

## Amelia Earhart

Amelia Mary Earhart was an American aviator who became famous because she was one of the first female pilots. She disappeared in July 1937 during an around-the-world flight.

Earhart began taking flying lessons in 1920 when she was 23 years old. Soon, Earhart had bought her own plane and was participating in events to break aviation records. In 1926, a group of people approached her to see if she would like to be the first woman to fly across the Atlantic. She jumped at the chance, even though she would only be a passenger on the flight because she did not have experience flying a multi-engine plane or flying by instruments. She described this experience in her book, *20 Hours, 40 Minutes*.

By 1932, Earhart was ready to make a solo flight across the Atlantic. So far, Charles Lindbergh had been the only person to accomplish this feat. She made the flight in record time, 14 hours and 56 minutes. She landed in Northern Ireland. The flight made Earhart a household name. When she returned to the United States, New Yorkers threw her a tickertape parade.

In 1935, she began making plans for her most ambitious project, a flight around the world. The flight would involve two major firsts: She would be the first woman to fly around the world, and she would travel the longest possible distance by circumnavigating the earth at the equator.

Earhart's around-the-world flight began on May 21, 1937, with her saying that she was planning to give up long-distance stunt flying after this excursion. By late June, she had flown 22,000 miles, with 7,000 more miles to go. Officials believe her plane went down on July 2, but no one is sure what happened. Several

