



## AS WE GO TO PRESS ...

Artifact 2-1, the navigator's bookcase recovered by TIGHAR's 1989 expedition to Nikumaroro, is at the FBI Laboratories in Washington, DC. Scientists there will analyse traces of various substances present on the artifact in an attempt to help TIGHAR evaluate the possibility that the aluminum structure came from Earhart's aircraft. Special thanks to Bill Renz (TIGHAR #0779) of Cincinnati, Ohio who arranged this very special favor, and to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for its willingness to apply its expertise in the interest of history.

Corroboration of Richard Evans' account of an unexplained water collection device on Nikumaroro in 1944 (see *TIGHAR Tracks* Vol. 6 No. 4, "Nor Any Drop To Drink") has been obtained through the efforts of Allen Thomas (TIGHAR #1038) of San Bernadino, California. After reading of the need to locate the other three Coast Guardsmen who were with Evans that day, he succeeded in tracking down Herbert Moffitt of Hemet, California (even though we had listed him as "Herb Moffett of Hemmett, California"). Mr. Moffitt remembers the day and the incident. He agrees with Evans' estimate that the location was between one and two miles from the Loran station on the eastern shore, but in his recollection the structure was not on the beach edge but back about 50 yards "in a grove of big softwood trees." If he's right we may be able to pinpoint the spot through old aerial photography which shows the distribution of buka groves in those years.

Allen Thomas was also able to determine that another of the group, Brooks MacDonald, died at a VA hospital in St. Cloud, Minnesota in October, 1988. He's now hot on the trail of Pharmacist's Mate Charlie Race, the final member of the party that saw the structure.

Expedition preparations have begun for next year's return to Nikumaroro. Oceaneering International, Inc., who found the 747 cargo door on the bottom of the Pacific, have expressed their desire to help TIGHAR find and photograph the Earhart plane. Senior Vice President John T. Johnson has presented TIGHAR with an estimated cost for Oceaneering's services which makes clear the company's commitment to this important historical effort (that means we think it's a great deal). The next *TIGHAR Tracks* should include a preliminary budget for the Return to Nikumaroro and we'll be ready to begin fund-raising for the expedition. That issue will also include initial volunteer selections for the expedition. At this time we anticipate an eight person TIGHAR team. Qualifications and requirements for TIGHAR expeditions are detailed in the box at right.

