

# February 2024 Newsletter



Dear Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup> relatives and friends,

Before the last newsletter, November 24, 2023, on November 6, I received an email from the daughter, Manda, of 64<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron radio operator, Roy F. Powell. She shared photos and stories which add to the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS history.

On November 27, Manda emailed me “Do you know anything about the 6<sup>th</sup> Service Group?”, referred to in a footnote to a 64<sup>th</sup> flight list. I went on the Air Force Historical Research Agency website and found a list of files for this group, and requested these and received them December 4. While reviewing these I found a Commendation to all Thirteenth Air Force units which I had not seen before.

On January 25, 2024, I was excited to receive an email from the cousin, Marilyn, of 1943-1944 navigator Watland, for whom I had never found a relative. She shared 20 photo album pages. On 11/24/23, the son of glider pilot Marchant shared two stories.

Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian  
February 14, 2024

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This is the newsletter for the U.S. Army Air Corps 13<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron, 1940-1946, nicknamed “The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>.” 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, sethpw1@gmail.com, or 5200 Meadowcreek Drive, Apt. 2060, Dallas, TX 75248.

Page numbers referred to are in the book “The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>” unless otherwise stated.

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

To: Commanding Officers, All Units, Thirteenth Air Force.

1. It is with considerable gratification and pride that I forward the above commendation from the Commanding General, United States Army Forces in the South Pacific Area, to every member of the Thirteenth Air Force.

2. General Harmon's splendid tribute will be read to every member of this air force at the first formation after receipt of this letter.

3. A copy of this commendation will be made a part of the historical records of each organization.

Ray L. Owens,  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

SUBJECT: COMMENDATION

TO : The Thirteenth Air Force

1. From 25 July 1943, to 20 December 1943, Major General James H. Doolittle, by direction of Congress and pursuant to the War Relocation Authority Act, directed the operations of the United States Army Forces in the South Pacific Area. Brigadier General Frank G. Strayer served as Fighter Commander, while Brigadier General William A. Athony (then Colonel) was Fighter Commander.

2. During this period, immeasurable damage was done to the enemy. His ships and barges were destroyed, all of the New Georgia Group was overrun, and his forces captured, and Bougainville was taken.

A TRUE COPY:  
Walter P. Dismukes,  
Major, Air Corps.

1. Additional History

a. 1943: Another Army Commendation

On December 4, 2023, while reviewing files of the Sixth Service Command, I was surprised to find an Army commendation from General Harmon. This is shown in part above right, dated December 16, 1943, "To: The Thirteenth Air Force."

This is different than the Meritorious Unit Commendation, which was established eight months later, 8/23/44, and was rarely awarded to an organization larger than a single unit. The new award required six months of performance vs. this commendation is for 7/28 -11/20/43. There was no ribbon for men to wear as a result of this.

The book *The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>* on page 449 notes we received a Navy Unit Commendation on 7/15/44 for our work as part of SCAT, and on page 665 notes we received an Army Meritorious Unit Commendation, as part of the 403<sup>rd</sup> Group for performance of duty regarding Mindanao.

The cover letter, above left, for this commendation states:

HQ Thirteenth Air Force, APO #719, 22 December 1943  
To: Commanding Officers, All Units, Thirteenth Air Force

1. It is with considerable gratification and pride that I forward the above commendation from the Commanding General, United States Army Forces in the South Pacific Area to every member of the Thirteenth Air Force.
2. General Harmon's splendid tribute will be read to every member of this air force at the first formation after receipt of this letter.
3. A copy of this commendation will be made a part of the historical records of each organization.

Ray L. Owens  
Brigadier General, U.S. Army, Commanding

Despite paragraph 3 stating "A copy this commendation will be made part of the historical records of each organization," this is not in the records of the 403<sup>rd</sup> Group, or of the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS, 63<sup>rd</sup> TCS, or 64<sup>th</sup> TCS.

The men listed on the next page, who served in the squadron July 28 to November 20, 1943, earned this. They all had a part in this no matter what their specialty. The words of the commendation follow the list of members.



**13th Troop Carrier Squadron Members Serving 7/28/43-11/20/43 Who Earned the 13th Air Force Army Commendation**

Last	Init.	Arr.	Left	Last	Init.	Arr.	Left	Last	Init.	Arr.	Left	Last	Init.	Arr.	Left	Last	Init.	Arr.	Left
Abernathy F. H.		2/43	2/44	Cooper D. W.		8/43	5/45	Hetzler E. B.		8/43	12/44	Mendenhall L. J.		8/43	4/45	Shearer W. J.		8/41	12/44
Adams Jr. A. T.		7/42	9/43	Copeland C. F.		11/43	5/44	Hladczuk J. V.		2/42	2/44	Merriott G. C.		8/42	12/43	Shook H. B.		11/42	12/43
Alexander J. D.		7/42	12/43	Cummins J.		1/42	9/43	Hogan C. F.		8/43	4/45	Meuret R. E.		2/42	11/43	Sidelko S. W.		7/42	9/45
Allen J. E.		6/43	2/45	Dalmann G. A.		8/43	8/44	Holbrook J. V.		8/41	7/45	Meyers C. M.		9/42	10/43	Sinclair R. D.		8/42	9/45
Allen, Jr. F. S.		5/42	4/45	Davenport W. R.		6/43	2/44	Holland W. G.		5/43	9/45	Mihalega F. T.		7/42	12/43	Skeens R. H.		8/43	2/45
Amert E. R.		6/41	9/45	Davis C. C.		7/42	12/43	Hopkins J. P.		3/42	1/44	Mika J. F.		6/42	8/45	Smith J.		7/42	8/45
Anacker V. O.		5/42	3/45	Davis C. E.		10/42	7/45	Houpt F. R.		8/43	11/44	Miller A. L.		5/43	8/44	Smith O. E.		8/41	8/45
Anderson C. L.		2/42	9/45	Davis W. D.		7/42	10/43	Ingalls L. F.		8/42	8/43	Miller G. J.		6/42	9/45	Smith W. E.		2/43	2/44
Ando E. L.		8/43	9/45	Dawson L. W.		9/42	8/43	Jay W. H.		6/42	12/43	Mitchell O. L.		11/43	3/45	Sodergren E. W.		7/42	9/45
Angle W. E.		7/42	3/45	DeAmbra T.		6/43	5/45	Johnson A. K.		4/41	2/44	Mlynek F. J.		6/42	4/45	Sorenson L. A.		2/42	11/43
Bacon E. O.		7/42	9/45	DeHaan J. G.		9/42	9/45	Johnson R. E.		11/42	12/43	Mogush J. J.		11/42	8/43	Souder L. W.		7/42	9/45
Bakken M. O.		7/42	3/45	Delaney J. A.		2/42	9/45	Johnston E. B.		11/43	4/44	Moore J. R.		9/42	8/45	Sprout M. E.		6/42	8/43
Baldry G. L.		7/42	8/43	DeLoss A. D.		2/43	8/45	Judd A. A.		8/43	4/45	Morgan S. W.		6/42	8/45	St. Pierre R. L.		7/42	9/45
Barker O.		9/42	1/45	Deppe V. L.		8/42	8/45	Jurkewicz A. S.		12/40	2/44	Morin R. A.		2/42	9/45	Staggs W. L.		6/43	10/45
Barnes N. W.		11/43	12/43	Dewey H. O.		11/43	2/44	Kelley V. R.		2/42	4/44	Moritz W. R.		11/42	12/43	Stainback A. M.		9/42	9/45
Barrett R. F.		8/43	3/45	Dewey Jr. E. K.		6/42	9/45	Killebrew G. W.		8/41	9/44	Muehr L. F.		2/43	1/44	Stallings D. C.		8/41	9/45
Barry F. J.		5/42	4/45	DiBias W. A.		12/40	1/44	Kilzer G. A.		2/43	11/44	Mullin J. M.		2/42	9/44	Steele D. H.		3/41	11/43
Bass W. H.		8/41	7/45	Dolney J. F.		6/41	8/43	Kimball M. E.		2/42	1/44	Myers H. C.		8/41	2/45	Stiers B. P.		7/42	9/45
Baxter N. E.		11/43	2/45	Drake R. W.		7/42	12/43	King E. P.		11/43	11/44	Myers R. S.		8/41	9/45	Stiver B. J.		12/40	8/43
Beacorn D. F.		9/42	9/45	Duffy R. C.		9/42	1/45	Kirk H. C.		11/43	1/44	Myres D. L.		12/40	5/45	Storbeck H. W.		7/42	9/45
Bechstein D. L.		6/43	3/45	Eastburn A.		2/42	9/45	Knoll L. A.		10/43	10/45	Nogaj S. R.		9/42	9/45	Storms C. W.		7/42	9/45
Beck P. A.		7/42	12/43	Eatmon J.		8/41	5/45	Kolkmeje J. E.		11/43	1/44	Norfleet M. B.		7/42	9/45	Stout J. W.		11/43	3/45
Bell H. D.		6/43	9/45	Eaton (Ea) W. L.		7/42	9/45	Korty E.		2/42	9/45	Norris S. G.		7/42	1/44	Sturgis B. N.		7/42	9/45
Bell J. B.		7/42	9/43	Eggers H. H.		11/43	4/44	Labadz C. A.		9/42	9/45	O'Connor W. J.		6/42	8/44	Sydnor K. W.		7/42	9/45
Bell R. E.		5/42	5/45	Elam R. K.		9/42	6/45	Lach H. A.		2/42	1/45	Oehm E. R.		9/42	9/45	Tangney W. R.		11/43	1/44
Belto E. D.		9/42	9/45	Enfield C. D.		7/42	9/45	Laine C. O.		2/42	8/44	O'Shea J. C.		7/42	3/45	Taylor R. C.		8/41	9/45
Bergstrom D. J.		7/42	12/43	Fabish M.		7/42	9/45	LaLonde J. R.		6/43	9/45	Page S. F.		6/43	10/44	Termini R. L.		9/42	9/45
Bernard R. J.		7/42	12/43	Farmer R. C.		7/42	12/43	Laming R. C.		6/42	6/45	Painter W. A.		8/43	10/44	Thaute L.		7/42	9/43
Bernhard J. J.		9/42	3/45	Ferguson J.B.		2/42	9/45	Larger H. F.		6/41	9/45	Palmer W. D.		8/42	1/44	Thompson D. C.		9/42	2/44
Biedenbac C. J.		5/42	7/45	Ferguson M. B.		8/41	9/45	Lawrence E. F.		2/42	9/45	Pasco V. F.		7/42	9/45	Thweatt O. D.		7/42	5/44
Blankinsh J. J.		7/42	12/43	Fernandez G.		2/42	9/45	Lawyer R. P.		2/42	2/45	Paucek J. L.		2/42	2/45	Tustin W. W.		6/42	6/45
Bloch J. H.		11/42	10/43	Finelli D. J.		9/42	9/45	LeBlanc N. J.		2/42	1/44	Persen A. T.		7/42	9/45	Tutella R.		7/42	9/45
Bogutski V. W.		7/43	4/44	Fitzgerald W. R.		7/42	8/43	Lee G. T.		7/42	11/43	Peters K. E.		5/43	1/45	Uhl D. C.		6/42	11/43
Bond W. B.		7/42	9/45	Flynn L. A.		2/42	8/43	Leibundgu H. B.		5/43	4/44	Petricola J.		7/42	8/45	Ummel C. B.		4/41	2/45
Bowen H. G.		5/42	9/45	Folatko R. L.		5/43	4/44	Lenderma L. L.		6/43	1/45	Petry B. E.		4/41	7/45	Valley B. X.		6/42	9/45
Bowman P. R.		11/43	5/45	Ford L.		11/43	3/44	Lindahl L. W.		2/42	2/44	Pettis N. L.		8/43	9/45	Van Ness O. K.		7/42	9/45
Boyko W.		7/42	11/44	Foster F. J.		8/42	12/43	Linden D. F.		10/43	9/45	Phipps W. A.		3/42	5/44	Vaughan J. T.		6/42	3/45
Bradford J. R.		7/42	7/45	Foster R. C.		8/41	11/44	Linkenhog F. B.		6/42	5/45	Pierce J. W.		2/42	3/44	Vaughn J. A.		12/40	12/43
Brandt W. M.		7/42	12/43	Franklin E. H.		6/42	9/45	Lippitt J. P.		2/43	12/43	Pocza E.		11/43	5/44	Versdahl O. J.		6/42	3/45
Brauns R. L.		6/42	12/43	Franklin L. E.		6/42	9/45	Locke T. C.		8/43	8/45	Podolsky E. H.		2/42	8/45	Vestre E. K.		6/42	11/43
Brewer, Jr B. C.		6/42	8/43	Fraser W. M.		6/42	12/43	Lord F. M.		2/42	9/45	Powell D. L.		5/42	1/44	Viktorchik M. A.		11/43	2/44
Brouse R. R.		7/42	6/45	Frey R. S.		11/42	12/43	Lowery J. A.		12/40	11/44	Power J. K.		6/42	3/45	Wade W. C.		7/42	5/45
Brown E. G.		2/43	2/44	Fuller T. C.		4/41	3/45	Luras A. J.		6/43	10/45	Preston II F.		11/42	8/43	Wallace J. T.		2/42	4/45
Bruce P. M.		8/43	5/45	Fuselier C. R.		7/42	9/45	Lyle J. R.		6/42	5/45	Price W. L.		8/41	9/45	Wallace K. D.		7/42	2/44
Bruce R. D.		6/42	8/43	Galant M.		11/43	4/44	MacElvain R. C.		6/42	9/43	Rapp A. C.		3/42	3/45	Waller E. A.		9/42	9/43
Buckingham E. B.		11/43	3/45	Gates E. N.		9/42	8/45	MacLeod J. D.		2/42	1/45	Reddick R. H.		8/42	4/44	Walsh L. P.		6/43	6/45
Burden D. W.		12/40	12/43	Gee W. W.		8/41	9/45	Maguire C. R.		6/43	9/45	Reeves S. B.		7/42	11/44	Wantz R. H.		12/40	12/43
Burgess A. E.		7/42	7/45	Geier F. R.		6/43	10/45	Malloy C. J.		6/43	7/45	Remaklus J. P.		6/42	12/43	Watkins J. W.		12/40	8/44
Byrd W. W.		8/41	9/45	Germersh F. J.		8/42	9/45	Mann T. O.		4/41	4/44	Reynolds G. E.		8/42	9/45	Watts C. T.		7/42	8/43
Cady R. G.		11/43	7/44	Geuther W. J.		8/42	9/45	Markowitz A. I.		11/43	9/45	Rhodenba G. L.		12/40	8/43	Weekley R. B.		12/40	7/45
Cairns J. J.		12/40	12/43	Gilbert B.		11/42	10/43	Marks K. G.		6/42	9/45	Rice D. W.		11/43	4/44	Wells R. S.		9/42	9/45
Cameron R. J.		7/42	9/45	Givens R. E.		7/42	8/43	Martinaga J.		8/42	9/45	Richards E. H.		8/43	1/45	Weston A. S.		6/43	10/43
Cannon L. F.		11/43	7/44	Goessl M. E.		7/42	9/45	Matela F. R.		6/42	9/45	Riordan J. J.		11/43	2/45	Whitaker P. J.		6/43	10/45
Carey P. E.		11/43	5/45	Goldstein F. H.		3/42	12/43	Mattes W. R.		11/43	9/45	Riskey J. E.		2/42	9/45	White W. C.		6/42	3/45
Carruthers W. E.		7/42	9/45	Goodwin W. C.		7/42	8/45	Mazzone G. J.		2/42	9/45	Robertson D. C.		12/40	7/45	Whitehear J. W.		12/40	3/45
Chambers F. L.		9/43	6/45	Gordon F. R.		8/42	9/45	McAllister F.		2/42	9/45	Robertson E. G.		8/42	12/43	Wicks R. M.		7/42	8/44
Chapman W. H.		8/41	10/45	Granger G. E.		3/42	6/45	McCullough E. L.		8/42	12/43	Rode E.		11/43	3/45	Wilkerson H. F.		9/42	9/45
Christie N. J.		2/42	10/44	Groesbeck B. R.		11/43	4/45	McDade F. J.		9/42	5/45	Samiran A. R.		6/41	9/45	Williams T. B.		12/40	12/43
Cirincione M. E.		11/43	9/45	Grubbs B.		4/41	7/45	McDaniel T. D.		6/43	4/45	Schertz C. W.		8/42	1/44	Windham E. T.		7/42	9/45
Clawson L. G.		2/42	3/45	Hammett R. A.		11/42	8/43	McMahon R. C.		11/43	5/44	Schissler G. J.		6/43	10/45	Wiseman B. H.		8/42	9/45
Cloud R. T.		11/43	3/44	Harmon E. C.		5/43	3/45	McNeil J. M.		6/41	12/43	Schmidt C. L.		8/42	8/44	Woodall C. C.		6/43	8/44
Cohen A.		5/43	4/44	Harp P. J.		6/41	6/45	McNulty J. P.		7/42	9/45	Schmitz J. D.		7/42	1/44	Yeager E. E.		9/42	10/43
Coker J. T.		8/42	2/44	Harper D. R.		8/41	9/45	Meade J. W.		11/42	12/43	Schroth A. K.		7/42	3/44	Yeomans W. C.		7/42	9/45
Cole H. L.		3/42	8/43	Hartline J. W.		2/43	7/45	Meadows J. H.		2/42	2/45	Scott W. M.		2/42	5/44	Zdon F. V.		2/42	9/45
Collart H. A.		6/41	9/45	Hay D. M.		2/43	2/44	Mello M. A.		2/42	4/44	Scruggs J. T.		2/42	9/45	Zechar E. L.		12/40	8/43
Conard W. L.		6/43	6/44	Hays C. S.		8/42	9/44	Melton R. E.		8/41	9/45	Seeley E. A.		5/43	2/44				



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COMCINSOPAC ADVANCED, APO#700

SUBJECT: COMMENDATION  
To: The Thirteenth Air Force

16 December 1943

1. From 28 July 1943 to 20 November 1943, Major General Mather Twining, by direction of Comsopac and pursuant to the air employment directives and policies of ComAirSoPac, commanded the Allied Air Forces Solomons. Brigadier General Dean C. Strother served as Fighter Commander, while Brigadier General William A. Matheny (then Colonel) was Bomber Commander.
2. During this period, immeasurable damage was done to the enemy. His ships and barges were destroyed, all of the New Georgia Group was overrun by our forces. Treasury [Island] was captured, and Bougainville was invaded, the Jap was subjected to heavy loss of aircraft and personnel, and his Bougainville airdromes were made untenable. As a result, we have materially improved our position for further assault on the enemy, and we have acquired important naval facilities and many fine additional airdromes. A great share of the credit for these victories goes to the Air Arms; the airmen of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Royal New Zealand Air Force, both shore and carrier based.
3. In all this, the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force, its Fighter Command, Bomber Command, Service Command, and all the officers and men of flight and ground echelons have had a major role. Your contribution to the success of the campaigns of the Armed Forces is inspiring to all. Your courage, your spirit of high endeavor, your patient endurance of discomforts, hardships, and danger; your cheerfulness thru all, and your will to win are a source of pride to all who are concerned with the destruction of Japanese force, the annihilation of his military power and the imposition of swift retribution on his individual leaders, his government, and his subjects.
4. The 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force will continue to carry the fight until the Jap is completely crushed and made to pay many times over for the crimes he has committed against our airmen, soldiers, sailors, and marines, and for the bestial deceit and brutality of Pearl Harbor, the Philippines, China, and Malaya.
5. The 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force, born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1943, is now almost a year old – and what a year! Many of you men of this force have been carrying on in this area since before our attacks and capture of Guadalcanal and Tulagi. You have worked and sweated through the mud and heat, the malaria, the dangers, and hardships of the early days at Efate, Espiritu Santo, and Guadalcanal. You wondered then if our meager force could really stop the Jap. But soon this doubt changed to confidence as the gathering power and momentum of our forces increased, and then you helped to break forever the myth of Jap invincibility and to blast him out of Guadalcanal, the Russells, Munda, and all of the New Georgia Group, and now, Treasury and Bougainville. You have seen him defeated in the air, on the ground, and on the sea. The issue is no longer in doubt.
6. Our people at home take just pride in your accomplishments and sacrifices, glory in our victories, and reverence the memory of your comrades who will not go home.
7. God bless you for your achievements, and grant each of you the fortitude to carry on to complete victory. Keep healthy, keep smiling, and keep fighting.

/s/ M.F. Harmon, Lt. General, U.S. Army

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**b. 1944: Photos from Edward Watland, Navigator, 12/43-10/44**

Watland was born 2/10/1920. He graduated from high school in 1937 in New Sharon, Iowa, 60 miles east of Des Moines, current population 1,262, and went to the University of Iowa for two years. He went to work as a mechanic for Douglas Aircraft Company in Santa Monica, Calif.

He enlisted in the Army 2/3/41, 10 months before Pearl Harbor, and was initially in Field Artillery in California. He applied for pilot training and on 1/2/43 was in Preflight School at Maxwell Field. He went to Primary Training at Douglas Field, Georgia, but seems to have washed out, and instead completed Navigator Pre-Flight School at Selman Field, La., on 5/21/43. He went to the navigation school at Coral Gables, graduating 10/8/43.

Watland joined the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS 12/29/43 with pilots Mucci and EK Smith, mechanic Lamb, and radio operator Conn. This is a 5-man flight crew, but it is not clear if they flew a plane over.

The morning reports state he flew 34 missions which had an overnight, the longest being 20 days, and he would also have flown many same-day missions,

At Espiritu Santo, in the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS officers area, Watland had the photos above. On the left are Mucci and unidentified. Above right he labeled Emerson King, Mucci, and Watland. Below, labelled "Beach Boys, No Gals" are ten of our pilots and navigators at the officers' beach at Espiritu Santo, with in the center with a moustache Emerson King. Two jeeps are parked in the back right.







Watland was assigned to Fiji from 1/31/44 until 2/15/44. The image above is at Nadi, Fiji, based on the airplane hangar and mountains. The nose art "Johnie" is shown again at left. I have seen this before, but it is not clear if this is a 13<sup>th</sup> TCS C-47, as it is hard to see our star on the nose. The 403<sup>rd</sup> order, bottom left assigned them to take our C-47 #41-18499.



Watland had the photo below and wrote "Fiji, February 14, 1944." It is Dalman (p), EK Smith (cp), Watland (n), Lowery (cc), Power (ro), and Meadows (m) at Fiji. The photo inset above right is these six at this same time with this same nose art so they are with the same C-47.



FIJI FEB. 14 1944

13th TCS, APO 708	From	To	T via
1st Lt GALE A. BISHAM, O-337547, P)	APO 708	ED APO 913	GAT
1st Lt EDWARD K. SMITH JR, O-675634, CP)		(TD not to exceed 15 days upon arrival).	
2nd Lt EDWARD D. WATLAND, O-816170, N)			
3/Sgt Joseph A. Lowery, 6668712, CC)			
Sgt John H. Meadows, 11069766, )			
Sgt Joseph E. Power, 11061977, RO)			
(C-47 Airplane #41-18499)			





Watland flew to Auckland for 3/11 - 3/15 and again 5/10 - 5/19/44, and had the photo above at Whenuapei Aerodrome titled "Arrived." The aileron shows some half-circles of different color paint, perhaps a camouflage scheme. The distant plane has a lot of altered paint, and our serial number and star are not on the tail.

He titled the photo at right "Civilization," and it is St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Auckland, the oldest surviving stone church in New Zealand. The first service was in 1850, and the tower was completed in 1882. This is 0.7 miles from the waterfront at Queen Street.



The image at right was labelled "Green Island," but appears to be Bougainville's Torokina Airstrip, while landing to the west.

The Marines made the Allies' first landings on Bougainville at a beach around the corner from the point at the top of the photo. The beach shown here is where Seabees unloaded supplies.

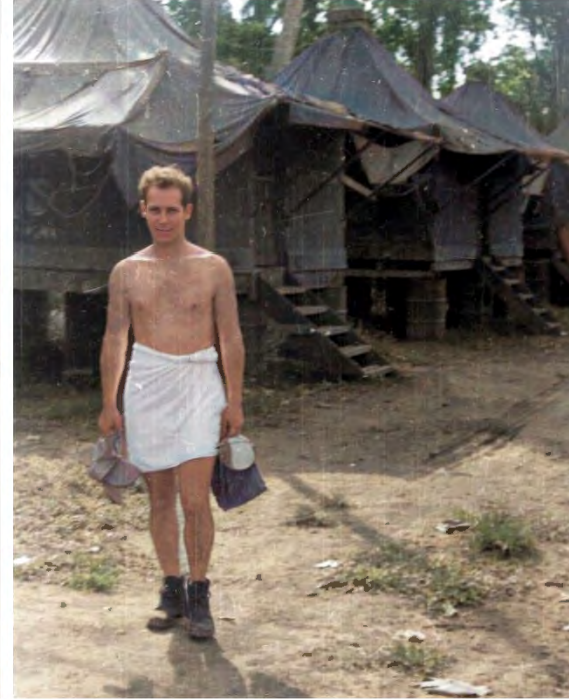
There were still Japanese on this island, to the right, up in the hills, so it makes sense that a camp would be near the water here.



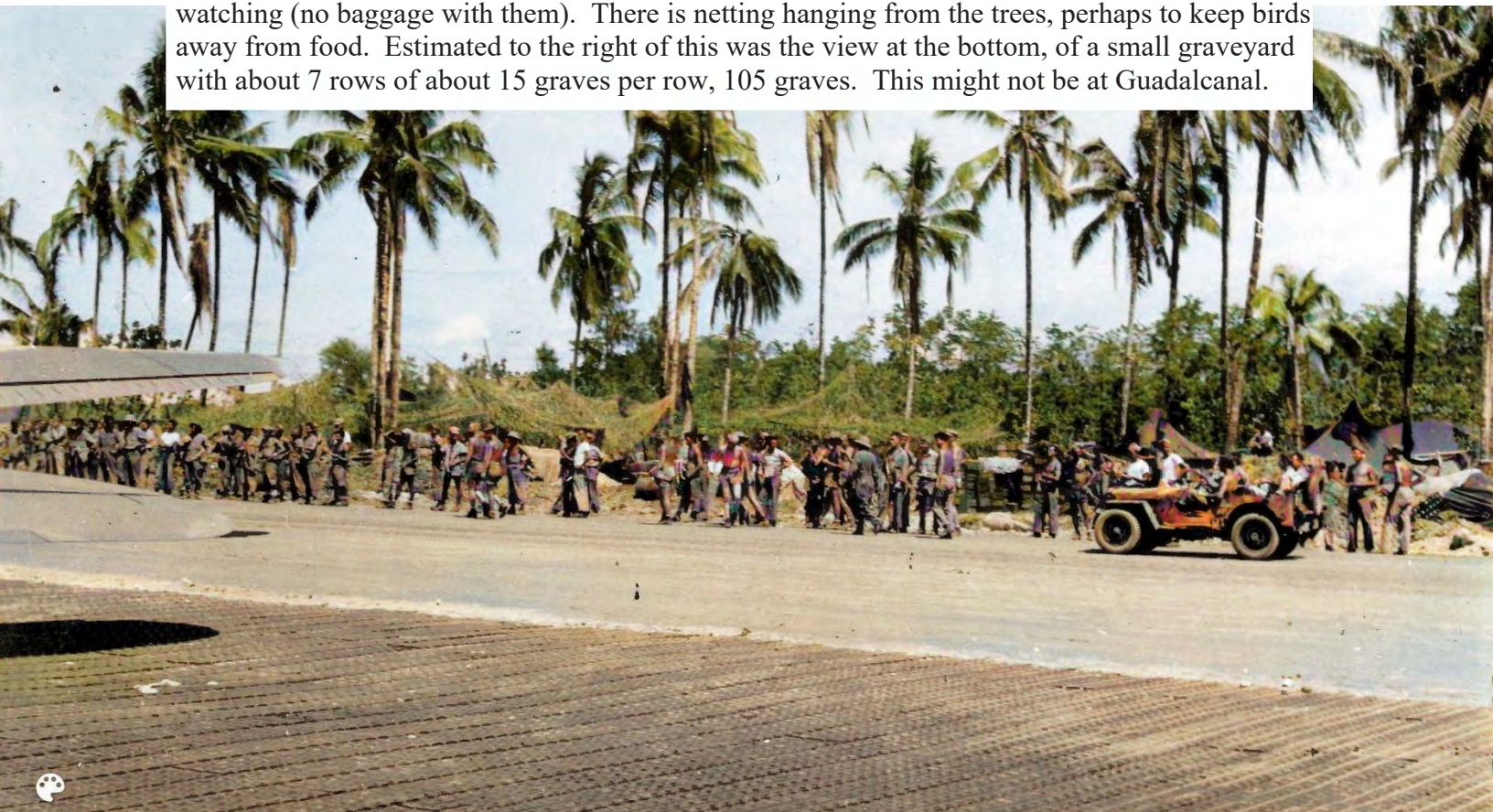


## Guadalcanal

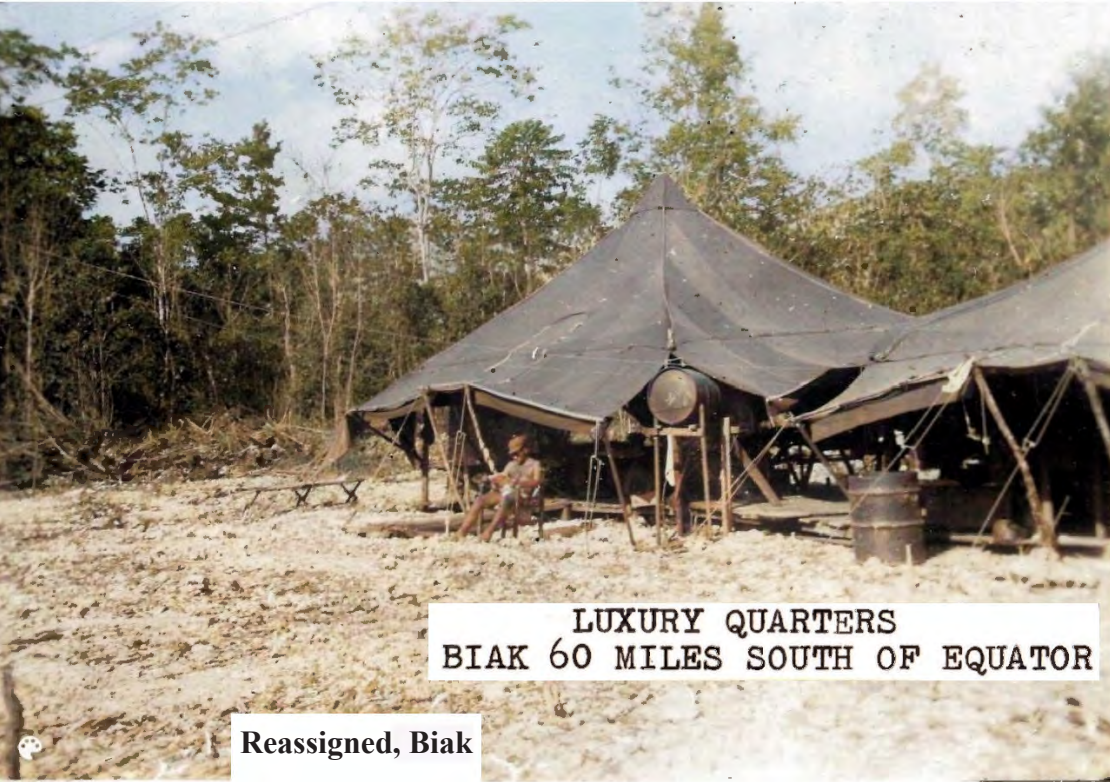
Watland was based at Guadalcanal from 7/8/44-7/27/44, from where he flew missions in the Northern Solomons. He had the photo at right of navigator Peter B. Small writing a letter. Far right appears to be Small again, in the officers area here. The shadow angle is about 45°, and the NOAA Solar Calculator says this was either 10:30 a.m., if the view is east, or 2:30 p.m., if the view is north. His right hand carries sandals for the shower.



He had the photo below of a C-47's wing and tail over Marston matting, a road, and men watching (no baggage with them). There is netting hanging from the trees, perhaps to keep birds away from food. Estimated to the right of this was the view at the bottom, of a small graveyard with about 7 rows of about 15 graves per row, 105 graves. This might not be at Guadalcanal.







LUXURY QUARTERS  
BIAK 60 MILES SOUTH OF EQUATOR

Reassigned, Biak



In October 1944, when the Fifth Air Force, which had been in New Guinea, and the Thirteenth Air Force converged on Biak, the Fifth Air Force went ahead of us. They flew missions to Palau and lost some planes because their navigators had always flown over New Guinea. They needed better navigators, and took sixteen of ours, including Watland, and 12 from each of the 63<sup>rd</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup>, a total of 40 navigators.

The morning reports state on 10/18/44, Watland went on Detached Service to the 54<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Wing and its 375<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Group. He was on Wakde, and transferred to Biak 10/22/44, so was never in our camp at Biak. He titled the photo above "Luxury Quarters, Biak, 60 miles south of Equator," in the 375<sup>th</sup> TCG camp. Above right is navigator JB Steele at that camp. On February 21, 1945, he was officially transferred out of the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS.

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA  
AUG. 1944

Watland is pictured at right on rest leave with us in Sydney in August 1944.

As shown below, he earned the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Asia Pacific Ribbon with six bronze stars, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one bronze star, and the American Defense Ribbon. Thank you to Ed Watland for your being a good part of the 13<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron.



EDWARD B. WATLAND 1 LT. 0-814128  
17 AUG 45 AAFRS #4 SAAAB, Santa Ana, Calif.  
I certify that the above named officer is entitled to wear ribbons and awards listed below.  
(3) OVERSEAS SERVICE BARS, AIR MEDAL w/4 OLC, AMERICAN DEFENSE RIBBON, A.P. RIBBON w/6 B STARS, PHILIPPINE LIB. RIBBON w/1 B STAR.  
A. H. SELGER  
Captain, AGD,  
Assistant Adjutant  
AFRS4 Fm #2-177 (6 Mar 45)



Voss # 66 MY OLD PLANE (5236)

**c. 1944-45: Roy F. Powell, 64<sup>th</sup> TCS Radio Operator, 7/44-9/45**

The *The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>* book on page 454-455 has our radio operator Arthur Driedger's story of flying from Fairfield AFB, 55 miles NE of San Francisco, to Honolulu on June 18, 1944, and on to Australia. Our pilot C. R. James departed Fairfield June 14, four days before Driedger, and flew the same route. Roy F. Powell is listed on the same 403<sup>rd</sup> order which assigned James to the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS and so likely also left Fairfield June 14. He was assigned to the 64<sup>th</sup> TCS.



Powell wrote on the back of the photo above "Voss and 66, my old plane (5236)." This is C-47 #43-15236. This is not the one he flew on to Australia, but one that was already in the 64<sup>th</sup>. We had 43-15235, 7 and 8, and these arrived to us in April 1944, two months before Powell.

**Biak Camp Entrance Road Sign for the 64<sup>th</sup> TCS**

Below left is an aerial view of the entrance road to our and the 64<sup>th</sup>'s Biak camps. Our sign is left of the road. Outlined in red is a sign for the 64<sup>th</sup> TCS. Below that in the direction of the blue arrow is the best photo I had of the 64<sup>th</sup> sign. Members at Biak who came in this entrance would see this sign.

Powell had the good photo below right of this 64<sup>th</sup> TCS sign and "C.S. Stockard" (there was a K.M. Stockard Jr. in the 64<sup>th</sup>). The logo is a stork carrying a baby paratrooper, as also shown bottom center. The 64<sup>th</sup> TCS patch, bottom left, had a similar stork dropping a paratrooper.





Powell RF (64<sup>th</sup> TCS Radio Operator, 7/44-11/45, per his daughter, Manda):

“Dad passed the Aviation Cadet exam (to train to be a pilot) and went to the school. In the flight school at Avon Park, Florida, he made a three-point landing and washed out. That’s when he chose to attend the Communications School and become a Radio Operator and Mechanic.

“He actually did fly the C-47 at times to relieve the pilots on long flights.

“He said it was like being a truck driver. They would get up, have breakfast, prep the plane, and take off for ten hours every day, seven days a week.

“He was in a flight of 3 or 5 planes and saw what looked like the entire American fleet down below them, carriers, battleships, destroyers, everything on their way to the Philippines [for the invasion of the Philippines at Leyte October 16, 1944]. He said they flew down for a closer look before better sense took over and they scrambled back out of sight. When they landed and told what they had seen and done, they were told how lucky they were to not have been shot down.”

Powell RF (64<sup>th</sup> TCS Radio Operator, 7/44-11/45, per interview): “When we were flying out of Guadalcanal, we were watching Naval planes coming in, and they were used to landing with a cable to stop them (on a carrier) but here there was no cable. And they hit their brakes and the prop cut into that steel ramp (Marston mat). And it tears the propeller up on the airplane.

“The 13<sup>th</sup> and 63<sup>rd</sup> stayed with the command of the (403<sup>rd</sup>) group and ours was the bastard squadron and we were assigned to the 1st Marine Air Group.” [The 13<sup>th</sup> TCS often referred to themselves as the “bastard” squadron, because overseas 11/42-8/43 with no parent organization.]

### 64<sup>th</sup> TCS Memo with Next Day’s Aircraft, crews, destinations, departure times

Powell had the document at right from the 64<sup>th</sup> which lists 11 aircraft by the last three of their serial numbers, the pilots, crew chief and radio operator, the destination and departure time. This was on November 12, 1944, at APO 704, Neomfoor, west of Biak, from where the 13<sup>th</sup>, 63<sup>rd</sup>, and 64<sup>th</sup>, operated in November and December.

Notes at the bottom say “714 will carry RAAF cargo to Morotai and return to Sansapor for 6<sup>th</sup> Service Group load to Morotai. 241 will shuttle 64<sup>th</sup> service Group cargo between Biak and Noemfoor. All other planes will carry loads to Morotai and return to Noemfoor.”

The 13<sup>th</sup> TCS likely flew similar missions on this day.

64TH TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON  
403D TROOP CARRIER GROUP, AAF

wp/ldk  
A.F.O. 704,  
12 November 1944.

SUBJECT: Flight Schedules for 13 November 1944.

TO : All Concerned.

AAF NO	P & CP	CC	RO	DEST	TIME
1. 714	Deweese Nichols	Spicer	Powell	Sansapor via Morotai	0500
2. 725	Weldeman Lee	Verzuh	Kipp	Morotai	0700
3. 724	Satka Junod	Hopkins	Garney	Morotai	0700
4. 689	Gill Diedier	Jehnings	Gano	Morotai	0700
5. 696	Santoney Cone	Russell	Arlician	Morotai	0700
6. 236	Beckham Lewis	Green	Johnson	Morotai	0700
7. 328	Pleasak Palrud	Blake	Weldner	Morotai	0700
8. 326	Cullen Metzger	Rhein	Minnigh	Morotai	0700
9. 230	Johnson Hummerder	Pleasant	Dorshimer	Morotai	0700
10. 3240	Voss Jarvis	Hiltner	Parris	Morotai	0700
11. 241	Dal Ponte Hernandez	Wilmot	Francke	Biak	0800

\* 714 will carry RAAF cargo to Morotai and return to Sansapor for 6th Service Group load to Morotai.  
\*\* 241 will shuttle 64th Service Group cargo between Biak and Noemfoor. Park in Depot #3 area.  
\*\*\* other planes will carry loads to Morotai and return to Noemfoor.

11

By order of the Squadron Commander:

WASIL PEROZEK,  
2d Lt., Air Corps,  
Asst Ops Officer.



## RF Powell Quotes about the Philippines and Okinawa from Recording

Powell RF (64<sup>th</sup> TCS Radio Operator, 7/44-11/45): “There was a gold miner from New Zealand. We flew in and landed on a guerilla strip at Bahi [on the book’s page 648; this gold miner is mentioned on page 655], a grass strip, and carried him fuel, gasoline for his small engines and his radio. They carried us down to the house for a meal, a supper that night.

“This guy had a mining outfit along a riverbed, and there was, he said, about ten pounds of gold per 1000 yards of gravel.” [This lets us know that this gold miner was near Bahi.]

Powell RF (64<sup>th</sup> TCS Radio Operator, 7/44-11/45): “They have a lake up in there, it is the crater of a volcano [Lake Lanao by Dansalan, Marawi City, on the book’s page 646]. It’s huge. You see sailboats out there on it. It’s the prettiest blue that you ever saw.”

Powell RF (64<sup>th</sup> TCS Radio Operator, 7/44-11/45): “They had that leper colony for all of the Philippines, China, all Asia over there [at Palawan, on the book’s page 634]. This is where the leper colony was. Also, they had a Filipino prison on the island of Palawan.

“Whenever the Japs came in, they turned them all loose, the lepers and the prisoners.

“Our instructions were ‘Don’t touch anybody. Don’t take anything to eat from anybody unless it is a GI cook.’”

Powell RF (64<sup>th</sup> TCS Radio Operator, 7/44-11/45): “There were 25 air strips at one time on Okinawa. Any place they could put an airfield, they put one in there.

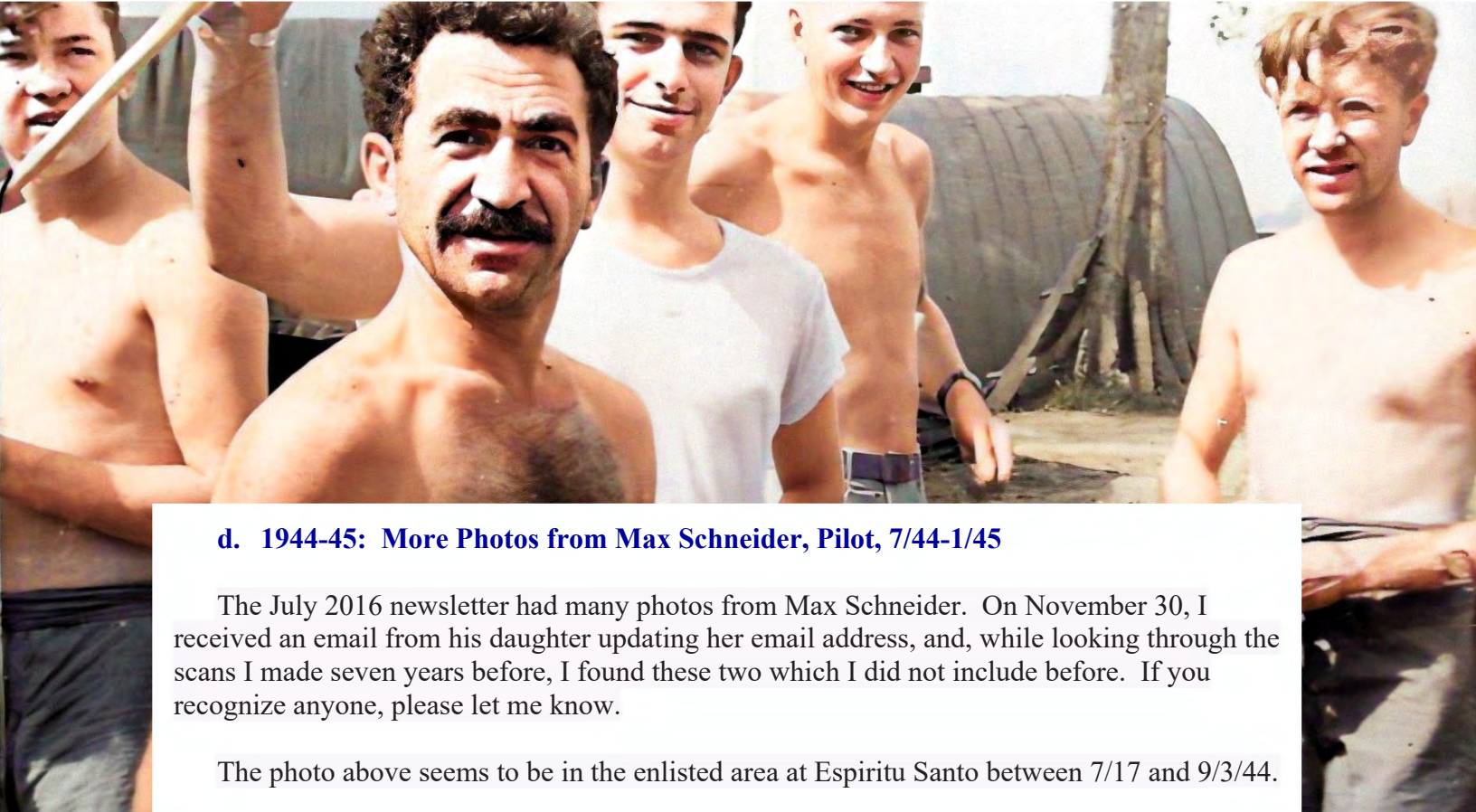
“One of the things I remember about Okinawa was a lime tree, and it was loaded with limes.

“I also found some pine trees, and no one had seen any pine trees since they left the states.”

Powell had the photo below of the airstrip at Palawan, with a Japanese Zero in the foreground and on the left and center-left are two C-47s. Below right is the 64<sup>th</sup> enlisted men’s club, called Club 47. Powell is shown up-close below left.







**d. 1944-45: More Photos from Max Schneider, Pilot, 7/44-1/45**

The July 2016 newsletter had many photos from Max Schneider. On November 30, I received an email from his daughter updating her email address, and, while looking through the scans I made seven years before, I found these two which I did not include before. If you recognize anyone, please let me know.

The photo above seems to be in the enlisted area at Espiritu Santo between 7/17 and 9/3/44.

The photo below is officers at Biak 12/31/44. Their uniforms were khaki, not this blue color. Front and center is Duffy. Again, [these below are only pilots or navigators](#), plus two 801<sup>st</sup> nurses.







**e. 1945: Additional Photos from Thomas Wright**

The November 2023 newsletter had photos from the collection of Wright which I bought on eBay. Above left is another of those photos, of Wright, next to what is mostly a flatbed truck, by the 403<sup>rd</sup> chapel (its roof in the top right). The door image is from the Toonerville Trolley cartoon, above center, with a masked bear, at right, not found. He had the photo above right showing he was in tent D7 at Biak. The book has others in this tent, and so perhaps he moved in later.



Thank you again to Ewan Stevenson in New Zealand for alerting me to these on eBay.

**f. 1945: Stories from Sons of Glider Pilots Marchant and Noakes**

On April 15, 1945, the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force assigned two glider echelons, each with 83 men, to the 403<sup>rd</sup> Group. Two days later, the 403<sup>rd</sup> assigned these to the 65<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> TCS at Morotai but on Detached Service to the 403<sup>rd</sup> at Biak so they did not move.

On August 3 and August 8, 1945, 11 glider pilots and 19 glider mechanics were assigned to and joined the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS and these 30 moved to our camp at Biak.

I assumed the glider echelon arrived overseas in early April 1945, but in looking over my correspondence with Marchant's son, his dad arrived in New Guinea in November 1944. Herb Noakes' son told me his Dad told him that he, too, was previously at Nadzab, New Guinea.

On 11/24/23, Marchant's son, Brad, shared two more stories.

Marchant (Glider Pilot, 8/8/45-9/22/45, per his son, Brad): "I asked my dad once if they flew their gliders after they got to the South Pacific.

"He said that they only flew them one time, when a general came for an inspection and wanted a demonstration. He said that they cut loose either too early or too low and barely made it back to the runway. In fact, one of the gliders ditched in the water and since the gliders were mostly made of plywood it just floated out there for a time and the Navy used it for target practice.

"He was kept very busy flying C-47s and C-46s and occasionally an L-3.

"He liked the C-46 the best."



## 2. Members and Relatives

### a. Frank Burder Passed Away, Perhaps Our Last Living Member

On January 3, I received emails from Frank Burder's grandson, Jeremy, and son, Thomas, that Frank passed away December 31, 2023. Frank was born December 7, 1924, and was 99 years old and 24 days. He grew up in in Birmingham, Michigan, the same town where I grew up. He is shown at right when I visited him in 2017. Frank provided many helpful quotes for the book and newsletters.

Albert A. Fitzpatrick, a pilot 6/12 to 9/22/45, was born 3/25/25, and so will be 99 in March if still alive, last known to be living in San Diego. He is the only one for whom I do not have a death date, and his daughter's phone is disconnected.

### b. "Contacts" Reaches 80.0%

The squadron had 815 members who served overseas. On 7/27/22, I for the first time found the name of Dolney's son, and found a relative through Ancestry, and emailed him and heard back 7/28/22. This was my 649<sup>th</sup> contact with a member's relative, which was 79.6% which I could round off to 80%, but was not truly 80%, so I have looked forward to getting to 652, 80.0%.

On 8/4/22, Christie's grandniece contacted me, 79.75%. On 10/23/23, I knocked on the door of Brewer's son and finally connected with him, for 79.88%. On 1/25/24, Watland's cousin, Marilyn, emailed me, and, at last, I am at a true 80.0%.

Watland was an only child, and had no children, and so I assumed I would never be able to find a relative and had stopped looking. This made it especially great to hear from Marilyn.

At right, is a photo of the Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup> patch Watland is wearing on page 9. The C-47 nose is slightly different than on other patches.

## 3. Conclusions and Thanks

Thank you to 64<sup>th</sup> TCS radio operator Powell's daughter, Manda, for reaching out to me, sharing his items and stories with us, and asking about the Sixth Service Group, which led to my finding the commendation.

Thank you to Watland's cousin, Marilyn, for finding me and sharing his photos. Thank you to the sons of glider pilots Marchant and Noakes for sharing stories.

With best wishes, - Seth

