

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:13,030

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:13,030 --> 00:00:17,556

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations but not necessarily

3

00:00:17,556 --> 00:00:25,285

the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

4

00:00:25,285 --> 00:00:28,729

The early morning of July 2nd, 1937.

5

00:00:28,729 --> 00:00:33,735

The media air heart and her navigator are bound westward over the lonely mid-Pacific.

6

00:00:33,735 --> 00:00:41,064

It is the final leg of a grueling round-the-world flight.

7

00:00:41,064 --> 00:00:51,276

Within several hours, they will disappear.

8

00:00:51,276 --> 00:00:56,282

1932.

9

00:00:56,282 --> 00:01:00,207

The media air heart returns home triumphantly.

10

00:01:00,207 --> 00:01:04,332

Against incredible odds, she is the first woman to have flown the Atlantic Ocean to

11

00:01:04,332 --> 00:01:07,976

Ireland all alone.

12

00:01:07,976 --> 00:01:12,982

America is crippled by the depression, but for this brave woman, the nation gladly

13

00:01:12,982 --> 00:01:15,986

musters its most lavish welcome.

14

00:01:15,986 --> 00:01:19,550

Her courage has captured the heart and imagination of the entire world.

15

00:01:19,550 --> 00:01:25,397

It's much easier to fly the Atlantic Ocean now than it was a few years ago.

16

00:01:25,397 --> 00:01:29,202

I expect to be able to do it in my lifetime again.

17

00:01:29,202 --> 00:01:42,178

Possibly not as a solo expedition, but in regular transatlantic service, which is inevitable

18

00:01:42,178 --> 00:01:46,102

in our lifetime.

19

00:01:46,102 --> 00:01:48,465

Her skill and courage are established.

20

00:01:48,465 --> 00:01:54,753

The media air heart delights in the challenge of new accomplishment.

21

00:01:54,753 --> 00:01:59,639

She sets an altitude record in an auto gyro.

22

00:01:59,639 --> 00:02:04,204

Soon she's aloft again to capture a new women's transcontinental speed record.

23

00:02:04,204 --> 00:02:08,489

And what did you carry on the trip?

24

00:02:08,489 --> 00:02:09,491

You mean to eat?

25

00:02:09,491 --> 00:02:11,493

Yeah, to eat and drink.

26

00:02:11,493 --> 00:02:18,141

Well, I carried some water, of course, because my cockpit is very warm, and I carried a sandwich

27

00:02:18,141 --> 00:02:25,630

in case I didn't eat it, so I carried some hot chocolate and the all reliable tomato

28

00:02:25,630 --> 00:02:26,631

juice.

29

00:02:26,631 --> 00:02:28,754

What kind of sandwich was it?

30

00:02:28,754 --> 00:02:32,678

Chicken sandwich.

31

00:02:32,678 --> 00:02:38,245

In 1935, she sails for Hawaii on an announced pleasure trip with her husband publisher,

32

00:02:38,245 --> 00:02:39,927

George Putnam.

33

00:02:39,927 --> 00:02:44,653

She once told him, I fly better than I wash dishes.

34

00:02:44,653 --> 00:02:50,900

The public wonders why she has taken her plane along.

35

00:02:50,900 --> 00:02:55,706

The media air heart put speculation to an end when she flew home, becoming the first

36

00:02:55,706 --> 00:03:00,592

to solo from Hawaii to California.

37

00:03:00,592 --> 00:03:03,235

Even now, she's thinking of another great adventure.

38

00:03:03,235 --> 00:03:08,281

Soon, she announces her plans for a flight around the world.

39

00:03:08,281 --> 00:03:12,767

Contemplated course covers about 27,000 miles.

40

00:03:12,767 --> 00:03:18,213

It will be the first flight in successful, which approximates the equator.

41

00:03:18,213 --> 00:03:22,418

The plane I'm using on the proposed flight is a transport plane.

42

00:03:22,418 --> 00:03:30,909

It is for Lockheed Electra, normally carrying 10 passengers and two pilots.

43

00:03:30,909 --> 00:03:36,515

This airplane will take a video on her most challenging and hazardous flight.

44

00:03:36,515 --> 00:03:40,841

Several days before departure, she tells her husband and the public just why she will

45

00:03:40,841 --> 00:03:41,842

do it.

46

00:03:41,882 --> 00:03:45,206

Well, DP, you know it's because I want to.

47

00:03:45,206 --> 00:03:49,211

Two hours later, that has a fairly familiar sound.

48

00:03:49,211 --> 00:03:55,018

But aside from that, you expect to accomplish something for aviation, do you not?

49

00:03:55,018 --> 00:03:57,341

Well, yes, I do.

50

00:03:57,341 --> 00:04:03,308

And if the flight's successful, I hope it will increase women's interest in flying.

51

00:04:03,308 --> 00:04:06,992

If so, it will be worthwhile as far as I'm concerned.

52

00:04:06,992 --> 00:04:10,036

Well, how about taking me along?

53

00:04:10,036 --> 00:04:18,606

Well, of course, I think a great deal of you, but 180 pounds of gasoline on a flight,

54

00:04:18,606 --> 00:04:21,209

perhaps might be a little more valuable.

55

00:04:21,209 --> 00:04:26,936

You mean you've reported 180 pounds of gasoline to 180 pounds of heart.

56

00:04:26,936 --> 00:04:28,698

Thank you, guess right.

57

00:04:32,983 --> 00:04:36,708

A rainy June morning, 1937.

58

00:04:36,788 --> 00:04:38,951

The final preparations are made.

59

00:04:45,438 --> 00:04:51,165

In the next 40 days, Amelia and her expert navigator, Fred Nuenen, will fly three quarters

60

00:04:51,165 --> 00:04:52,968

of the way around the world.

61

00:04:52,968 --> 00:05:11,510

On the final leg of the flight, with little more than 7,000 miles to go, she will vanish

62

00:05:11,510 --> 00:05:21,322

over the mid-Pacific without a trace.

63

00:05:21,322 --> 00:05:26,929

The news that Amelia Earhart was lost registered shock and disbelief throughout the world.

64

00:05:26,929 --> 00:05:31,854

She'd come within days of achieving her goal, and for many it was difficult to accept that

65

00:05:31,854 --> 00:05:36,500

so courageous a woman could be gone so suddenly.

66

00:05:36,500 --> 00:05:40,505

Almost immediately after her disappearance, the public imagination became fired with rumors

67

00:05:40,505 --> 00:05:45,671

and speculation that Amelia Earhart and her navigator, Fred Nuenen, might be alive and

68

00:05:45,671 --> 00:05:50,757

well on an uncharted Pacific wreath that she may have been shot down by Japanese fighter

69

00:05:50,757 --> 00:05:56,124

planes and then captured, that perhaps she was actually on a top secret spy mission for

70

00:05:56,124 --> 00:05:57,125

our government.

71

00:06:06,136 --> 00:06:11,182

Five years after her disappearance, a Hollywood film starring Rosalind Russell does much to

72

00:06:11,182 --> 00:06:13,905

keep rumors about Amelia Earhart alive.

73

00:06:14,426 --> 00:06:18,270

Miss Carter, we want you to do a job for us.

74

00:06:18,270 --> 00:06:19,912

A big job.

75

00:06:19,912 --> 00:06:24,838

So big that I have no hesitation in saying that the safety of our country may very well

76

00:06:24,838 --> 00:06:29,164

depend upon a successful outcome.

77

00:06:29,164 --> 00:06:31,887

Are you sure you want me?

78

00:06:31,887 --> 00:06:35,892

It's a job that can be only carried off by a woman who happens to be a world-renowned

79

00:06:35,892 --> 00:06:40,737

flyer and whose personality has caught on with the world.

80

00:06:40,737 --> 00:06:43,421

You land on that little speck right there.

81

00:06:44,422 --> 00:06:50,069

The top secret mission calls for the lady flyer to deliberately ditch near a small Pacific

82

00:06:50,069 --> 00:06:53,433

island where food and provisions have been stored.

83

00:06:53,433 --> 00:06:57,438

But as far as the world knows, you're lost.

84

00:06:57,438 --> 00:06:59,440

There'll be widespread search for you.

85

00:06:59,440 --> 00:07:01,442

Public opinion will demand it.

86

00:07:01,442 --> 00:07:05,447

That search will include the Japanese mandated islands.

87

00:07:05,447 --> 00:07:11,455

And Japan won't dare to interfere because we are looking for you, the world's greatest woman flyer.

88

00:07:11,455 --> 00:07:17,462

During that search, we'll photograph a brisk square mile of those islands.

89

00:07:17,462 --> 00:07:25,471

Then when war comes, we'll be able to defend ourselves against attack and strike back at the nerve centers of their empire.

90

00:07:27,474 --> 00:07:32,480

Ladies and gentlemen, this afternoon somewhere in the South Pacific, a brilliant flying career has probably ended.

91

00:07:32,480 --> 00:07:34,482

Tony Carter has definitely lost.

92

00:07:34,482 --> 00:07:36,485

There has been no report for hours.

93

00:07:36,485 --> 00:07:39,488

The second attempt to overcome the hazards of a world plane has ended in disaster.

94

00:07:39,488 --> 00:07:42,492

Tony Carter lost somewhere in the South Pacific.

95

00:07:49,500 --> 00:07:54,506

When she learns the Japanese know of the plan, she ditches where no one can find her.

96

00:08:03,517 --> 00:08:06,521

Questions about Amelia Earhart persist.

97

00:08:06,521 --> 00:08:13,529

Yet retired Air Force Major Joseph Jarvis has devoted nearly 20 years of research to what he believes is the answer.

98

00:08:13,529 --> 00:08:16,533

The last flight was really a military flight.

99

00:08:16,533 --> 00:08:22,540

Two civilian people flying a civilian aircraft on a mission for the then President of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt.

100

00:08:22,540 --> 00:08:34,555

The purpose of the flight was to overfly the truck at all in the Pacific where the Japanese were secretly fortifying to take pictures of it and to return back to the United States

101

00:08:34,555 --> 00:08:40,562

with photographic evidence to present to the League of Nations that Japan was in violation of the treaty.

102

00:08:40,562 --> 00:08:51,575

The Japanese with an aircraft carrier station between Canton Island and Hull and with Japanese Zero intercepted Earhart and shot her down and she made a crash landing on the island of Hull.

103

00:08:51,575 --> 00:09:03,590

Major Jarvis' belief that Amelia Earhart landed on Hull Island is based largely on his interpretation of civilian radio direction reports received during the Earhart flight.

104

00:09:04,591 --> 00:09:12,601

He also finds a photograph of Hull Island which he believes shows a Japanese flag near the wreckage of Amelia Earhart's aircraft.

105

00:09:16,605 --> 00:09:29,621

From a former Japanese soldier Ramon Cabrera, Jervis learned that in 1937 a woman pilot was interrogated by this Japanese officer and then taken captive to Japan.

106

00:09:29,621 --> 00:09:41,636

In Japan she was a very important political prisoner. She was held captive in the Imperial Palace for a period of approximately eight years at the close of World War II.

107

00:09:41,636 --> 00:09:54,651

Two weeks before MacArthur occupied Japan, Jaclyn Cochran and a group of people went in there and secretly removed Amelia Earhart out of Japan before the occupation disguised as a nun.

108

00:09:54,651 --> 00:10:10,671

They brought her to this country, she took on a new identity, new occupation, has spent time living in Jamesburg, New Jersey, a place called Leisure World and also has spent time abroad being involved in foreign radio broadcasts particularly in the area of Luxembourg.

109

00:10:10,671 --> 00:10:21,684

I have been studying Amelia Earhart for 17 years. I have over a thousand photographs of her from the time she was a baby through her time in elementary and high school and all the other things that she did.

110

00:10:21,684 --> 00:10:24,687

I know more about her than I know about my mother.

111

00:10:28,692 --> 00:10:36,702

Well Amelia Earhart, I believe, has taken on an identity of the name of Irene Bolam.

112

00:10:36,702 --> 00:10:46,714

In 1965, Jervis meets this couple while delivering a lecture. He becomes convinced that this woman's true identity holds the proof to his theory.

113

00:10:46,714 --> 00:10:55,725

And I went over and I met this couple and I looked this lady straight in the face and I knew who it was as soon as I looked at her. Amelia Earhart. I would know her anywhere in the world.

114

00:10:55,725 --> 00:11:01,732

The fantastic story which makes me out to be some kind of a mystery woman is utter nonsense.

115

00:11:01,732 --> 00:11:07,739

I think she's Amelia Earhart because this entire episode is shrouded with mystery.

116

00:11:07,739 --> 00:11:10,743

I am not a mystery woman. I am not Amelia Earhart.

117

00:11:10,743 --> 00:11:18,753

I don't know what the ending to all this, you know, will be but I would like it to have, you know, a happy ending. Really. I really would.

118

00:11:18,753 --> 00:11:23,759

If there was anything bad about it, I don't think I'd want to be associated with it. Really.

119

00:11:23,759 --> 00:11:31,768

Because I have that much admiration and respect for her. I think she's really a lovely person. Really. And I like her very much.

120

00:11:32,769 --> 00:11:39,778

Jervis is not alone in his search and others have come up with different answers.

121

00:11:39,778 --> 00:11:47,788

A determined search for a solution to the Amelia Earhart mystery has followed many intriguing

routes.

122

00:11:47,788 --> 00:11:54,796

Two independent investigators now believe that the final answer is very close at hand.

123

00:11:55,797 --> 00:12:04,808

The Pacific leg of Earhart's last flight is by far the longest and most dangerous.

124

00:12:04,808 --> 00:12:08,813

Her first destination is a refueling stop at Howland Island.

125

00:12:08,813 --> 00:12:15,821

A tiny two square mile at all in the mid-Pacific, it juts only 15 feet above the sea.

126

00:12:15,821 --> 00:12:23,831

The Coast Guard cutter, Etasca, stands off Howland to provide Earhart with radio assistance.

127

00:12:24,832 --> 00:12:34,844

On the morning of July 2nd, Earhart radios that she is low on fuel in the vicinity of Howland but cannot find the island.

128

00:12:34,844 --> 00:12:45,858

A world record holding pilot and navigator, Captain Elgin Long has carefully studied a wealth of detailed information about Amelia Earhart's last flight.

129

00:12:45,858 --> 00:12:53,867

He has analyzed such things as the fuel consumption of Earhart's plane, the strength of radio signals received by the cutter, Etasca,

130

00:12:53,867 --> 00:12:59,874

and the effect on the flight of crosswinds, which Earhart did not even know were there.

131

00:12:59,874 --> 00:13:07,884

With this data, Captain Long has reconstructed a sophisticated navigational model of Amelia Earhart's final flight.

132

00:13:07,884 --> 00:13:15,894

Actually, I think everything went smooth in the flight. All indications are up until they reported over Howland Island at 742.

133

00:13:15,894 --> 00:13:22,902

At that time they said we should be on you, but we cannot see you. In other words, they thought

they were at Howland.

134

00:13:22,902 --> 00:13:25,906

They didn't know anything was wrong up until then.

135

00:13:25,906 --> 00:13:35,918

Now, I can't find the evidence that doesn't indicate any single mistake that anyone made that caused them to miss the island, which they obviously did.

136

00:13:35,918 --> 00:13:45,930

Rather, it's a series of small errors that compounded themselves, unfortunately all in the same direction, which caused it all to happen.

137

00:13:45,930 --> 00:13:47,932

And indeed, they did miss the island.

138

00:13:51,937 --> 00:13:57,944

And of course, once they couldn't find the island, they searched for it for over an hour and ran out of fuel, and their fuel was exhausted,

139

00:13:57,944 --> 00:14:01,949

and then were forced to ditch the airplane into the sea.

140

00:14:01,949 --> 00:14:06,955

In the movie Flight for Freedom, the end was depicted this way.

141

00:14:12,963 --> 00:14:21,973

From the information he has gathered, Captain Long believes that he has pinpointed the exact place where Amelia Earhart crashed into the sea.

142

00:14:22,975 --> 00:14:30,984

The location is about 40 miles northwest of Howland Island, an area where the water is over 16,000 feet deep.

143

00:14:30,984 --> 00:14:37,993

Actually, the airplane is almost perfectly preserved. You know, this is something we weren't familiar with.

144

00:14:37,993 --> 00:14:47,004

Just a few years ago, of course, we didn't know anything about the deep abyss, but now we know that things are preserved in deep water.

145

00:14:48,005 --> 00:14:55,013

And we have recovered airplanes that have been underwater for almost 30 years, and as long as they were in deep water,

146

00:14:55,013 --> 00:15:01,021

everything in that airplane and the airplane itself, it was scary at a depth. It's just like the day it went down there.

147

00:15:01,021 --> 00:15:08,029

Navy recovered an airplane off the coast of San Diego. They show that the airplane is almost in perfect condition.

148

00:15:08,029 --> 00:15:13,035

It's very surprising to learn this, because we're used to things that come from shallow water.

149

00:15:13,035 --> 00:15:20,043

We're used to things recovered off the coast of Florida and 200 feet of water, covered with barnacles, covered with coral, rusted out.

150

00:15:20,043 --> 00:15:23,047

It's not that way in deep water.

151

00:15:23,047 --> 00:15:32,058

Captain Long believes that advanced deep sea exploration equipment like this could be used to locate and then recover the Earhart plane.

152

00:15:33,059 --> 00:15:40,068

The airplane sitting there today, right now, this moment, just like it went down 39 years ago.

153

00:15:40,068 --> 00:15:49,078

And I know that now, in order to really put it all finally to rest, we've got to get an expedition together.

154

00:15:49,078 --> 00:15:54,084

We've got to get out and search and locate our airplane and recover it.

155

00:15:54,084 --> 00:16:01,093

And then I think finally that will put the Amelia Earhart mystery once and for all. The Amelia Earhart search will reach its conclusion.

156

00:16:03,095 --> 00:16:08,101

When Amelia Earhart is lost, a frantic search for begins immediately.

157

00:16:14,109 --> 00:16:21,117

It is the largest naval sea hunt of its kind in history. 63 planes scout the Pacific.

158

00:16:22,118 --> 00:16:28,126

The coordinated search also includes more than a dozen surface vessels.

159

00:16:28,126 --> 00:16:35,134

In three weeks, 250,000 square miles of ocean are carefully scanned.

160

00:16:35,134 --> 00:16:39,139

There is no sign of Amelia Earhart.

161

00:16:39,139 --> 00:16:46,147

We believe the Navy missed Earhart in the search in 1937, perhaps by only a few miles.

162

00:16:46,147 --> 00:16:52,154

Radio messages were received after the disappearance by amateur radio operators along the west coast of the United States,

163

00:16:52,154 --> 00:16:56,159

and they were also received by Navy radio stations.

164

00:16:56,159 --> 00:17:01,165

If we'd looked in the right area in 1937, Amelia might be with us today.

165

00:17:03,168 --> 00:17:09,175

Newsman Fred Garner has spent more than 16 years investigating the disappearance of Amelia Earhart.

166

00:17:09,175 --> 00:17:15,182

His belief that she survived her crash into the Pacific is that she was a very dangerous person.

167

00:17:15,182 --> 00:17:21,189

The crash into the Pacific is based on his analysis of information in civilian and military radio reports.

168

00:17:24,193 --> 00:17:30,200

These reports were painstakingly uncovered by Garner during several research trips to Washington.

169

00:17:30,200 --> 00:17:36,208

Garner's persistent detective work, however, did not begin in Washington, D.C.

170

00:17:36,208 --> 00:17:40,212

It began in 1960 with CVS. I was a correspondent here in San Francisco.

171

00:17:40,212 --> 00:17:47,221

We received information that it was a possibility that Amelia Earhart might have reached Saipan in the western Marianas.

172

00:17:47,221 --> 00:17:52,227

I was sent by CVS news to Saipan to find out if there was supporting information.

173

00:17:52,227 --> 00:17:59,235

Saipan Island is nearly 1500 miles northwest of Earhart's destination at Howlin Island.

174

00:17:59,235 --> 00:18:06,244

Yet, Jesus Salas, a Saipanese farmer, recalls an incident in the Garapan prison on Saipan.

175

00:18:07,245 --> 00:18:15,255

In 1937, while a prisoner of the occupying Japanese army, Salas sees a white woman in the cell next to him.

176

00:18:15,255 --> 00:18:18,258

She is held there for several hours.

177

00:18:18,258 --> 00:18:23,264

Prison guards tell Salas that she is a captured American pilot.

178

00:18:23,264 --> 00:18:26,268

Salas never sees her again.

179

00:18:26,268 --> 00:18:35,279

Jose Panjelen, a grocer on Saipan, remembers seeing a white woman on the second floor of a compound hotel several times.

180

00:18:36,280 --> 00:18:40,285

He hears that she is a captured pilot and spy.

181

00:18:40,285 --> 00:18:52,299

These native Saipanese, Joaquin Seaman and Ben Salas, tell Gernr of hearing that an American woman was buried in this cemetery sometime in 1937.

182

00:18:52,299 --> 00:18:56,304

Gernr excavates several gravesites but finds no proof.

183

00:18:56,304 --> 00:19:02,311

The strongest evidence to me is the eyewitness reports on the island of Saipan.

184

00:19:02,311 --> 00:19:13,325

To me, it is inconceivable that these people were not telling the truth and it is inconceivable to me that anyone else answering those descriptions was on that island at that time.

185

00:19:13,325 --> 00:19:19,332

Later, Gernr finds Japanese newspaper articles from the time of Earhart's disappearance.

186

00:19:19,332 --> 00:19:24,338

One reports that Amelia Earhart was picked up by a Japanese fishing boat.

187

00:19:25,339 --> 00:19:33,349

Gernr also learns of secret government documents which he believes can prove the Japanese capture of Amelia Earhart.

188

00:19:33,349 --> 00:19:40,357

It is my belief that Amelia landed on a small reef area between Howland Island and Canton and the

Northern Phoenix Group.

189

00:19:40,357 --> 00:19:46,364

She was picked up after our search by the Japanese taken to Saipan.

190

00:19:46,364 --> 00:19:59,380

She died in Japanese custody and the proof of her Japanese custody is contained in records of the Counter Intelligence Corps captured from the Japanese at the end of World War II.

191

00:19:59,380 --> 00:20:02,384

Those records are today classified in Washington.

192

00:20:02,384 --> 00:20:10,393

They are records supposedly of Japanese interrogation of Earhart and I think that a final answer to the mystery is going to be written.

193

00:20:11,395 --> 00:20:14,398

Alas, Amelia Earhart is not alive and well in living in New Jersey.

194

00:20:14,398 --> 00:20:16,401

I wish that she were.

195

00:20:20,406 --> 00:20:24,410

In at least some sense, Amelia Earhart is alive.

196

00:20:24,410 --> 00:20:32,420

For in the memory of her courage, her passion, her dedication to an ideal, she still touches many of us.

197

00:20:33,421 --> 00:20:42,432

It has been nearly 40 years since Amelia Earhart vanished and the final answer to her disappearance is still an enigma.

198

00:20:42,432 --> 00:20:50,442

There's a vast amount of convincing yet sometimes contradictory evidence which can support any one of several explanations.

199

00:20:50,442 --> 00:20:52,444

But who is right?

200

00:20:52,444 --> 00:20:57,450

For at least three men, the search for the answer will continue.

201

00:20:58,451 --> 00:21:07,462

It will go on until someone proves without the slightest doubt the final fate of this daring and charismatic woman.

202

00:21:07,462 --> 00:21:12,468

Before the takeoff on her last flight, Amelia wrote to her husband,

203

00:21:12,468 --> 00:21:15,472

Please know that I am quite aware of the hazards.

204

00:21:15,472 --> 00:21:19,477

I want to do it because I want to do it.

205

00:21:19,477 --> 00:21:23,482

Women must try to do things as men have tried.

206

00:21:23,482 --> 00:21:29,489

When they fail, their failure must be but a challenge to others.

207

00:21:35,496 --> 00:21:42,504

Coming up next in search of continues with the probe into why the death of Glenn Miller was never properly investigated.

208

00:21:42,504 --> 00:21:49,513

Then 20th century with Mike Wallace looks at the attack on the cruise ship Achille Laro and other terrorist acts against Americans.

209

00:21:53,518 --> 00:22:07,535

Music