STAYING IN TOUCH

Over the past few years TIGHAR, like everyone else, has benefited from the communications revolution. The steadily increasing popularity of the TIGHAR internet website (www.tighar.org) and the Earhart Search Forum email group have enabled us to greatly accelerate our historical research and increase our educational impact, but in the midst of this unprecedented growth we’ve struggled, and often failed, to meet the needs of TIGHAR members who rely upon more conventional means of communication. Realizing that frequency is more important than style, we’ve decided to go back to a simple monthly newsletter that will feature excerpts from the website and the forum. Once a year we’ll also put out a glossy TIGHAR Journal on the pattern of the Vol. 15 TIGHAR Tracks you received earlier this year. We hope this new system will permit all TIGHAR members to stay informed and participate in TIGHAR’s exciting work.

NIKU III

The dates have been set and the deposit has been paid to reserve the ship for TIGHAR’s next expedition to Nikumaroro. A twelve-person TIGHAR team will meet Nai’a, the Fiji-based 120 foot motor-sailer we’ve used for the past two expeditions, at Pago Pago, American Samoa on September 3, 2001. From there we’ll embark on the three-day voyage to Nikumaroro where we’ll have twelve to fourteen days on-site to accomplish the search operations now being planned. These will include:

- a detailed search of the “7 Site” (see the article in this newsletter).
- the inspection of one, and possibly two, suspect graves.
- an underwater search of a ledge off the western edge of the reef.
- an underwater search of the lagoon bottom inside the main passage.

It is our hope that these operations will result in the discovery of human remains and artifacts which can be conclusively identified as being from the Earhart flight. The cost of mounting and conducting the expedition is projected to be $300,000. That’s a lot of money to raise over the next twelve months, but the prospects for finding the proverbial “smoking gun” evidence have never looked better and TIGHAR has never been stronger. We can do it, but as always, it will take all of us pulling together to make it happen. Please use the enclosed card to send in your contribution today.