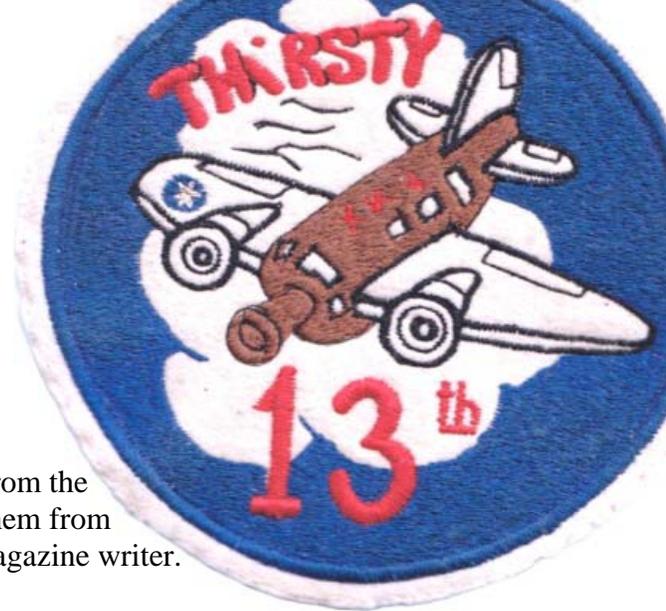


December 2017

Newsletter



Dear Thirsty 13th members, relatives, and friends,

This letter continues the path of the 1942 ground crew from the prior letter, providing details on the convoy which carried them from San Francisco to New Caledonia, with an account from a magazine writer.

In August I borrowed 23 film negatives from the son of a squadron photographer, Bill Bond, sent them to digitized, received them back, and share one of the images. The son of navigator Maginot shared his dad's diary. The daughter of Harrington MacDonald shared a reunion photo.

I found another still-living member, a pilot from 1945, and sent interview questions. I made great progress in identifying and confirming men by determining their birth and death dates, such that all but 25 of the 758 men are correctly identified by a birth date, and I have estimates for 9 of these. I also reached a milestone in finding relatives, when, on November 20, at 8:24 p.m., the percentage of members who I have reached rose to 70%. This was the son of medic Bill Boyko.

Thank you for your interest in The Thirsty 13th.
Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian, December 13, 2017

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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.

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

1. Additional History

a. 1942: The Ground Crew Ship Convoy



The last newsletter and the book's page 126 note the squadron's 169 ground crew members were shipped to the South Pacific on the Dutch ship *Klipfontein*, November 3, 1942, in a convoy. On November 7, I researched the convoy, and found a list of ships, and a first-hand account.

The War Department had an Army magazine titled "Yank," and one of its writers, Mack Morriss, along with famous sketch artist Brodie, were in our same convoy, on an adjoining ship. Morriss wrote a diary, and in 1996 this was edited and published as "South Pacific Diary, 1942-43." I purchased this online, and the right to share the portions below. He provides details of what our 169 ground crews would also have experienced. His editor, in the footnotes, provided additional details. They crossed five time zones, and set their watches back 30 minutes at midnight on even-numbered days, equal to one hour every four days, for the roughly 20-day trip.

Morriss (Writer for Yank, aboard the *Tjisadane* in the same convoy as the 13th TCS):

Tuesday, November 3: This morning at 11:45 we slipped beneath the Golden Gate and headed out to sea, bound for the South Pacific. For most of us, the swells that lifted this Dutch East Indianman, while the southern tip of SF still gleamed white in the sun, were the first taste of ocean sailing. Results were swift.

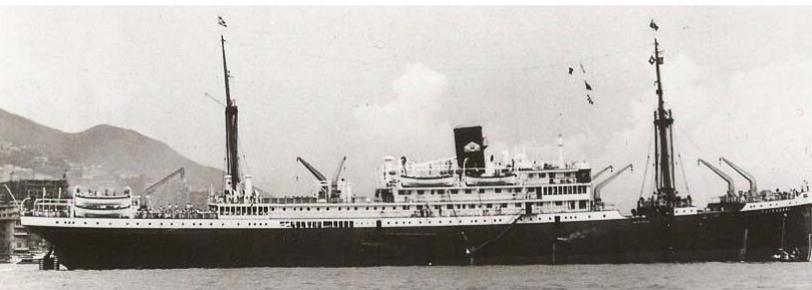
This is a tiny convoy – three transports, with a Navy escort of one vessel.

Blimps shepherded us until dusk, then turned back and floated toward the mainland.

This is 'going overseas' – that part of the Army which most of us have spoken of in awe – yet we find nothing terrifying about it. I feel surprisingly at home in the never-ending chow line, and in the jammed hold where we sleep. Most of the men aboard have been in camps, waiting, for such a long time that they seem relieved to be on the way.

Blackout at 6:00. Weather clear; easy rollers, wind.

The Arnold Hague database has our convoy as PW2157, and it soon included **five transports**: *Klipfontein* (10,544 tons), Morriss's *Tjisadane* (9,228, below left), *Mormacsea* (7,773, below right), *Cape Flattery* (6,756), and *Pennant* (6,576). These would have filled the docks at Fort Mason, above. Note below right, on the *Mormacsea*, the deck guns with steel squares for protection.



They were escorted by light cruiser *USS Honolulu*, below left, and destroyer *USS Crosby*, below right. *Honolulu* is shown October 26, 1942, one week before sailing with us, and was next based at Espiritu Santo and served in the Northern Solomons until mid-1943. Our ground crew would have looked out from the deck of the *Klipfontein*, and seen these ships with us.



Wednesday, November 4: Two seaplanes, one on either side, took up the watch. They patrol a half mile ahead, turn, come back, and turn again.

We breakfast at 7:30, dine at 4:00. To do anything aboard the ship you stand in line – mess, PX, latrine. Average wait time for mess is half hour to 45 minutes. First wave of sickness seems to have died. The sea is calm, old hands tell us.

The two troop ships with us cleared their guns this morning, and we on the Tjisadane got a ringside seat for the movement of tracers streaming skyward.

[There was] a broadcast over the PA system, condensing news picked up by radio at sea. The men listened attentively; seemed keenly interested in announcements in the Solomons.

We set our watches back one half hour tonight at twelve.

Thursday, November 5: This morning we were joined by a converted aircraft carrier and [two] other transports. We are now [seven] troop ships, the cruiser, the carrier, and another vessel, which is either a destroyer or a sub-buster. It never got close enough for me to say definitely. I understand we were 600 miles out this morning, and that the extra ships joined us from San Diego. Soldiers manned [our] 20 mm AA guns, and the 4-inchers fore and aft.

The loudspeaker has begun its evening concert.

The converted aircraft carrier was the Altamaha (9,800 tons), below left, with 74 planes, incl. P-51 Mustangs, and 50 tons of aircraft parts. This was its very first voyage. The two additional transports were the USS President Monroe (10,210 tons, below center) and Weltevreden (9,245 tons, below right), carrying more than 3,000 officers and men of the Second Marine Division.



Friday, November 6: We had our first boat drill today at 2:00. It consisted of going up on deck and smoking cigarettes. We set our watches back another half hour tonight.

Saturday, November 7: Gunnery practice for the 20 mms today. Plane from the cruiser towed a sleeve over, and one of our port crews snapped the cable with a bullet, bringing it down. The whole boat cheered. It made me feel good, even proud, to see it float down with tracers still hitting it after the first burst canopies over the decks.

Sunday, November 8: Heat gets worse as you near the equator. [Not] really bad – yet. We turn back watches tonight one half hour. A million stars.

Monday, November 9: The paper is taking all of my time.

Tuesday, November 10: The hold, tonight, as every night, is full of poker games, wherever there is space for two or three men, they sit on boards and watch the cards fall.

We turn back our watches one half-hour at midnight.

Wednesday, November 11: The Chaplain held a short service for Armistice Day.

Thursday, November 12: This afternoon at 1:37:30 we crossed the Equator; in a split second we swapped hemispheres, and autumn became spring. Strangely, last night and tonight, as we steam through the heart of the torrid belt, the breeze has been cool and fresh. Tonight, from the southeast, it came like a caress just at sundown. Strange, too, is the sudden darkness; there is no twilight, no softening of the day into night.

Friday, November 13: Rickenbacker is rescued.

Saturday, November 14: The Chaplain remarked tonight that “We’re in dangerous waters now.” We had two abandon ship drills. Noticed for the first time that we zig-zagged, but I think our changes in course were only convoy practice. We had steak for supper. Extra life preservers were placed in the companionways over the ship, and some of them were promptly missing. There is no tension whatsoever. Set ’em back another half hour tonight.

Sunday, November 15: Yesterday was calm. The sunset was beautiful – the first one I’ve noticed – brilliant red, rimmed with gold, and spread all over the sea. Everybody talked about it. We spent quite a lot of time idling along on a plate glass sea, while the cruiser wet-nursed one of the ships which dropped far behind, presumably because of engine trouble. For the first time noticed a real feeling of boredom.

Monday, November 16: We are supposed to be within 500 miles of Samoa today.

Tuesday, November 17: At 12:45 today, the cruiser, the carrier, and four transports left us and headed westward, apparently in the direction of New Caledonia and Australia. Shortly afterward, the two remaining ships [President Monroe and Weltevreden] went off southwestward, apparently toward southern ports of New Zealand. We are left alone.

On the after deck, we watched six ships drop away over the rim of the sea, and it was a little like seeing a friend of brief but intimate acquaintance go away. We felt we had lived much with the flat-top and the others, and tonight the ocean seemed strangely vacant.

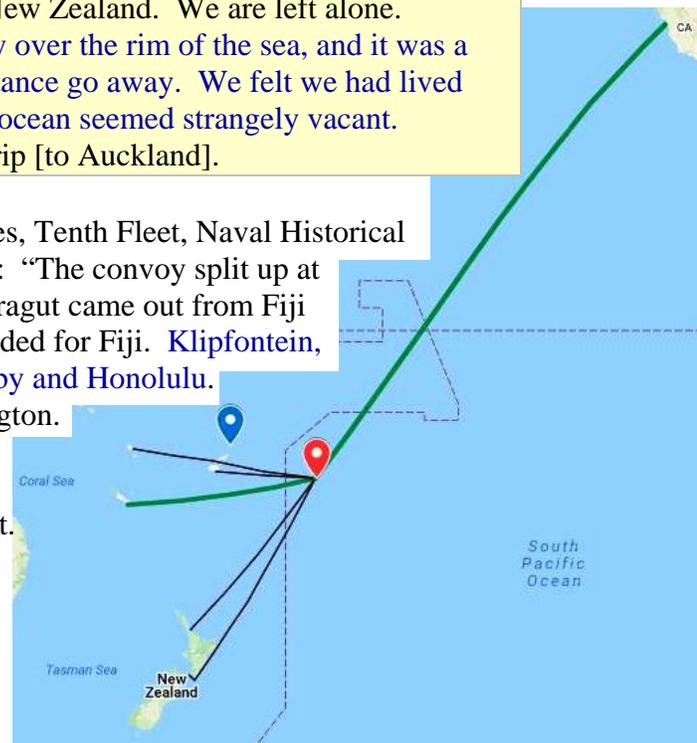
We are to pick up plane escort for the rest of the trip [to Auckland].

Morriss’s editor checked the Routing and Convoy Files, Tenth Fleet, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, and wrote in footnote 15: “The convoy split up at Point Yoke, 19°-21’ south, 168°-07’ west. Destroyer Farragut came out from Fiji to escort Altamaha to the New Hebrides. Mormacsea headed for Fiji. Klipfontein, Cape Flattery, and Pennant sailed for Nouméa, with Crosby and Honolulu. President Monroe and Weltevreden turned toward Wellington. Tjisadane sailed on alone for Auckland.”

The break-up coordinates are at the red marker at right. Our path is plotted in green. This makes sense, being direct to New Zealand for the three ships going there, and all 10 stayed together along that route as long as possible.

Finelli on p. 130 has a certificate of crossing the 180° line at 15° south, which is the blue marker north of Fiji. Perhaps the west-bound ships stayed together up to here to fend off enemy submarines, or the certificate coordinate was slightly off, to avoid disclosing the path. Morriss and the Tjisadane arrived in Auckland on Sunday, November 22, four days later (after losing a day at the dateline), but the Thirsty 13th on the Klipfontein did not arrive at Nouméa, in New Caledonia, until November 26, for 8 days, despite these being equidistant, so perhaps it did take a longer route.

I hired a researcher to go to the Navy Yard and try to get the Klipfontein’s exact coordinates, and he is busy until late January, so hopefully we will have these then. Deppe, Fueslier, and Windham recalled the convoy, and so it is good add the convoy details, too, to the history.





b. 1944-1945: Digitized Slides of William Bond

During the August scanning trip I visited the son, Craig, of squadron photographer Bill Bond. Craig let me borrow 23 black & white film negatives, to get scanned. I sent them out in early October, and got them back November 8. 21 images were of setting up the camp at Biak.

Above is the view westbound toward Biak's Mokmer Aerodrome, showing this airstrip, and the end of the ridge. In the upper right, the second inlet has the beach to which the 13th TCS went.

c. 1944-1945: Stories Retold from H.A. Johnson, Pilot, 8/44-10/45

Johnson, H.A. (Pilot, 8/44-10/45, as told by his wife): "One time in his tent [at Biak] he turned around to find a native standing there, with a bone in his nose. He wanted a cigarette. "Another time, he was sent to evacuate some men, and, because he was only about 5' 6", a grizzled old sergeant said 'I'm not going to fly off with that little [guy],' and he didn't."

d. 1945: Diary of Richard A. Maginot, Navigator, 5/45-9/45, 1/46-4/46



Maginot, at left at Biak, had a diary, at right, which his son scanned and emailed me December 1. In this Maginot recorded his unit assignments, a flight log, and other details. As noted below left, he enlisted 2/18/43, and was called to active duty six months later. I always assume men started their service when they enlisted, so this was helpful. Similar to other men headed for the Pacific in 1945, his last U.S. stop was the Army Air Forces Overseas Replacement Depot in Kearns, Utah.



He flew overseas, as part of a crew or as a passenger, from Hamilton Field to Hickam, in Hawaii, at right, to Johnston atoll, Tarawa, Los Negros, Biak, and Nadzab, where he was in a replacement depot 4/17/45 - 5/16/45. He was flown back to Biak, and assigned to the 13th TCS May 16, 1945, below right.

✓ Hickam Field - Hawaii
 April 4 1945 - April 12 1945
 via Johnston Island and
 via Tarawa
 via Los Negros to
 ✓ Biak, New Guinea

Enlisted Feb 18, 1943
 Called to active duty Aug. 20 1943

Biak - Atch. Assn. to 13th T.C.S., 403rd TC
 13th Air Force APO 920
 May 16, 1945 - 17 August 1945

CARGO CARRIED
XIII AAF 403RD T.C.G. 13TH T.C.S

Maginot wrote a summary of the cargo carried by the 13th TCS on his flights. This is one of the few descriptions of items carried, so is helpful. He wrote:

- “Personnel: Army: infantry, field artillery, coast artillery, air corps, chaplain corps, nurses, WAAC [Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps], intelligence, finance, signal corps, medical, A.G.O., engineers, M.P.s. Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine, Red Cross. Philippine army, Australian army, RAAF.
- Munitions: mortar shells, small arms ammunition, 78 50-lb liquid incendiaries (M-47), 75 50-lb parafrag assemblies.
- Fuel: 100 octane aviation gas, 80 octane gasoline, oil, oxygen-acetylene-aerosol, kerosene.
- Vehicles: Jeeps, water trailers, two Culver ‘Kadets’ [a small airplane].
- Motors, etc: aircraft engines, wheels and accessories; refrigerators (2,000-lb hospital type), radar equipment, radio equipment, B-25 mobile TNG unit.
- Foodstuffs: 10-1 rations, K-rations, butter, eggs, steak, chicken, soup, catsup, dehydrated milk, dehydrated cherries, lard, apples.
- Misc.: mail, money - July 3, 1,700,000 pesos [equivalent in 2017 to \$12 million], cement, welding tanks, aerosol tanks, household furnishings, lumber, kitchen gear, personal equipment, dogs, cats, monkeys [these animals estimated as pets the flight crew picked up].
- Medical Evacs: broken members, jungle rot, skull fracture, appendicitis, bullet, shell and shrapnel wounds, knife and bayonet sounds, psycho-neurotics, eye injuries.”

JULY 3 1,700,000 PESOS

Maginot’s hours are summarized at right, being quite active from May to September. He had the entry below on June 6, 1945, that on Mindanao, at or between Malabang and Valencia, he landed at “Strip X” – a new location.

JUNE 6 LEYTE - LIBBY MINDANAO 0320
 6 LIBBY - MALABANG " 0120
 6 MALABANG - STRIP "X" - VALENCIA 0120
 6 VALENCIA - MALABANG 0120
 6 MALABANG - LEYTE 0145

Maginot Hours Flying, 1945

Month	Days	Hrs/D	Hours
May	9	7:07	64:10
Jun	10	8:27	84:30
Jul	17	7:28	127:10
Aug	16	5:52	93:55
Sep	12	6:30	78:00
May-Sep Av	13	7:05	89:33
Oct ¹	6	4:43	28:20
Nov	6	4:43	28:20
Dec	2	3:12	6:25
Jan	3	2:30	7:30
Feb	3	2:51	8:35
Mar	1	4:00	4:00
Apr	2	3:37	7:15
Oct-Apr Av	3	3:39	12:55
Total	87	6:11	538:10

He moved to Dulag August 17, after the surrender. As noted below left, and on the Bridges order, on September 23, 1945, he transferred to the 66th TCS. Similar to other pilots, he flew on few days after September 30, 1945.

✓ Dulag, Leyte 13 TCS. 403 TCG
 APO 719
 17 Aug 1945 - Sept. 22 1945
 66 TCS SQDN. Sept 23 - Nov. 30 1945
 64 TR SQDN Nov. 30, 1945 - Jan 5, 1946

Due to men going home, he was transferred to the 64th TCS November 30, and back to the 13th January 6, 1946.

13 T.C. SQDN. Jan. 6 1946 - May 3, 1946
 Clark Field, Luzon

From December 24 to January 14 he got checked out, in an L-4 Grasshopper patrol plane, at right, similar to a Piper Cub. Pilot Soderland said he, too, enjoyed flying an L-4, at Clark Field.

DUAL				- L4 - CONT.			
L4	DEC 24	LOCAL	01:00	COORD EX.	LANDINGS	NO	
	DEC 26	LOCAL	01:30	"	"	DU	
	DEC 28	LOCAL	01:30	"	"	DU	
	DEC 29	LOCAL	00:15	"	"	DU	
	DEC 31	LOCAL	02:45	"	"	DU	
	JAN. 12	LOCAL	01:00	"	"	STA	
	JAN. 12	LOCAL	01:00	"	"	STA	
	JAN. 14	LOCAL	01:00	"	"	STA	
	"	"	SOLO 00:30	"	"	SOL	
	JAN 14	LOCAL	DUAL 00:30	"	"	SPIE	
	"	"	SOLO 01:15	"	"		



2. Members and Relatives

a. Four Members Identified by a Birth Date; Added 7 Death Dates

From November 8-21 I identified 4 more men by a birth date, and 7 death dates.

James W. Davis

There are 172 men by this name who enlisted in the Army in WWII. A search on Ancestry.com for men with this name born 1915-25 produces 1,519 results. I then searched on his name, 1920+/-5 years, and the word "air," and found the photo at right, with pilot wings in his collar. I contacted the person who posted this, who put me in touch with his son, Barry, who said his dad flew cargo planes in the Pacific. I wanted some additional confirmation, though, and on November 27 Barry, called, and read notes on pages of his dad's photo album, one saying his tent mates on Biak were Huston and Kulikoff. The book on page 528 says our J. Davis was in tent B6 at Biak, with tentmates... Huston and Kulikoff! It was a thrill to have him, too, finally exactly identified.



James W. Taylor

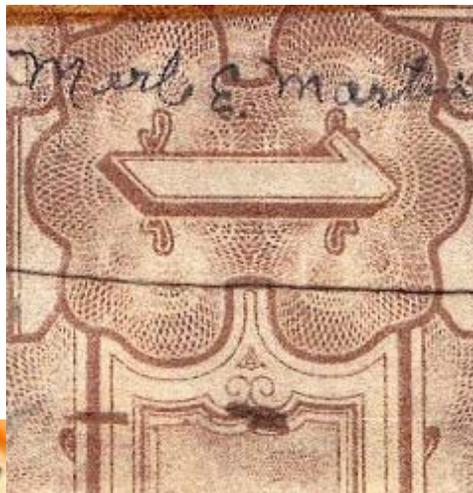
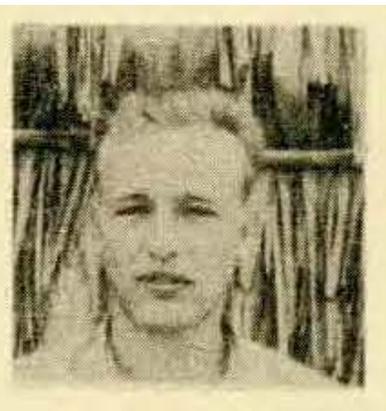
All I had was an address, in Kansas City, Mo., from the Bridges diary. This is in Jackson County. WWIIenlistment.org has 131 JWTs, but only four with enlisted serials numbers with a second digit of 7, for the Northern Plains states: one from Minnesota; one from St. Louis (only grammar school); one from Platte County Mo. which includes Kansas City, but born 1905 and only grammar school; and one from our county, born 1918, who completed 4 years high school, and worked in building aircraft. This sounds like ours, but for now I count him as "estimated."

Merle Martin

All I had for him was the image below left from the squadron yearbook "Two Years," with no middle initial or town. On January 19, 2016, the daughter of Hedges emailed me scans of her dad's short snorter, and I was thrilled to find Martin's signature, below, providing his middle initial "E." I thought this was an unusual name, but Ancestry lists 10 born 1905-1925.

On November 18 I tried again, and eliminated seven and focused on three. I searched on one named Merle Edward Martin, born 1921, and at 3:30 p.m. on this day found a draft registration card, below right. If you want to feel like me, see if you find any clues on this card.

I remembered his signature, and instantly recognized it. The same as on the short snorter. He eluded me for 9 years, but this card provided his birth date and town, finally identifying him.



REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after February 17, 1897 and on or before December 31, 1921)			
SERIAL NUMBER	1. NAME (Print)	ORDER NUMBER	
T 91W	MERLE EDWARD MARTIN	T 10.657	
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print)			
WALDO COLUMBIA ARKANSAS			
[THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON THE LINE ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 2 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL]			
3. MAILING ADDRESS			
SAME			
[Mailing address if other than place indicated on line 2. If same insert word same]			
4. TELEPHONE	5. AGE IN YEARS	6. PLACE OF BIRTH	
NONE	20	DODSON, LOUISIANA	
DATE OF BIRTH			
OCT 26 1921			
7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS			
MRS FRED MARTIN, WALDO, ARKANSAS			
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS			
MARTIN'S CAFE, WALDO, ARKANSAS			
9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS			
WALDO, COLUMBIA, ARK.			
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.			
D. S. S. Form 1 (Revised 1-1-42) ☆ GPO 16-21030-1			
Merle E. Martin			

Lt. Merle Martin,



Lt. John Smith,

R E S T R I C T E D
Par 2, SO #199, Hq Thirteenth AF, APO 719, 18 Jul 45, Contd.

CAPT MELVIN ALLEN, MOS (0210)	0477223,) 1721st Sig Sv SigC } Bn, Avn, APO } 719. } } }	Hq Thirteenth AF APO 719. Placed on DS w/1721st Sig Sv Bn, Avn, APO 719. EDCMR 24 Jul 45.	No tv1
2D LT JOHN N. SMITH, MOS (1051)	0770814,) 13th Trp Carr AC } Sq, APO 920.	Hq XIII Ftr Comd, APO 719-1. EDCMR 24 Jul 45.	TDMCC APR #3 to APO 705.
2D LT WILBERT D. McGEE, MOS (1051)	0771084,) AC }		

1ST LT JOHN N SMITH 0770814 (1051) 61 Box F, Cokato, Minn

John Smith

The squadron yearbook "Two Years" in Flight F has the photo above left of "Lt. John Smith," with no middle initial or town. This may be the most common name in America, John Smith, and it seemed it would be impossible to identify which one was our pilot (we also had an enlisted JS).

As noted in the April 2017 newsletter, page 12, in April I reviewed literally 10,000 pages of orders, from the 13th AF, Far East Air Forces, and others, for familiar names, and found the order above from July 18, 1945, transferring a 2nd Lt. John N. Smith from "13th Trp Carr" to "Ftr Comd," providing for the first time his middle initial, and a serial number. On Ancestry.com, I found only two JNS's who were aviation cadets, though, and one went to Europe, the other died in 1943.

On May 5, 2017, when in Phoenix scanning items of Walter K. Bridges, I found Headquarters Far East Air Forces (FEAF) Special Order 343, December 9, 1945, relieving men to return to the U.S., and noted in my May 2017 letter on page 23 I found an address, above, for a Smith. This order included men not in the 13th TCS, and so this could have been another John N. Smith, but he had the same serial number as in the 13th TCS, so this was the one who had been ours.

This provided the name of a small town in Minnesota, so I thought I could easily identify him. There were no John N. Smith's ever in Cokato, Minn., though, and only one born 1920+/-5 years in all of Minnesota, and this one had a note in a family tree he was part of D-Day in Europe.

On November 18, 2017, I tried again on Ancestry for him, with the same results.

It then occurred to me that sometimes the men used as their home address the address of their wife, who still lived at home with her parents. The challenge was then to find which young lady in Cokato, Minn., married John Smith. I searched Ancestry for anyone named Smith, i.e. later in life, born 1920+/-5 years, with special field Cokato, and found only 2 results, one a Marjorie Mae Smith, 1921-1988, born in Cokato. Then I searched on her name with just her years, and leaving out Cokato, to get her later in life with hopefully a spouse mentioned.

I found the listing below left, connecting this Marjorie from Cokato with a John N. Smith and had a euphoric moment. Her maiden name was Johnson. Searching on John Norris Smith, I found he was an Air Force 1st Lt., similar to ours. He was born in Clifton, Arizona, far from Minnesota. I found his dates and final resting place, contacted family trees, and even visited his son, below right.

Name	Marjorie Mae Smith
Relative	John Norris Smith
Birth	31 May 1921
Death	17 Feb 1998

Name:	Marjorie Mae Smith [Marjorie Mae Johnson] [Marjorie Smith]
Gender:	Female
Race:	White
Birth Date:	31 May 1921
Birth Place:	Cokato Wrigh, Minnesota

Name	John Norris Smith
Birth	1 Jun 1920 Clifton, Green- lee County, Arizona, United States of America
Death	28 Jun 1996 Tempe, Mari- copa County, Arizona, United States of America



The prior pages were the four newly identified. Here are the three for whom I had birth years, but now also have death dates.

Harold L. Markelson

Markelson, new from the Bridges order, had the listing above. Ancestry.com had no record. A site “AncientFaces,” had his birth year as 1916, so I considered him identified, but had no specific birth date, nor year of passing.

On November 12 I searched Ancestry again, and searched on just his last name. Oddly, there are only 16 people ever listed with this last name. None are him. But I noticed 4 of the 16 had a last name spelled with an “e,” as Merkelson. Ancestry had no record of him with an “e” either.

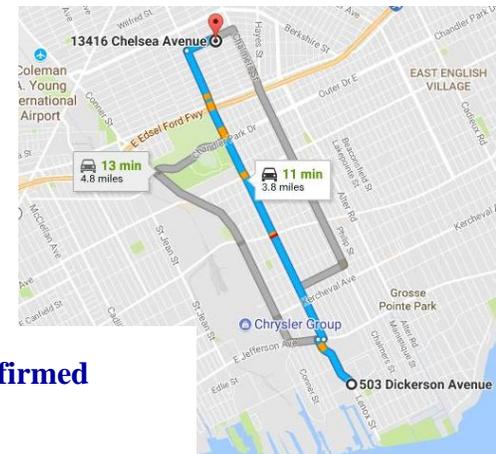
I then did a Google search for Merkelson and found his full obituary, including a death date. This allowed me to find his son. The son confirmed he was a navigator in the 13th Air Force, but knew of him on B-25s and B-26s, and did not know he had also been in the 13th TCS.

Harold F. Smith

I had his enlisted serial number, and from ww2enlistment.org found his birth year of 1922. Ancestry has four HFSs from northern California born in 1922. One was a TEC5 in the Army, one’s daughter said he was in the Navy. One of the other two has a FindaGrave photo of his grave saying Air Force, and from Alameda County, so was ours. This provided his death date.

Paul P. Thomas

He was estimated, as one born in 1918, from Chicago. Bridges had a 1945 address for him at a house in Detroit at the red marker at right. Searching again on Ancestry I found one who at the time of the 1940 census lived in an apartment building at the lower end of the blue line at right, 3 miles away. I now estimate this one was ours. He is still in the estimated category, and is the second added with an estimated death date.



b. Nine Members Previously Estimated by Birth Dates Now Confirmed

Richard A. Maginot

Stanley J. Cohan, Richard J. McDonough, Harry S. Oliver, Robert S. Truman

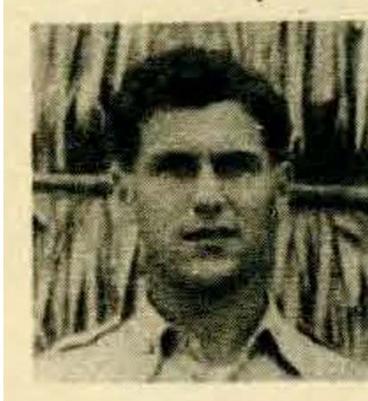
For Maginot, Cohan, McDonough, Oliver, and Truman, I had estimates, but nothing to confirm them, and had tried to find relatives. I finally did connect with the relatives, and they confirmed these were in their respective roles, of navigator, glider pilot, radio operator, glider pilot, and navigator, moving these 5 from estimated to exact. Maginot I had tried to identify for 9 years, so it was a thrill to do so. The next four were new from the Bridges order found May 5.

Guy E. Matthews, Jr.

For Matthews, from the Bridges order, I had an estimate, but was stumped. I noticed on Ancestry a listing for a “Jr.,” and searched again on Newspapers.com, but included “Jr.” after his name, and found an article from 1950 with him and an aircrew having an internment ceremony in Cincinnati. This stated their plane went missing in December 1945, which would have been after he left the 13th TCS. I could finally confirm him, too.

Paul Epstein

The squadron yearbook "Two Years" has the photo at right of Lt. Paul Epstein, with no middle initial or town. For nine years I have had nothing else to go on. On May 5, 2017, in Phoenix, when scanning items of Walter K. Bridges, I found the order above, which provided a middle initial, "N," and officer number.



Second Row, L. to R. :
 Lt. William Goodman,
 Lt. Darrel Huston,
 F/O George Laycock,
 Lt. Paul Epstein.

Ancestry.com had two possibilities. The daughter of one said her dad was in another unit, but I could not reach relatives of the other. It seemed the other had to be ours, but men exist who are not on Ancestry.com, and this other was born in Western Pennsylvania, and Army enlistment records had one who enlisted from Brooklyn, so there was nothing to confirm the other was ours.

In the 2nd October newsletter, on its page 15, I included part of an order from Willman, and noted the navigators were all assigned new officer serial numbers in a row. I have seen orders for graduates of pilot training which list middle names and addresses. Therefore on November 11, I searched all our navigators to see if any had a number starting with 744 such as Epstein's 744886. I was surprised to find our navigator Stanley F. Page was 744861, only 25 away. I also remembered that in January 2013, when I visited Page's son, that his dad saved all of his documents, a thick file, and I thought I might have skipped scanning some, so wondered whether Page might have a navigation school graduation list which also included Epstein. I emailed Page's son, Stanton, asking if he would please be so kind as to look through his dad's file for such a graduation list.

On November 15 2017, I was thrilled to get a reply from Stanton, that he found exactly such an order. It is below, and includes "Paul Nathan Epstein," with our serial number 744886, and from Brooklyn, NY. This was indeed the other one on Ancestry, which provided his birth and death date. I sent messages to possible relatives. Another squadron member positively identified. Thank you, Stanton!

R E S T R I C T E D
HEADQUARTERS
 AAF PILOT SCHOOL (SPECIALIZED TWO-ENGINE)
 AND
 AAF NAVIGATION SCHOOL
 Mather Field, Mills, Calif

8 May 43

SPECIAL ORDERS)
 NO.....113) E X T R A C T

1. DP, Avn Cadets (Navigators) having accepted apmt as 2ND LTS Air-Res or AUS (as indicated) and having agreed to serve on continuous AD until reld by competent orders fol-named 2ND LTS Air-Res or AUS now at Mather Fld, Calif are ordered to AD with the Army of the United States, effective 8 May 43 and are asgd to 375th Troop Carrier Gp Laurenburg-Maxton Fld, Ft Bragg, N C, WP thereto by rail reporting to GO thereof for dy. Ea O will depart this sta 8 May 43 and report new sta 13 May 43. Ea O will rank fr 8 May 43. DP, ea 2ND LT AUS listed is asgd to dy with the AC. TDN. FD 31 P 431-01, 02, 03, 07, 08 A 0425-23:

NAMES	SERIAL NO	HOME ADDRESS
JOHN FISHER ADAMS	0744891 AUS	Greelyville, S C
WILLIAM MILLIUS ARMER	0744821 Air-Res	Stillwater, N Y
DAVID DANIELSON BARCLAY	0744823 Air-Res	Rockford, Ill
JOHN FREDERICK BUNCH	0744830 Air-Res	Seattle, Wash
GEORGE JOSEPH CARLINO	0744881 AUS	Punxsutawney, Pa
WILLARD IRVIN CATON	0744831 Air-Res	Ignacio, Colo
ROBERT ARTHUR CHAPEL	0744882 AUS	Williamsport, Pa
WARREN GEORGE CURETIS	0744833 Air-Res	Council Grove, Kan
ROBERT MORRIS ELLISON	0744837 Air-Res	Covington Ky
REID FLANN ELLSWORTH	0744838 Air-Res	Pocatello, Idaho
PAUL NATHAN EPSTEIN	0744886 AUS	Brooklyn, N Y

Harold A. Johnson

For H.A. Johnson, my spreadsheet as far back as December 30, 2009, had his Carmichael, Calif., address, from a 1991 reunion roster. When I started using Ancestry.com in 2015, it had phone listings at this address, but no birth date. On November 11, 2017, I noticed another result on Ancestry when searching on Carmichael, Calif., but listed as only Sun Valley, Nev. This time I clicked on this Nevada listing, and saw it was a second home, also with the Carmichael address. Incredibly, though, this listing alone had a birth date for him of May 26, 1923. Searching on his name born in 1923 provides a birth location of Butte, Calif., but no death date. One has to then search on Butte, Calif., to find his death date. I found his wife's contact info, and spoke to her.

Armando Gonzalez

The Zerovich Roster, which is the only complete roster for enlisted men overseas, created May 15, 1945, has the entry below for a Pfc. Armando Gonzalez, of 526 S. Rosillo St. in San Antonio. Ancestry.com had Gonzalez's at 502 and 706 Rosillo, but not at 526, and no Armando. Ancestry had 8 men from Texas named Armando Gonzalez, born in 1910 (Harris County), 1913 (Starr County), 1916 (Webb County), 1919 (El Paso), 1923, 1924, and 1926, and only the 1916 one ever lived in San Antonio – in 1993. I estimated ours was the one born 9/4/1926. On March 18, I even drove by this house, and asked if they knew Armando – nope. This seemed impossible.

Pfc Gonzalez, Armando 526 S. Rosillo St San Antonio Tex

On November 16, 2017, I searched again on him, and recalled that Ancestry had the 1940 census pages for Gonzalez's at 502 Rosillo and 706 Rosillo, and noticed the 1940 census pages were from a stack of 54 pages. It occurred to me I could click through these until I found the 1940 census page for 526 S. Rosillo, to see who lived there, if perhaps Ancestry skipped this or misspelled his name. This was about 17 pages back from where I started, but it seemed like the census taker was staying in the area, so was quite exciting to approach the house.

Lo and behold, when I got to 526 S. Rosillo, I was elated to see the entry below:

Rosillo	526	191	D	# 2400	70	Gonzalez, Abraham	head	0	M	W	59	7/1	No	9	9	Mexico	37	al
						Paula B. D.	wife	1	F	W	55	7/1	No	3	3	Mexico	37	al
						Armando	son	2	M	W	32	S	No	4	4	Mexico	37	al
						Hortensia	daughter	1	F	W	30	S	No	4	30	Mexico	37	al
						Armando	son	2	M	W	27	S	No	4	30	Mexico	37	al

Additional columns had his occupation at right as a butcher, which was the same role he had in the squadron, per his MOS, so this was indeed him.

Butcher retail meat market

The census page provided the names of his parents, Abraham and Paula, and his age, 32. The census was completed on April 12, 1940, so he was born in 1907 or 1908. I then searched Ancestry for his name, born 1907+/-1 year, and extra field "Abraham," for his father, and found the family tree at right, with his exact birth and death dates. He is in three family trees, which I contacted. I now realize Ancestry indexed his last name as Ganzalez. **But whew, one more one down. It is great to have Armando Gonzalez, too, finally exactly identified.**

Name	Armando Eligio González
Father	Abraham Justo González Gonzalez
Mother	Paula Valdez
Birth	1 Dec 1908 México
Death	25 Jan 1997 Pasadena, Harris, Texas, USA

Unidentified Thirsty 13th Members

Below is the latest unidentified list. The first 16 are Thirsty 13th men not identified by a birth or death date, listed by the reference, which is also the order they were in the squadron. #5-#8 appear in photos in the squadron yearbook "Two Years," and nowhere else, so have no middle initial or town. I hope someday to find flying school records with the pilots' middle initials, middle names or towns, which would identify 8 of these. For Samuel Levine, I searched on serial numbers near his, and was amazed they were all from Passaic County, NJ, so assume he was, too.

Thirsty 13th Members Not Identified by a Date of Birth or Passing

#	Role	Last	First	MI	Birth	Death	Address	City	ST	ASN	Ref	From	To	Possible:
1	Ground Officer	McGill	Charles	C.	n/a	n/a				o-365354	White 10/4	9/42	12/42	3
2	Pilot	McClure	Robert	G.	n/a	n/a		Fort Wayne	IN	T61 241	Page 9/44	8/44	4/45	0
3	Pilot	Schaefer	George	E.	n/a	n/a				442694	Pet 12/44	8/44	9/44	6
4	Pilot	Weis	Francis	C.	n/a	n/a				779029	Pet 8/44	8/44	10/44	2
5	Pilot	Beckman	Edward		n/a	n/a					F	5/45	9/45	17
6	Radio Operator	Clark	Harry		n/a	n/a					H	4/45	8/45	??
7	Pilot	Lucas	Charles		n/a	n/a					F	5/45	9/45	??
8	Pilot	Ford	Albert		n/a	n/a				0770527	D, Gol 7/4	5/45	9/45	40
9	Pilot	White	Edward	C.	n/a	n/a	2140 Ashl	Also Chicago -		766134	F, Page 9/	6/45	9/45	2+
10	Crew Chief	Baker	Harry	H.	n/a	n/a	West Ward St.,	Urbana	OH	35221806	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	0
11	Pilot	Gandy	George	M.	n/a	n/a				2058784	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	4
12	Radar mechanic,	Hall	William	G.	n/a	n/a				38514466	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	0
13	Radar mechanic,	Johnson	Harold	E.	n/a	n/a			MI	16119021	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	16
14	Clerk, General	Levine	Samuel		n/a	n/a		Passaic Count	NJ	32394314	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	3
15	Glider pilot	O'Conner	Joseph	F.	n/a	n/a				T130225	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	2
16	Crew Chief	Baker	Kenneth		n/a	n/a	134 W. Court St.,	Urbana	OH		Zerovich ar	1/45	9/45	0

The next section is 10 men identified by a birth date (blue) birth year (in pink), or who are estimated to be the one with this name who is ours (dark red), but with no death date.

Members with Actual (blue and pink) and Estimated (dark red) dates of Birth, but no Dates of Passing

17	Navigator	Kelty	Thomas	R.	8/8/18	n/a		Wheeling	WV	2210, 3520	B, Hedges	5/45	6/45	
18	Mess Cook	Sandler	David	Le	2/12/22	n/a	36 So.3rd St.,	San Diego	CA		Zerovich, E	12/44	8/45	
19	Crew Chief	Lowery	Joseph	A.	1911	n/a	South Rd,	Poughkeepsie	NY	06668742	Many	12/40	9/44	
20	Pilot	Brown	Charles	L.	1920	n/a		New York City	NY		Air medal I	11/43	4/44	
21	Radio Operator	Abramowitz Irving			1911	n/a	8794 Bay Parkway,	Brook	NY		Zerovich	8/44	8/44	
22	Ground Enlisted	Cohen	Irwin		1925	n/a	2309 Holland Ave,	Bronx	NY		Zerovich	8/44	2/45	
23	Crew Chief	Gagliardi	Joseph	A.	1924	n/a			NY	32891088	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	
24	Radio Operator	Cloud	Robert	T.	1/2/24	n/a		Chicgao	IL	16145805	Ross 1/44	1/44	8/45	
25	Pilot	Laycock	George	J.	10/7/24	n/a				T7621	C, Bridges	6/45	9/45	
26	Duty Soldier	Jagger	Floyd	R.	6/1/25	n/a			WA	39203534	Bridges 9/	6/45	9/45	

The last category is squadron members for whom I have a best-estimate of which one was ours, but cannot confirm them. These include recently estimated Taylor (page 7) and Thomas (page 9).

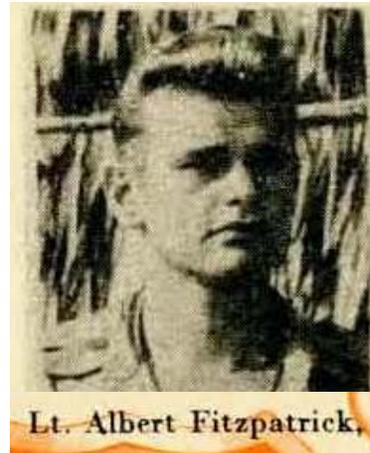
Thirsty 13th Members with Estimated Dates - Need Confirmation Each One was Ours

1	Pilots	Franz			3/2/20	5/25/08					Off Reports	11/42	4/43	
2	Operatons	Chambers	Frank "Buck"		2/12/21	1/7/78		(not the one on Ancestry born 1923)			Photo	10/43	9/45	
3	Pilots	Taylor	James	W.	11/1/18	8/2/99	5120 Brool	Kansas City	MO	0-782402	G, Bridge,			
4	Navigator	Thomas	Paul	P.	5/27/22	6/21/92	13416 Che	Detroit	MI	T135986	A, Bridges	4/45	12/45	
5	Crew Chief	Venezia	Eugene		9/29/21	7/7/12	?-22 Metro	(Bronx) Parkch	NY		C, Zerovich	4/45	9/45	
6	Operatons	Rosen	George	ise	10/26/20	10/9/03	152 Beach	Rockaway Bea	NY	13084378	Zerovich	1/44	8/45	

The top 16, and the last 9 with birth dates in dark red as estimates, are the last 25 squadron members not positively identified of 758. I hope readers can appreciate that with so few left to identify, and having tried for 9 years to identify them, it is a thrill to confirm any of these dates.

c. Found Another Living Member

On November 12, 2017, I searched again for relatives of members, focusing on men without death dates. For Alfred A. Fitzpatrick, he is pictured at right in the book "Two Years," the only reference I had to him, with no middle initial or town. Similar to others, on May 5 in Phoenix I found the order with his middle initial, and an address book with his address, but still was not able to find his relatives. On November 12, I tried again, and this time found his daughter.



I was excited to learn he is still alive. Born March 25, 1925, he is 92 years old, and lives near San Diego. His daughter plans to visit him and record answers to questions I sent.

Progress on these now is quite rare, so is amazing

d. Found Relatives of 14 More Members

The latest dashboard is at right. I removed an estimate for Lucas, so added a net 3 birth dates (Davis, Martin, J. N. Smith, Taylor, less Lucas), and 6 death dates (additional Merkelson, H.F. Smith, and Thomas). I found I had two A. J. Alexander's, so "Need" dropped by 1 more, by 4, to 16. I found resting places for a net 8, and FindaGrave links for 5. **Estimated births and deaths fell from 18 and 14, to 9 and 6.**

Members and Families Found (of 758 total)

Members:	7-Nov	13-Dec	Add	Need
Birth Date*	739 97%	742 98%	3	16
Death Date***	706 96%	712 96%	6	26
Resting Place**	610 83%	618 84%	8	120
FindaGrave Link**	434 59%	439 59%	5	299
Contact	516 68%	530 70%	14	228
Have Book	486 64%	495 65%	9	263

* Birth and death dates incl. 9 and 6 best-estimates.
 ** Percent and Need for 2nd-4th exclude 20 living.

70%

I made contact with relatives of the 14 members listed below, and offered complimentary books.

William Boyko
 Stanley J. Cohan
 James W. Davis
 Albert A. Fitzpatrick
 Cleo P. Jenison

Harold A. Johnson
 James Kane, Jr.
 Edward A. Krzyminski
 Richard A. Maginot
 Charles J. Manne

Harold L. Merkelson
 Harry S. Oliver
 John N. Smith
 Donald C. Uhl

Relatives of now 70% of the 758 men have been contacted

e. Thirsty 13th Reunion Photo

On November 7, 2017, the daughter, Stacy, of Harrington MacDonald, an airplane mechanic 8/44-11/45, emailed me the photo at right, from a reunion, with her dad on the right, and reunion organizer Finelli in the lower center. Stacy's dad attended the 1983 reunion, and maybe others.



It is nice to see a Thirsty 13th T-shirt.

3. Closing

The convoy to the Pacific was a special experience for the 169 original ground crew members, so it is good to have an account of this. The history also advanced with the photo from Bill Bond, the stories from H.A. Johnson, and Maginot's diary. Our number of men yet to be positively identified dropped from 38 (20+18 estimates) to 25 (16+9), by 34%, and unknown death dates from 47 to 32, by 32%. It was also great to contact relatives of 13 more members, and reach 70%. – Seth