

## UPDATE # 69 - "CITY OF SAVANNAH"

B-17 Restoration  
September 10, 2010

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This week the "*City of Savannah*" team spent most of our time trying to absorb all of the information that we picked up during the previous seven days, which we are now calling "Garcia Week". Virtually everyone who took part in last week's events is still under the spell of the vast amount of work that was accomplished and the knowledge that was imparted upon us during Tommy Garcia's visit. It proved the old adage - "You don't know what you don't know". Well, now we know a whole lot more than we did before Tommy showed up at the Mighty Eighth.

If last week was "Garcia Week", we will be calling this week "388<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Week". During the considerably more calm events that took place in the last seven days was the welcome news that the 388<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group has made a very generous financial contribution to the "*City of Savannah*" project. As you may remember from previous Updates, the crew of the original "*City of Savannah*" left Hunter Army Airfield, outside of our city, on December 5, 1944, with Lt. Ralph Kittle in command. When they arrived in England Lt. Kittle and his crew were assigned to the 388<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, where they flew twelve successful missions, referring to themselves as the "*City of Savannah*" crew. They ran out of luck on their thirteenth mission and were shot down in March 18, 1945, with one crew member KIA and the others becoming prisoners of war. (The original aircraft named the "*City of Savannah*" that Ralph Kittle and his crew delivered to England was assigned to another group. Our historians have yet to settle the mystery of which Bomb Group the original aircraft finally called home.)



Lt. Ralph Kittle's POW identification photograph, March, 1945

Knowing that Lt. Kittle and his men were members of their Group has kept the 388<sup>th</sup> Association involved with the restoration of the "*City*" from the very start of the project. We are most grateful for their generous gift and will be sure to spend the money wisely.

While the 388<sup>th</sup> was receiving accolades for their financial contribution to the project we were honored when one of their members, Wayne Daniels, from Cornville, Arizona, made an appearance at the Museum on Wednesday morning. Wayne was a pilot in the 388<sup>th</sup>, and

in his words, “flew one mission too many”. Like Ralph Kittle, Wayne became a guest of the Third Reich, residing for six months at Stalag Luft I until the war ended in May of 1945.



Honored visitor Wayne Daniels of the 388<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group standing in front of the “*City of Savannah*”

Wayne was given a personal tour of the “*City*” and had lunch with the Wednesday (Day) Crew, who presented him with a Restoration Team patch, thereby making him an honorary member of the team. Wayne will be included in the Museum’s honored visitor exhibit that is currently under development.

Next week all three work crews will be preparing the “*City*” for the next big event for the project - the painting of the interior of the aircraft, which is scheduled to begin on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

More to come...