

Deep-Sea Search



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Amelia Earhart in 1928.

This spring [2005], David Jourdan and a team of explorers will search the floor of the Pacific Ocean for an old airplane. Their **expedition**, or voyage, will concentrate on an area west of Howland Island. The tiny island is located roughly halfway between Australia and Hawaii. The explorers are trying to solve one of history's greatest mysteries—what ever happened to Amelia Earhart?

Who Was Amelia Earhart?

Amelia Earhart was an **aviator**, or airplane pilot, who broke many flying records during the 1930s. In 1932, she became the first woman to fly alone across the Atlantic

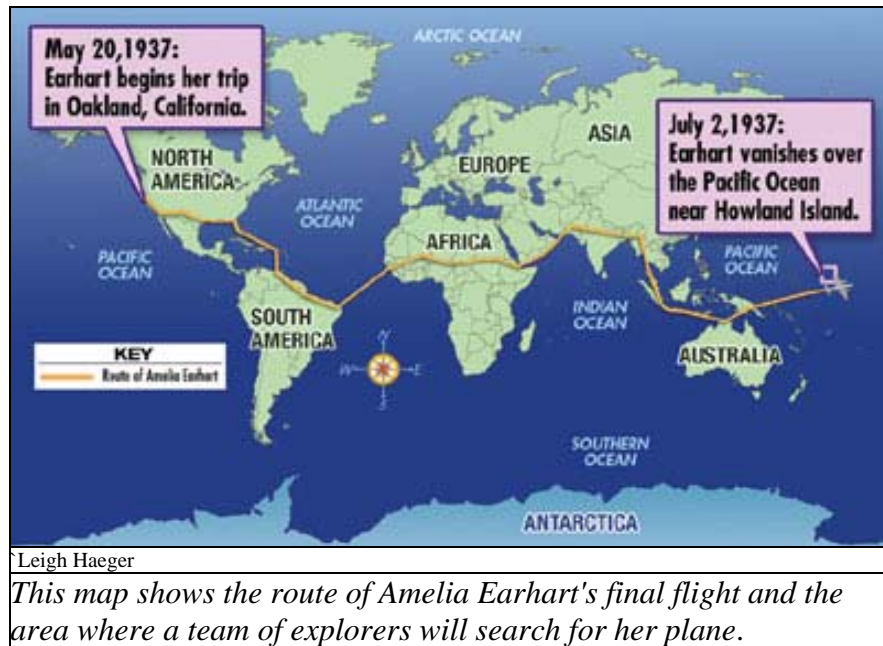
Ocean. In 1937, Earhart attempted to become the first woman to fly an airplane around the world.

During that historic trip, she and her **navigator**, or guide, Fred Noonan, vanished forever. They were scheduled to land on Howland Island in the Pacific. After their disappearance, the U.S. government launched a search, but no trace of the plane was found.

Some people think Earhart's plane ran out of gas and crashed into the Pacific Ocean. Others believe she may have crash-landed on a deserted island and was never rescued.

Searching the Seafloor

Jourdan is confident that his team will find Earhart's plane. "Our expectation is the plane will be largely, if not completely, intact," he said.



The explorers will use **sonar** to search the ocean floor. Sonar sends out sound waves, which bounce off underwater objects.

Over the years, many unsuccessful attempts have been made to solve Earhart's mystery. Despite the uncertainty, Earhart will be remembered as a pioneer of aviation and a fearless flier.