

## **UPDATE # 88 - "CITY OF SAVANNAH"**

### **B-17 Restoration February 21, 2011**

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This week the Wednesday (Day) crew continued work on the pilot's seats and began taking apart the newly discovered APU. They also primed the bomb racks in preparation for final painting.

The Wednesday (Night) crew continued their work on the control cables and preparing the radio room for final installation of the radio equipment by the CARS team.

The Saturday crew remained fully employed with sand blasting parts that needs to be painted before they can be installed in the bomb bay. They did further work on the instrument panel until they ran into some wiring issues. Research on all of our newly obtained wiring diagrams will hopefully solve that problem. The Saturday crew also kept up their record of meeting WWII 8<sup>th</sup> AF veterans. This week they talked to Merle Cisney. Merle served as a ball turret gunner in the 322<sup>nd</sup> Squadron of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group. He is in town to attend the wedding of his grandson – which took place Saturday at the Mighty Eighth. We are hoping to get an interview with Merle before he leaves town.

The most recent word out of the LMI shop is that our famous Wednesday night painter, John Finch, is almost finished with painting the rudder. All of the flight control surfaces will be returned to the museum and mounted on the aircraft when John is finished.

Good news from the second floor this week as our Project Manager, Jerry McLaughlin, was asked to make a presentation to the Museum Board of Directors on the State of the Project. Jerry gave the Board members highlights of our progress during 2010 and outlined plans for 2011, emphasizing the transition from preparation mode to restoration mode between November 2010 and January 2011. He also told the Board that the secret for our success so far has been the expertise of our volunteers, the outside help we have received from our good friends in the B-17 restoration community – particularly Harry Friedman and Tommy Garcia – and financial support from such activities as the Museum sponsored Flying Fortress 5K Run organized by Jane Harper.

This week's update of a "City of Savannah" plank owner is Bill Burkel. Bill has been on the Wednesday (Day) shift since the start of the program in 2009. Today he is also an independent operator as the keeper of our parts storage room and the project's constant scanner of E-bay, looking for "stuff" that we need for the airplane. Bill is also the owner/operator of our interstate acquisition truck-trailer combo that he and Jim Grismer take to Florida on parts hunting trips.



Bill was born in Massachusetts and graduated from King Phillips Regional High School in 1960. Soon after graduating he joined the USAF and served on active duty for eight years. He joined the Air National Guard here in Savannah in 1970 and served with the 165<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing at Hunter Field for the next 28 years. Bill and his wife, Betty, have a son, Bill, Jr., five grandchildren and one great granddaughter. He is one of the six 100 hour club members of the project for both 2009 and 2010. Thanks Bill, for everything that you do!



**DO YOU KNOW THIS AIRPLANE?**

Yes, that is our "City of Savannah" as she looked when working in Canada in 1955. Note the extra fuel tanks and slightly primitive airfield conditions.

*More to come . . .*