
Contribution Of Amelia Earhart's Last Flight

Amelia Earharts Last Flight

There is nothing special about flying around the world, George Putnam told his wife Amelia. People have already done it (Earhart 73).

Yes, Amelia replied, but nobody has ever done it at the Equator, where the distance around the earth is the greatest (Earhart 73).

On June 1, 1937 Amelia Earhart and her navigator Fred Noonan departed Miami, Florida bound for California by traveling around the world. The first destination was San Juan, Puerto Rico. From there they would go to the northeast edge of South America, across the Atlantic Ocean to Africa and the Red Sea.

The flight to Karachi (then part of India) was another first no one had ever flown non-stop from the Red Sea to India before. From Karachi the Lockheed Electra flew to Calcutta on June 17. From there, they flew on to Rangoon, Bangkok, Singapore, and Bandoeng.

Monsoon weather prevented departure from Bandoeng for several days. It was June 27 before Earhart and Noonan were able to leave Bandoeng for Port Darwin, Australia. Earhart reached Lae in New Guinea on June 29. At this point they had flown 22,000 miles and there were 7,000 more to go.

The next stop was Howland Island, a small piece of land that would be their refueling stop on the way to the Hawaiian Islands. It was 2,556 miles away from Lae and surrounded by nothing but ocean.

The U.S. Coast Guard cutter Itasca was at the island to keep in radio contact. At first, everything seemed to go well. Earhart radioed she was making good progress and was within 100 miles of the island. Later she radioed: KHAQQ cling [calling] Itasca. We must be on you but cannot see you . . . gas is running low . . . (Lovell 283).

After several more messages, she gave what she believed to be her position, then the radio went dead. The cutter Itasca, a battleship, an aircraft carrier with all its planes, and four destroyers searched for 16 days, they never found a trace of the missing Lockheed Electra or its brave pilot and navigator.

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Amelia Earhart was an aspiration to all women. She proved that just because she was a woman did not mean that she could not have a successful career like men of the time. She wrote a note to her husband saying,

Please know I am quite aware of the hazards . . . I want to do it because I want to do it. Women must try to do things as men have tried. When they fail their failure must be but a challenge to others (Earhart 228).

From conducting this research I have learned several things that I did not know about Amelia Earhart. There are several theories about what happened to her. Some of which include: a spy mission authorized by President Roosevelt and was captured, she purposely dove her plane into the Pacific Ocean, she was captured by the Japanese and forced to broadcast to American GIs as Tokyo Rose during World War II, and she lived for years on an island in the South Pacific with a native fisherman. Whether any of these theories are true has not been proven. It still remains a mystery as to what happened to Amelia Earhart.

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