Dear Travelers:

In 2015, we invite you to explore one of the greatest mysteries of all time on this Voyage in Search of Amelia Earhart! This is a first time ever opportunity, and we hope you will join us!

We developed this trip in association with TIGHAR, an organization which has been searching for Amelia Earhart the last 25 years.

Our trip will begin with flights from Los Angeles to Fiji where we will have a festive welcome, including an introductory lecture and traditional Fijian fire walking.

The next day, we will board the 130-passenger motor vessel Reef Endeavour and head to Tivua, Rotuma, and Funafuti Islands on our 1000-mile journey to Nikumaroro (formerly Gardner Island) where TIGHAR believes Amelia Earhart’s plane landed (see the brief summary of evidence on overleaf of this brochure).

We will be traveling to one of the most remote parts of the Pacific Ocean - the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) where Nikumaroro Island is found. It is the largest marine sanctuary in the world. Experts from TIGHAR will travel with us as well as Betchart naturalist leaders, including Bob Nansen.

We will have fascinating lectures on what we know about Amelia Earhart’s disappearance (and what we would like to know). We will also learn about Pacific Ocean oceanography, coral reefs, and the people of Melanesia and Polynesia. It will be a rich experience!

At Nikumaroro, we will divide into teams (with TIGHAR and Betchart leaders) to explore the island, lagoon, and reef edge. The ship carries a 40-passenger shaded glass bottom boat, which will be excellent for exploring the underwater world along the reef edge. (Another boat is available for scuba divers.) There will be opportunities for swimming, snorkeling, and kayaking.

Teams will boat and walk to the main sites identified on past TIGHAR research expeditions. A special focus will be exploring the beach and beach edge adjacent to the colonial village where plane parts have been found in the past. Teams will also visit the “7” Site where bones and other items were found.

We will gather in the evening to review anything we have found and to confirm plans for the next day.

The voyage will give you amazing insights into the vast amount of work TIGHAR has done in Search of Amelia Earhart. And who knows, we may find a missing piece of the puzzle about Amelia Earhart’s disappearance!

We hope you will join us!

Margaret
President, Betchart Expeditions Inc.
For AAAS Travels, Sigma Xi, ACS Expeditions & The Planetary Society
Days 1/3  Los Angeles to Nadi, Fiji
Expedition members depart Los Angeles on a nonstop Fiji Air flight to Nadi ("Nandi"). Cross the International Date Line en route. On the morning of Day 3, arrive and transfer to the Novatel. Enjoy a welcome lunch and introductory lecture. Meet your expedition leaders and the experts from TIGHAR. This evening, gather for a festive dinner and traditional Fijian fire walking.

Day 4  Cultural Overview & Tivua Island
On Board M/V Reef Endeavour
This morning, enjoy a breakfast buffet and lecture on the cultures of the South Pacific with a special focus on the distinctive cultures on our voyage. Transfer to Denarau Harbor and Village for last minute purchases and a bite of lunch before we board M/V Reef Endeavour. We will then sail for Tivua Island 8 miles off shore. After the shipboard safety drill, we will have an afternoon of swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, or optional diving. In the evening, we will sail for Rotuma.

Day 5  At Sea En Route to Rotuma
(320 nautical miles)
Today, we will have a day at sea, an ideal time to continue our lectures on the disappearance of Amelia Earhart. During our voyage, we will also have lectures on the marine world of the South Pacific, oceanography, impact of sea level rise, the southern sky, and other topics. There will be a special briefing today on Rotuma. A small island (13 km x 4 km) which is a shield volcano with multiple cones, one reaching 840 feet at Mount Suelof. It is surrounded by coral reef and has a distinctive population of Polynesian descent.

Day 6  Rotuma Island to Funafuti
(268 nautical miles)
We will arrive this morning at Rotuma Island. According to oral history, the first inhabitants came to Rotuma from Samoa. Later, other islanders came from Tonga and Kiribati ("Kiribass"). Captain Edwards of the HMS Pandora was the first European to sight the island in 1791 when he landed in search of sailors from the mutiny on the Bounty. It became a favorite stop of whaling ships and in the 1840s missionaries arrived. The majority of Rotumans now live elsewhere in Fiji, while the 2,500 who live in Rotuma maintain a traditional life. We will explore the island this morning and depart at mid-day for Funafuti.

Day 7  Funafuti
This morning, we will have an introductory briefing on Funafuti, and continue our lecture series. Funafuti is the capital of Tuvalu and is a true atoll with a lagoon 20 km x 11 km, with 30 islands and 9 villages; the largest island, Fogafale, is heavily populated. In 1837, Sir Edward David, an Australian geologist, drilled here in an effort to substantiate Darwin’s theory on the formation of coral atolls (the hole can still be seen). Funafuti was also a key location during WWII. It marked the beginning of the US advance in the central Pacific. Some war relics can be seen around the lagoon and the runway on Fogafale was built by the Americans during WWII. Depart for Nikumaroro Island this evening.

Day 8  At Sea En Route to Nikumaroro
(445 nautical miles)
Today, our lecture program will continue and we will prepare for our visit to Nikumaroro Island. We will divide into teams for our visits to Nikumaroro, each with a TIGHAR or Betchart team leader. There will be a briefing on the Nikumaroro Island visit, and we will review how we will proceed. Some teams will explore land-based island sites. Others will take the 40-passenger glass bottom boat along the reef edge or in the lagoon, and can swim, snorkel, or kayak. Diving is an option for those interested (optional cost for diving).

Day 9  Nikumaroro Island
We’ll arrive at Nikumaroro at mid-day, and circumnavigate the island. In the northwest we will see the wreck of the SS Norwich City, which went aground in 1929, and the place where TIGHAR hypothesizes that Amelia Earhart landed. To the south is the 1939-63 government station and village, where TIGHAR has found airplane parts. Farther southeast are Aukaraima and Ameriki, a U.S. long range navigation (LORAN) station during World War II.

Days 10/11/12  Nikumaroro Island
For the next three days, we will explore the major sites on Nikumaroro where research has found what may be evidence of Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan having landed here. We will visit the sites with our team leaders and will have an opportunity to see if we can find anything pertinent to their being here. We will transfer to the island by the glass-bottomed boat or tenders, landing on slippery, wave-washed uplifted coral. We will then walk to the sites which can be very hot. Everyone will carry bottles of water and come back to the landing for lunch.
Some teams will go out in the glass bottom boat to cruise the reef edge. Swimming, snorkeling and kayaking will be possible, and diving is an option. All participants must follow their team leaders’ guidelines, including identifying the location of any discovery by GPS, and photographing any findings in situ. Any discoveries are the property of the Kiribati government and are not to be taken by team members. Site visits may include:

- The “7” Site where 1940 British records indicate a discovery of a cranium and a total of 13 bones. (The “7” Site is a natural clearing in the Scaeva frustescens bushes which resembles the numeral “7.”) The bones were shipped to Suva in 1940. Archaeological study by TIGHAR occurred there in 2001, 2007, and 2010, which has produced a good deal of data suggestive of visitor(s) from the 1930’s, including bottles, a small cosmetic ointment pot, zipper, and mirror compact.

- The Bivouac Site where in October 1937, British colonial officers Harry Maucler and Eric Bevington saw signs of someone’s ‘overnight bivouac.’ This is where parts of a woman’s shoe and man’s shoe were found by TIGHAR in 1991. The woman’s shoe was identified as a ‘Blucher-style oxford’ dating to the 1930’s (a style Amelia wore on her flight).

- The Colonial Village Site was settled in 1938-40 and abandoned in 1963. TIGHAR has recovered dozens of fragments of aircraft structure from the deserted village, used to make handicrafts, combs, etc. Many of the aluminum pieces are consistent with a Lockheed Electra like Earhart’s.

- The Nutirian Shore where the SS Norwich City was grounded in 1929. A photograph taken by colonial officer Eric Bevington in 1937 shows an anomaly on the edge of the island’s northwestern reef that very much looks like an airplane’s landing gear.

There will be a daily recap late in the day, and the goals for the next day established.

**Days 13/14 Nikumaroro Island to Wallis Island (523 nautical miles)**
We will wrap up our projects on Niku on the morning of Day 13 and depart at noon for Wallis Island. The afternoon will be for rest, working on notes, and evaluation of the Niku visit. On Day 14, our lecture program will continue.

**Days 15/16 Wallis Island to Futuna Island (126 nautical miles)**
This morning, we will have a lecture on Wallis Island (Uvea), which is a small Polynesian kingdom with a monarchy. It is one of three traditional kingdoms of Wallis and Futuna. The island is volcanic, whose highest peak is Mount Lulu Fakaheta (131m high). There are several large lakes which reflect the volcanic origin, with steep walls in almost perfect circles. Uvea was renamed ‘Wallis’ after navigator Captain Samuel Wallis discovered it while sailing the HMS Dolphin there on August 16, 1767, following his discovery of Tahiti. The islands are now an overseas French collective. We will explore Wallis and then depart for Futuna. Then on Day 16, we will explore Futuna in the morning and depart for Nadi. (355 nautical miles).

**Day 17 Nadi to USA**
Arrive Nadi and disembark in the early evening. Transfer to the Nadi Airport for your flight back to Los Angeles. Arrive LAX the same day. Take connecting flights home.

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**RESERVATIONS #1390**

Yes! I want to join the *Voyage in Search of Amelia Earhart, June 17–July 3, 2015,* offered by Betchart Expeditions. Please reserve space(s) on the expedition. As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for $____ (10%) by person), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s): ___________________________ Age __ Sex ___

Name(s): ___________________________ Age __ Sex ___

Address: ____________________________ State __ Zip ______

City ____________________________ State __ Zip ______

Phone: Home (____) ______

Work (____) ______

Email: _____________________________

Please Mail To:
In Search of Amelia Earhart 2015
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435

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**Amelia Earhart 1897–1937**

Amelia Earhart, the famous pioneering pilot, set many flight records. Her mysterious disappearance has endured in the American consciousness. Amelia was the most famous female aviator, a best selling author, designer of a line of clothing and accessories, public speaker, and heroine to many. In 1928 she was the first woman to fly as a passenger across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1932 she became the first woman to pilot a plane across the Atlantic.

Amelia embarked on her around-the-world flight at the equator in June 1937 with Fred Noonan as her navigator. On the third to the last leg, from New Guinea to Howland Island, she and her navigator went missing. An extensive search by air and sea turned up no trace of her or the plane. Many theories have surfaced over the years, one that she landed on uninhabited Nikumaroro Island south of Howland Island and perished.
Explore One of the Greatest Mysteries of all Time!  
In Search of Amelia Earhart  
June 17–July 3, 2015

**Costs & Conditions**

**Expedition Fee:** Is based on twin share per person (depending on cabin category) plus group air fare of $1,535 including tax with Fiji Air from Los Angeles to Nadi, Fiji, round trip.
- Deck D: Dining Room level with porches $7,195
- Deck C: Lounge Deck staterooms with 2 windows $7,895
- Deck B: Upper Deck staterooms with 2 windows $8,495
- Deck A: Top Deck Suites with 2 windows $10,995

**Single Supplement:** is 15% of the cabin rate on Decks B, C, or D.

**We encourage all singles to bring a roommate, or we may be able to pair you up with a roommate.**

**Expedition Fee Includes:** Group transfers in Nadi; hotel in Nadi; 3 meals and firewalking in Nadi; transportation by ship from June 20–July 8; accommodations based on twin share in comfortable cabins with private bath; meals and activities on board ship; leadership and lecture program; administration.

**Expedition Fee Does Not Include:** International air fare (quoted separately); independent transfers; lunch Day 4, tips on board ship; optional diving, alcoholic beverages, snacks, sodas, bottled water; laundry, internet use, phone, fax, passport, travel insurance, or other personal expenses; foreign airport departure taxes.

**What to Expect:** This is an expedition in the true sense for the travel enthusiast who would like to explore one of the world’s greatest mysteries—the disappearance of Amelia Earhart! We will sail from Fiji north 1000 nautical miles via Faturaliti to Nikumaroro Gilbert Island, in the Phoenix Islands Protected Area in the midPacific, one of the most remote archipelago and finest marine reserves in the world.

We will travel at a speed of 8 to 11 knots on board a comfortable 130-passenger ship. We will have a lecture program about the search for Amelia Earhart, geology, marine biology, and other topics, with excellent meals and camaraderie on board ship.

We will learn why, where, and how the TIGHAR group has searched for Amelia on Nikumaroro Island, and how we might further their research in our time on Nikumaroro. We will disembark in groups to explore the island and reef edge. It will be hot and there will be long walks in full sun to reach some sites. The tender navigates a narrow channel cut in the coral where you will disembark. Stepping onto the coral can be slippery and challenging (we’ll give you a hand, but you should be sure toed or plan to mainly explore in the glass bottom boat which leads directly from the ship). There will be diving, snorkeling, and swimming opportunities. We will investigate sites on the island to look for artifacts which might provide more clues about Amelia’s possible presence on the island. Typically it will be hot midday (80’s to 100’s). We will be there during the dry season, so little rainfall is expected, mainly lots of sunshine.

**M/V Reef Endeavor:** Has 65 staterooms and cabins with private facilities; a fresh water swimming pool, two jacuzzis, and mini-gym. There are a 40-passage glass-bottomed boat, and snorkeling and dive tenders with a Filian crew. Also two lounges and a bar on Deck C, a library on Deck B, and bar/lounge on the Sun deck.

**Airfare & Airline Ticketing:** Group flights from Los Angeles are on Fiji Air. Please contact Marisa for flight information. AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**Reservations, Deposits & Payments:** To reserve a space, please contact Marisa Betchart Expeditions Inc.
- Phone (800) 252-4910 (USA) or (408) 252-4910 (International)
- Fax (408) 252-1444
- Email: Marisa@betchartexpeditions.com

Final payment is due 180 days before departure (December 15, 2014).

**Cancellations & Refunds:** The initial deposit is refundable up to 180 days before departure. Less a handling fee of $250 per person.  
There is no refund for any cancellation within 180 days of departure. Trip cancellation insurance will be offered. No refunds are made for unused services.

**Responsibility:** Betchart Expeditions Inc., the American Association for the Advancement of Science/AAAS, Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society, American Chemical Society (ACS), and The Planetary Society act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels, and exercise every care possible. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident or irregularity in connection with the service of any airline, ship, motorcoach, or other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. Operation of the ship is solely the responsibility of Captain Cook Cruises. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delays or changes in air or other services, weather, sickness, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as our rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or to reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any surcharge increase, or fuel increase will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued will constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airline concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance.

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Exploring Amelia Earhart’s Disappearance
By Tom King, Senior Archaeologist
The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR)

Amelia Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, disappeared over the Pacific in 1937.
What happened to them?

There are three main hypotheses—that is, educated guesses that can be tested through research and exploration:
1. They crashed at sea;
2. They were captured by the Japanese military and died; or
3. They landed on Nikumaroro, an uninhabited coral atoll in what is now the Republic of Kiribati, survived for awhile but finally died.

For over 25 years, The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR) has been at work testing the Nikumaroro Hypothesis. We’ve made nine trips to “Niku,” as we call it, to do surveys on land and in the water. We’ve inspected other nearby islands, and done historical work in Fiji, Funafuti, England, and other parts of the world. We’ve done research in oceanography, meteorology, radio science, chemistry, forensic anthropology, and other disciplines. We’ve studied everything from 1930s cosmetics to the behavior of coconut crabs. We think we have a pretty good idea what happened to Earhart and Noonan, though we don’t know for sure.

Here’s our evidence in a very small nutshell:

- Earhart and Noonan were headed for Howland Island, on the equator north of Niku. To judge from the strength of their radio signals, they got close. The last universally accepted radio message from them said they were flying on a course of 157-337 degrees. That course, plotted through the neighborhood of Howland Island, also passes close to Niku.
- After they disappeared, over 100 radio messages were received at stations around the Pacific that were logged as possible messages from her. When the U.S. Navy failed to find her, the messages were dismissed as hoaxes, but TIGHAR’s research suggests that at least half of them weren’t.
- About three months after they disappeared, a British team exploring Niku for possible settlement saw debris suggesting someone’s “bivouac,” but didn’t make anything of it.
- In a photo of the British team tock of the island’s northern reef, there’s an odd image of oil in one corner, caught by accident. Forensic imaging experts say it looks like an airplane’s landing gear.
- Deep on the reef face below where that possible landing gear was in 1937 (it’s gone now), robotic imaging has revealed what may be airplane parts.
- An settlement was established on the island in 1939; it lasted till 1963. The settlements—from Kiribati and Tuvalu—had used airplane parts; they had stories about this, and we’ve recovered fragments of aircraft aluminum in the ruins of their village.
- In 1940, they found human bones—thirteen of them, near the south end of the island, associated with the remains of a man’s shoe, a woman’s shoe, a sextant box, and a few other artifacts. Sent to Fiji, the bones were identified by a medical doctor as those of a European or mixed-race man. The bones and artifacts have been lost, but we have the doctor’s notes and measurements. Forensic anthropologists examined the data and concluded—with caveats—that the bones suggest a European woman of Earhart’s stature.
- We’re pretty sure we’ve located the site where the bones were found, and we’ve excavated part of it. We’ve found the remains of campfires with bird, fish, and turtle bones, clam shells, and some very interesting artifacts—like:
  - The remains of a woman’s compact dating to the 1930s;
  - A jar, also from the 1930s, that apparently contained a mercury-based cosmetic used to lighten freckles;
  - Other cosmetic bottles from the 1930s; and
  - Two bottles that were apparently left sitting upright in one of the fires, perhaps in an effort to boil water—there is no fresh water on the island except what can be caught during rain squalls.

But what about the other hypotheses?

The one that probably most people believe, because it’s the simplest, is that Earhart and Noonan never found any island, crashed into the ocean, and sank. That may be what happened, but it doesn’t account for the radio messages and the various things found on Niku.

The other popular hypothesis is that Earhart and Noonan flew into the Japanese occupied islands of Micronesia—most likely the Marshall Islands—and there were captured and either were executed or died of disease. Many, many stories have been told in support of this idea, by residents of Micronesia and by men and women of the U.S. military during and after World War II. But that’s what they are—stories, and while they might be true, they also might not be: no one has produced hard evidence. In recent years, psychological research has demonstrated that even sincere eyewitness testimony by honest people can be seriously distorted by a variety of factors. Another problem is that the “Japanese capture” hypothesis requires that the U.S. and Japanese governments have hidden the truth all these years. Maybe that’s what’s happened, but it makes for an awfully complicated hypothesis.

We prefer a simpler one—they couldn’t find Howland, they did find Nikumaroro, they landed there, and they died. That’s the one we’ll keep investigating until we either prove it correct or decide that we’re wrong.

For further information on the Nikumaroro hypothesis and TIGHAR’s work, visit tighar.org, or see:
Thirteen Bones (a novel) by Tom King (2009)

For further information on the "crashed and sank" hypothesis, visit http://eigenlong.com/earhart/crash-and-sink.html or see:
Amelia Earhart: The Mystery Solved, by Elgen and Marie Long (2009)

For further information on the "Japanese capture" hypothesis, visit http://earharttruth.com or see:
Amelia Earhart: The Truth at Last, by Mike Campbell (2012)
(All the above books are available from Amazon.com and other booksellers)