

UPDATE # 93 - "CITY OF SAVANNAH"

B-17 Restoration

April 4, 2011

There were several highlights this week. The Wednesday (Day) crew began their shift by moving the newly restored WWII Hunter Field crash truck into the Combat Gallery. After the truck was placed in its final position the crew got busy with polishing the lower tail area of the "City". There were a lot of sore backs when they got done with the work, but the airplane (and the fire truck) looks great!



This 1941 Ford fire truck was working at Savannah's Hunter Field when the original "City of Savannah" departed in December of 1944.

Wednesday evening saw the final placement work on the national insignia that Tommy Garcia presented to us as a gift during his last visit. Tim Steele completed this job and will be working with Tommy to place all the correct signage on the outside skin of the airplane.

The Saturday crew had an especially busy and rewarding day for the ten volunteers that turned out this week. For the first time in (we estimate) twenty-seven years, 44-83814, aka the "City of Savannah", actually had electricity running through its innards and had lights showing. Crew Chief Rocky Rodriguez and his merry band have been running wire through the fuselage of the airplane for several weeks. This week they tested their work and successfully lit several of the "City's" navigation lights.



The Saturday crew celebrating their successful lighting test.

While the electricians were having a field day with the lights, other members of the Saturday crew were getting dirty as they manually lowered the “City’s” flaps and removed the motors for those devices. The radio room team will check out the motors in order to determine if they can – hopefully – be re-installed and eventually power the flaps for demonstrations to Museum visitors. Making the day even more complicated, a writer by the name of Jose Ruiz, arrived at the Museum at 10:00 AM to interview Rocky for a Spanish aviation magazine. When the article is published across the pond in Spain we will get a copy - the first foreign language story published about our project, and our popular Saturday Crew Chief.

The volunteer profile this week is of our project historian, Leslie Grainger. Leslie is from Marion, Massachusetts, and is living in Savannah while she attends the Savannah College of Art and Design, majoring in writing. Leslie has a long history of interest in things military. Starting at age 17 she began working in the Boston Veteran’s Affairs Medical Center. She has also worked for both the New England and Savannah USO organizations.

Leslie joined us several months ago and has put together an exhibit of material associated with the history of 44-83814. She is currently preparing a new exhibit featuring pictures and biographical information on visitors to the Museum who served with the Mighty Eighth during WWII. In her spare time Leslie is taking flying lessons and expects to qualify as a pilot shortly after her graduation from SCAD with the class of 2011.



Project historian Leslie Grainger

Everyone has been looking forward to next week and the return of Skip Shelton. Unfortunately Skip had a problem when a pipe bust and flooded his house, delaying his trip to Savannah. He has told us that the lack of his presence on Wednesday night will not stop him from painting one of his famous water colors of both the “*City of Savannah*” and our volunteers who will be attending the All-Hands meeting on Wednesday evening. We will forward a group photo to him and he will have the painting to us in only a few weeks.

More to come . . .