

Update # 41 – “*City of Savannah*”

B-17 Restoration
January 22, 2010

There has been a lot of activity going on at the Museum since the first of the year, but not much information has been going out to those of you who are following the “*City of Savannah*” restoration. Hopefully this issue of the Update will make all of you up to date on project events.



Senior Volunteer Staff members with Sheila Saxon
(L to R; Marshall Brooks, Jerry McLaughlin, Jim Grismer)

The first, and most significant, event that has occurred in the past several weeks is the departure of our administrative officer, Sheila Saxon. Sheila moved on to bigger and better things, which she very much deserves. A BIG “thank you” goes out to Sheila from all of us involved with the project.

With the departure of Sheila we need to introduce her replacement, Jane Harper. Jane is yet another native New Yorker who has transplanted to Savannah. Her previous experience was in the advertising business, where she worked with Grey Advertising, Inc. in New York City and with several other firms here in Savannah, including our next door neighbor JCB, Inc. We look forward to having Jane’s initiative and creativity become an important part of our project.

Sheila’s departure coincided with several other events at the Museum, to include the first annual “Thank You” dinner event to honor the volunteers on the “*City*” project. A dinner was held in the art gallery on January 15th with CEO Henry Skipper as Master of Ceremonies. Henry thanked all of the volunteers for their work during 2009 and also mentioned how grateful the Museum is to several corporate supporters, particularly LMI Corporation and their volunteer representative, David Pineger.

Each volunteer was presented with a certificate of their participation on the restoration project during 2009. Attached to the certificate was a small piece of the original left elevator of our B-17, officially manufactured in May of 1945 as A/C 44-83814, and now known as the “*City of Savannah*”. A Certificate of Authenticity was attached to each certificate. As would be expected, Sheila came up with the idea for the certificates and had them produced before her departure, and in time for the dinner. Sheila was presented with a bouquet of a dozen roses from the senior volunteer staff as a special “thank you” award at the end of the dinner.

Another event that will have long term implications for the project happened on January 20th when Guy McDonald and Mac McCormack visited the Museum representing the Coastal Amateur Radio Society (CARS). Guy and Mack met with the senior volunteer staff, climbed into the “City” radio room, and then visited the B-17 parts storage room to look over the radio equipment that came with the “City” last January. The ultimate goal of the involvement of the CARS team with our project is that we will eventually have a functioning comm shack on the aircraft. Guy and Mack say that they can make that happen. A thank you for this great idea goes to Dr. Harry Friedman of “*Memphis Belle*” fame who suggested involvement of local HAM operators during his visit last summer.

Steam cleaning of the aircraft interior continues, with the first week of February still scheduled for the beginning of the painting of the “City’s” interior.

As you know, many hours have been dedicated to the B-17 Restoration Project in the past year - 3,391 total hours to be exact. Those volunteering more than 100 hours for this project include Jim Argo, Glenn Braselton, Bill Burkel, Mort Glick, Jim Grismer, Ron Gunnells, JEB Harper, Jerry McLaughlin, Bill Ridgill, and Scott Whitcher.

More to come.....