

# June 2021 Newsletter



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

The newsletter April 20, 2021, presented 53 of the 695 photos in the album of Albert Eastburn. After scanning many of Eastburn's photos, I took photos of all the pages of his album, so I could later look at these photos of pages and see if I missed any. I identified 15 images which I had passed over on the March scanning trip, and many others I wanted to potentially scan. I flew from Dallas to Los Angeles June 9, and met Eastburn's daughter, Lynn, and husband Fred on June 11. This newsletter presents additional images from Eastburn, and other items. I colorized all the images with the MyHeritage photo feature, which is great for faces, but makes khaki turn out blue, so please understand that the uniforms were likely khaki, not blue.

As Father's Day approaches, let's all remember and be thankful for the efforts of all those who served in World War II, or supported them here at home, especially for our loved ones.

With best wishes,  
Seth P. Washburne, Squadron Historian  
June 19, 2021

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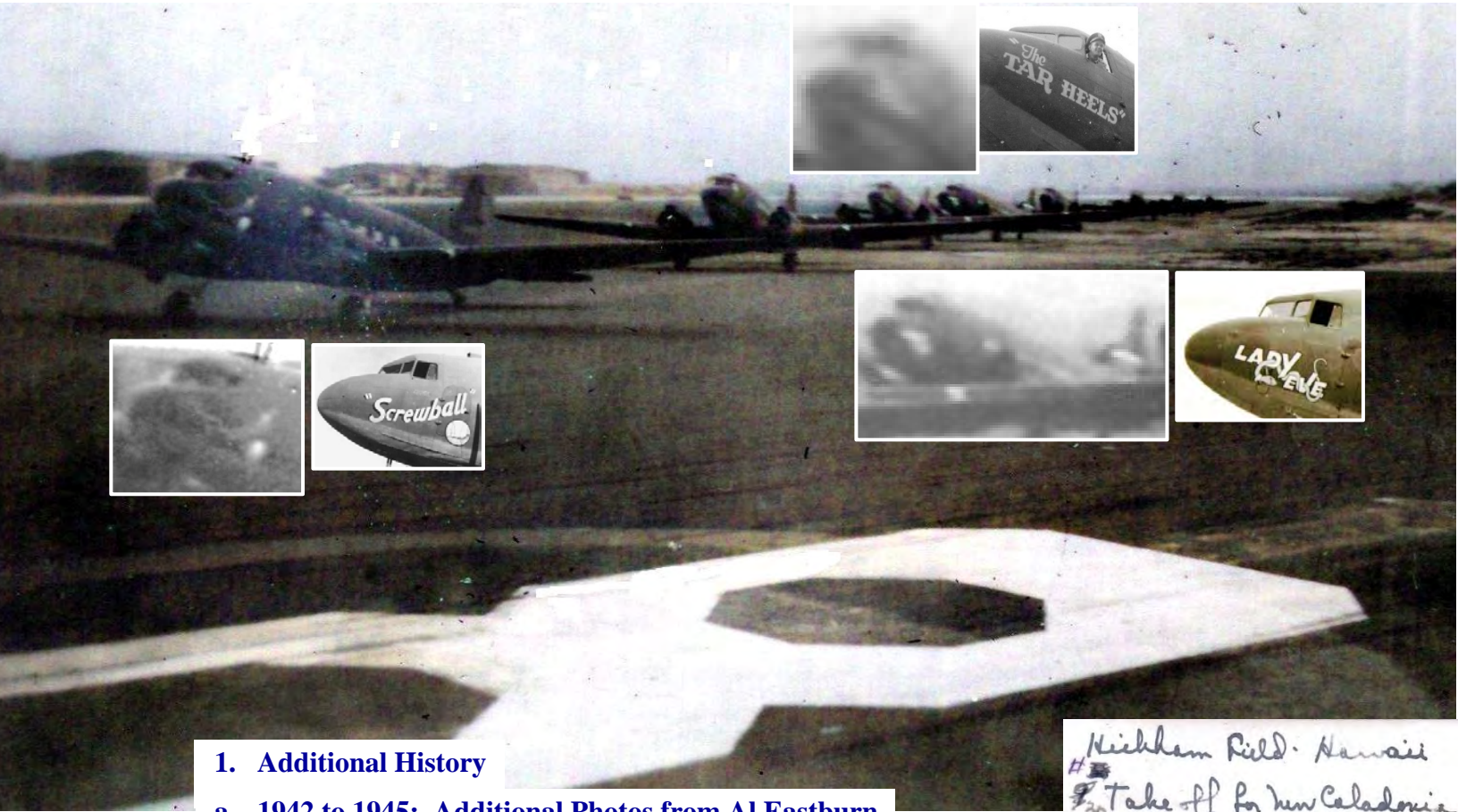
This is the newsletter for the U.S. Army Air Corps 13<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron, 1940-1946, nicknamed "The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>." This is prepared by Seth P. Washburne, the son of John C. Washburne, navigator 11/42-7/43. Please direct any comments to him at: (212) 289-1506, sethgw1@gmail.com,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

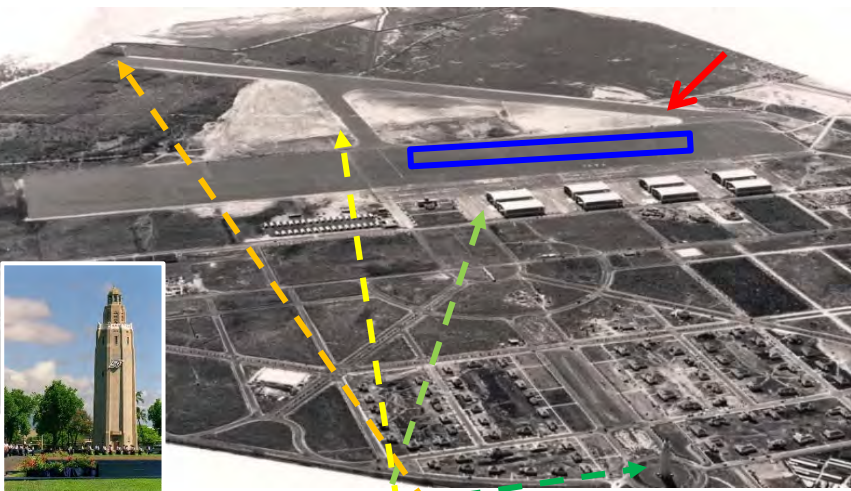
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**1. Additional History**

**a. 1942 to 1945: Additional Photos from Al Eastburn**

Above is Hickam Field, Hawaii, "Takeoff for New Caledonia," on October 6, 1942. This is estimated from Commanding Officer Cullum's C-47 (his mechanic Cairns also had this, unlabeled). This shows the next two C-47s in his element on page 114 - Screwball, and then no name. Third seems to be "The Tar Heels," and fourth is "Lady Eve," with its white tail stripe.



Hickam is shown at left on 1/25/39, 3.5 years before this. At the dark green arrow is what is now Freedom Tower (a water tower, inset), then a road to the airfield, and the 1939 hangars, all still there.

The wide area in front of the 1939 hangars was and is still a parking area. We lined up in the blue area. The runway is the narrower paved area. The photo above is in the direction of the red arrows, That runway is now a parking area. Honolulu Int'l is east of this. The view is of 8 other C-47s, a total 9 of our 13. This was a special time in our history.





Above left is Eastburn estimated in January 1943 upon getting his Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup> patch. Next, in "March 1943" are Eastburn, Robertson and Dawson digging a ditch to drain water from the supply area in the New Caledonia camp. The photo above right, on the book's page 193, had the names on the back, and this is Kimball, then Bacon, Schmitz, and Storms, in May 1943.

At right from May 1943 is "Native and I fighting with a tomahawk. Our hut in the making." The native has a friendly smile.

Below, from May 1943, is "Paint shack and storage shelter in the rear of the supply area," showing the SW part of the camp, in a view southwest, with tents on the barren hillside.



At right is "Engine change, Tontouta Air Base, January 1943." At the top right is the box the new engine came in, then the new engine, facing down. The men work on disconnecting the old engine from the area behind it.

Below is "One of the new fields at Cactus," and is Carney Field. This is estimated taken from an L-5 Sentinel in late 1943. This looks north, and in the distance are the Florida Islands. The first record of us landing here is 9/12/43. Our air echelon had a forward base camp here July 8 to August 15, 1944.



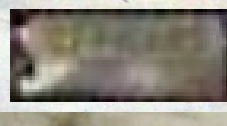
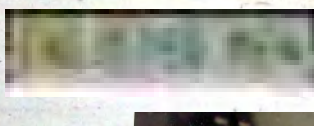
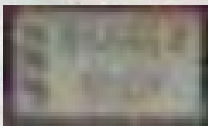
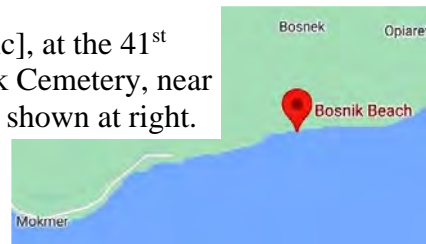
**New Hebrides in 1944** - From New Hebrides, below is "Fuselier standing and JB Ferguson in the boat. This was built by them in one week and launched on time! Note glee of John B when boat proved a success. It is christened 'Tugboat' in honor of our last dog."





**Biak in 1945** – Above is “Funeral for [403<sup>rd</sup>] Headquarters pill roller [medic], at the 41<sup>st</sup> Division Cemetery, Biak. Entire group in attendance.” This was called Bosnek Cemetery, near the town of Bosnek, now near Bosnik Beach, about 5 miles east of Mokmer, as shown at right. [The caskets were later disinterred and moved to the U.S. or the Philippines.]

Below, in our camp and on the book’s page 533, the signs, inset, over the the doors are for the barber, laundry, enlisted men, and officers - their showers.



At right is the inside of the 403<sup>rd</sup> chapel at Biak, estimated with chaplain DeVore leading, showing this had a choir area.

Thank you to Eastburn for collecting 695 photos, and thank you to his daughter, Lynn, for making time to get together with me, to share these additional images, too, with us.



## 2. History Related Activities

### a. 1942: Navigator Ralph Saltsman's Astrocompass

On 4/12/21, I received an email from the niece, Maidi, of one of our original 13 navigators, Ralph Saltsman, with his photo at right. Apparently, he was an aviation cadet before becoming a navigator.

Maidi wrote that in 1942 an astrocompass was mailed from overseas, presumably by Ralph, to Ralph, c/o The Shinerocks, in Los Angeles. There were 10 Alpert siblings, and 8 moved from upstate N.Y. to Los Angeles, where Ann Alpert married Sol Shinerock. Ann's 7 LA-based siblings congregated at her house, including her brother, David, who Ralph listed on his draft registration, at right, as "the person who will always know your address." Ralph, too, moved from upstate NY, and was attending UCLA. He married Ann and David's sister, Dorothy.

Ralph died in our first fatal plane crash, on the book's page 271. The astrocompass went to his wife Dorothy's sister Molly Alpert, and was stored first in her garage in Los Angeles, and then with her daughter, Maida, in Aptos, Calif. During the week of April 11, Maida visited the Oakland Aviation Museum, and donated this to honor Ralph and Dorothy.

Below left, from the Internet, is the model Ralph had, an Astrocompass MK II, made by the W.W. Boes Co., Dayton, Oh. It is 8" high, and 4" in diameter. Ralph's was in excellent condition.

An online guide states to use this one would:

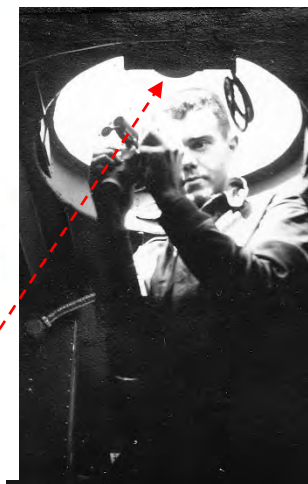
1. Turn the wheels on the base plate so the bubbles in the tab's windows show it is level.
2. Turn a knob to the nearest latitude degree, tilting the upper half, the equatorial drum.
3. From the American Air Almanac, determine the declination and G.H.A. for the object to be observed, e.g., the sun. Set the pointer on the top dial to the declination.
4. Turn the "Push to turn" dial to rotate the drum to the hour angle, the hours x 15°, e.g., 1 p.m. is 195°.
5. Turn the bottom dial until the shadow of the bar in the top section is between two lines on the screen. The true course will be indicated on the tab, as shown at right.

One website says this was used on some C-47s during WWII, installed in the astrodome, but was replaced by the periscopic sextant. I have not heard of us using this. A photo of my dad, below right, in his prior 12<sup>th</sup> TCS navigating the first C-47s to Europe, seems to show one.

Thank you, Ralph and Maida.



SERIAL NUMBER	1. NAME (Print)	ORDER NUMBER
7	RALPH LEWIS SALTSMAN	1355
2. ADDRESS (Print)		
1614 HOLCOMB W. LOS ANGELES CALIF.		
3. TELEPHONE		
LOS ANGELES 25		
4. AGE IN YEARS		
25		
5. PLACE OF BIRTH		
PALM BEACH		
6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP		
U. S. A.		
7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAY KNOW YOUR ADDRESS		
MR. DAVID ALPERT		
8. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON		
4165 MANDALAY DR. LOS ANGELES CALIF.		
9. EMPLOYER'S NAME		
STUDENT U.C.L.A.		
10. PLACE OF REGISTRATION OR RESIDENCE		
405 HILGARD AVE. LOS ANGELES CALIF.		
11. I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ADDRESS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.		
REGISTRATION CARD		
Do. No. B. Form 1		
19-1750		
Ralph L. Saltsman		
(Signature)		



MAPPING CHARTING & RECONNAISSANCE STANDARD PLOTTING FORM U S AIR FORCE

**B3126**

ORGN. & SORTIE 17 PPS ENL 208  
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 SCALE (APPROX.) 1:26,440  
 EXP THIS DE. SQ. YV 1-20, 23-40, 44-60, 65-81, 86-105  
 TOTAL EXP. YV 1-125  
 REMARKS \_\_\_\_\_

DATE (D.M.Y.) 23 JUL 45  
 TIME (G.M.T.) 0723-0835  
 COUNTRY (S) PHILIPPINES  
 QUALITY  EXCELLENT  GOOD  FAIR  POOR  
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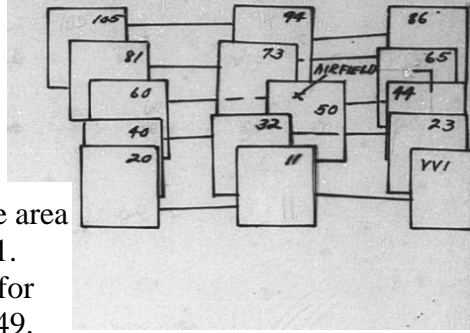
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ADDITIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION \_\_\_\_\_

BOATH, 21 MAY 56

**b. 1944-1945: Searching NARA Record Group 373 for Aerials**

On March 15, I emailed the National Archives to see if they had aerial photos of our Dulag camp after the July 23, 1945, one in the book. They replied March 22, with a link to a site, [catalog.archives.gov/](http://catalog.archives.gov/), for their Record Group (RG) 373, at which I could enter coordinates and see all the aerial photos of my area of interest by date.



For Dulag, I input 10N124E. They had images from 144 flyovers of the area up to the next lines of latitude and longitude, for dates from 2/4/43 to 3/3/61. The book has their images from 7/23/45, which had the record card above, for the images at right, but the next date after that is not for 4 years, until 1/30/49. This record group will not provide an aerial view of the Dulag camp from August - October 1945.

I input coordinates for other areas of interest. For Guadalcanal's Carney Field, where we were in mid-1944, it had nothing from 3/23/44-6/3/47. For Los Negros, at 02S147E, our air echelon was there 8/16/44 to 10/4/44. RG 373 had images from 9/3/44, and then jumps to 1/22/45. For Mokerang on Los Negros, 1° south, I input 01S147E, and there was nothing from 8/10/44 to 11/4/44. For Wakde, where we were 10/4/44-10/18/44, RG373 had nothing from 9/19/44 until 1/12/45. For Biak, RG373 had images perhaps near the airfield on 9/30/44, but we were not there yet, and 1/12/45. I hope later this year to get images from Los Negros and the Biak airfield when the NARA contractor I hire in College Park, Md., can access the film cans.

**3. Members and Relatives**

**a. Second visit with Al Eastburn's Daughter Lynn**

On June 9 I flew from Dallas to Los Angeles to scan additional photos from the album of Al Eastburn. I met his daughter Lynn, at right, and her husband Fred, at the Panera Bread in Glendale, at the same table we sat at on March 26. She now has two copies of the "The Thirsty 13<sup>th</sup>" book, and I signed them. I scanned 48 photos, including the 16 herein, and 40 backs. It was fun to see Lynn and Fred again.



**b. Milton Bromberg Final Resting Place Recorded**

For the 815 men who served in the 13<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron overseas, I had final resting places for all but 65 men. On June 14, I received an email from the nephew, Paul, of our airplane mechanic Milton Bromberg, and he wrote "Found my uncle Milton Bromberg's gravesite. Going there to visit my parents' grave and his today. Hope all is well." He attached a link to the site. It is great to record the final resting place for Bromberg, too. Thank you, Paul. I plan at some point to email everyone a list of all of our members, with their final resting places.

**4. Conclusions and Thanks**

The additional Eastburn photos provided many more details to add to the history. Thank you to Al and his daughter Lynn for these. Thank you to Saltsman's niece, Maidi, for the Astro compass story, and to Bromberg's nephew for his final resting place. With best wishes, Seth