

UPDATE # 97 - "CITY OF SAVANNAH"
B-17 Restoration
May 4, 2011

Our update this week has to begin with some very sad news. We were notified on Thursday of the death of Mr. Arnold Kolb on May 27th, while he was visiting family in Alexandria, Virginia. Arnold was the last private owner of our B-17, 44-83814, aka the "*City of Savannah*". He owned the airplane from 1971 until 1984, when he flew as the co-pilot with his son Nathan in the pilot seat on 814's last flight, from Puma, Arizona, to Chantilly, Virginia. The aircraft was then placed in storage by the Smithsonian Institution until it was presented as a gift to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, Arnold's daughter, Maurita Autrey, arranged for Arnold to speak to several Museum staff and volunteers about 814's life as part of Black Hills Aviation Corporation, the company that Arnold had founded and owned for many years. Arnold had mentioned several times that he hoped to be on hand when the restoration of the aircraft was finished and its dedication took place. He will not be at that affair, but you can be sure that members of the Kolb family will be present, and that Arnold's name and the story of his relationship to our B-17 will be well noted.



Nathan and Arnold Kolb standing beneath 814 when the aircraft was delivered to the Smithsonian Institution in 1984

Through the efforts of Wednesday night volunteer Bob MacDonald we had twenty-five members of the Savannah chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association come to the Museum this week for dinner and a tour of the airplane. These pilots and craftsmen were thrilled to be able to tour 814. Hopefully we will have a couple of new recruits for our restoration team resulting from this visit. Thanks to Bill Liening, Rocky Rodriguez and Bill Burkel for taking time out to answer questions and provide tours of the aircraft.

There were some very special visitors at the Museum last week. Everyone connected with our project has heard about the fantastic support we have gotten since the inception of the project from LMI Corporation. Most recently all of the fabric covered control surfaces for the “*City of Savannah*” arrived at the museum after two years of restoration work by LMI employees working as volunteers with after-hour efforts on our behalf. LMI’s point man in Savannah is David Pinegar, who has coordinated all of this LMI volunteer effort.



LMI Corporation’s Taylor family. Volunteers that have made many trips to Savannah from their South Carolina home to work on our control surfaces at the LMI Savannah facility. L to R: Jeremy, Dad Joe, Ben, Joe’s sister, Torrie, Christofer, Mom Michelle – an LMI employee - and our own Dave Pinegar

Several other LMI employees worked on this project, to include John Calvert, Domingo Sanchez and Kenny McDonald.

The Taylor family is a great example of the support that LMI has given our project, and we are proud that they are members of our extended “*City of Savannah*” family.

Finally, everyone needs to stand by for the opening of the official “*City of Savannah*” web site. Mike Callahan reports that we will shortly have the home page of the site up and running. The tentative address is: B-17restoration.sav.com.

More to come . . .