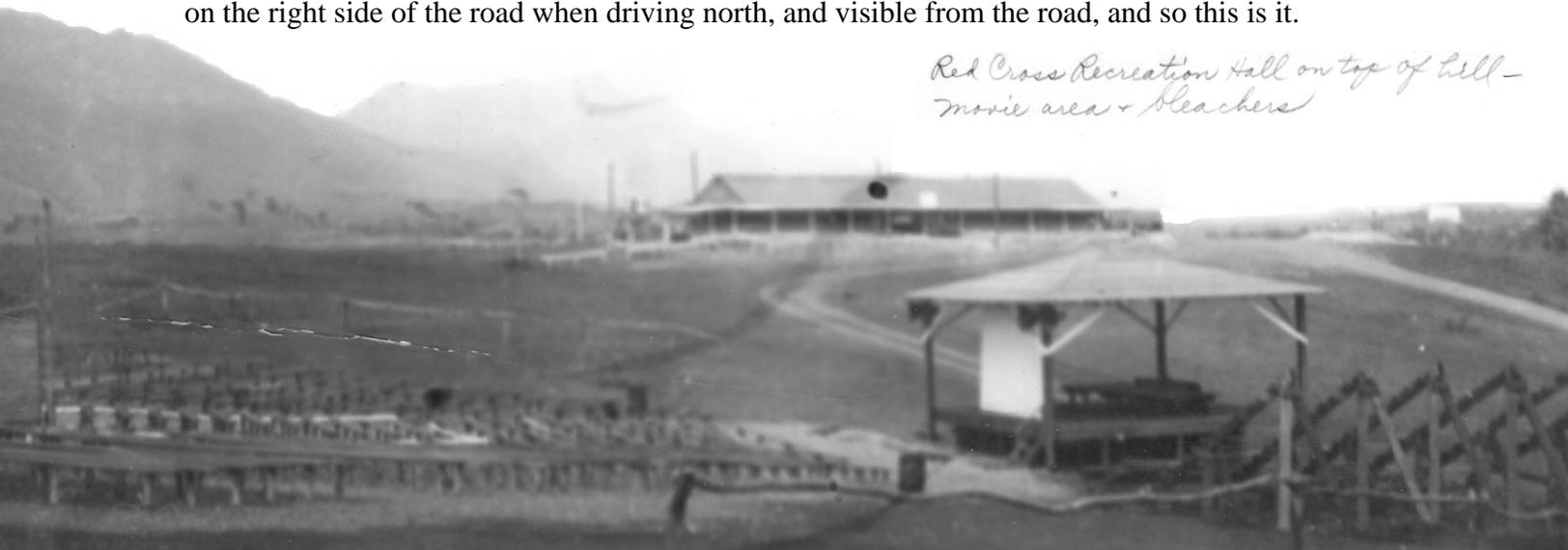


New Caledonia Mess Hall - Above is the only photo of the mess halls, for officers and enlisted men, respectively, in the 1942-43 camp in New Caledonia. In the foreground are the oil drum halves which would contain boiling water over a fire in which to dip mess kits after eating. Natives completed the enlisted men’s mess hall in early 1943.

New Caledonia Movie Theater - For members in 1943 a main activity in the evening was to go to movies, which as noted on page 237 were available every night. On that page I showed the Marines’ theater, and stated there was probably another one, and have wanted to find it for 9 years.

Incredibly, Sidelko had the photo below, and wrote on the back “Red Cross Recreation Hall on top of hill, movie area and bleachers,” and this is in the exact location remembered by Fuselier, as on the right side of the road when driving north, and visible from the road, and so this is it.

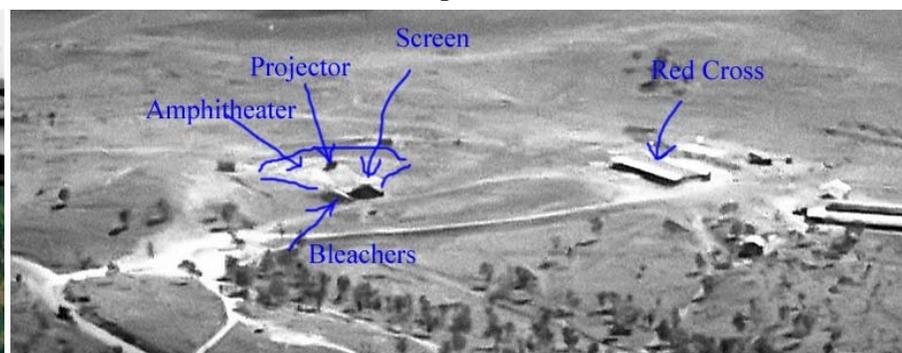
*Red Cross Recreation Hall on top of hill -
movie area + bleachers*





New Caledonia Movie Theater Location Today

Regarding the exact location of the theater, I drew a line, below left, connecting the middle peak of the distant mountain and the peak in front of it, and estimated this was next to Tontouta airport, but could not find it on my aerial photo. I emailed Eric Gavarone, who was of immense help in 2014, and on September 16, was thrilled to get a reply from him, that, looking at a different aerial photo, and using a Deep Zoom feature, he found it exactly, below right! He identified and labeled all of the elements – the Red Cross building, the amphitheater, screen, and bleachers, and even identified the projection booth. The roads to the theater in the Sidelko photo are also there.



On September 17, I was further amazed that Eric, who lives near here, went a step further, literally, and walked at the site. He wrote that, according to his GPS, the screen was at 22° 00' 17.5" S, 166° 13' 12.7" E, the red pin at right. He took the photo above.

Eric looked around for remnants, and found all four cement casings in which the theater's wood corners were set, two of these shown below left.

Thank you so much to Stanley Sidelko for being the only person to have a photo of this theater, and to his granddaughter, Kerri, for sharing this with us. Thank you to Eric Gavarone for his incredible sleuthing to identify the location. I asked Eric to please send a selfie from the site, and received that below right, titled "The Detective at work."

On behalf all of the members and relatives of the Thirsty 13th: **Merci Beaucoup, Eric!**

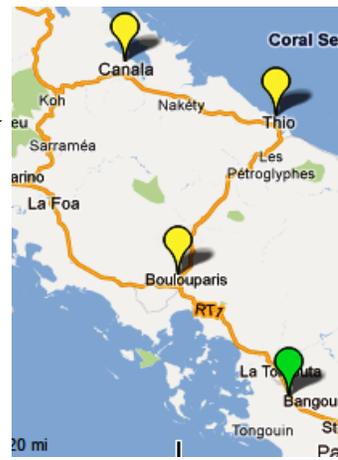




Visit to Canala, Nakéty

On the book's page 247 Fuselier describes weekend trips from the New Caledonia camp, the green peg at right, to Canala, the top pin at right. Sidelko had the photo above left of the "monument aux morts" in Canala. He also had the photo above center, east of Canala, in Nakéty, estimated to be our Roger St. Pierre on the right.

On June 3, 2017, my colleague Marcel Claude in New Caledonia identified the man with St. Pierre as Reverend Father Luneau, and said this Father appreciated the visits by the American military to Canala and Nakéty. Marcel emailed me the photo above right (from the Jean Jacques Syllebranque Collection, the Association Témoignage d'un Passé) of the mission at Nakéty in 1988, now a site visited by the 13th TCS.

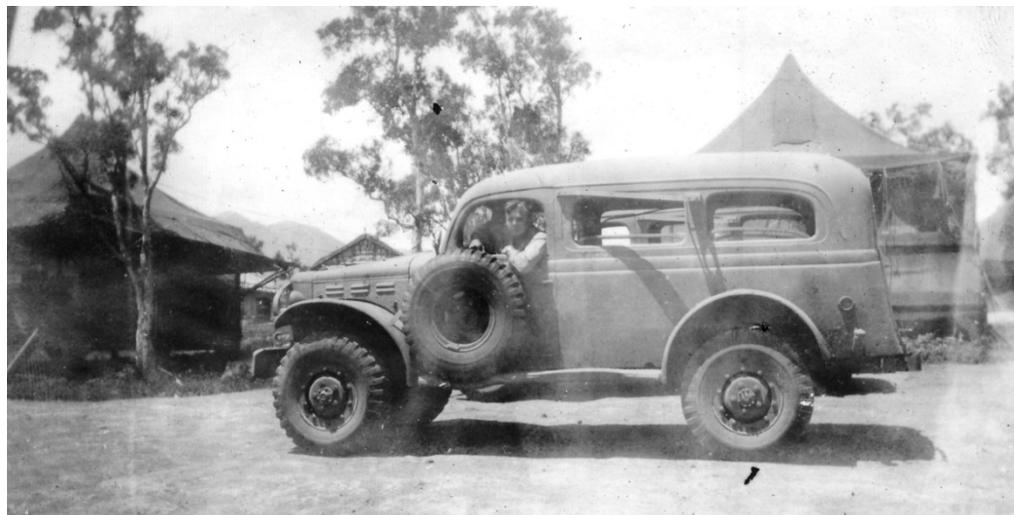


Sidelko had the photo at right of St. Pierre estimated also in Canala, possibly visiting a police station.

Dodge WC-53, ¾ - Ton Truck

Sidelko had the photo below right, which is after one pulls into the New Caledonia camp, and it is a 1942 Dodge WC-53, ¾-ton Carryall truck. The Table of Organization on page 51 indicates the squadron was allowed 4 ¾-ton trucks (including the ambulance which was a different model), so we may have had 3 of these.

At left are photos of this model from online, of how it would look new.





At the Line

Sidelko had the photo above of the line in New Caledonia, with six C-47s including Billie, with its left side baby shoes at right. A photo of Snafu at right has the cockpit windows and door open to cool it off.

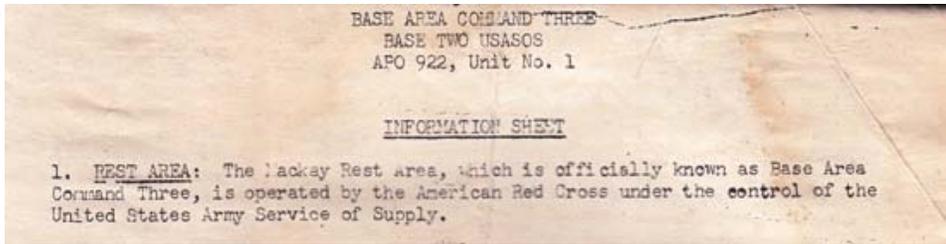
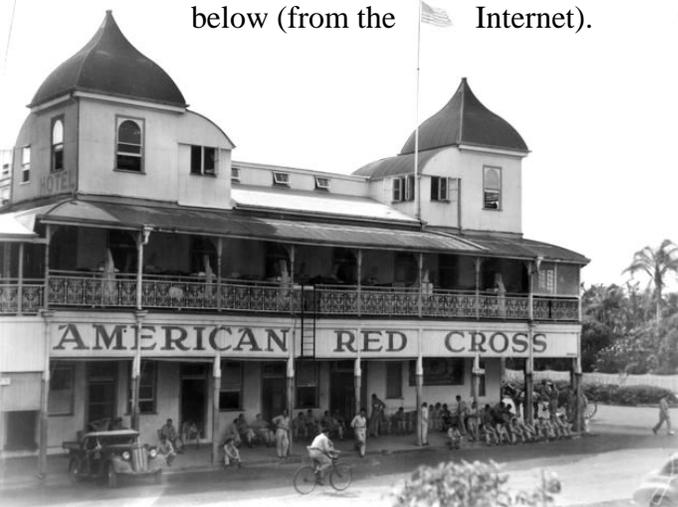


At Biak, Sidelko had the photos below of a C-46 with field number 39. The tractor may have been used to pull it, and is probably better suited to muddy conditions than the usual smaller tug.



Mackay, Australia, Rest Leave (page 506)

Sidelko had a two-page Information Sheet of guidelines for rest leave in Mackay, Australia. The handout stated "The Mackay Rest Area, which is officially known as Base Area Command Three, is operated by the American Red Cross under control of the US Army Service of Supply. All military control is exercised through U.S. Army Headquarters on Wood Street." The Army headquarters location provided a post office, quartermaster store, and issued passes for travel outside the city limits. Men were required to wear their uniform, but not ties or hats. Bars were open from 11 a.m. until noon, and 5 p.m. until 6 p.m., except on Sunday, and all beverages had to be consumed onsite. It stated "Do not encourage the black market which takes advantage of gullible soldiers and which often supplies inferior liquor at enormous prices. Homemade liquor may contain poisonous ingredients." Red Cross places to stay are below, mainly the Grand Hotel, below (from the [Internet](#)).



A.R.C. INFORMATION:

Billets are located at-

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| York House | - | Carlyle Street |
| Hopkins House | - | Brisbane St. and Gordon St. |
| Porter Flat | - | Gordon Street |
| Grand Hotel | - | Brisbane St. and Victoria St. |
| Grand Hotel Annex | - | Victoria Street |
| Brown Buildings | - | Sydney Street. |

**Table of Organization:
Why Enlisted Men Were
Rarely Promoted Overseas**

Sidelko had the article at right, which explains why most of the enlisted men in the squadron never got promoted overseas.

Men who went overseas as privates, after three years were still privates, despite doing their job well. In short, there is a payroll for each outfit based on certain numbers of men at each rank, and unless someone leaves, which was rare overseas for the ground crew, then others cannot be promoted.

The Table of Organizations for troop carriers is on pages 49-53, and 760-761. I purchased a copy of it in 2010. On this trip I found an original of it in the collection of Walter C. White, with the cover below.

I was aware of this phenomenon, but it is nice to see it someone else's words.

Table of Organization Rules Promotions in Army

By TOM WOLFE

London —(NEA)— Unless the folks back in the states fully understand the story of the "T. O."—the Army's Table of Organization—a lot of good and deserving soldiers who haven't been promoted are going to be badly underrated and unjustly maligned at home.

The T. O. contain the Army's hard-and-fast rules for promotion.

Every unit in the Army has a table of organization. It states specifically how many men may hold commissioned and non-commissioned ranks in this unit. It also states specifically how high these ranks may be.

Assume that the T. O. of a certain unit calls for seven enlisted men in grades not to exceed one technical sergeant, one sergeant, one corporal, one first-class private, three privates. Assume that John Jones is one of this outfit, he never can be promoted until one of the non-commissioned officers leaves the unit.

Stop and let that sink in. Unless one of the non-coms leaves the unit, Private Jones never can be promoted—not if he has been in the Army 10 years, not if he has been in 50 major campaigns, not if he has won 100 medals.

The only exceptions to this are that a soldier in any enlisted grade is eligible for Officer Candidate School; and in battle he is eligible for battlefield appointment to lieutenant.

In practice, this comes to mean that a man's chances of promotion are better at home than overseas. This is true because at home new units are frequently formed. Any enlisted man may be promoted to any non-commissioned grade.

In our expanding Army, when a new unit is activated at home, there will be places in the Table of Organization for non-commissioned officers. If Private Jones is transferred to this new unit when it is formed, he may become a master sergeant overnight.

Overseas, however, comparatively few units are formed. Therefore, one Private Jones

leaves the states, his chance of being transferred are less. Thus his chances for promotion overseas are smaller than they would be at home.

What goes for enlisted men goes for officers as far as the T. O. are concerned, with one extremely important additional qualification. No officer may skip a grade. For instance, a captain cannot become a lieutenant-colonel without having served as a major.

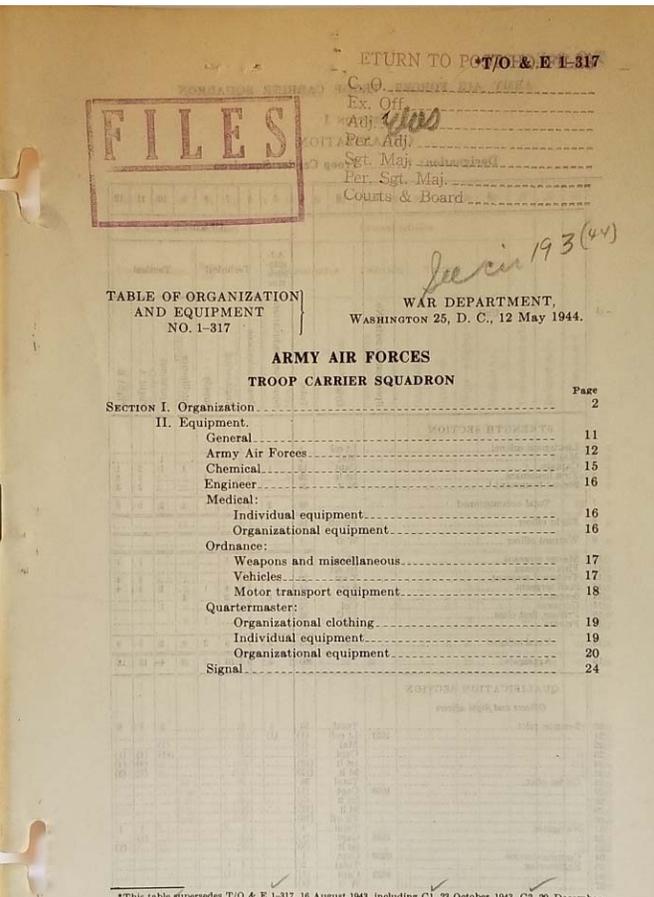
There are rigid time-of-service rules for promotion of officers. A second lieutenant must serve six months before being eligible for promotion to first lieutenant; a first lieutenant must serve six months; a captain, six; a major, nine; a lieutenant-colonel one year. The War Department can promote a full colonel when it sees fit.

There is one other qualification for officer promotions. Before an officer is promoted he must occupy for three months the position he will occupy when he gets promoted. Assume that a major has served the full time when he gets promoted. Assume that a major has served the full nine months required for promotion to lieutenant-colonel.

Suppose, too, that the T. O. for his unit lists the job which he has been doing as one carrying the rank of major. He cannot be promoted to lieutenant-colonel until he has served three months more as a major in some position for which the T. O. authorizes a lieutenant-colonelcy.

In battle there are several modifications to the rules of promotion. Most important of these is that any man who shows outstanding ability in battle can be promoted to the next higher rank, without having served his time in grade—if a vacancy exists.

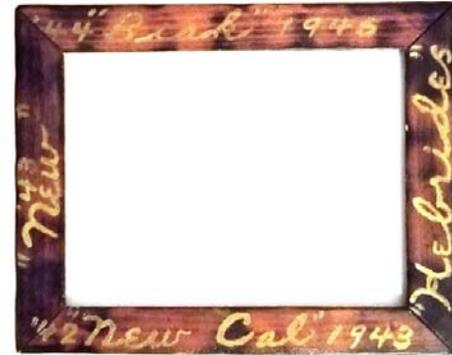
Thus, if Captain Smith, the company commander, is killed in battle, and First Lieutenant Klein takes his place, he can be promoted to a captaincy even if he has not been a lieutenant for six months.





Souvenirs - Bracelet from Australian Coins, Gun Shell Ashtray, picture frame

Sidelko had the bracelet above. His granddaughter understood that he made this himself. He also had the gun-shell ash tray at right, and picture frame, painted for 'New Cal' 1942-1943, New Hebrides 1943, and Biak 1944-1945.

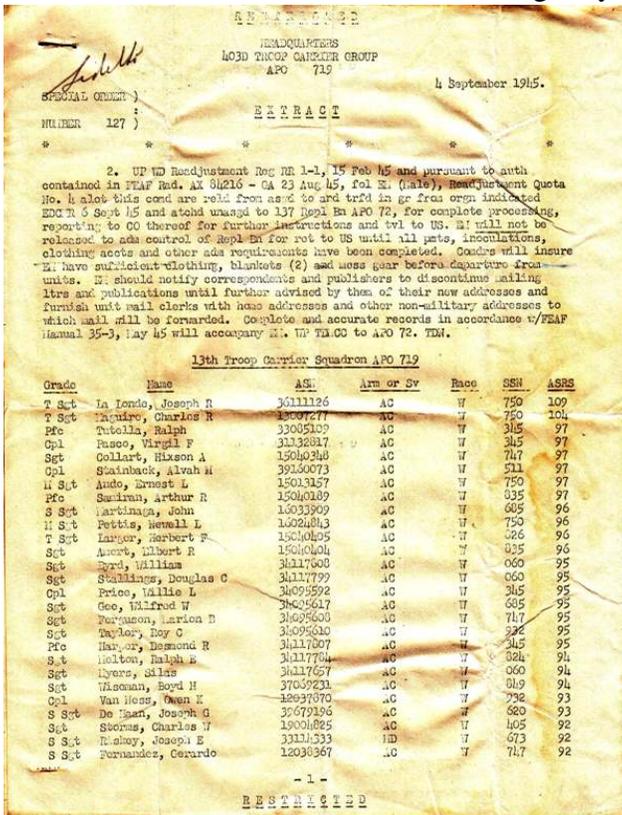


USS Tabinta's 69 Thirsty 13th Passengers

On page 726 under "Going Home" I wrote "Most of the squadron returned on the U.S. Army Transport Tabinta." Windham is quoted saying "Half of us or better were on this."

Sidelko had the order below left listing 69 squadron members relieved from assignment to the 13th TCS on September 4, 1945, and attached to the 137 Replacement Battalion APO 72 for travel to the U.S. They are listed by their "points," the ASRS score, from 109 down to the minimum required 85 pts. All are enlisted; and all but 7 had been in the squadron the entire time overseas, and all but 9 were ground crew, working in the camp, vs. flying on the missions. This was 57 (51%) of the 111 ground crews who went overseas on the Klipfontein in 1942, and 57 (68%) of the 84 original ground crews estimated to still be overseas in 9/45. There may be other orders sending additional men on this same ship. This order extended estimated timelines for four men. The men are listed at right by function, with the most from the motor pool.

69 13th TCS Men Relieved 9/4/1945 to Return on the Tabinta



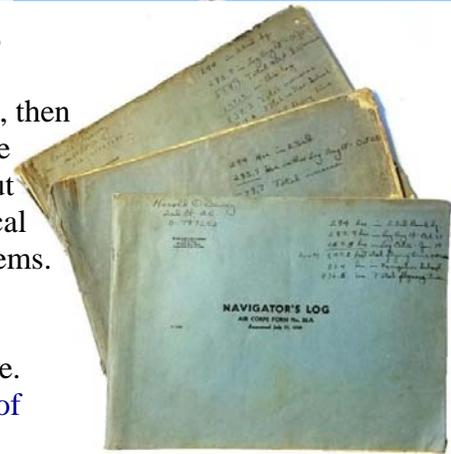
#	Name	Join	Pts	#	Name	Join	Pts	#	Name	Join	Pts
Ground Crew Members				Transportation (Motor Pool)				Instrument Repair			
Orderly Room				22	Collart	9/41	97	48	Gee	3/42	95
1	Enfield	3/42	88	23	Delaney	6/42	89	49	Martinaga	6/42	96
2	Goessl	6/42	91	24	Ferguson, M.B.	1/42	95	50	Wells	9/42	90
3	Mazzone	3/42	91	25	Franklin, L.E.	6/42	87	Personal Equipment			
Mail				26	Harper	3/42	95	51	DeHaan	9/42	96
4	Bond	6/42	90	27	Lawrence	7/42	90	52	Labez	9/42	90
5	Finelli	9/42	86	28	McNulty	6/42	85	53	Nogaj	9/42	87
6	Gordon	6/42	90	29	Pasco	6/42	97	Tech Supply			
Utilities				30	Price	10/41	95	54	Amert	6/41	96
7	Bacon	6/42	90	31	Sidelko	6/42	86	55	Larger	6/41	96
8	Korty	3/42	91	32	Souder	9/42	86	56	Scruggs	2/42	90
9	Lord	7/42	90	33	Stiers	7/42	86	57	St. Pierre	6/42	85
Barber				34	Sydnor	6/42	85	58	Storms	6/42	92
10	Sturgis	6/42	86	35	Taylor, R.C.	9/41	95	Operations			
Mess Cooks				36	Tutella	6/42	97	59	Eaton	6/42	86
11	Anderson, C.L.	12/41	91	37	Van Ness	2/42	96	Intelligence			
12	Byrd	8/41	95	38	Windham	8/42	85	60	Babcock	2/44	86
13	Melton	8/41	94	39	Zdon	6/42	91	Air Crew Members			
14	Myers, R.S.	8/41	94	Radio Repair				Crew Chiefs & Mechanics			
15	Stallings, D.C.	8/41	95	42	Wilkerson	9/42	87	61	Ando	8/43	97
16	Storbeck	6/42	85	43	Carruthers	7/42	91	62	Bell, H.D.	6/43	91
Duty Soldier				Ordnance				63	Cameron	7/42	91
17	Diamond	1/44	87	44	Samiran	6/41	97	64	Germershausen	6/42	90
Squadron Supply				45	Stainback	9/42	97	65	LaLonde	6/43	109
18	Eastburn	12/41	90	Engine Mechanics				66	Maguire	7/43	104
19	Ferguson, J.B.	8/42	91	46	Fernandez	6/42	92	67	Matela	6/42	90
20	Fuselier	6/42	89	47	Persen	6/42	91	68	Pettis	5/43	96
21	McAllister	3/42	90					69	Wiseman	6/42	94



WAR DEPARTMENT Air Corps Form No. 21A Revised March 9, 1939										LOG SHEET—NAVIGATOR		
DEPARTURE <i>Espirito Santo</i>					DESTINATION <i>Guadalcanal</i>							
DATE <i>November 27, 1943</i>					PILOT <i>Abernethy</i>							
AIRPLANE TYPE AND No. <i>C-47 - 535</i>					NAVIGATOR <i>Dewey</i>							
MISSION <i>Rescue</i>												
POSITION	TIME	TRUE COURSE	DRIFT CORR.	TRUE HEAD.	VAR.	MAG. HEAD.	DEV.	COMP. HEAD.	RUN			
									DIST.	TIME	G. S.	
<i>Cape Quiros</i>	<i>1803</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>+2</i>	<i>312</i>	<i>-9</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>301</i>				
<i>Cape Cumberland</i>	<i>1815</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>+3</i>	<i>309</i>	<i>-9</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>298</i>			<i>1357A 130</i>	
<i>Cape Surville</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>-9</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>337</i>	<i>215</i>	<i>150</i>	
<i>Marau I</i>	<i>2050</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>-9</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>388</i>	<i>235</i>		
<i>Marapa I</i>	<i>2111</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>-9</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>443</i>	<i>250</i>		

b. 1943-1944: Items from Harold O. Dewey, Navigator, 11/43-2/44

Harold Dewey was in the 23rd bombardment squadron in New Hebrides, then on 8/19/43 transferred to the 63rd TCS, and on 11/19/43 to the 13th TCS. He returned to the states 2/17/44, and so was in the squadron only 3 months, but when I visited his niece in February 2010 he had 7 photos which were critical to the history in New Hebrides, and on this rescanning visit I found more gems.



Dewey had three books, at right, of navigator's logs, War Department form #26A (each page being Form 21A) – forms I had never heard of before. These are fantastic for providing the exact routes they flew, and the names of the landmarks familiar to them. The form above right lists the checkpoints here mapped for a flight from Espiritu Santo to Guadalcanal November 27, 1943. He has these for missions to the Northern Solomons, New Caledonia, Fiji, and New Zealand, and I will share the other routes at a later time.



Dewey had a 403rd Group order 11/19/43 assigning ten men to the 13th TCS: himself and pilots Cannon, Rode, and McMahan, Viktorchik (cc), Cloud (ro), Johnston (ro), and two others. He had a lot of shipping tickets, with the exact models of watches and other items issued to him.

During this visit I noticed 12 photos, such as that at right of Dewey with his navigator's bag and sexton walking to the line, in the officers' area in New Hebrides (page 386). I have wanted more photos in this area, even if with the 63rd, and so these will help with figuring out the layout of the officers' areas in New Hebrides.



Below is estimated to be Vella Lavella, where he landed four times. The C-47 does not have 13th TCS markings.





c. 1944-1945: Items from Willard A. Evans, Mail and Communications, 11/44-8/45

Willard Evans worked with the mail, then at the 403rd Group switchboard, and edited the 403rd weekly publication “Skytrain,” at which he is pictured at right. On August 12 I visited his son in Athens, NY, and scanned 43 letters, 343 pages. Due to time constraints I scanned only an estimated one-fourth of the letters, and these alone produced 18-pages of stories.



At Biak he was in tent D2, above left, Evans on the left with Waker, and above right. His tentmates were Carlson, Leone, Reberry and Waker. Below are highlights of the letters.

Evans (Mail Orderly, 11/44-8/45, 10/28/44, New Hebrides, rear echelon): “Right now I have the barracks all to myself, **the only sounds are the beat of distant airplane motors, and the more subdued chug-chug of the generator.** [One forgets the generator ran continually for electricity].

Biak Camp Description

12/7/44 [at Biak]: “This job with the mail includes the following. At seven I go grab myself a jeep, and drive off for the post office down the road. There I sweat out a line to mail packages, and buy envelopes for the squadron, usually returning about 8:30. At 9:30 I go down to the post office again, after mail this time, and hold **mail call from 10:30 to 11:45.** After dinner [at lunchtime] I stroll back around 1:30 to take care of certain odds and ends until time to go after the mail again at 2:30. **Afternoon mail call from 3:30 – 4:30** winds up my day, except for an almost nightly tussle with returning crews who quite naturally want their mail pretty badly.

“The living conditions around here are pretty good. **The food is excellent, by common consensus, quite the best anybody has had overseas.** Steaks are a regular feature, the potatoes are always fresh, and there are always fresh eggs for breakfast. The mess hall itself is very pleasant. It has been decorated on the walls and ceiling with billowing blue and orange dyed parachute silk. Its foundation is a less esthetic but even more useful concrete floor. The showers, too, are excellent, featuring hot and cold, but mostly cold, running water, and again a concrete floor.

“For recreational purposes there are volleyball and horseshoe courts, and a Group theater consisting of rows of barrels which serve quite acceptably for seats, except that the lack of a good back rest always leaves me with a crick in the neck. But there is a show only three nights a week, and I guess I can stand it that infrequently.

“We live in tents which are moderately satisfactory. They are about 16 feet square, maybe 14 feet high in the middle, and accommodate five occupants. The tents have no side walls, but instead a piece of burlap about three feet high runs all the way around the sides. You might think it would rain in, and indeed so it does, but the canvas top extends quite a ways out and down past the burlap side walls and this feature keeps out most of the rain except for some stray spray.

“There are also still some Japs back in the hills on this island - small, isolated, disorganized and disarmed remnants of the original Jap garrisons of this island. They are being gradually exterminated largely by starvation and by the natives who are paid so much per head for every dead Jap they bring into the American authorities. Once in a while you can still hear rifle and artillery fire in the hills whenever our infantry locate a few Japs.

“For a time, going Jap hunting was a favorite sport of the lads off duty in this squadron, but I understand that the authorities now frown upon the practice.

“This island here is Dutch territory, and that fact leads to the two complications I find most confusing. The first one is that fact that our medium of exchange is no longer the dollar, but the Dutch guilder. In fact, American money is practically worthless here. PXs will not take anything but Dutch money, and aside from PXs, there is nothing to spend money on (and precious little to spend it on at the PXs). I will still take dollars at the post office, but I’m not supposed to. The guilder seems to be pegged at about 53 cents US money, but there are complications and intricacies which I have not yet mastered.

“The other factor which confuses me is that we drive in the English-continental manner, on the left side of the road. Again it seems dumb since there is no one to drive the roads except the American soldiers, but such is, nevertheless, the rule.

12/11/44: “Tomorrow is the second anniversary of the date that the 403rd Troop Carrier Group was activated. A ‘gala celebration’ has been announced to commemorate the festive occasion. Everybody is to have the day off, there are to be tournaments in softball, volleyball, touch football, and horseshoes between the officers and enlisted men’s team of the 13th, 63rd and 64th squadrons and of the group headquarters. A GI band is to perform at the theater in the evening, to be followed by a double features movie bill. And there is to be, as the sign says, ‘BEER – all you can drink (well, almost all).’ I’m to play on the softball team and will probably see the evening show. Anyhow, it will be an extra day off.

“Enthusiasm over the Group Activation Day is, understandably I think, not very high among men of the 13th, seeing as how most of them were already overseas before the group was even activated. The old men in the squadron have always resented their being attached to the Group, and look back on their New Caledonia days as an independent outfit as ‘the good old days.’

12/22/44: “It may sound goofy, but I wish you would send me some golf balls! There is a chance that in six or nine months I may get to go down to Australia for a rest leave. I’m told by fellows who have been there that there’s a very fine golf course at the place this squadron goes. You can rent clubs, but you have to furnish your own balls, and there are none to be had for love or money. So I wish you’d send me a half a dozen or so, so that if I ever do get down there I’ll be able to play golf.

12/24/44: “It’s a blistering hot, sultry day, the most un-Christmassy day imaginable.

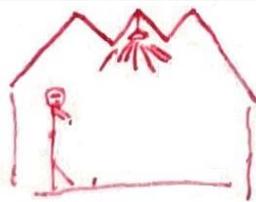
1/27/45 [Saturday night]: We adjourned to the enlisted men’s club for a few beers.

“Now our enlisted men’s club is something you don’t meet any old day of the week, particularly on this island. I don’t mean that is swank or anything like that, but it does have a certain atmosphere which I shall try to convey to you presently.

“There are two rooms to the club, of about equal size. One of them contains the bar across which beer and coke are sold. Around two walls of this room are green and brown booths, about ten of them perhaps. A third wall is the bar and the fourth opens onto the second room.

“So far nothing out of the ordinary – but that second room is the pay off.

“In the first place, there is the ceiling which has to be seen to be believed or appreciated. It is a very low ceiling of not more than eight feet at the most, and it consists of V-draped cardinal red – a wicked red, the gaudy indecent color you associate with cheap, wild dives, parachute material that looks something like this:



“Although that drawing captures none of the feeling the place gives you, you might think that such a ceiling would be depressing, but due to its outlandish, sinful color it is instead subtly exciting and lustful. The fact that it is so unusually low seems only to give you a supreme sense of solidarity with the other occupants of the club.

“It is as though that low ceiling were sufficient to cut you off entirely from the entire rest of the world. You feel that there is no other world except that which is inside the club.

“In one corner of this room are three booths, and opposite it a blank corner where the six piece band which performs occasionally takes its stand to do or die. Around the rest of the room are arranged in semi-circular fashion stiff packed wooden benches and small knee-height tables in front of them for placing your cans of beer upon. In the center there is nothing but the hugely finished utterly bare cement floor. The light comes, as in the drawing, from glaring bright lights hung in the middle of the central v-fold of that fantastic ceiling. Because the room is small and always crowded to the very limit and because the ceiling is so low, the room soon fills with acrid, tangy smells of human sweat, beer, and a dense dead aura of cigarette smoke.

“Last night, as I said, Marv and Adam and I went over to the club about a half hour before closing time. We found in full swing one of the best jam sessions I have ever seen or heard. The beer was plentiful, and the music inspirationally hot.

“This little six piece band features a hot trumpet player who, while he has no real feeling for the music, is a very fine jazz virtuoso. There is a clarinetist-saxophonist who is also something of a jazz artist. A couple lads do some twang-twangs on their guitars. But the best of the lot are the fellows who play respectively the drums and the accordion. The drummer is a young Gene Krupa in the days when Gene Krupa was Gene Krupa, before commercialism of modern swing corrupted his art. He is really an artist of the finest order. And the accordionist is even better. This fellow is also a very fine jazz artist, but unlike the rest of the band he also has a real feeling for his music. He can take something like ‘La Golindrina’ or ‘La Paloma,’ play it through a couple of times in the original form with all the feeling mastery of the concert artist on any more sophisticated instrument than his lowly accordion, and then dress it up in jazz rhythms in a way to make Duke Ellington or Louis Armstrong weep!

“Last night this band was in full swing, alternating red hot and purely improvised jam sessions featuring the trumpet and clarinet, with the more highly organized and calculated work of the accordionist. The music was hot and in that small room with the low ceiling positively deafening. Everybody was in fine fettle of reckless abandonment to whatever joys the moment might hold. Out in the middle of the room, whirling in calculated extempore were the three or four couples – always one big fellow dancing with one smaller one. The band started to play [Russian tune] ‘Dark Eyes,’ and Adam and another fellow brought down the house by doing a slapstick imitation of the Kazatsky, that Cossack Folk dance where the men sit on their haunches and violently kick their legs out to either side to the jazzed up tune of ‘Dark Eyes.’

2/6/45: “Just came back from firing a carbine at the range – the first time I have fired since Kearns [Utah], and if I have my way (which I probably won’t) it will be the last time I’ll ever fire. It seems I get more allergic to guns every time I see them. But even so did fairly well, a score of 64, just four points more than enough to keep me from having to fire again.

“Sunday we all did a good day’s work, and now have a wood floor in our tent. With a floor and a parachute ceiling, and sliding curtains to keep it from raining on the open sides, we now have things fixed up pretty well in our tent. It’s quite inhabitable: dry, and comparatively cool.

2/9/45: “I am going to send this letter by what is known as ‘blue envelope mail.’ This blue envelope mail is not censored by this squadron’s censoring officers. It will go instead to the base censors’ office and will there be opened and censored by officers who don’t know me.

“This lifts a bit of the restraint which I feel even now when I know that Lt. Yeomans or Lt. Greene or some other officer I know will be looking in over my shoulder tomorrow morning. I believe we are allowed one blue envelope letter per week, and just because nobody else in this squadron ever uses it is no reason why I shouldn't.

2/14/45: “I've seen three fairly good movies: ‘Winged Victory,’ ‘To Have and Have Not,’ and ‘None but the Lonely Heart.’ [Regarding ‘Winged Victory,'] I thought this was a pretty good show, but **what I enjoyed most was the reaction of the GI audience who saw it.**

“You must realize that parts of ‘Winged Victory’ are pure corn, and as such brought great shouts of derisive laughter and jeers from the highly vocal GI audience. There is one thing the overseas GI hates above everything else in the way of entertainment and that is what he calls, with utters scorn and contempt in his voice, ‘flag-waving.’ Home front heroes, eager beaver attitudes, glory, etc., etc. – The GI calls them all ‘flag-waving’ and usually walks out.

“For example, those early scenes of the airplane crazy kids who just couldn't wait to get called to active duty – those scenes were greeted with derisive laughter and shouts of ‘You'll be sorry!’ from the audience. And that scene where Pinky was washed out by the cadet board and broke down crying may have been effective enough with civilian audiences, but the GI laughed and jeered and cried in scorn ‘Take him back to his Mama!’ And that scene where the colonel stops to console the lad whose friend has been killed in a crash and offers to take the lad to town in his own car – that, too, was greeted with derisive scorn. As I said, I got a much bigger bang out of observing the rigidly predictable reaction of the GI audience.

3/4/45: “Today is a lovely day – cloudy, dreary, drizzly, cool. That may not sound like a beautiful day in Chicago to you, but when you remember that the alternatives is to have that Old Sol out in all his primordial power that it is enough to fry eggs on the floor of your tent you will understand why such a day as I have described is ‘a beautiful day’ in APO 920.

3/8/45: “We had s showing of ‘Meet me in St. Louis,’ but the soundtrack was snafued somehow, and only the most horrible screeches, growl and shivers would come from it. They finally gave it up and sent everyone home about halfway through the show.

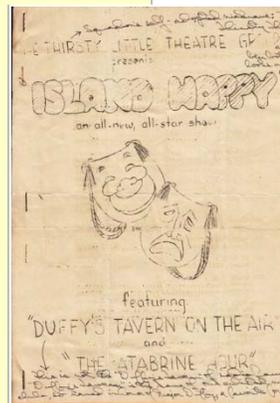
3/12/45: “Enclosed [at right] is the program for the second ‘Squadron Show’ which was given a week or two ago [2/28/45]. The first part of the show, ‘Duffy's Tavern on the air.’ was staged by the enlisted men, and was on the whole a pretty dreary and dull affair [‘Duffy's Tavern’ was also the name of a radio show 1941-'51], but ‘The Atabrine Hour’ put on by the officers was a ribald scream.

3/18/45: “The switchboard I work on is located at the airfield, which is about five or six miles from our squadron area. **Most of the time I ride a bus to and from work, but on the two nights in five I either get off or go on work at midnight I have to take a jeep down to work.**

3/27/45: “Checkers is our very latest fad. We have had fads for, in turn, rummy, casino, poker, Red Whiskey, and now (as a relief from card games), checkers.

9/5/45: “**I was just down to the 13th tonight, to say goodbye to Gene Bacon, one of the best friends I've ever had. Gene is, at last (after 34 months) on his way to stateside. Gene, Marv Goessl, and Charley Storms and all the rest of the ‘Old Boulders’ are going home tomorrow. It is the first mass movement of men back to the states [page 7 herein], as such is an occasion itself.**

9/7/45: “It was at Dulag that the brief fighting took place on this side of the island. The town was all but obliterated in the fighting, and after it was captured most of the buildings still standing were condemned and razed by American bulldozers. Now only a small settlement remains and most of the populace has moved to the neighboring village of San Juan.”



I hope to visit Evans' son again and scan the remaining letters.



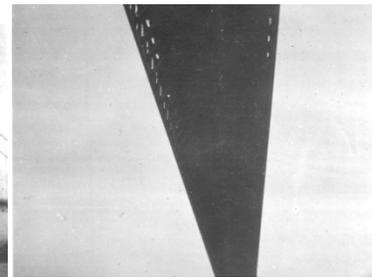
d. 1944-1945: Items from Gerald I. Getter, Radio Repair, 4/45-9/45

Gerald Getter joined the 13th TCS around or before April 1945, and was in radio repair. Above left in front of Biak tent B11 is "Tent buddies." Above right is the Biak chapel, showing an extra wing on the left, and trucks in the motor pool area on the right. Getter is pictured at right, by the operations building.

In Leyte Getter had the photo below of the "American Red Cross Canteen" at the Dulag airfield. The taxiway in front has steel Marston mats.



Also in Dulag at left is Getter by the chapel next to the main road. I particularly like his photos from the ship returning as he approached the Golden Gate, with the passing under it probably signaling being home. Then a ship (a la page 729) with a band playing and girls dancing and waving. Getter wrote on the back of the photo below right this banner hung on the train all the way to NY.



2. Members and Relatives

a. Eastern US Scanning Trip – Part 2 of 3

Regarding the eastern U.S. Thirsty 13th scanning trip I made August 3-24 making the 22 visits at right, the September newsletter described visits 1 to 9, culminating with a wonderful visit with the daughter Joyce of Supply officer Walter C. White in Lunenburg, Mass. This newsletter describes the next four visits, 10-13.

Day 10 (8/12) Visit 10: Evans. At 9:25 a.m. this Saturday morning we knocked on the door of the son, Randy, of Willard Evans. He lived in a beautiful rustic home built in 1724, overlooking the Hudson River, at right, south of Albany, NY. Randy brought out a large file of letters his dad wrote. These were overwhelming, for their sheer number and length. After first scanning photos, I set up my stand with my phone to photograph the letters, and from 10:35 a.m. until 11:48, 73 minutes, took photos of 343 letter pages, one every 13 seconds.

I was due in Schenectady (at right) 1 hour away at 1 p.m. (originally noon), and reluctantly skipped probably 80% of Evans' letters. I was thrilled with the stories found, and hope to have the privilege to return.

Visit 11: Getter. In October 2015 out of the blue I called Wayne Getter, whose dad was in radio repair in the squadron, and asked if he had heard of the Thirsty 13th, and he said at that moment the only thing on his dining room table was his dad's Thirsty 13th patch! His sister had dropped off some things a few days before.

Wayne just a few months earlier had donated his father's photo album to the Schenectady Air Museum. The curator Bob Vore, at right, in the center, with Wayne, scanned the photos for me in March 2016, but I wanted to also scan them on my scanner and meet Wayne. I found lots of additional information. Wayne interrupted a family camping trip to drive 1.5 hours to meet me. Thanks and great to meet you, Wayne!

Visit 12: Sidelko. At 5:30 p.m. on this same day in upstate NY, I again entered Thirsty 13th research heaven, when met by the granddaughter of Sidelko, Kerri, who had lots of Thirsty 13th items, and I found many gems, including the Tontouta theater. We ordered a pizza, and I scanned until after 8 p.m., when my mother and I bid her goodnight. Thank you, Kerri!





Day 11 (8/13) Visit 13: H. Dewey. One of my fondest memories when writing the book was on February 26, 2010, a cold, snowy night. My 1999 Chevy Malibu bounded through 2 feet of fresh snow up the driveway of Harold O. Dewey's niece, Martha, where I also met her daughter Linda, at the farmhouse above left in Perrysburg, NY, 35 miles south of Buffalo. Dewey had several key photos, 7 of which are in the book. I scanned everything at 96 dpi, and have long wanted to rescan the photos at 600 dpi, and they were wonderful to let me visit again. This visit was no less memorable. My mother and I were there from 1 p.m. until 8:15 p.m.

Martha had the foot locker above, full of items. Her other daughter, Cindy, went home and returned with a wagon pulling the two large tubs above right. Then Linda went home and returned with a box of photo albums! Below left are me and Linda.

I recalled that I still remembered the homemade chili and cornbread we had in February 2010, and Linda said she'd make some again for us! She produced the large bowl of chili and cornbread below center, also of Martha, Linda, and my mother, Nancy. Linda, even sent us on our way with fresh peaches. Thank you to all of the wonderful Deweys.

The next newsletter will describe the final 10 days of this Thirsty 13th research journey.

