



THE NJ DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERAN AFFAIRS



OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING



31 JULY 2024 NEWSLETTER:

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National Hire a Veteran Day

**JULY
25TH**

HISTORY

Marine Corps veteran Dan Caporale, founder of Hire Our Heroes, established National Hire a Veteran Day in 2017 as a call to action for hiring veterans. Each year, around 200,000 military personnel transition to civilian life, seeking employment. The NJ Department of Military and Veteran Affairs recognizes this day for raising awareness and encouraging companies to harness the skills and discipline veterans offer. By connecting veterans with employers, National Hire a Veteran Day intends to ensure that all veterans receive the opportunities and recognition they deserve for their service. There are several resources available to veterans. Utilize and share the resources provided here.

RESOURCES

NJ Department of Military and Veteran Affairs Vacancies

Job Vacancies -

<https://www.nj.gov/military/admin/vacancy/>

US Department of Labor

Veteran's Employment and Training Service -

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/employers/hire>

NJ Department of Labor

Services for Job Seeking Veterans -

<https://www.nj.gov/parole/docs/veterans/Veterans%20JobSeekers%20Services.pdf>



AMELIA EARHART AVIATOR



When one thinks of Amelia Earhart in the modern day, the most immediate thought may be of her mysterious disappearance. Over the course of the past century Amelia Earhart's untimely fate has been mythologized in the American consciousness. So much as to nearly mystify her as a folklore hero within the same vein as Paul Bunyan or John Henry. The sensationalism of the tragedy that ended her attempt at being the first woman to circumnavigate the globe overshadows a lifetime of achievements and honors and, unfortunately, obfuscates the woman herself. A passionate, driven, sometimes insecure individual who was always in a race against the world around her. Earhart was a pioneer, not just of the sky, but of what women in the early 20th Century could accomplish if afforded the same opportunities as their male colleagues.

'MILLIE' AND 'PIDGE'

Born in Kansas to Samuel 'Edwin' Stanton Earhart and Amelia 'Amy' Earhart in July of 1897. Amelia Mary Earhart was named for her two grandmothers, Amelia Josephine Harres and Mary Wells Patton which was a family tradition. Earhart would have one younger sibling, Grace, and the two were inseparable. Nicknamed Millie and Pidge, they would spend the days adventuring around their neighborhood collecting small animals and insects and climbing trees. Amelia was even known to hunt rats as a child with a small rifle. The two sisters' mother felt disdain for the traditional tropes of femininity at the time; she'd have the girls wear pants like bloomers much to the disapproval of the children's grandmother. While Earhart enjoyed the freedom of movement pants provided, Earhart was always self-conscious about how wearing pants separated her from the other girls in the neighborhood. Her first almost-encounter with flying was when her uncle assisted her in constructing a ramp in the backyard meant to emulate a rollercoaster Earhart had seen on a trip to St. Louis, Missouri. She used the ramp to launch herself off the roof of her family's shed. When she emerged bruised and bleeding from the makeshift box Earhart had used for the boxcar she stood up smiling and said to her sister, "Oh Pidge, it's just like flying!"

'THE GIRL IN BROWN WHO WALKS ALONE'

Earhart would be taken to Chicago to live with her mother in 1915. She searched throughout the area for a school with a good science program to attend but was dismayed to find that the school most local to her had a chemistry lab she likened to a 'kitchen sink'. She would settle on Hyde Park High School and only spent one semester there, which she detested. When she graduated in 1916 the blurb for her photo in the class yearbook read "A.E.-the girl in brown who walks alone". During her childhood and well into her teenage years Earhart kept a scrapbook which catalogued stories of women succeeding in what at the time were considered male dominated professions. Earhart had an eye on defying what was expected for her at a very young age. She would go on to becoming a nurse's aid after a visit to her sister in Toronto in 1917 exposed her to many injured soldiers returning home from World War I. Health issues would soon begin to manifest in Earhart in the form of pneumonia and chronic sinusitis. The latter of these conditions she would manage for the rest of her life, often requiring a drainage tube taped to her face that she would cover with a bandage. While in Toronto Earhart attended her first Air Fair, the standout exhibition was a performance by a famous WWI ace pilot which left an indelible impression on Earhart. "I believe that little red airplane said something to me as it swished by", Earhart would later say of the event. On December 28th, 1920, Earhart (now 23 years old) would attend an aerial meet in Long Beach, California. She asked her father about potentially setting up a passenger flight. The next day Earhart paid \$10 for a short flight with famed air racer Frank Hawks. After that experience, Earhart knew she couldn't do anything else but be a pilot. The next month Earhart would get into contact with female pilot Neta Snook to teach her to fly. Twelve hours of flight instruction would cost \$500 (over eight thousand dollars today). Following flight instruction, Earhart purchased a secondhand yellow biplane and nicknamed it 'The Canary'. After her first successful landing, Earhart would go and buy a proper leather aviator's jacket. Due to facing mockery from other male pilots, she slept in the jacket for a month and intentionally stained it with oil to make it look more aged and authentic.





EARHART'S FLIGHT MILESTONES

- **October 22nd, 1922:** First woman to fly at 14,000 feet.
- **June 17th-18th, 1928:** First woman to fly across the Atlantic. (20 Hours and 40 minutes)
- **June 25th, 1930:** Set the speed record for women aviators at 100 kilometers an hour.
- **July 25th, 1930:** Set a speed record for 181.18 mph over a 3K course.
- **April 8th, 1931:** Set an autogyro altitude record for women at 18,415 feet.
- **May 20-21st, 1932:** First woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. (14 hours & 56 minutes)
- **August 24-25th, 1932:** First woman to fly across the continent solo, setting the women's transcontinental speed record. (2,447.8 miles in 19 hours & 5 minutes)
- **July 7-8th, 1935:** Breaks her previous transcontinental flight speed record. (17 hours and 7 minutes)
- **January 11th, 1935:** First person to fly solo nonstop across the Pacific Ocean, from Honolulu to Oakland, CA. (2,408 miles)
- **April 19-20th, 1935:** First person to fly solo from Los Angeles to Mexico City (13 hours & 23 minutes)
- **June 1st, 1937:** First person to fly from the Red Sea to India (Part of the final flight)

Amelia Earhart's first taste of an oceanic flight came in 1928 where she joined Wilmer Stultz and Louis Gordon on their flight across the Atlantic. The expedition was sponsored by publisher George P. Putnam who would later become Earhart's husband. The journey aboard the plane named 'Friendship' is thoroughly documented in Earhart's book *20 Hrs. 40 min*, which would become a hit for Putnam's publishing house. The journey propelled Earhart to celebrity status in the states and when she returned to America from the trip she was greeted with a ticker-tape parade and a reception by then-President Calvin Coolidge at the White House. The subsequent book and lecture tour Earhart went on caused her to become a favorite in the press. Papers dubbed her 'Lady Lindy' (For her similarities to famed aviator Charles Lindbergh) or 'Queen of the Air'. Earhart's P.O. box was flooded with fan mail from across the country. A not insubstantial amount from both men and women fixated on the fact that she wore pants. Earhart received dozens of written marriage proposals and even early fanfiction about herself. She would read most of it. The influence she held over the women's liberation movement was massive, encouraging millions of women to seek greater autonomy and agency over their lives. Department Store Macy's launched an 'active living' line of clothing entirely inspired by Earhart's functional style choices and it became wildly successful. Earhart accepted a role as an associate editor at *Cosmopolitan* magazine to promote not only aviation but to try and recruit more women into the field. Earhart was always eager for the next big achievement, and in 1928 she became the first woman to fly solo across the continent and back. Earhart also involved herself in the air derby scene (racing) and would compete in the first Santa Monica-to-Cleveland Women's Air Derby in 1929 where she placed third. By 1930 Earhart became an official at the National Aeronautic Association where she campaigned for the establishment of flight records for women separate from those of men. Still working with derby organizations between flight projects, Earhart became the President of one group called the Ninety-Nines, also in 1930. The Ninety-Nines were a network of all women pilots offering each other moral support and trying to advance the role women had in aviation. In 1934 the Bendix Trophy Race banned women from competing. As a direct response, Earhart protested by refusing to fly actor Mary Pickford to the race to conduct the opening ceremony.

(Right) Amelia Earhart and her husband George Putnam in their home in 1931



PIONEER

Amelia Earhart would go on to claim many firsts, not just for women, but in aviation as a whole. For being the first woman to fly across the Atlantic solo in 1932, Earhart was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross by Congress and the Cross Knight of the Legion of Honor from the French government. That flight was arduous and potentially deadly, with high winds blowing in from the North and the threat of ice buildup on the machinery. She missed her target of Paris and landed instead in Ireland, north of Derry. Earhart became close friends with Eleanor Roosevelt, who once bonded over a spontaneous flight Earhart piloted the two of them between DC and Baltimore. The two shared many interests and would correspond frequently about the advancement of women's rights in America. People would often write to Earhart asking about if she was ever afraid during her flights. In *20 hrs. 40 min.* she would write, "It would sound more exciting if I only could admit having been shockingly frightened. But I honestly wasn't. Of course I realized there was a measure of danger. Obviously I faced the possibility of not returning when first I considered going. Once faced and settled there wasn't any good reason to refer to it again. After all, even when driving one admits tacitly there is danger, but one doesn't dwell on the result of losing the front wheels or having the rear end fall out on a mountain."

UNCONVENTIONAL WEDDING VOWS

After he proposed six times, Amelia Earhart eventually agreed to marry her publisher, George P. Putnam. The conditions were that she wanted an egalitarian marriage where each party contributed, and she kept her last name. Earhart also had a very blasé attitude towards infidelity. Her very public wedding vows were recorded as, "I want you to understand I shall not hold you to any medieval code of faithfulness to me nor shall I consider myself bound to you similarly. I may have to keep some place where I can go to be by myself, now and then, for I cannot guarantee to endure at all times the confinement of even an attractive cage."

It's with that deterministic attitude that Amelia Earhart would embark on her most ambitious expedition; an attempt to circumnavigate the globe, close to the equatorial line. There was an aborted first attempt in 1937 that had to be abandoned due to a non-fatal crash that occurred on transit between Oakland and Honolulu. The second attempt, flown in the then-modern Lockheed Electra aircraft, departed from Miami, FL on June 1st, 1937, with navigator Fred Noonan. The trip went well, traveling from South America to Africa to India and to New Guinea by June 29th. They were in the last leg of the journey. 7:58 am on July 2nd the USCGC ship *Itasca* at Howland Island received the last radio transmission Earhart would make. Earhart was trying to get a radio bearing and requested the *Itasca* to transmit to them in Morse Code. Earhart never arrived. Much has been speculated on and theorized about her disappearance, but we should not let that mystery overshadow the legacy Amelia Earhart forged for all women and the full life that she lived as an individual inside and outside of the cockpit. In 1967, pilot Ann Pellegrino completed the course Earhart attempted on the 30th anniversary of her disappearance. Upon approaching Earhart's last known location, Pellegrino dropped a rose wreath over Howland Island.