

# March 2018 Newsletter



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

Four people were very thoughtful and kind to share with us treasured family items and research materials, which solved two mysteries, and added much to the squadron history. Will Armstrong, a legal research professional at the Taylor Research Institute, in Alexandria, Va., completed a book in November 2017 about a Marine unit which flew in conjunction with the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS, and in which his father was a pilot, and shared several photos. The son Jerome of 1942-45 mechanic John T. Vaughan scanned and shared 19 documents. The son David of 1944-45 pilot William H. Goodman mailed me an original photo to examine, and the son Tom of 1945 navigator Robert S. Truman mailed me his dad's photo album to scan and return. A big thank you to Will, Jerome, David, and Tom.

I continue from the last newsletter to present aerial images of airfields in Mindanao and Tawi Tawi. I do not include the usual sections of History-Related Items and Members and Relatives.

Thank you for your interest in The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>.

Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian  
March 11, 2018

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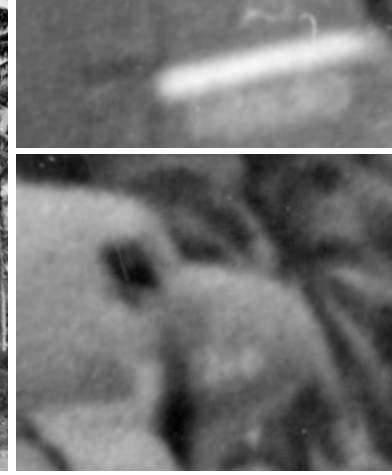
This is the newsletter for the U.S. Army Air Corps 13<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron, 1940-1946, nicknamed "The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>." This is prepared by Seth P. Washburne, the son of John C. Washburne, navigator 11/42-7/43. Please direct any comments to him at: (212) 289-1506, sethgw1@gmail.com, 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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To enlarge the PDF to fill the width of your screen, press the CTRL key and "+" at the same time.

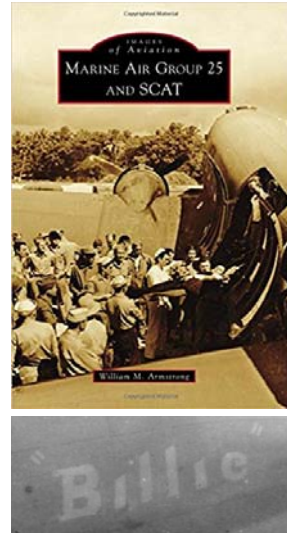
Please click the hand symbol to make it easier to scroll down.



## 1. Additional History

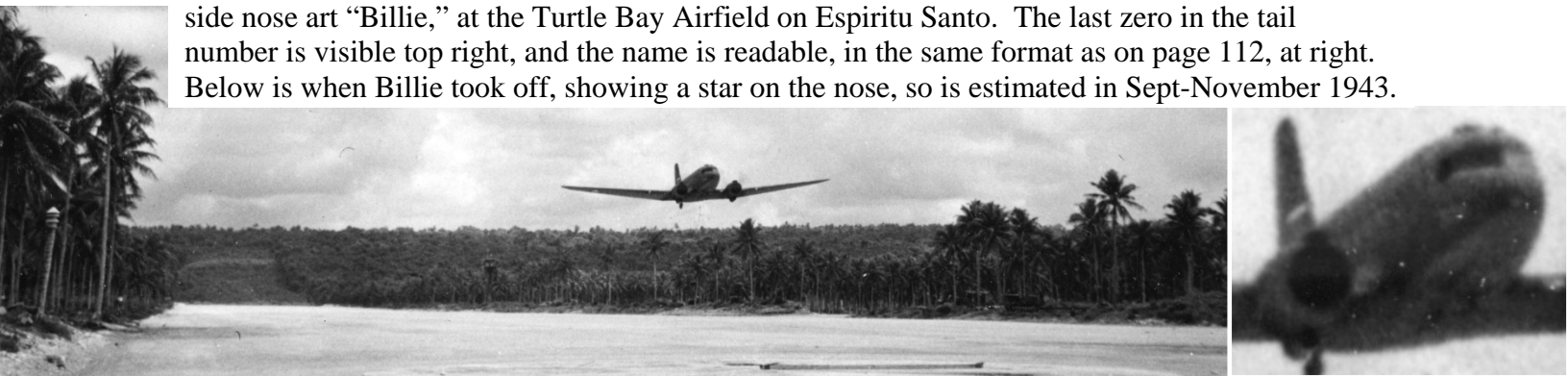
### a. 1943-1944: Photos from Will Armstrong for MAG-25

On February 10, 2018, our colleague in New Zealand, Ewan Stevenson, emailed me about a book published in November 2017, “Images of Aviation - Marine Air Group 25 and SCAT,” with the cover at right. SCAT was South Pacific Combat Air Transport, and consisted of three Marine squadrons in “MAG-25,” and three Army Air Corps squadrons, the 13<sup>th</sup>, 63<sup>rd</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> TCSs, and assigned many of our flights from Dec. 1942 to July ’44. I contacted the author, Will Armstrong, and learned his dad was a pilot in MAG-25. On March 2, 2018, Will emailed me he also just launched a website, [marineairgroup25.com](http://marineairgroup25.com), with photos from his father, from reunions, the National Archives, and other sources. He shared and let me reproduce here high-quality versions of several of these photos.



### 1943: Billie at Turtle Bay Airfield

On March 6, 2018, Will emailed the image above of 13<sup>th</sup> TCS C-47 #41-18590, with right-side nose art “Billie,” at the Turtle Bay Airfield on Espiritu Santo. The last zero in the tail number is visible top right, and the name is readable, in the same format as on page 112, at right. Below is when Billie took off, showing a star on the nose, so is estimated in Sept-November 1943.



### 1943: Wimpy’s Café in the Russell Islands

On the book’s page 340-341 I show Renard Airfield, and Wimpy’s Café, below left, and wrote it was at one end of the airfield, and have always wanted to find the exact location. On March 6 I reviewed the photo below right from Will’s MAG-25 website, and was excited to see the thatched roof behind the plane on the left, which is the same roof as Wimpy’s, without the sign. The buildings on the right are in the image on my book’s page 341, at right. **The café was therefore located where outlined in red at right.** Thank you, Will!





### 1943: Munda Airfield

On February 27, 2018, Will emailed me the photo above of a parking area at Munda Airfield, alongside a diagonal white coral runway. The C-47 in the center is shown up-close as inset, and is the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS's "The Nomad," with the nose art at right. Perhaps it is being refueled.



### 1944: 13<sup>th</sup> TCS Camp and SCAT Offices at Espiritu Santo

My book on page 427 has the image at right at Espiritu Santo's Pekoa airfield, with Finelli on the right, by a sign "SCAT Passenger Office, Baggage," and I have wondered where this was. Will's book, "Marine Air Group 25," has the image also at right, with the same trees and Quonset huts.



On March 6, Will emailed me an aerial photo which I cropped as below. This was taken by Marine 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. David Douglas Duncan in March 1944. Left of the left parade ground is the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS's Squadron Street. **In the lower left are the SCAT huts.** Above these was the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS officers' area, and to the right of this was the 403<sup>rd</sup> area. It is a great perspective on our 1944 camp. Thank you again to Will Armstrong for making his book and photos available.



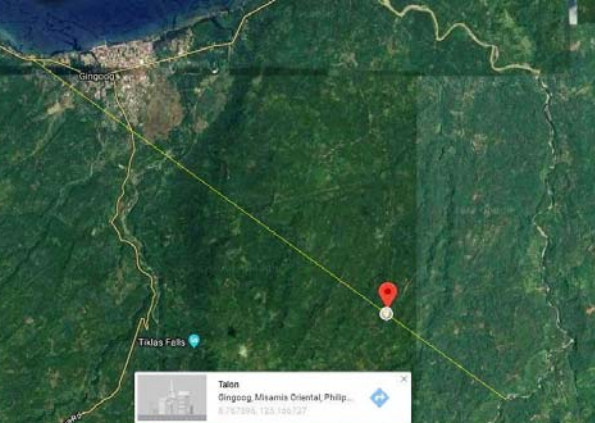
**b. 1944: Documents from John T. Vaughan, Airplane Mechanic, 6/42-2/45**

On March 2, the son of mechanic Vaughan emailed me scans of 19 documents. Helpful items included:

- **403<sup>rd</sup> TCG Special Order 76, May 1, 1944** - assigned Goldberger and Tozzini to the 13<sup>th</sup>, providing their start dates. It has promotions for 13 men, and temporary duty for 14. Frazzini and Lund appear on a roster of men overseas with the squadron, but this is the first other mention of them in an order, and provides a first date for their timelines. For DiTullio, Doukas, Hall, Lounsbury, and Martinez, this provided an earlier confirmed date for their timelines. It listed a Pvt. Dorman E. Cone on a temporary duty with six others to the 403<sup>rd</sup> officers' mess hall, and this was a new name. I found his dates, resting place, and relatives, and emailed this order and camp photos to them which they appreciated.
- **403<sup>rd</sup> TCG Special Order 204, November 1, 1944** – provided the first serial number reference for Balch, and the first confirmed date when he was in the squadron.
- **403<sup>rd</sup> TCG Memo File #300.4, November 9, 1944** – assigned Boss, DeLoss, Vaughan, Bechstein, Bowen, and Edwards to rest leave in Sydney for 10 days. On the book's page 506 I note in late 1944 the Army added places north of Sydney for rest leave, and that some of our men went to Mackay November 23, 1944. It is interesting to see that as of November 9, 1944, we were still sending men on rest leave to Sydney.
- **13<sup>th</sup> TCS Certificate, March 2, 1945** – stated Vaughan flew 958 hours of missions with the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS.
- **13<sup>th</sup> TCS Memo March 2, 1945** – noted that for processing home, Vaughan was first transferred February 24, 1945, to the 11<sup>th</sup> Replacement Battalion at Biak.
- **AAF Personnel Distribution Command memo re Security of Military Information, 9/1/44** – for men returning while the war was still on this stated: "It will be natural for you to want to talk to your family and friends about your experience, and for them to urge you to do so," but "Some of our units have already been ripped apart...by conversations such as you will be tempted to have." "Your talk must be confined to general description of the countries you have been in, the people, their customs, your battle experiences without naming units or equipment. You must not give information to anyone – wife, parent, or friend, which would disclose the number of troops in the area, or their equipment, the size of the ships, or their escort or route." Men who served in WWII who have been unwilling to speak about their experiences may have been influenced by such documents.

g. An alert, persistent, and capable enemy intelligence system exists. No bit of information is too small for its use. Your loyal friends will understand, if, when they question you, you say "I can't talk about the details of that show yet". Their sons and brothers will be safer as a result, and you will be fulfilling your continuing obligation to the men you have left behind.

By Command of Major General HARMON:



ANAKAN	MINDANAO	4/24/45	5000 LBS. CARGO	via LEYTE
	125°10' E, 08°46' N			



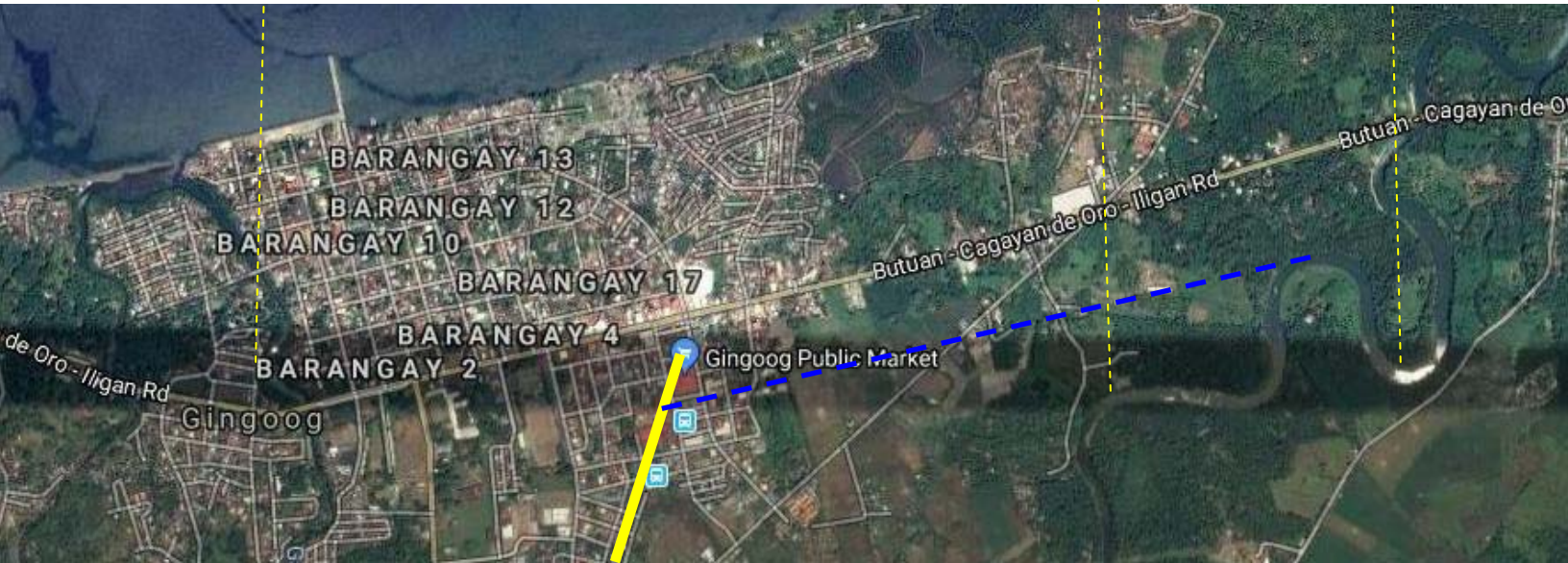
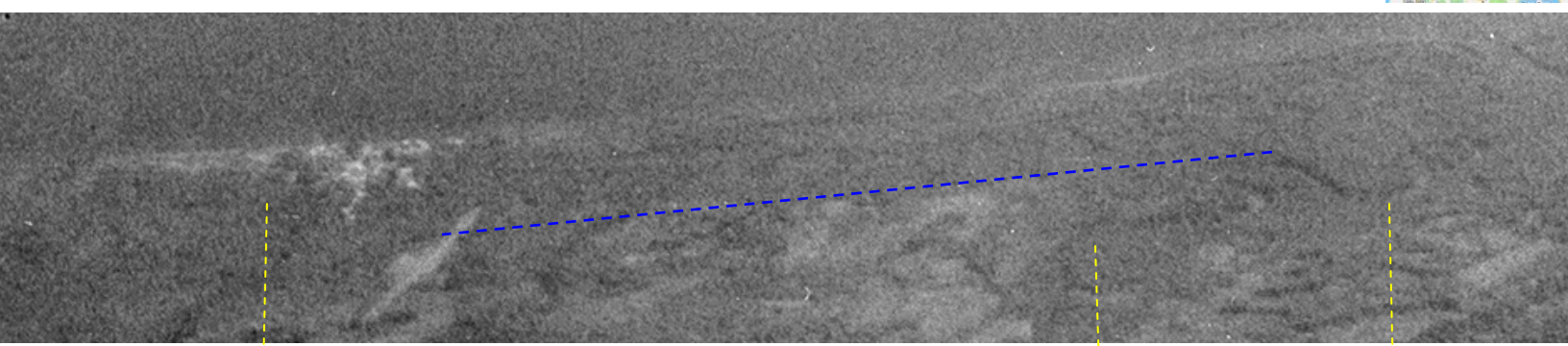
### c. 1945: Four More Mindanao Airfields

The last newsletter noted I ordered from the National Archives scans of several airfields to which the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS flew in Mindanao. This letter has aerials of Anakan, in the middle box at right, Bahi east of this, and in the lower box Farm 7 and Padada.

**Anakan** – the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS first landed at Anakan 4/24/45, bringing in 5,000 lbs of cargo. Coordinates of the airstrip in the April monthly report, above, were 125° 10' E 8° 46' N. This is the red marker above left on Google Maps. I drew a line from the edge of the bay, through the coordinate, to a bend in the river on the right. I drew a similar line to the same bend in the river above right. There is another stream and mountain ridge east of the coordinate, so the location may be estimated. Searching in this area, there were no clearings 2,000 feet long in which a C-47 might land. The photo above right is from 1944-45, and undated, but it is unlikely a field was cleared here later.



I found a clearing similar to an airfield in the blue circle, at 125° 06' E 8° 49' N, which in the town of Gingoog, with a barangay (area) named Anakan on the right edge of the images below. The difference in coordinates is big, but perhaps they meant this field, also at the red peg at right. The blue lines are parallel to the shore, to show the airfield started closer to it than the river bend. The airfield location is estimated in yellow, where today are two small roads at the same angle.

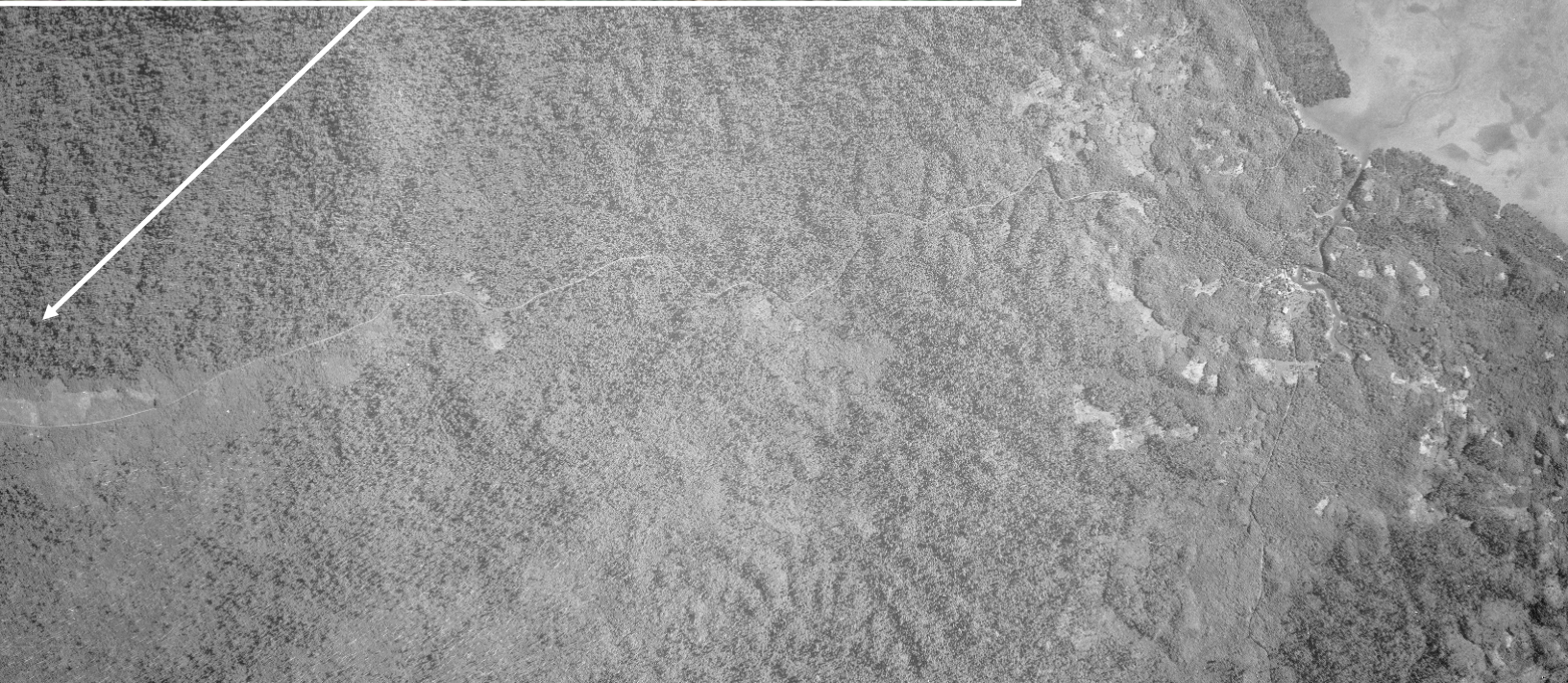
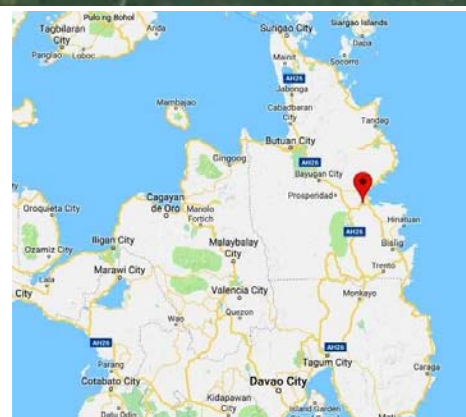


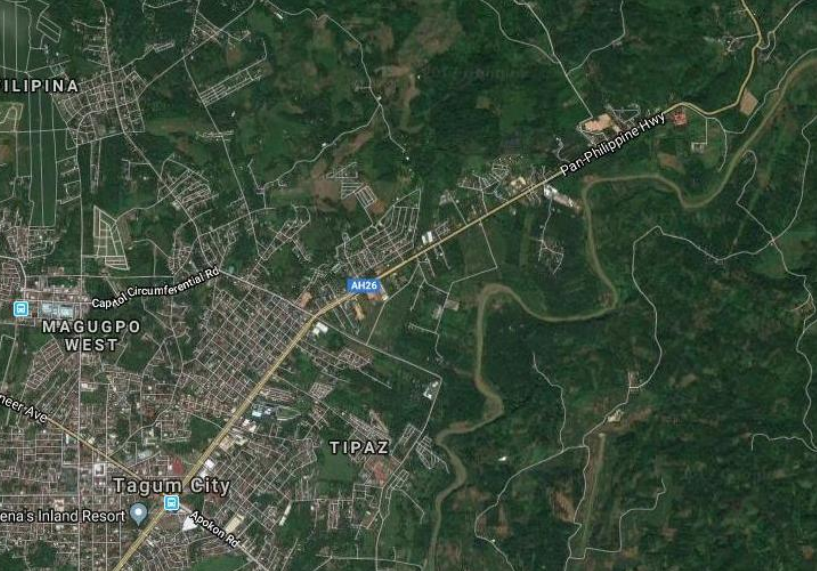


**Bahi**

BAHI	N. LUZON 126°05' E, 08°31' N.	4/20/45	5000 LBS. CARGO 5 PASS.	via LEYTE
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The 13<sup>th</sup> TCS first landed at Bahi on 4/20/45, bringing in 5,000 lbs of cargo and five passengers. The coordinates are listed above from the monthly report, but the landing strip is 1 minute, i.e. 1 nautical mile, north of this, at 126° 05' E 8° 32' N. It is shown at the top here one month later, on May 19, 1945, along a road in the location also at right. The airstrip is about 1 mile long. No buildings or airplanes are visible. In the overlay below with the 2018 map, the airstrip is outlined. The larger image below shows the airstrip was ~2 miles from the shore. There were few dwellings

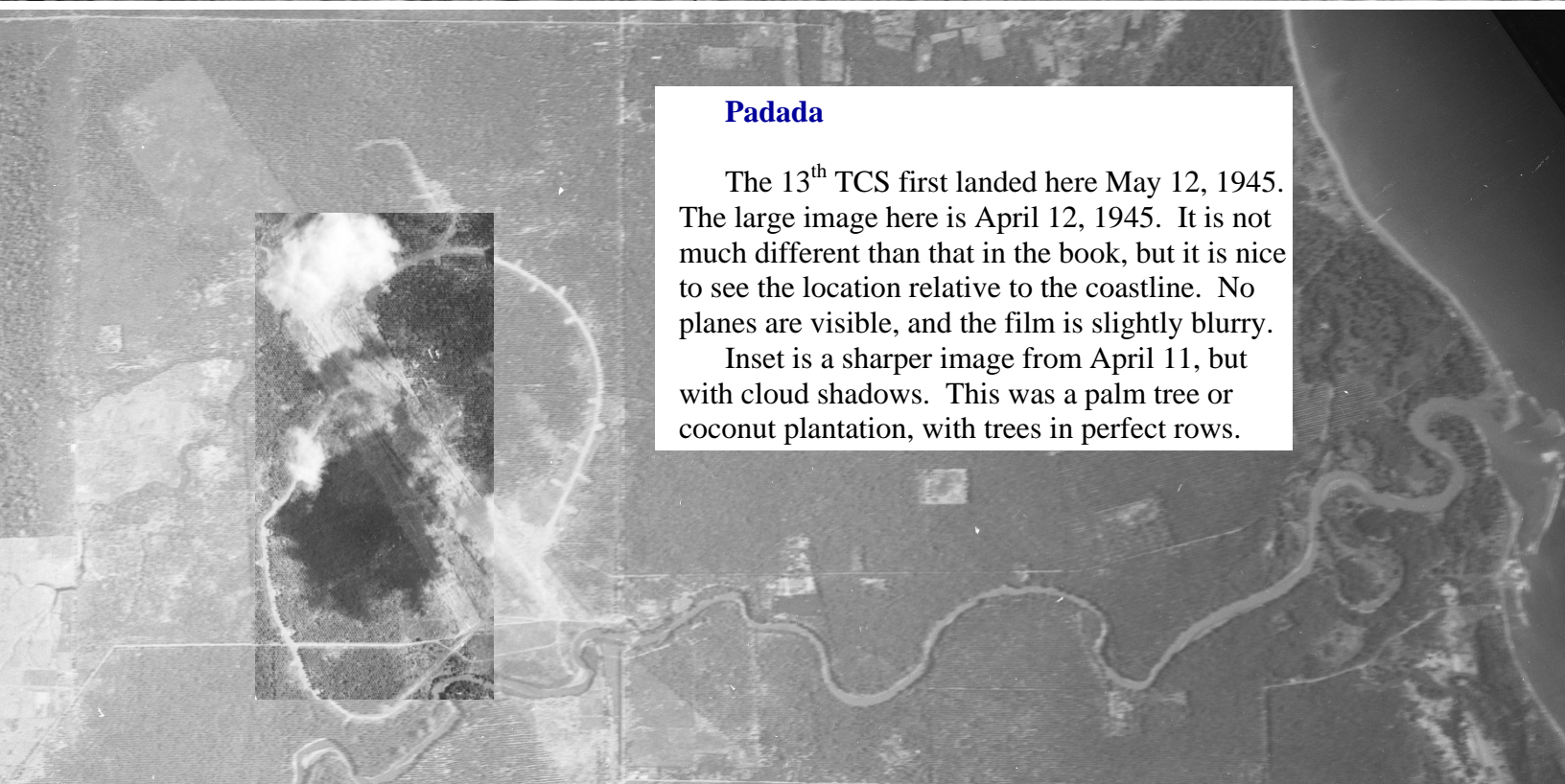




## Farm 7

The 13<sup>th</sup> TCS first landed here on April 4, 1945, and the book has an estimated location. In the November 7, 2017, newsletter I learned the exact location, on the Pan-Philippine highway east of Tagum City, above left. I ordered a scan of an aerial image May 4, 1945, one month after we landed here, and was excited to see the image above right includes a landing strip at its east end.

Below is a close-up of the landing area, after the image was rotated to make it east-west. No airplanes are there at that moment. I believe they flew in and flew right back out, and did not stay long. The road to the right goes back to being a small dirt road.



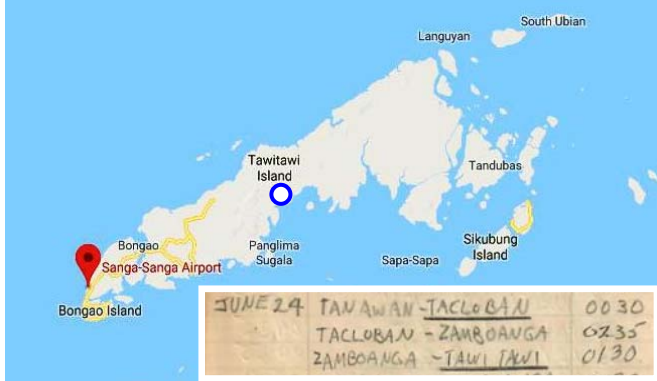
## Padada

The 13<sup>th</sup> TCS first landed here May 12, 1945. The large image here is April 12, 1945. It is not much different than that in the book, but it is nice to see the location relative to the coastline. No planes are visible, and the film is slightly blurry.

Inset is a sharper image from April 11, but with cloud shadows. This was a palm tree or coconut plantation, with trees in perfect rows.



FIELD	LOCATION
SANGA SANGA	SULU ARCHIPELAGO 119°50' E. 5°5' N.
TAWI TAWI	SULU ARCHIPELAGO 120° E. 5°10' N.



**d. 1945: Sanga Sanga**

The 13<sup>th</sup> TCS monthly report for April 1945 has the table shown in part above left, that the squadron landed at Sanga Sanga and Tawi Tawi. Tawi Tawi is the southern-most province of the Philippines, as shown above. It has 107 islands, including large Tawitawi Island, above right, with the squadron coordinates circled in blue, and Maginot's flight log inset. This is connected on the south to Sanga Sanga Island, with the 2018 airport, at right (most photos here from the Internet). Sanga Sanga island has a bridge to Bongao Island, the capital of Tawi Tawi, with the largest town on its eastern tip, inset below right.

Sanga Sanga was liberated April 2, 1945, and the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS first landed here April 18, bringing cargo and passengers. The 13<sup>th</sup> TCS flew drop missions from here to Borneo Island (part of this labeled Malaysia above), in a campaign from May 1 to August 1, 1945.

The only plan-view aerial from the National Archives, below, was from February 17, 1945, before being liberated, so the airfield has bomb craters and is undeveloped.



After the US took over, the airfield appeared as shown below. The photo below right, by our pilot Harry Molvar, is estimated in the direction of the red arrow.





FIELD LOCATION

TAWI TAWI

SULU ARCHIPELAGO  
120° E, 5°10' N.

**Tawitawi**

The squadron's monthly report for April had a note we made our first landing at Tawi Tawi on April 24, 1945, with 4,100 lbs of cargo and 5 passengers at 120°E 5°10' N. This translates to digital coordinates 120 E, 5.167 N.



The Google image above right has a marker at these coordinates. The image above center is from April 26, 1945, two days after we landed there, but the area is quite hilly and overgrown. Other aerial images covered the width of the island from about 5 miles north of here through 5 miles south, and there were no areas with a clearing at least half-a-mile long, half the widest width of the pinecone-shaped peninsula, for an airfield.

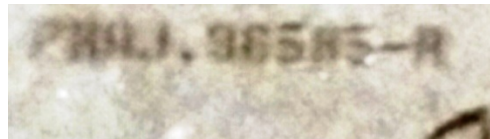
**Buan**  
Tawi-Tawi, Philippines  
5.166792, 120.001397

It appears perhaps someone in the squadron recorded this coordinate as roughly in the middle of the three islands, because the longitude appears rounded off, as 120° E, and is at the halfway point east-to-west, and the latitude of 5° 10' N is the average of the island's southern (5°0') and northern (5°20') latitudes. I now suspect that in Tawi Tawi province the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS landed at only **Sanga Sanga**. Sanga Sanga was a beautiful spot, with the dramatic mountain on Bongao Island.

**e. 1945: Old Boulder Photo from W. Goodman**

On February 13, 2018, the son, Winston, of William Goodman, emailed me the image at right, of Jack Roberts and his dad, both pilots, under the "Old Boulder." The caption said Dulag, but the background is inconsistent. In the last letter I noted orthochromatic film changed yellow paint to dark, and this is the case here with the lettering, vs. the image on page 585. It has a logo similar to the Royal Australian Air Force symbol, inset, but with a larger kangaroo, different colors, and a narrower outer circle, and so perhaps was for fun, to represent island-hopping.

The serial number is shown on its tail on page 451 as 42-93506, but I wanted to try and read this on the nose, and Winston's brother, David, mailed me the original to scan and look at with my phone's magnifier function. Below left, one can imagine this says 93506. A project number was readable as 96585-R, and agreed with the number on the individual aircraft record card, also below.



INDIVIDUAL AIRCRAFT RECORD CARD		
42-93506	MANUFACTURER AND LOCATION	Douglas, Glendale
	FINAL DESTINATION IN U. S.	
	PROJECT OR LEASE REQUISITION NUMBER	96585 R



**f. 1945: Photos from Robert S. Truman, Navigator, 8/45-9/45**

On March 3, 2018, I was excited to receive in the mail, to scan and return, a photo album of navigator Robert S. Truman, from his son Tom. Truman in June 1945 was in Nadzab, New Guinea, an arrival and distribution hub, and it is not clear when he joined the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS, but the first photo of him after Nadzab is at right, in September 1945, in Dulag, estimated with the 13<sup>th</sup> TCS. He was transferred to the 66<sup>th</sup> TCS on September 22, 1945, but this looks like our camp. Many of his photos were from his next unit, the 13<sup>th</sup> AF Fighter Command, but he had three of Palawan (page 634) from September 1945.

Truman had the photo above of a beach probably by the transient camp, and from the mountain outline and photo inset this is Honda Bay. In the map at right, the airfield is outlined in red, and the view above is in the direction of the blue arrow, near what is now Hartman Beach. Below left is the view back into the camp, and below right the view south along the beach. Thank you, Bob Truman, for being in the 13<sup>th</sup>, and thank you, Tom, for sharing these photos.



*Dulag, P.I., Sept '45*



Thank you again to Will, Jerome, David, and Tom for sharing these items, and to their dads for saving them.