Proposed Topic: Flying Antiques

I am interested in presenting a panel discussion on the idea of aviation museums that fly their collections. We could discuss the special challenges and risks, the rewards and educational opportunities, as well as some of the considerations unique to building/restoring a “flyer”—paint, tires, communications equipment, FAA regulations, etc.

Representatives from the Fly Heritage Collection could discuss the pioneering effort to return a vintage Me 262 to the skies. This involves heavy negotiations with the FAA, modern alloys and metallurgy processes to “fix” its notoriously difficult Jumo 004 engines, learning new/old restoration techniques (restorers sought the help of Model T body men to figure out how to work with steel skins), and test-flying a plane type that has not flown in generations. (This project is ongoing, currently. It is possible that the plane will have flown or is getting close to flight by the time of 2016’s Mutual Concerns.)

There are a number of institutions with operating collections (and come to Mutual Concerns) that might be available to participate as well—Collings Foundation, Commemorative Air Force, Military Aviation Museum (Virginia Beach). Perhaps locally (NYC), the American Airpower Museum on Long Island or a representative from the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome could give the presentation a local/compelling angle.

Another aspect I am mulling over is the idea that non-aviation museums that use their collections might have unique ideas or takes on the subject. Such as a hydroplane museum that runs their boats at local events, or a music museum that loans a Stradivarius violin to a musician for a special concert, or a train museum that makes its living giving visitors rides.

Subject Area:

- [ ] Museum Administration
- [ ] Collections Management
- [X] Restoration/Conservation
- [ ] Exhibition Design
- [ ] Education and Programming
- [ ] Development & Marketing
- [ ] Media & Technology
- [ ] Other topic area
Submission deadline is April 20, 2015
Please email completed form to nasmmutualconcerns@si.edu