

May 22, 1989

Frederick A. Goerner
24 Presidio Terrace
San Francisco, CA 94118

Dear Mr. Goerner:

Enclosed is a copy of the letter from Ken Whiting's daughter that you requested. We've also enclosed our latest newsletter.

Rob Gerth was kind enough to send copies of your letter of April 8, 9, and 13. After reviewing them I think that our telephone conversation of May 6 (with intermission for the Derby) cleared up many of the points you raised and questions you had concerning our work. There are, however, a few points which merit further clarification as well as some specific information you have offered to send us.

In your letter of April 8 you say that Joe Gurr made alterations to the plane's radio capabilities so it could broadcast from the water in emergencies. Specifically, what were those modifications and when did Gurr remember them? His letter to you of May 3, 1982 describes modifications he made to improve the radio's general effectiveness but there was no consideration expressed or implied that this was done with on-water broadcast in mind. He did express his opinion that such broadcast was possible "under favorable conditions." You offered to pass along Mr. Gurr's address and phone number, and to call him and tell him we're legit. We would like very much for you to do that.

You also offered to send the address and telephone numbers, at least those that you have, for the three gentlemen who flew as observers on the Colorado's aircraft. That also would be very useful information for us to have.

With respect to Fred Hooven's work and, specifically, his diagram, we came across his paper at the Smithsonian where you had very conscientiously put it. As you know we do not entirely agree with the conclusions Mr. Hooven drew from the facts he gathered, but his compilation and documentation are among the most scholarly we've seen in Earhart research. To the extent we used his paper as a source we duly cited him, as we have all our sources, in our notes and bibliography. To answer your question about the differences between his diagram and ours -- No, the differences are not there to make a firmer case. The absence of the 337° reciprocal bearing from Howland was an oversight which we have corrected in the new edition. The 201° bearing from Midway was omitted because we could find no provenance for it either in original sources or in Mr. Hooven's own notes. There are, likewise, many pieces of information supportive of our hypothesis which we cannot use for the same reason.

On the subject of verification, we'd love to be able to use the further developments in the Floyd Kilts story which you mention. If you'll provide sources for that it would be a big help.

Verification also is at the center of your disagreement with Professor Peattie. He presents his position and meticulously cites his sources. You disagree but say you withheld your sources from him because he "appeared to be embracing Japan's post-World War II positions" That choice, of course, is yours, but you leave serious researchers with no choice but to accept scholarly documentation over unsupported allegation. Perhaps your forthcoming book will change that. Thanks for your input.

Sincerely yours,

Richard E. Gillespie
Executive Director

REG/am
encl.