

Newly Discovered Photo Shows Amelia Earhart May Have Survived Plane Crash



Summary: A History Channel documentary claims that Amelia Earhart was captured by the Japanese instead of killed in a plane crash.

One of America's greatest mysteries is what happened to Amelia Earhart? The legendary female pilot vanished 80 years ago during a round-the-world flight, but a new photo appears to show that she had survived a crash landing in the Marshall Islands.

According to *NBC News*, a photo was newly discovered in the National Archives, and it appears to show Earhart and her navigator Fred Noonan on a dock with Japanese soldiers present.

While it is not for certain that the woman and man are Earhart and Noonan, experts said that the photo appears undoctored and legitimate.

"When you pull out, and when you see the analysis that's been done, I think it leaves no doubt to the viewers that that's Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan," Shawn Henry, a former FBI executive assistant director, told *NBC News*.

The discovery was made as part of a History Channel special called "Amelia Earhart: The Lost Evidence" that airs Sunday, and the documentary will examine the mystery of her disappearance and introduce testimony regarding the photograph.

Dorothy Cochrane, the curator for the Aeronautics Department at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, told *CNN* that she understands why people are so interested in Earhart's story.

"I don't blame people for wanting to know," said Cochrane. "It is one of the greatest mysteries of the 20th century because she was so well known."

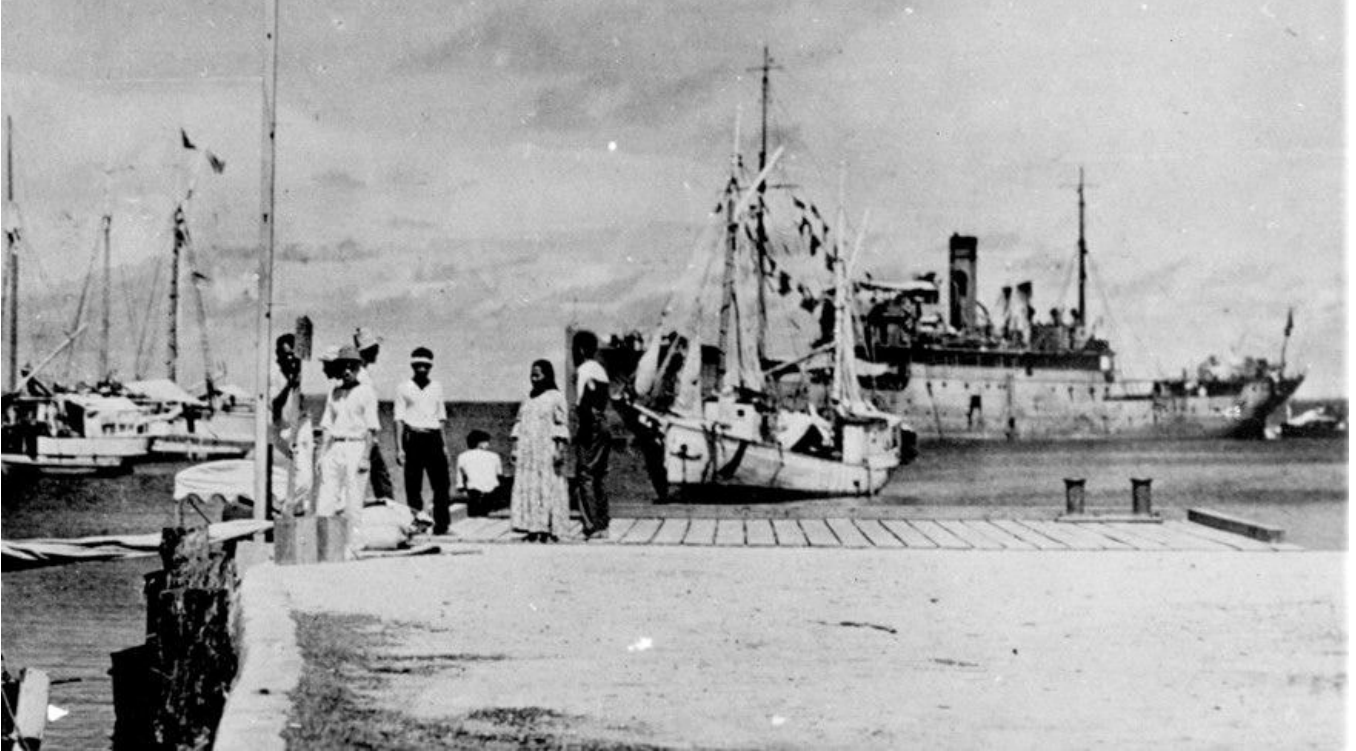
Earhart attempted to become the first woman to fly across the globe in 1937, but she disappeared on July 2. She was declared dead two years later when the U.S. government concluded that her plane had crashed in the Pacific Ocean. Her remains and the plane were never found.

The investigative team behind the History Channel's special believe that Earhart and Noonan ended up blown off course and were captured by the Japanese. They said that they think the photo of the two was taken by someone spying for the U.S.

Japanese officials told *NBC News* that they had no records of Earhart being in their custody. However, Japanese locals told the organization that people had seen Earhart's plane crash before she and Noonan were allegedly taken away.

In the photo, a woman who resembles Earhart sits on the dock with her back to the camera while a man who looks like Noonan stands to the far left. Facial recognition experts claim that the man is Noonan based off of Noonan's distinctive nose.

See photo below:



Cochrane told *CNN* that the photo presented was "interesting" but not "definitive" and that there was no way of knowing what had happened to Earhart.

"People take photos and interpret them, and they're free to do that," Cochrane said. "It has not persuaded me."

Cochrane said that she preferred to believe that Earhart had died quickly rather than spend her life captured by the Japanese.

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What do you think of the History Channel's claim? Let us know in the comments below.