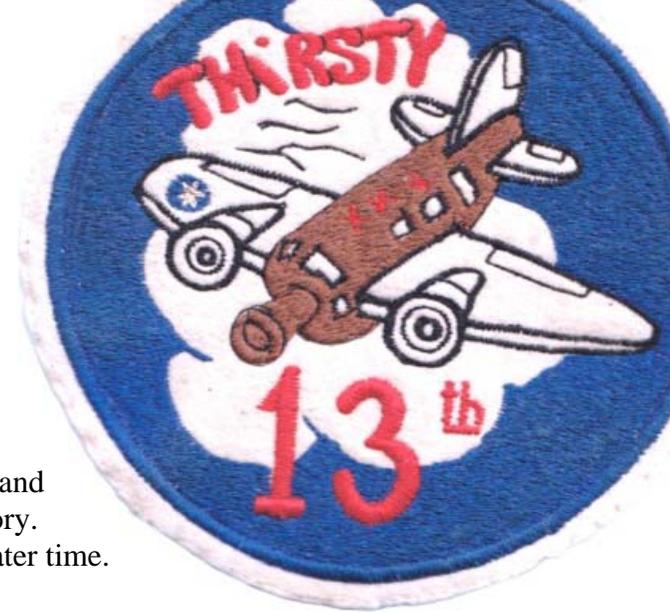


January 2018 Newsletter



Dear Thirsty 13th members, relatives, and friends,

Since the December 13, 2017, newsletter, several items and stories were shared with us, which add to the squadron history. Many more items were received which will be shared at a later time.

I continued to try to identify unidentified members, and was amazed to make more progress, thanks to an incredible researcher in Kansas who contacted me December 27. I also used a new website to find relatives of members, and was astonished to contact relatives of fully 35 more members. The percentage of members for whom their relatives have been contacted, which last month reached 70%, climbed all the way to 75%. This included relatives of 10 squadron members who joined in 1941-1942, and, at last, of executive officer Duffy.

Thank you for your interest in The Thirsty 13th.
Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian
January 14, 2018

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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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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.

MILITARY SPECIALTIES										
YEARS		MONTHS	GRADE	PRINCIPAL DUTY	ARMY CODE NO.	YEARS	MONTHS	GRADE	PRINCIPAL DUTY	ARMY CODE NO.
1		1	Pvt	Basic	521	1	8	Sgt	Airplane Maintenance	750
2		2	Sgt	Airplane and Engine Mechanic	747				Technician	
						1	-	S/Sgt	Aerial Engineer	2750
SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND CIVILIAN CONVERSIONS (Shown by title)										
AIRPLANE MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN: Supervised the inspection, maintenance, adjustment, major and minor repair of aircraft and aircraft equipment. Performed prescribed inspection of aircraft. Determined priority of jobs and assigned crews to tasks. Thoroughly checked maintenance work. Instructed subordinate in the interpretation of technical orders. Coordinated all maintenance operations. Supervised maintenance of shop records, airplane and engine maintenance forms, and requisitioned tools, equipment, parts, and supplies. Warmed up engine and taxied plane. Served as Crew Chief.										
SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND CIVILIAN CONVERSIONS (Shown by title)										

1. Additional History

a. 1942-1945: Responsibilities of John T. Vaughan, Airplane Mechanic, 6/42-3/45

Vaughan joined the Army October 14, 1941, was sent to Keesler Field, Ms., for airplane mechanic training, and to the 13th TCS June 25, 1942, at Pope Field, as shown on the book's page 26. He was in the first group of mechanics flown to Plaine des Gaiacs, departing the US October 13, 1942, similar to others on page 123, and is pictured at right from page 134. He returned to the US 3/10/45, so was in the squadron for almost 3 years at almost all of the bases.

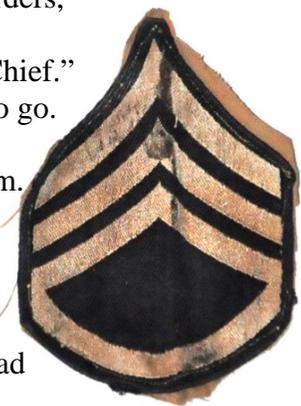
1. S Sgt John T. Vaughan, 34 134 432, was overseas with this organization in the Pacific area from 13 October 1942 until the time of his return to the United States in March 1945.



On December 11, 2017, Vaughan's son, Jerome, emailed me his dad's Army Separation Qualification Record, with the section above. This describes his responsibilities, and provides an insight into what mechanics did, other than work on planes. He "interpreted technical orders, supervised maintenance of shop records, airplane and engine forms, requisitioned tools, equipment, parts, and supplies. Warmed up engine, and taxied plane. Served as Crew Chief." When the pilots arrived, the engines were already warmed up, and the plane was ready to go.

Jerome shared the image at right of his dad's staff sergeant rank, cut from his uniform.

He also shared the images below of one of his hats. This is called a garrison cap. According to Internet sources, the color of the piping indicates the branch of the Army. The Army Air Corps since 1920 had as a primary color ultramarine, and the secondary color was golden orange. The pattern of the weave varied between manufacturers and had no significance. If one looks closely, at the bottom here, one can see the two colors.



Thank you, John T. Vaughan, for all you did for the 13th TCS.

Cap, field, cotton khaki....





b. 1943-1944: Photo of C-47 #42-100456 from Stirling Airfield, Treasury Islands

On Christmas Day, my friend in Fort Worth, Leo Clevenger, who has found great photos before, emailed me the photo above he found by searching on “C-47, Stirling Island.” Stirling Airfield is in the Treasury Islands on the book’s page 361. Leo wrote: “I believe [the C-47 on the left] is 42-100456 as shown in your book on page 406. What caught my eye was the citation star on the tail. It has a different color tail & cockpit door just like the one in your book.” Three planes are parked in a line, suggesting they arrived, and plan to leave, together.

Below left is the photo from page 406, and indeed the cockpit door is painted darker. It was very observant of Leo to notice this, and also to remember the citation star on the tail.



Leo added: “There appears to be a cameraman with a tripod under the wing of the other plane filming the unloading.” This second C-47 is of the 63rd TCS (in the same 403rd Group as us), and is its C-47 Peggy, above right, #43-15243. I believe I have the movie clip being filmed.



c. 1945: Photos from Eugene Venezia, Crew Chief, 12/44-9/45

On December 28, 2017, the son, Anthony, of our airplane mechanic Eugene Venezia, emailed me scans of some of his dad's photos. These are from Biak. He was in tent E2, based on there being four tents beyond his, and the angle to the trees, as inset above right. The photo at right shows the fence at the boundary of the 403rd Group, and a flag on the 403rd flagpole.



Below left it appears he is holding a type of koala bear, the first time I have seen us having such a pet, while a pet monkey clings to his arm. In the next photo, I estimate the oil drum has fresh water, and one scoops some with the bucket, to rinse hands closer than the wash room. Next he is at the Biak beach.



At left is Tech. Sgt. Venezia in front of probably the C-47 for which he was crew chief. The prop dome is not painted. His photo below is estimated on Leyte, in the Philippines, of a U.S.-built bridge.



d. 1942-1945: Stories Relayed by Relatives

When I find a relative. I ask whether they remember any stories, and when I email items to relatives they also sometimes reply with stories. These are always helpful, and being told secondhand takes nothing away from them. Below are a few I heard recently.

Davis, Clifton C. (Pilot, 6/42-12/43, per son Rusty): “He flew into fields in the night, and picked up people, and the only thing he had was a submachine gun and a .45.

“One time he had a bunch of higher-ups, and they wanted to see firsthand some of the islands [estimated while on detached service to Fiji in October-Nov. 1942], and so they were island hopping. He had spent a lot of time climbing to a higher altitude, to make it cooler.

“All of a sudden, one of the generals said ‘I want to get down close to that island right there.’ So Dad was frustrated, because he didn’t want to be hot again, and so he put the plane in a very steep dive, and it put everyone on the floor! So when they landed, the general grounded Dad for three days, and had him literally washing planes by hand for three days.”

That one made me laugh. I love Davis’s confidence.

Fuller, T.C. (Crew Chief, 6/41-7/45, per son Tom): “He was on a crew taking the plane for a check ride, and coming back the landing gear would not extend. The pilot wanted to declare an emergency, and my Dad told him, no, to just land on a grass runway. He did, and the plane was fine, and cost my dad just a few extra hours of work, and that was all.”

Finelli, D. (Mail Room, 9/42-9/45, per son Dom): “The [1942 ship] convoy ran into bad weather en route, and so much of the time was spent below deck. Pop said he felt every wave on the trip. For the rest of his life, he hated boats. Even when I bought one he wouldn’t go out on it. He’d help me clean it, wax it and store it, but he never went for a ride.

“The last boat ride he ever took was when he came back to the States after the war. As a little kid, I’d want to see his Army stuff, but he didn’t have very much at all. ‘Why not Pop?’ ‘I threw it all over the side. I’d never need it again.’ Unfortunately, he did. The train ride from San Francisco to Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, took five days – and Pop spent every one in the same clothes. It wasn’t until he got to the Gap that he got an issue of clean clothes so at least he would look presentable when he got leave to see my Mom.

“[In August 1944 at Biak] he and some other guys were in the advance party tasked with getting a campsite ready to receive the full squadron. This meant getting the squadron area laid out and built. While all of this was going on, some of the enemy that didn’t surrender was still engaging our guys. Pop and some of his buddies got fired upon by a sniper. Pop said that, thanks to the Marines, the sniper didn’t live long enough after that to hurt anyone.

“The war time bonds these men forged continued long after VJ day. Beginning in 1946, Pop and Major Duffy organized bi-annual reunions. In truth, my Mom did most of the legwork: typing the invitations, addressing the envelopes, keeping the list of who was attending. The invitation for the 1995 reunion included Pop’s obituary, and I still remember all the nice notes my Mom received. At that reunion, they had a short memorial for Pop.

“The men knew and appreciated all of his hard work to keep them together for so long. So much so, that they insisted that instead of driving, he and my Mom fly to the last couple of reunions they attended, and they even bought their tickets.”



2. History-Related Activities

a. 1944: Norfleet Holster

On July 8, 2017, I received a call from Kirk Hughes near Austin, Tex., who said he found and purchased a gun holster with the label above, “M. B. Norfleet, 13th Troop Carrier Sqdn.” Kirk wanted to return it to the relatives, and wrote “I’ll give it to her for the price I paid for it, which is like \$28. I am not looking to make money, I just kinda knew the item at the thrift store was out of place.” This was extraordinarily thoughtful and kind of him.

I contacted Norfleet’s daughter, and she was thrilled to learn about it, and Kirk shipped it to her. She has his Army gun, and so now it is reunited with the holster.

Clothing is an important part of the squadron history. This holster, at right, has not yet been identified by a number. Although it was made in Auckland, it could still have been issued in the U.S. Norfleet is pictured below wearing this in 1944 in New Hebrides, when taking a boat to a nearby island. Thank you, Kirk Hughes!



b. 1944-1945: P-38 Ashtray of Alva O. Ayres, Operations, 8/44-10/45

One of the hobbies of 13th TCS members while overseas was to make ashtrays out of shell casings, bullet parts, and other items. On November 28, 2017, the daughter, Alva, of our Alva O. Ayres, emailed me photos of the fine ash tray at right which her dad made while in the squadron. It is of a P-38, and is one of the finest I have seen.



3. Members and Relatives



a. Found Another Living Member: 1945 Pilot George J. Laycock

On December 16, 2017, I again tried a work phone number for the daughter of 1945 pilot George. J. Laycock, pictured above in "Two Years," and this time the receptionist said he could send her an email with my message. Previously I left messages on her voicemail, but she travels to many offices and does not monitor voicemail at all the offices so had not received these. On December 19 it was a thrill when she called and said she had just received the email from the receptionist. I expected her father was still alive, and she confirmed this, and sent me the photo at right of him speaking Friday, November 10, 2017, at St. Roberts School in Chicago, at a Veteran's Day Assembly. He is 93. I sent a book, and hope to meet him in 2018. We now have 21 still-living squadron members.

b. Identified 4, Confirmed 3 Estimates; Unconfirmed Drops by 6, 24%

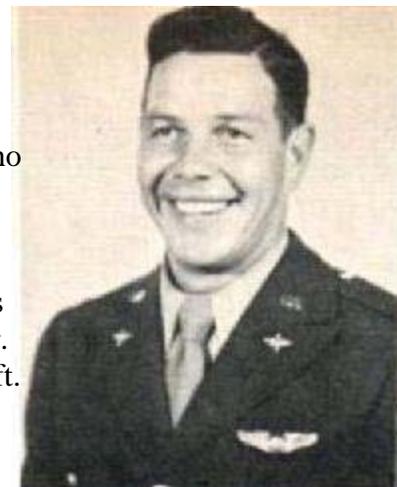
On December 27, 2017, I received an out-of-the-blue email from an amazing person. He is Stephen A. Burris, at right, and he wrote: "I have been researching the officers of the Army Air Corps for over thirty years and I believe that I can help you. After reviewing your March 2017 newsletter, I was able to identify three of your pilots, which I have located photos of on the internet. My database contains the names and data for 293,000 officers and I believe I have only 80,000 more men to identify and then learn of their activities in the Army Air Corps."



On December 13, in the last newsletter, too, I included a list of 16 unidentified Thirsty 13th members, and wrote "I hope someday to find flying school records with middle names or towns which would identify them," and expected this would take years. Exactly two weeks later Steve provided such information for four of the missing.

Albert Ford

For Albert Ford, the website ww2enlistment.org lists 40 men by this name who served in the Army in WWII. Ancestry.com was no help. All I had for him was the photo in Two Years, with a first and last name – no middle name, or town.



On December 29, Steve emailed me the photo at right, from a 1944 Air Corps flight training yearbook, of our Albert Ford, which he identified by serial number. He has the same great smile as in "Two Years" and on the book's page 544, at left. Incredibly, this also has his address, as 9106 Hooper Avenue in Los Angeles.

I went on Ancestry.com, and found the listing below at this address, with his age, place of birth (Texas), and the names of his parents. From this, on Ancestry I then found a family tree, with his exact birth and death date, and contacted his relatives. It was amazing to identify him and find his family. Thanks you, Steve!

Albert Ford
9106 Hooper Avenue
Los Angeles, California
Primary: Thunderbird II
Basic: Percos



Hooper Avenue	9106	284	0	5000	no	Ford, John C.	Head	0	M	W	38	m	no	11/2/10	Texas
						Marie L. @	Wife	1	F	W	39	m	no	7/7	Texas
						Albert	Son	2	M	W	23	m	no	11/4/30	Texas
						Mary-Ellen @	Daughter-in-law		F	W	19	m	no	11/4/30	Texas

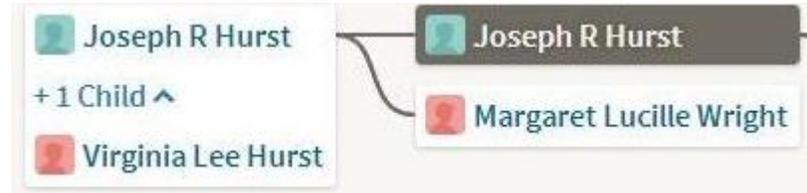
512040	O 5900	Hurst Joseph R	Head	0	M	M	44	FRI., JAN. 7 Jim Taylor 5120 Brookwood Ave. Kansas City, Mo. Wab 2089
		- Margaret L	Wife	1	F	M	41	
		- Joseph R	Son	2	M	M	19	
512041	R 55	Burden John A	Head	0	M	M	54	

James W. Taylor

In the last newsletter, on page 7, for 1945 pilot James W. Taylor I noted I had a 1945 address in Kansas City from Walter Bridges, above right, at 5120 Brookwood Ave. On Ancestry I found the census, above left, that in 1940 Joseph and Lucille Hurst and son Joe lived here. I had hoped to see a daughter, perhaps Taylor's future wife, but no. I then went to the ww2enlistment.org site, which had 131 JWTs, but only 4 from the Northern Plains states, and had one from the same county as ours, who prior to the war worked in building aircraft, and completed 4 years high school, so estimated he was ours, born in 1918. He was "estimated," not yet confirmed.

Prompted by Steve Burris providing a middle name for ours, on December 30 I searched again. I wondered if Hurst's wife Margaret L., above, had a maiden name of Taylor, such that ours went to live with his aunt. I clicked on a family tree, below right, but her maiden name was Wright.

Ancestry will list the first born child and "+1 child" if more, and I was thrilled to see this, suggesting perhaps there was a daughter after all. I clicked on that, and the other child was a daughter, Virginia Lee Hurst, at right.



As you can imagine, the next click was done with great anticipation, hoping to see that she married a James W. Taylor. I clicked on her name, above, and at 10:30 p.m. December 30 saw the line at right. Yabba-Dabba-Doo. I had connected him to that address, for his wife. It was great to also see he had two sons.



From here I would usually click on Taylor and get his birth and death dates. However the person who created this tree, the only one of three trees to list him, provided no dates for Taylor. I then spent from around 10 p.m. until 2 a.m. searching other ways to find his dates, for naught.

James Wesley Taylor 0782-402

Back to Steve Burris, he had a graduation list for Santa Ana, Calif., Class 44-F, with the entry at right, for a JWT, with our serial number, with a middle name Wesley. I found a James Wesley Taylor, who lived 1.2 miles away from Virginia Lee Hurst, went to the same high school, was in the Air Force in WWII, and rose to be a Lt. Commander, and so was probably a pilot, so this sounds like ours. I contacted the ancestry person and hope to reach a relative. I now consider him definite. He is different than the one I estimated. Thank you, Steve!

Francis C. Weis

In 2009 I contacted Weis' brother, who said his brother gave him his book "Fiji to the Philippines with the 13th Air Force," and a photo album, but later I called, and thought this was a son, and he said his dad served in Europe, which I now see Weis's father did in WWI, and forgot my note and assumed he was the wrong one. Steve provided the photo at right, with his hometown, which identified ours as the one whose brother I spoke to. I am trying to reconnect with the brother's family.



FRANCIS C. WEIS
 Brinkley, Ark.
 Tulare—Merced



Edward C. White

On December 15, the son, Dave, of our pilot Alan Stoltzmann, after reading in the last newsletter that I was trying to find Edward C. White, emailed me that he and his dad visited White in the late 1940s or early 1950s, in Alamogordo, NM, and that his wife was named “Lou.” I expected this was short for Louise, and was excited that this would be enough to finally identify our “Eddie White,” but searched, and was still not able to identify him.

On December 28, 2017, Steve Burdiss emailed me that his database of Air Force officers had White with a middle name of Charles. I went to Ancestry with this, searching Chicago where ours lived later, and, incredibly, found a family tree for an Edward Charles White, with a wife Luella! This provided his dates, and I contacted his family. White, in addition to being a 1944-45 pilot, wrote incredibly funny plays which entertained everyone. Thank you, Steve, and Dave, too.

c. Found Relatives of 35 Members, using SpokeO

On December 16, I made a list of Thirsty 13th goals for 2018, which included scanning trips. It occurred to me that, for the 228 squadron members for whom I had not found a relative, I should try again to find them, in case I learn of someone with items along a route I might travel. This was also a good time because: a) Christmas was 9 days away, when family gathers and can share a book, and b) it is easier to calculate people’s ages, e.g. if born in 1924, they are probably 93, vs. if I did this in June they could be 92 or 93. So I again went through all the 228 members with no contacts, trying to find relatives. It took six days, at right, to search for 134 men on Ancestry.com.

Searches

Date	#
20-Dec	3
21-Dec	25
22-Dec	35
23-Dec	29
24-Dec	37
25-Dec	5
Total	134

In the last 9.5 years I have tried to find phone numbers for free, and almost always could. A few times I have paid WhitePages.com or another site, but often the numbers were disconnected, and I could never find cell numbers. I expected there was no directory of cell numbers.

In early December I subscribed to people-search site “Spoke-ee-oh,” with the logo at right. For squadron members who passed away after around 1980, one can often find them still listed, with their children’s names, and children’s landline numbers, cell phone numbers, and even email addresses! This has been an amazing revelation. It is far from perfect – it will list as many as nine landlines, including the “most recent,” and often the phone numbers are all disconnected, or someone got the number recently, and the link to a son will pull up someone unrelated, and almost all the emails fail, but at least it provides names of relatives.



On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day I was astounded to find names of children on SpokeO which I could never find before, for relatives of fully 65 men, many who I had resolved had no children. From December 20 to 30, excluding Christmas and Christmas Eve, I made hundreds of calls. When I found a relative, it could take 30 minutes to an hour more to prepare an email with the orders and photos I have for their dad. I offered complimentary books to all.

I made contact with relatives of 35 more members. These included from 1941 W.H.Bass and mechanic Fuller; and from 1942, executive officer Duffy, two of the first 26 pilots, Adams and CC Davis, radio operator Powell, operations officer Lindahl, instrument specialist W. D. Palmer, Souder from the motor pool, and parachute rigger D.C. Thompson. For 1944-45 radio operator Lenard E. Davis, 1921-2005, on December 21, 2017, I found and spoke to his daughter, and she said that this was his birthday, so this was special.

Members and Families Found (of 758 total)

Members:	13-Dec	14-Jan	Add	Need
Birth Date*	742 98%	745 98%	3	13
Death Date***	712 97%	715 97%	3	22
Resting Place**	618 84%	627 85%	9	110
FindaGrave Link**	439 60%	440 60%	1	297
Contact	530 70%	565 75%	35	193
Have Book	495 65%	522 69%	27	236

* Birth and death dates incl. 6 and 4 best-estimates.

** Percent and Need for 2nd-4th exclude 21 living.



The latest dashboard is at right. The three identified by birth and death dates are Ford, Weis, and White; Taylor was previously estimated so instead reduced the estimated number. Estimated fell from 9 and 6 to 6 and 4, the three confirmed being Laycock, Taylor and Venezia – when I found his son. Overall our unconfirmed dropped from 16+9=25 to 13+6=19. I have contacted relatives of 75% of the squadron members

The 35 members with relatives newly contacted were:

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Alva T. Adams | Lenard E. Davis | Leonard W. Lindahl |
| Kenneth H. Ahrens | John G. Domarski | Merle E. Martin |
| Theodore C. Anderson | Robert C. Duffy | Joseph E. Narey |
| Wm. Henry Bass | Joseph Edelstein | Willard D. Palmer |
| Donald L. Bechstein | Paul N. Epstein | Douglas L. Powell |
| Robert A. Berryman | Albert Ford | Frank H. Rea |
| Roger G. Cady | Theodore C Fuller | Leroy W. Souder |
| Kenneth L. Champion | Jack W. Graham | Buster Stallings |
| Joseph G. Cleere | George C. Griffith | Doris C. Thompson |
| Richard C. Cover | James H. Hall | Eugene Venezia |
| Lee O. Dammon | Alex Hershberg | Edward C. White |
| Clifton C. Davis | George J. Laycock | |

The table above notes I have not contacted relatives of 193 members. As shown at right, 13 are relatives of the men not identified, I can't find relatives of 19, and I left messages or wrote 26. For 37 others I estimate I am unlikely to ever find a relative, and for 98 believe it is very unlikely. For each of these 135, I have tried to find relatives at least a dozen times, including searching on their siblings' children, for nieces or nephews. I will probably try again on all of these categories at the end of 2018, but for now feel I have done all I can.

Not identified	13	2%
Can't find relatives	19	3%
Pending	26	3%
Unlikely	37	5%
Very Unlikely	98	13%
Not Contacted	193	25%

4. Closing

Thank you to Jerome Vaughan, Leo Clevenger, Tony Venezia, Kirk Hughes, and Alva Ayres for sharing items, and Rusty Davis, Tom Fuller, and Dom Finelli for sharing stories. Thank you to many others who also shared items and stories which will be shared at another time. Thank you again to Steve Burris, who allowed us to identify three of our un-identified members, and one of our estimated, members, which for me was absolutely huge. Overall we identified and confirmed 24%, 6 of 25, of the previously unidentified and estimated members.

We found relatives of 35 more members, going from 70% to 75%, including of Duffy. Most of the names above have been known to me for 9.5 years, and so it was great to connect at last with relatives of each. It was also wonderful to find another living member in George Laycock.

With best wishes for 2018,

Seth