

We've helped fund scientific research into new conservation techniques and we put together and published the world's first *Guide to Aviation Historic Preservation Terminology*. And that was no easy trick. Our investigations in Germany have put to rest dozens of rumors about underground Luftwaffe airplanes. We would, of course, have rather found the airplanes than expose the rumors, but the truth is what it is, and finding the truth is always a good trick. Our work in Maine and Newfoundland has not yet discovered the fate of the White Bird, and that goal may never be achieved. But that search has been the school in which we have learned the skills which have made possible the successes of the Earhart Project. Perhaps you are among those who see that project as without meaningful result unless and until we recover the proverbial "smoking gun." As you might guess, I don't see it that way. The Earhart Project has brought to light a wealth of new and accurate information which has replaced myth with documented fact. That's a trick worthy of any pony. When the day comes (and it will come)

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June 9, 1998

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR RECENT LETTER AND renewal. For a five-year renewal you're entitled to some chain pulling.

Is TIGHAR a "zero-trick-pony? I guess it depends on what you call a trick. We made a decision a long time ago that we would not concentrate our efforts on saving old airplanes from the "teeth of time" only to have them destroyed by "the hands of mistaken zeal." There are very few air museums to whom I would turn over a truly historic aircraft. In that sense, we're an organization well ahead of its time. Before it makes sense to recover historic aircraft a great deal of education still needs to be done.

Over the years we've conducted dozens of seminars, conferences and training courses which have introduced hundreds of enthusiasts (including you) to the principles of historic preservation. That's a pretty good trick.