

UPDATE # 91 - "CITY OF SAVANNAH"

B-17 Restoration

March 21, 2011

Each of the three "*City of Savannah*" crews are now well into their restoration mode of adding to the airplane rather than cleaning and taking things off of the airplane, which was how we spent all of 2009 and 2010.

One newest addition to the airplane will be the electric system pilot's control panel. The panel was found by our ace internet "scrounger", Bill Burkel, who found the panel on eBay and was able to work with the owner on its price. The panel is on its way to Savannah to replace another panel was installed in the "*City*" during its days as a fire bomber and is not original military equipment.

This week we had another major addition to the airplane when LMI Corporation backed a truck up to the shop door with the "*City's*" rudder on board. Those of you who have been following the project from the very beginning may remember that LMI Corporation took all of the "*City's*" fabric control surfaces with a promise to return them looking like new. The arrival of the rudder at the Mighty Eighth was the first delivery on that promise. Over a period of almost two years, using volunteer labor in several corporate locations, the LMI team completely re-finished the rudder, ailerons, and elevators of the aircraft. When the work on the surfaces was completed LMI allowed our own John Finch to use their paint shop to finish the job. Our LMI inside man, David Pinegar, has informed us that we will be receiving one new control surface a week until all of the control surfaces have been returned. We have to give a major thank you to David for his initiative and to LMI senior management for their support of the "*City of Savannah*" project.



The Wednesday Crew re-mounting the rudder on the “*City of Savannah*”

Our Saturday Crew had a special visitor this weekend and actually got together to pose for a picture. Assistant Project Manager Dave Talleur

was on hand to photograph the crew with Bud Porter from the Mighty Eighth Board of Directors.



Saturday crew with Bud Porter (front left) a Museum Board member and WWII B-17 ball turret gunner in the 95th Bomb Group. Crew members, L to R: Bob Hearn, Pete Balsom, Joel Hedgpeth, Justin Patrick, Mort Glick, Ben Hedgpeth, (Crew Chief) Rocky Rodriguez, Gil Patrick. (Note that our Saturday crew has two father-son teams, the Patrick's and the Hedgpeths)

We had another special visitor this week, from Gulfstream Corporation. Dick Gorman, the editor of the Gulfstream intranet in-house journal visited with our Project Manager, Jerry McLaughlin, to discuss the role that Gulfstream Corporation and its employees have had in the “*City of Savannah*” project. After an in-depth description of the various phases of the project, Jerry took Dick on a nose to tail tour of the “*City*” – probably the first time a non-volunteer has seen this much of the inside of our airplane. Dick will draft his story, get it reviewed for accuracy, and then send the story out to all Gulfstream employees on their intranet web. This will be the first time that our efforts have been viewed through the eyes of the international aviation community. We look forward to hearing their feedback.

More to come . . .