

May 2016 Newsletter



Dear Thirsty 13th members, relatives, and friends,

In the two months since the newsletter March 26, 2016, more information has been gained about the U.S. Army Air Corps 13th Troop Carrier Squadron, the “13th TCS,” in World War II. Lach provided great stories and details, plus a new rest leave area in Sydney. With Amelang we hit a gold mine of details, from his two diaries, scrapbook notes, and letters home. These led to finding a long-sought camp location. We now even have a souvenir from the 50th reunion.

To enlarge the PDF to fill the width of your screen, press the CTRL key and “+” at the same time. Click the hand symbol to make it easier to scroll down.

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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, sethpw1@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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1. Additional History

a. 1942-1944: Items of Hendrick A. Lach, Crew Chief, 6/42-1/45

On October 2, 2015, I found the son, Henry, of 1942-1945 crew chief Hank Lach (“Latch”). The Thirsty 13th was already part of his household, with the picture frame above adorning a wall. Henry had his dad’s pennants, above, including the first Tulagi I have seen, and the fine photo above of his dad in his flight jacket. Henry shared three stories he remembered:

Lach (Mechanic, 6/42-1/45 per son): “He was scheduled for a flight, and the Line Chief pulled rank and he got bumped. That plane was never found, and they never knew what happened. He never talked any more about it. This story never really hit me until I read [in the book] about Risky. [Line Chief Rinaldi flew on Risky, and so indeed took Lach’s place.]
“Someone was taxiing a plane, and he said it was tightly lined with a lot of trees. One of the wingtips hit a tree and did a lot of damage. They spent a good part of the night getting it all fixed up. [This sounds like Palikulo Bay, Russell Island, or Ondonga.]
“About them running booze, he would laugh about that, saying they had cases of the stuff that they got in Australia, and they could sell it to guys outside of their outfit for fifty bucks a bottle [in 2016 equal to \$676].”

Henry had a July 1, 1944, 403rd Group order, of the promotion of 19 squadron members, and special duty for 12 more, which confirmed some serial numbers, and revealed that mess cook Faraclas transferred in from the 64th TCS. A 13th TCS memo October 2, 1944, certified that 35 mechanics and 30 radio operators were eligible for flight pay for September - the first memo found of this type. I emailed it to relatives of 34 of the men for whom I am in contact with their families. He had an order October 11, 1944, sending nine men on rest leave to Sydney (next page), also showing when pilot Petmecky left the squadron. Henry emailed me scans of the photos below: his dad awarded the Air Medal in August 1943, pg. 332, and, from Espiritu Santo (parade ground on right): Jurkewicz, Ando, Lach, and ?, and in front Lawyer, Lindahl, Grubbs, and Larger.



Rest Leave in Sydney, Australia, October 1944

For an October 11-23, 1944, rest leave, Lach had the Army Leave Control Station card below, indicating he would stay at 351 Pitt St., which was the American Red Cross Service Club No. 2, revealing another location where 13th TCS enlisted men stayed. It was replaced by a hi-rise.

U.S. ARMY REGISTRATION AND LEAVE CONTROL STATION.

Name: *Lach H. A. TSGT AC* Rank: _____ Serial No.: _____

is authorized a billet at *351 Pitt St*

a U.S. Army Leave Billet, staffed by the American Red Cross for a period of *12* days from *12 OCT* to *23 OCT*

At the expiration of your leave you will vacate this billet.

You will be on a duty status while awaiting transportation.

Capt. G.E. Registration Officer, Billeting Officer.



He had a second card, below, during this trip, from "HQ Base Section Seven," noting he was issued cigarettes, an NCO club membership card, and coupons for food and clothing. It says to return at 6 a.m. on the day of departure, and on the back says to check in 3 days prior to departure.

Cigarettes Issued: *8*

Date: *19 Oct 1944* Sydney Leave Area

HQ. BASE SECTION SEVEN.

LACH HENDRICK A T.SGT. 11008956

Name: LACH HENDRICK Rank: A Serial No.: T.SGT. 11008956 Air Corps

has permission to be present on leave in Sydney, N.S.W., from *OCT 12*, 1944

report to Leave Registration Office *6* a.m. *OCT 23* 194 . A.P.O. *920*

Manifest *13th A.F. NO 118*

N.O.O. CLUB HONORARY MEMBERSHIP CARD ISSUED No. *6405*

C. A. FERTIG, LT. COL. INF. LEAVE AREA OFFICER.

COUPONS ISSUED: *BOOK 1944*

FOOD COUPONS: *NOV 1944*

CLOTHING ISSUES: *NOV 1944*

P. Patton

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AIR CORPS PERSONNEL.

1. Manifest filed with Transportation Section Leave Registration Office, MJ4666—Ext. 3.
2. Leave Phone number at Transportation desk.
3. Check at least three days before departure.
4. Leave Orders or Furlough papers must be stamped out on departure at Transportation desk when taking the bus to the Airport.
5. A.T.C. passengers are limited to 55 lb. baggage.

DEPART 23 OCT 1944 SYDNEY LEAVE AREA SYDNEY N.S.W.

The membership card is below, good October 12-23, for an NCO Club at 646 George St., close to 351 Pitt St. The building was replaced with that below right, but the other three corners have old bars, with the two on the west side of the street shown at right, so this was another area visited by the Thirsty 13th. The back of the card shows Lach visited this club only once, October 12, for a beer, spirit, and two glasses of wine.

Lach was one of the first overseas, flew in or supported at least five battles, was in the squadron 31 months, and logged 1,195 flight hours.

Non-Commissioned Officers' Club

BASE SECTION 7

646 George Street

MEMBERSHIP

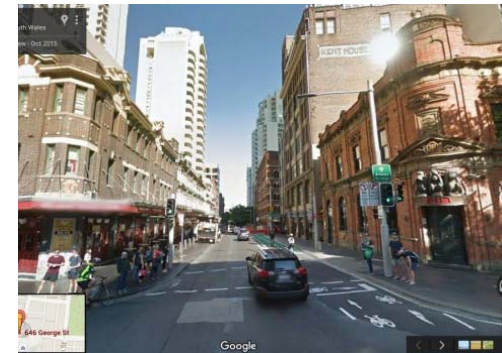
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Issued *Oct 10* Expires *Oct 23*

Lach Hendrick

No. *6405* President

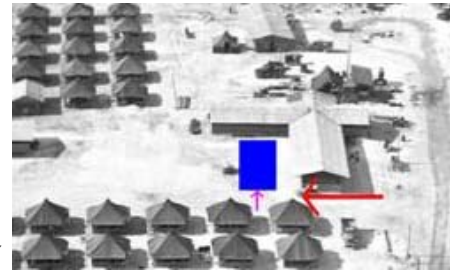
	Beer	Spirits	Cordials	Wine
1st Week				
2nd Week				
3rd Week				
4th Week				





b. 1945: Items from L. Max Amelang, Radio Operator, 3/45-11/45

On January 3, 2016, the daughter Karen of 1945 radio operator Amelang emailed me the photo above. This is in the camp at Biak, in the direction of the red arrow at right, of the entrance to the enlisted men's club, built after the photo at right, hence shown in blue. It is the only photo of this entrance. If your relative was an enlisted man in the squadron at any time from January 1945 to July 1945, he probably walked through this opening. The sign near the roof, apparently with back-lit letters for night, says "Duffy's Tavern."

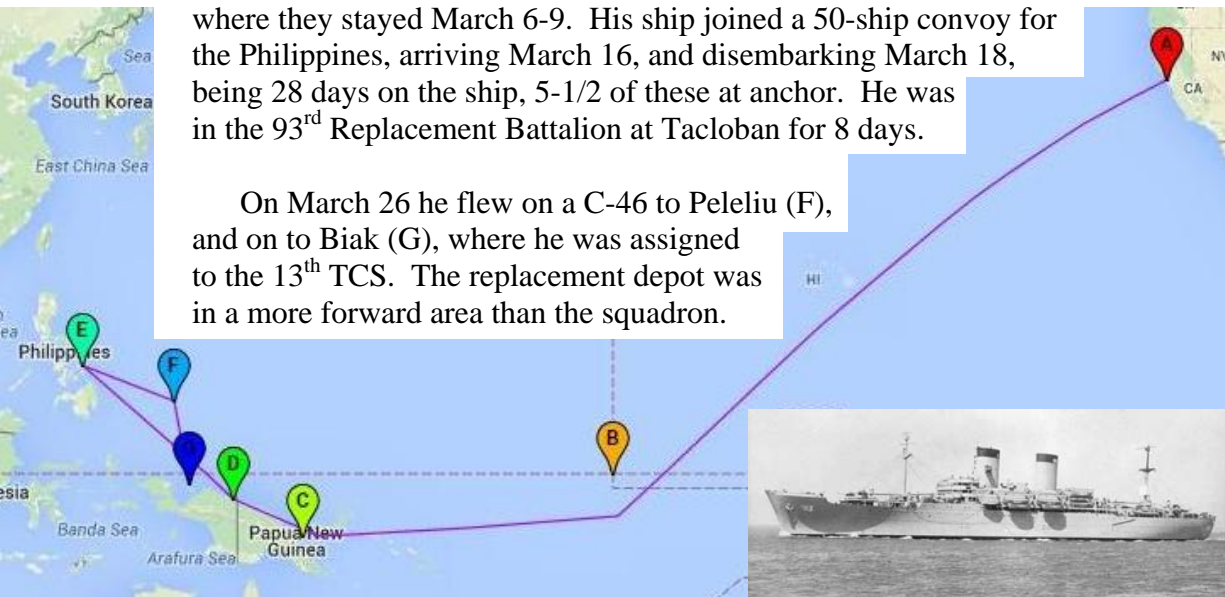


Karen shared the photo at right of her dad, in June '45 by Operations at Biak. On May 13, 20, and 30 she typed and emailed me her dad's diaries and letters.

Amelang departed San Francisco under the Golden Gate Bridge at 6:22 p.m. February 17, 1945, on the General H.W. Butner (inset below), a troopship, just one year old. He followed the path shown below, crossing the equator February 25, and the international dateline (below "B" in those days) the next day.

On March 4 he arrived in Finschhafen (point C), where he noted "1st G.I. haircut." After 24 hours the ship sailed to Hollandia (D), where they stayed March 6-9. His ship joined a 50-ship convoy for the Philippines, arriving March 16, and disembarking March 18, being 28 days on the ship, 5-1/2 of these at anchor. He was in the 93rd Replacement Battalion at Tacloban for 8 days.

On March 26 he flew on a C-46 to Peleliu (F), and on to Biak (G), where he was assigned to the 13th TCS. The replacement depot was in a more forward area than the squadron.



Logbook of 13th TCS Radio Operator L. Max Amelang

May '45	June '45	July '45	August '45	September '45
1 "On Flying Status"	1	1	1	1 0:00 Wait for carburetor
2	2	2	2	2 0:00 Wait for parts
3	3	3	3	3 4:45 Kadena
4	4	4	4	4 5:30 Clark
5	5 Training with Hedges	5	5	5 3:10 San Marcelino-Dulag
6	6 8:15 Biak-Mor-Leyte	6	6 C-46 #29	6
7	7 8:15 Ley-Malabang-Mor-Bk	7	7 2:00 Wakde-Biak	7
8	8	8	8	8 No flights rest of month
9	9	9	9	9
10 5:00 Local	10	10	10	6 13:25 185:45
11	11	11	11	Note
12	12	12	12	1. Flights are color-coded by the furthest destination. Colors indicate increasing proximity to Japan:
13	13	13	13	Off or work in camp
14	14	14	14	New Guinea
15	15 Training with Hedges	15	15 C-46 #39; 16th as passenger	Philippines
16	16 7:20 Biak-Mor-Dul	16 "Alone in my new C-46 #24"	16 6:10 Dulag (direct)	Okinawa
17	17 5:55 Dul-Ceb-Man-Dul-Ceb	17 9:30 Biak-Dulag	17 6:10 Biak (direct)	
18	18 4:15 Ceb-Manila-Dul	18 4:40 Local, Sam-Dul	18 6:35 Dulag (direct)	
19	19 7:55 Dul-Malabang-Biak	19 2:10 Sam-Dul-Sam	19	
20	20	20 1:40 Dul-Sam-Dul	20	
21	21	21 4:00 Sam-Dul-Sam	21	
22	22	22 1:05 Dulag-Samar	22 "2nd trip in my C-46 #24" (Aug 27 trip in C-46 #36)	
23 6:25 Biak-Mor-Zamboanga	23	23 1:15 Dulag-Samar	23	
24 3:15 Zamboanga - Mor	24	24 1:45 Dulag-Samar	24 1:25 Samar-Dulag	
25 6:50 Mor-Tan-Dul-Palawan	25 "C-47 28, 1st time by myself"	25 6:30 Dulag-Biak	25 6:40 DI-Lb-MI-DI-VI-DI-Tn-Du	
26 12:20 Pl-DI-Mal-Zam-Mr-Bk	26 4:00 Biak-Mor	26	26 4:50 Cebu-Dul-Cebu-Dul	
27 *also in Golumb, Hedges logs	27 9:40 Malabang-Mor-Biak	27	27 4:50 Clark-Nich-Neilson	
28	28	28	28 5:55 le Shima-Yontan	
29	29	29	29 0:10 Naha	
30	30	30	30 4:20 Clark	
31	31	31	31 1:15 Nichols	
5 33:50	8 55:35	9 32:35	10 50:20	

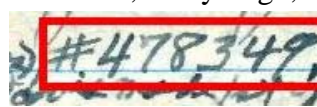
Amelang's flights with the squadron are summarized above. On March 31 he came down with pneumonia (until April 12), so he did not start flying until May. The following are quotes from his diaries and letters, plus my comments in brackets, by month. He provides many great details.

- Apr. 13: "We get Wrigley's gum overseas - I never did see it in P.X.s in the States."
- Apr. 21: "I've just been assigned to the newest plane in the squadron. I'm the second operator. Either first or second has to go up on all flights." [The first mention of a 1st & 2nd.]
- Apr. 23: "Flying personnel here do a full share of K.P. detail, guard detail, etc. between flights. I suppose that is why there are two of us assigned to 'my' plane."
- April 23 to May 1: [He was assigned to the officers' mess, every other day, which required:] "two Pvt's or Pfc's daily - changed to 1 daily on May 1st."

- May 1: "On flying status."
- May 8: "Someday within the next year or so, when they get it completed, we will get a 'History' of this squadron as a souvenir; not free of charge, but I want one."
- May 10: [His first flight; he wrote, at right, "7784 (#39) locals," providing one of the missing C-46 serial numbers, 44-77784, and its field number, 39.] *May 10, '7784 (#39) [Locals]*
- May 11: "[In a photo of the chapel] the wings on each side of the pulpit and the choir loft don't show, but they seat quite a few more, and usually have to be used. I saw our camp from above this week, and it looks lots smaller than it seems from the ground. I could make out our chapel and my tent. I also saw it in the night. All the squadrons are dispersed, but in the squadrons themselves the lighted tents were in even, straight rows. Peaceful looking."
- May 12: "I went to the show 'Bring on the Girls'" [released Feb 23, '45 - free on YouTube].
- May 14: "A V-mail from Lucy was slow in getting here, so don't ever write V-mail; either Airmail or 3 cent, preferably Airmail. I'm sending you a picture of some [Biak] natives. We never see them except on our way to the 'line.' Note the unusually flat-topped trees. Some trees are perhaps 80 ft. tall, and all shapes. Some have red flowers on them."

- May 20: “We have coffee, and either tea, ice water or fruit drinks twice a day. We had roast beef for supper; very good! I went to the Technicolor movie: ‘Tonight and Every Night.’ Good way to pass an evening. I never go to more than one or two a week, though. Tonight our choir and chaplain DeVore had a 15-minute program over the local station of the armed forces at 11:15. Sounded good. I played a little on a guitar tonight in the next tent. I had a swell Coke tonight. I don’t drink too many – not even one a day hardly.”
- May 21: “Today was my last day on officers’ mess.”
- May 22: “We had ice cream today at noon, second time in squadron since I came here.”
- May 23-26: [He flew to the Philippines on C-46 #36 as backup, with Hedges 1st Operator.]
- May 27: “Flew to several places in the Philippines, including Leyte again. It isn’t hard work, but if you fly a lot at a time it gets monotonous and tiring. I feel just fine now, though. To church twice today. Evangelistic meetings next 10 to 14 days in our chapel, 7 P.M.”
- May 31: “[Tonight] they had choir practice for an hour; about 20 men there.”

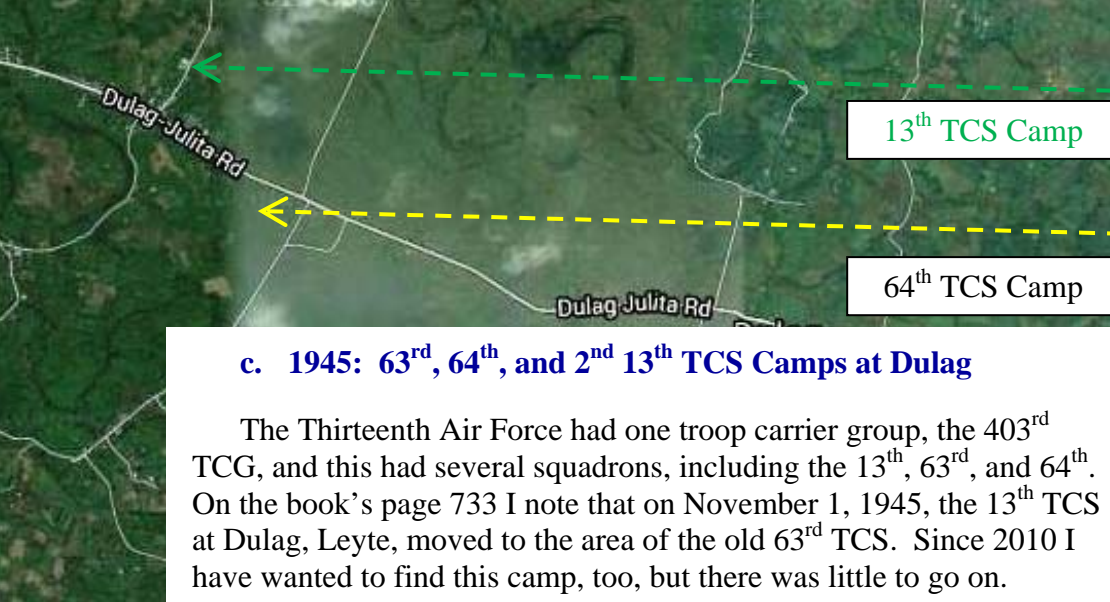
- June 4: “Wiser [in another squadron] had his nose broken in an accident. Another fellow [in a different squadron] who was at Cairns was in a plane crash. Our squadron has a very good record. One of the best, in fact!”
- June 6-7: [Second flight to the Philippines on #36, as backup, with Hedges.]
- June 8: “New regulation now permits all south of equator to tell where they are.”
- June 12: “Cpl. Clunie [a new name] (Maine, 27 yrs old) moved into my Sq. & tent (D-5).”
- June 15: “Several (6 to 9) R.O.M.s [radio operator mechanics] joined 13th Sq. in past 2 wks.”
- June 16-19: [Third flight to the Philippines.] “I was checked out, on Loran set, too.”
- June 20-23: “Sick call for cut on back shoulder; on ceiling of C-46 last flight.”
- June 26-27: “#28, oldest C-47, ready to be turned in to depot. 1st time by myself!”

- July 5: [He got the skin rash which many people in the squadron had and referred to as jungle rot, page 547, for which he provides the medical name, impetigo (im-puh-TIE-go). He wrote that in the squadron it was also referred to as crud.] “Soaked & painted twice daily July 5-26.”
- July 5: “I wasn’t in the formation when they awarded a few air medals or clusters to R.O.M.’s and crew chiefs. A general was present for the ceremony.” [Provides a new ceremony date.]
- July 9: “They sometimes beat 8 or 9 p.m. in posting flights [on the bulletin board by Operations, showing who is flying the next day], but more often it is late. That night [June 25] it was 10:40 p.m. when I looked. I try to keep most everything I will need or want, ready to go, ’cause it is usually late before I know I’m to go out in the morning.”
- July 10: “Second week of July assigned to C-46 D #478349, #24; Tharp still my 1st operator,” providing another missing C-46 number. 
- July 17-25: “Alone in my new plane #24, straight to Dulag [nonstop], 9 trips to Samar.” This is during the time the next camp was being set up at Dulag, and so the flights to Samar, which was a Navy base, was to get lumber and other supplies to build the camp.
- July 26: He returned to Biak with Hedges on #36, logging “W [wounded?] time.” [This 13th TCS’s C-46 #36 is shown below (Getter Collection), at Dulag.]



Celebrating
the end of
the war.

- July 27-Aug 3: “9th Gen. Hosp” for “crud & ringworm; 6 spots on left leg & 1 on face.”
 - July 29: “Some of the men who ride along on drop missions in our planes get combat time for it, and our planes have had flak and small arms fire hit them.”
 - July 29: “One of our C-46’s (2nd oldest, #38) crashed & burned just before the blackout [page 690]. Lt. Foote thrown free but injured, plane was on a local (transition). Lt. Foote (died without gaining conscious) & two others’ burial services [were] August 2.” This provides the field number for this C-46, and the date of the memorial service on page 692.
-
- Aug. 7: “Local (C-46 #29) w/Lamb, 1st & last time on New Guinea! To Wakde.”
 - Aug. 13 (at Biak): “[I was awakened at about 1 a.m. by shots and yells, and I knew right away that the war with Japan was over.](#) So I lay in bed and just listened to what the guys were yelling. Then the machine guns started firing, and the ack-ack booming (once on the ground and again, long seconds after, when the shell had exploded up in the air), and rocket shells and flares were streaming through the air, in many colors, from many places; machine-gun tracers, too. The 8-12 most powerful army searchlights, each with thousands of candlepower, were shining in arcs, coming to points all over the part of Biak we occupy. The shooting and flares went on for more than an hour. Some men were for waking the whole camp. The guys persuaded the trumpeter of the ‘orchestra’ to play, but the assistant to the 1st Sgt. put a quick stop to that. I rolled over to go to sleep, but about a dozen men (mostly officers) sat outside where the officers’ club had stood, and they sang, yelled, joked, screamed, and talked until daylight. They never slept at all. I got 2 to 3 hours’ sleep myself. They drank up all the beer and drink they had. However I was very glad the war was over, so I didn’t mind losing some sleep.”
 - Aug. 15: “I paid \$10.00 for two ‘histories’ of our squadron [Two Years c/o Postmaster], which you may get some time in the near future. Today each man got to buy five bottled Coca Colas, the first I had overseas. Our usual Coke (which I like better) is in bulk, and mixed just before it is given to you to drink.”
 - Aug. 16: “Flew on #39 (a C-46), as passenger, 6 h 10m, moved to Dulag (direct).” [He was now based at Dulag. He made a trip back to Biak to help the rest of the squadron move up.]
 - Aug. 24: “I went to a show last night – over half a mile, so I hitch-hiked.”
 - Aug. 24: “Flew in #247, 2nd time, to Samar.” [247 is a new C-46 or C-47 number.]
 - Aug. 25: “Flew with Lt. Sand & Lt. Huston & S/Sgt Vitek on #25 (C-47): Dulag to Del Monte, Libby, Malabang, Del Monte, Valencia, Del Monte (got 3 pineapples, 2 gal. peaches & 1 gal pears (canned) – free! Tanauan, Dulag. Total: 6 hr:40.”
 - Aug. 26: “Same plane #25, 2 Med Evac from Cebu to Tanauan, 22 infantry men. Have had ‘crud’ (Impetigo) continuously from July 5th to Aug 26 except for 2 days.”
 - Aug. 27-30: “In #36 (oldest C46 [pictured above]) w/Capt. Sackett, Lt. Lindberg, Lt. Cir- incion & S/Sgt Venezia. To Clark Field from Dulag, to Nichols, Nielson, R.O.N. Aug 28 to Ie Shima, land on “Plum,” park on “Birch,” to Bolo on Okinawa, Yontan, R.O.N. Aug 29 to Naha. Aug 30 Naha to Clark Field, Luzon.”
-
- Aug. 31-Sep 5: “Started to Okinawa, rt. engine backfire again, so flew to Nichols, R.O.N. I spent 1 hour in Manila buying souvenirs.” Sept. 2: “Put new carburetor on; found & fixed oil leak; found leak in left landing strut hydraulic cylinder. [As a radio operator he assisted the crew chief.] Rained again; R.O.N. Nichols.” Sept 3: “Waited till 10 AM for parts; rained hard, as usual. To Kadena, Okinawa, in P.M. (4hr:45), fast, 30-knot tail wind! [Typhoon in area.](#) R.O.N. Kadena – wind & rain. [Censorship lifted.](#)”



c. 1945: 63rd, 64th, and 2nd 13th TCS Camps at Dulag

The Thirteenth Air Force had one troop carrier group, the 403rd TCG, and this had several squadrons, including the 13th, 63rd, and 64th. On the book's page 733 I note that on November 1, 1945, the 13th TCS at Dulag, Leyte, moved to the area of the old 63rd TCS. Since 2010 I have wanted to find this camp, too, but there was little to go on.

The 63rd completed its move to Dulag in June 1945, per the note below from its monthly report. I had an aerial photo of the Dulag area from between July 19 and July 23, and so their completed camp was "down there somewhere," but I had no idea how it was laid out. I also had a sketch of the 64th TCS camp, but, per their monthly report, they did not move to Dulag until August 17, so I expected the features of their camp would not appear in the July aerial.

For the 63rd TCS:

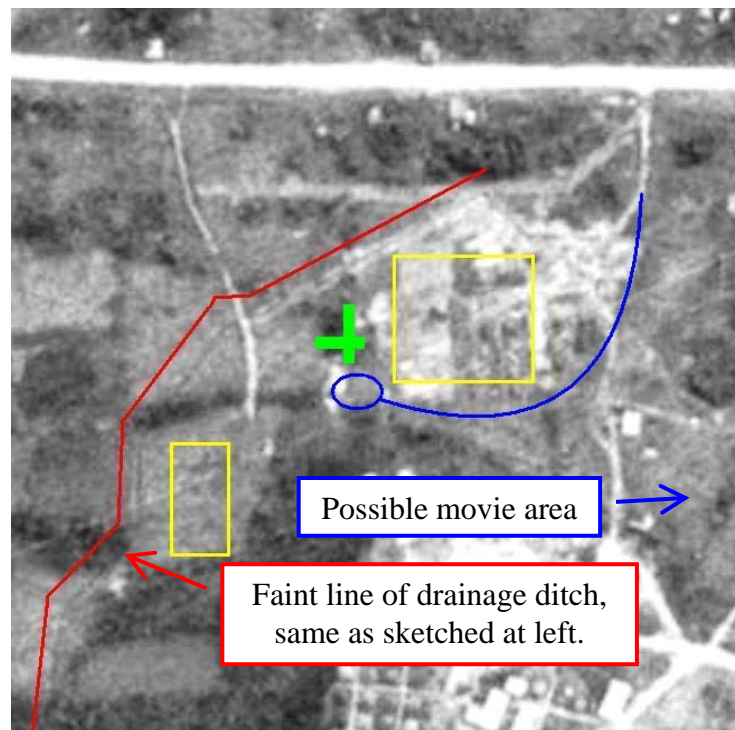
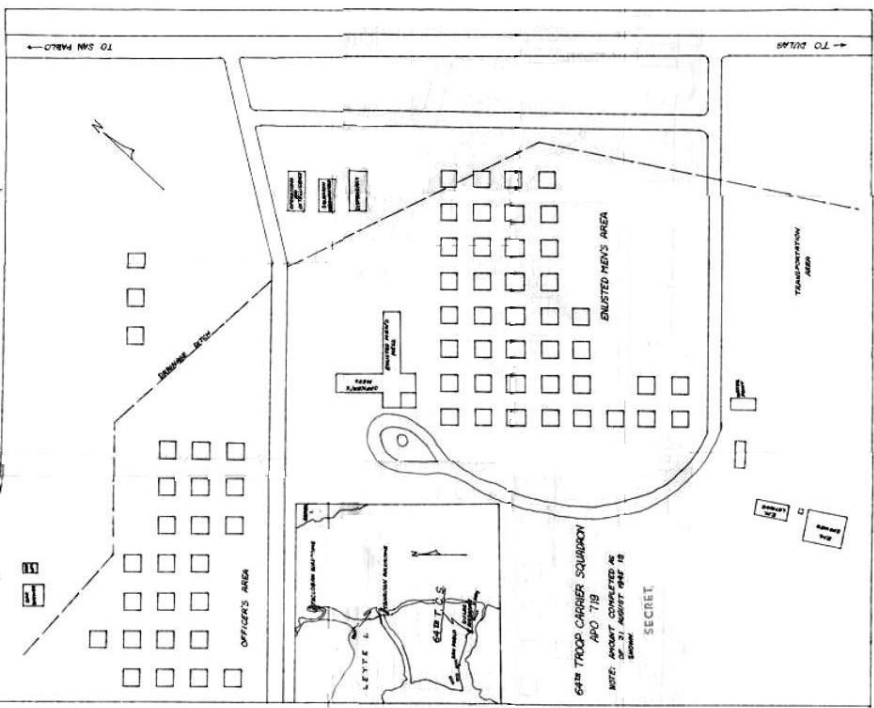
For the 64th TCS:

By the first of June, the squadron camp area construction was completed, and to the relief of all personnel.

Personnel and equipment of the rear echelon continued being moved up from Biak, N.E.I. to our permanent station at Leyte, Philippines. The main movement was completed on 17th of August.

Amelang's notes provided the breakthrough. On August 24 he wrote: "I went to a show last night – over half a mile [away]," and October 6: "The two squadrons [63rd and 64th] are right next to each other." I compared the 64th TCS camp sketch, below left, to the aerial, above, and below right, and focused on the area slightly more than a half mile east of the 13th TCS camp. I used to ignore the dashed line in the sketch, but this time I looked closer at the label on it, and, rather than being an imaginary boundary, the label says "Drainage Ditch." "Ah-ha," I thought, "this might be visible." Looking closer at the aerial photo, below right, I then had a "Eureka!" moment, when I found the drainage ditch, shown with a red line next to it. The second road at the top, and that on the left, match, too. I drew in where the new camp road, mess hall, and tents were later built. The 63rd camp, which became the 2nd 13th TCS Dulag camp, would then be the one just below it. The movie location is not known, but is estimated where drawn in blue above, and noted below.

DRAINAGE DITCH

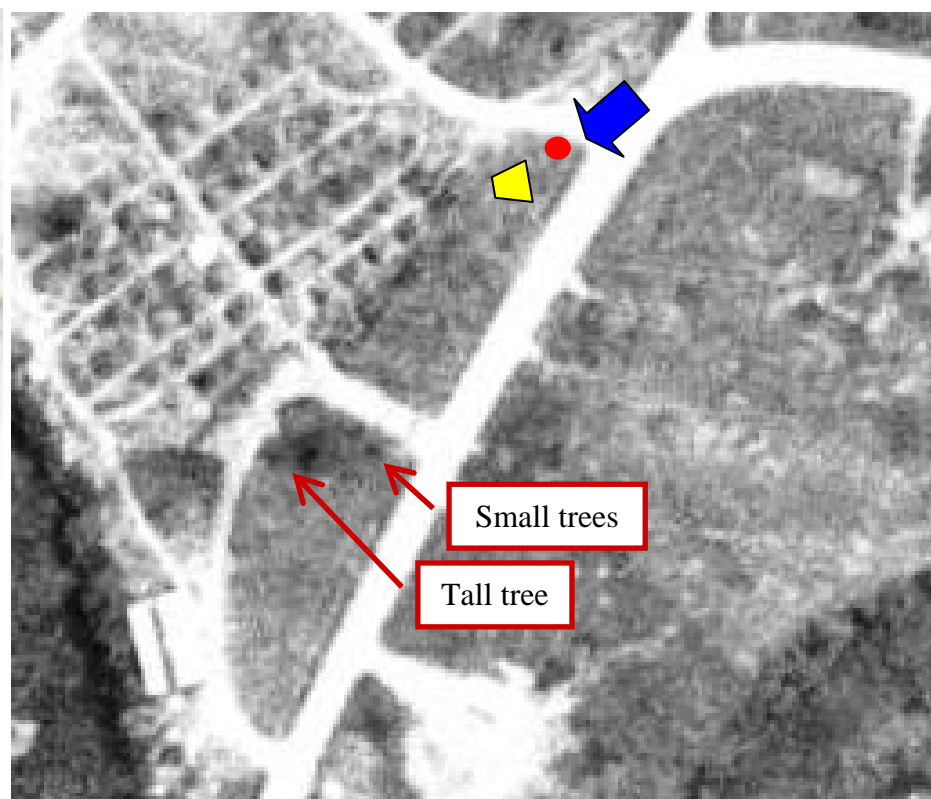




The areas of the 63rd and 64th TCS at Dulag are outlined above in red and yellow, in 1945 and 2006. Many 13th TCS members moved to the 63rd area, and this unit was renamed the 13th TCS, so the 13th TCS was in the red area November 1, 1945, until moving to Clark Field in Luzon, January 7, 1946. The above right image is from Bing. Almost no roads or paths from these camps remain, however the Google image, at right, with less growth, and much obscured, shows the road on the upper left was still there.



Ricker had the photo below left, on page 733. This finally makes sense, in the direction of the blue arrow below, with the sign, tents, trees, and shed in the background. The oil drums are estimated to be a curb by the entrance road, and she posed on them.



2. History-Related Activities

a. 50th Reunion Glass



On May 17 Ewan Stevenson in New Zealand emailed me that on eBay someone was offering the beautiful glass at right. The book includes a photo of a cake from the 25th reunion, but we had nothing from the 50th reunion, and so this is quite special. I immediately purchased it. I hope someday to create a Thirsty 13th museum, or a display for a museum, and this trophy-like artifact will add to the squadron's prestige.



Ewan provided great help with the book, and is mentioned on page vi. He has continued to find amazing and rare items related to the squadron, and has been mentioned in many newsletters.

Ewan runs Archaeistoria, expert guidance for exploring WWII sites in the Solomons, and shipwrecks in New Zealand. He lived on Guadalcanal, where his father worked, until he was a teen, and so speaks the language, and this has been a lifelong hobby. He is pictured at right, on the right, and has website archaeistoria.org.



The eBay seller, Dave, “thesleepylibrarian,” who offered the glass literally worldwide, wrote that his wife “never misses an opportunity to rescue treasures like this from places where their history may not be fully appreciated.” She found it in Fairfield, Ala., near Birmingham, at a store that deals with collectibles, mostly from estates. He looked at the squadron website, and wrote: “They are called our ‘Greatest Generation’ for a good reason. They were quite possibly the most critical piece the human race ever had, and you are lucky to have had a part of it for a family member. This is definitely the most important thing we have ever sold. We are so proud to have helped you secure something so valuable to you and others who cherish the history.”

b. Streamers

On April 9, the son Charles of 1942-44 mechanic Laine sent me a link to battle streamers offered on eBay, as shown at right, and wrote: “We had these on our Command unit guidon (flags) in any unit I was ever in... esprit de corps.” They are shown at right on a flag when the Thirteenth Air Force was deactivated. The ones on eBay are reproductions. I bought one for each of the 13th TCS's seven battles, to hopefully add to a flag at a museum someday.



c. C-47 Pilot Training Film

On April 13, 2016, Charles Laine sent a link to a US Army Air Corps film about how to fly a C-47, which he thought others might enjoy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sA_N10PQtI0. The trainee is Hollywood actor George Montgomery.



3. Members and Relatives

a. Visit with Our Oldest: 98-year-old Walter Moritz, Navigator, 1942-1943

On March 18, 2016, I was in New York and drove out on Long Island to visit Walter Moritz. Walter was one of the first 13 navigators to join the squadron (along with my dad). I met him only once before, in June 2009, and wanted to see him again. He is our oldest surviving member, turning 98 on June 3. I took a recorder, and taped about 30 minutes of stories.

Walter is pictured above with a Japanese rifle he traded for on Guadalcanal. In the middle is Walter with two of his five children, Claire and Bob, and his wife Claire. There was a tray of Hershey Kisses on the table, and I said after I took the photo I wanted a kiss – and I got a kiss on the cheek from his wife! Very sweet! Wishing him and his family many more years of health.

b. Our 2nd Oldest and Most-Decorated, Karl Peters, Turns 96

On March 17, 2016, Karl Peters, the squadron's second oldest member, and most decorated pilot, turned 96. He is pictured at right with his son Brent, daughter-in-law Karen, granddaughter Karlee, and daughter Sharon. He lives in western Oklahoma, where he has a cattle ranch.

Karl, similar to Walter Moritz, contributed greatly to the squadron history, with photos and stories, speaking for all of our fathers. Thanks again, Karl. Wishing you, too, many more healthy years.



c. Five New Member-Families Found

On April 18, 2016, I received a book order from someone named Begg. I immediately recognized this as one of my “never-found” Thirsty 13th families. Ronald V. Begg was a pilot 12/44-9/45. The order was from his grandson, Ian, who put me in touch with his dad, Dennis. Dennis emailed me the photo at right of his dad, which appears to be behind the Officer's Club at Biak. Thank you, Ian, for looking up your gran-dad's squadron!



Recently I found the nephew, Jerry, of 1945 navigator Harvey Willmann. I left him a phone message, and on April 23 he emailed me, and I sent him a book. He is a corporate pilot. He has all of his uncle's artifacts, and will see if there is anything that might be of interest.

In honor of Memorial Day Weekend, on May 28 I sought and found relatives of three more members: mess cook R. Foster, pilot D. Lesh, and pilot Fontinell. I met Lesh's granddaughters in 2010 and scanned his items, but then lost touch with the family, so it was great to reconnect.

On April 28 I received a call from the nephew of Ezio Mastrantonio, who was the mechanic onboard when the C-46 crashed into the ridge at Biak. I previously sent Ezio's sister a book, but this nephew had never seen it, so it was good to get it to another of Ezio's relatives.

In other member news, pilot Carl Sackett turned 95 on April 3; engineering assistant William Mattes turned 93 on May 30, and pilot Welly Goddin turned 92 on May 27.

d. Book Distribution

On February 29 I received a book order from Dr. William Wolf, who has the largest private WWII collection in the world, with more than 25,000 books and magazines, and has written 19 WWII aviation books. It is an honor to have "The Thirsty 13th" added to his collection.

On March 28 aviation author Bill Cass shared with me the list of museum gift shops which offer his books, and these included the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pa. On April 26 I donated a book to their library. It is great to have the squadron story told here, too.

As of May 31 our remaining number of books is 416.

e. Latest Dashboard

I refer to the table at right as my dashboard, and hope to increase the highlighted percentages with gains. During the last two months we had several gains, including five additional Thirsty 13th families saw the book for the first time.

Member Families Found (of 679 total)

Members'	26-Mar	29-May	Gain	Need
Birth Date	636 94%	639 94%	3	40
Death Date*	612 93%	615 93%	3	44
Resting Place*	470 71%	475 72%	5	184
FindaGrave Link*	360 55%	362 55%	2	297
Contact	301 44%	306 45%	5	373
Have Book	286 42%	291 43%	5	388

* Percent and Need for 2nd-4th exclude 20 known living.

4. Conclusions

The 13th Troop Carrier Squadron history advanced yet again, with new photos and stories. Many thanks for taking the time to scan and share these wonderful items go to Hank Lach's son Henry, and Max Amelang's daughter Karen. We also received photos from the collection of Getter which will be shared in a future newsletter. Thank you to Ewan Stevenson for finding the 50th reunion glass, and to Dave, "thesleepylibrarian," and his wife on eBay for offering it. Five new member-families were found.

With best wishes,

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