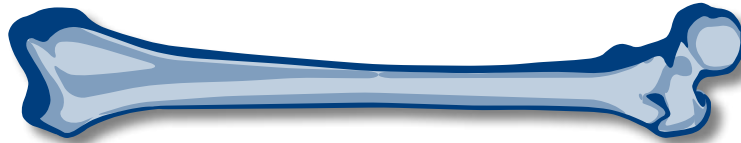


TIGHAR NEWS

June 2011

FIJI BONE SEARCH III



On Tuesday, 10 May 2011, a TIGHAR team arrived in Fiji to search for the partial skeleton, believed to be Earhart's, that was sent there from Nikumaroro in 1941.

This was TIGHAR's third attempt to locate the missing bones but, for the first time, we had permission to search the Colonial War Memorial Hospital – arguably the most likely place for the bones to have been stored. The team of four experienced TIGHAR researchers – Dr. Jon Overholt, Gary Quigg, Lonnie Schorer, and Karl Kern – worked closely with the American embassy, Fiji governmental authorities and hospital officials to carry out a thorough search for the bones of a castaway discovered on Gardner Island (now Nikumaroro) in 1940 and sent to British colonial headquarters in Fiji for analysis. Although originally thought to possibly be the remains of Amelia Earhart, the head of the Medical School measured the bones and judged them to be those of a man.

The thirteen bones were measured and evaluated in 1941 by the then head of the Colonial Medical School, Dr. David Hoodless. Hoodless noted that the poor condition of the bones, especially the ends chewed by crabs, made identification of the sex and ethnicity of the individual difficult. Applying the criteria available at that time, he judged the remains to be those of a European or possibly mixed-race male. Satisfied that the partial skeleton was not that

of Amelia Earhart, the British High Commissioner rejected suggestions that the bones be sent to Australia for more sophisticated evaluation and decided not to inform American authorities of the discovery. On April 12, 1941, Dr. Hoodless was instructed to “retain the remains until further notice.” What happened to the bones after that is a mystery.

In 1998 we found Hoodless' notes and the measurements upon which he based his identification of the bones as male. Re-evaluation of the measurements by two independent forensic anthropologists using currently available computer databases found the measurements to be consistent



The Fiji Bone Search III team, left to right: Lonnie Schorer, Karl Kern, Gary Quigg, Jon Overholt. Photo courtesy Lonnie Schorer.



with a female of northern European ancestry who stood roughly Earhart's height. If we can locate the bones — assuming they still exist — we should be able retrieve DNA and confirm or deny that they are Earhart's.

TIGHAR teams in 1999 and 2003 reviewed official records of burials and cremations, inspected collections of bones in museums and medical schools and conducted dozens of interviews, but there were a number of places, in particular the giant Colonial War Memorial Hospital, that our teams had never been able to search. The 2011 search was organized by Dr. Jon Overholt who initiated a physician-to-physician dialog with the hospital's chief medical officer and with the American embassy in Suva, Fiji. With expectations of access to previously unsearched areas, Jon recruited a largely self-funded team of veteran TIGHAR researchers. On the ground in Suva, Jon transferred operational leadership to Gary.

Building on the excellent work of the 1999 and 2003 teams, the 2011 team cultivated and enjoyed an unprecedented level of cooperation from the hospital staff and Fiji government officials which enabled them to performed a detailed search of the hospital and a number of other likely but previously prohibited or unknown venues.

And they found bones — lots of bones — forgotten bones — old bones — damaged bones — bones that nobody knew were there. They did not, however, find a group of bones that matches the selection sent to Fiji in 1940. There is, of course, the possibility that the collection was dispersed at some time and that "our" bones got mixed in with other bones. The excellent connections and cooperation the team established in Suva will enable us to explore that possibility as well as several other leads that the team didn't have time to follow up on. The search goes on.



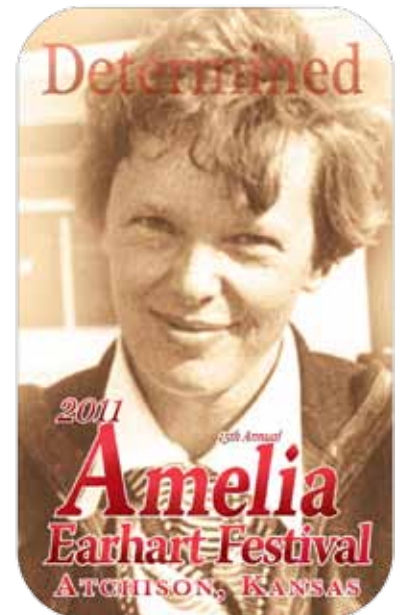
*A sampling of bones.
Photo courtesy Lonnie Schorer.*

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Gillespie to Speak at Earhart Festival

TIGHAR Executive Director Ric Gillespie will speak at the Amelia Earhart Festival in Atchison, Kansas, the town where Amelia was born and spent much of her childhood. Atchison's annual celebration of AE's accomplishments and legacy is held on the third weekend in July, this year Friday July 15 and Saturday July 16. The festivities include a country music concert Friday night and a full day of events on Saturday climaxing with a fireworks extravaganza on the riverfront. Ric's presentation "Finding Amelia" is scheduled for 2:30 PM on Saturday in the 200 seat Atchison Community Theatre. The program is free and open to the public.

In addition to Ric, several members of TIGHAR's Earhart Project Advisory Council are planning to be there. TIGHAR members and anyone interested in learning more about TIGHAR's progress in solving the mystery of Earhart's disappearance are encouraged to join us in Atchison. This is the first time TIGHAR has been invited to attend this event. In the past, presentations at the festival concerning Earhart's fate have often featured enthusiasts who are devotees of the theory that Amelia was abducted by the Japanese. This year, all of the fireworks may not be on the riverfront.



TIGHAR Aviation Archaeology

Field School August 3 – 7, 2011

Registration is still open for the 2011 edition of TIGHAR's popular Field School in Aviation Archaeology. In a day of introductory classroom work followed by four days in the field, participants will learn the principles and basic techniques for finding, examining, and evaluating historic crash sites. Completion of the Field School is a requirement to be eligible for selection for TIGHAR expedition teams.

The subject aircraft for the 2011 Field School will be the historic Douglas B-23 "Dragon" wreck at Loon Lake in the Payette National Forest in northern Idaho. The "Lady of the Lake" remains the most intact WWII wreck surviving in the contiguous U.S. despite the depredations of vandals and forest fires. We have surveyed the site twice before, in 2000 and 2009. The work done by the 2011 Field School will be a valuable addition to TIGHAR's on-going monitoring of this classic preserved-in-situ wreck.

The instructors for the 2011 Field School will be:



**Principal Instructor,
TIGHAR Archaeologist
Megan Lickliter-Mundon**

Megan has a Masters in Archaeology from the University of Edinburgh and is a veteran of TIGHAR's Niku VI expedition to Nikumaroro in 2010.



**Associate Instructor,
TIGHAR Aviation
Archaeologist Craig Fuller**

Craig has extensive experience in wreck location and identification and is a veteran of many TIGHAR field investigations including the 2006 assessment of WWII Japanese aircraft in Yap, Federated States of Micronesia.



**Associate Instructor,
TIGHAR Aviation
Archaeologist Gary Quigg**

Gary has been active in TIGHAR field work for the past twenty-one years including five TIGHAR expeditions to Nikumaroro.



**Assisting – TIGHAR
Executive Director Ric
Gillespie**

Megan Lickliter-Mundon describes what the Field School will cover:

The field school is designed for participants who want to have a solid understanding of the when, why, and how of terrestrial aviation archaeology and the heritage preservation that goes with it. We will use a grid mapping method as established in previous years, and GPS will be used for point reference. Various technology applications, excavation strategies, the basics of stratigraphic profile drawing, and field recording will be emphasized. The finds analysis, of course, will be highly airplane oriented and a parts identification component will be stressed.

Lectures will be conducted on a regular basis on various aspects of archaeological theory, excavation practice and analyses, as well as heritage management and site monitoring. We strive to give students the best instruction in theory vs practice.

At the end of this field course, the students should:

- Understand archaeological research designs and their impacts on field investigations.
- Have competence in field survey, excavation and documentation methods (including basic mapping, line-level, stratigraphic profiling, and excavation techniques).
- Understand basic site formation and site disturbance factors.
- Gain experience in field survey and working in remote settings.
- Develop a working knowledge of metal detecting and GPS use
- Have an understanding and appreciation of heritage sites and public-use archaeology sites.

Note: The Field School involves strenuous outdoor activity.

It's a five-mile hike from the trailhead to the wreck site on a good, but occasionally steep, trail. An outfitter will use mules to transport heavy gear and will provide meals on site, but participants will pack in their own tents and personal gear.

The dates for the 2011 Field School are Wednesday August 3rd through Sunday August 7th. We'll assemble at Boise International Airport at 1 p.m. on August 3rd for the 2.5 hour drive to the hotel in McCall, ID. In McCall we'll do some initial classroom work and have a chance to pick up last minute personal items. On Thursday morning we'll drive to the trailhead, hike to the site, set up camp and get to work. On Sunday morning we'll break camp, hike out, and drive to Boise. For those who need to fly out on Sunday night we'll have you back at the airport by 4 p.m.

Full tuition of \$2,000 includes:

- All instruction
- Transfers from Boise International Airport to the hotel in McCall and from the hotel to and from the Loon Lake trailhead
- Hotel in McCall (excluding meals)
- All outfitter support and meals in the field
- We can accommodate a maximum number of 20 students. A \$500 deposit is required to reserve a place, with the balance due July 1.

Use the enclosed registration form to join us! (or register on line – just click on any link to the TIGHAR Store and then click through to the school registration item.)



The TIGHAR Literary Guild II

By popular demand, the time has come for me to begin writing the second book in the Finding Amelia trilogy – and just as we did with the first book, we're asking that you help fund the writing by joining The TIGHAR Literary Guild. For a contribution of at least \$100 you'll receive a signed copy of the first edition as soon as it's published.



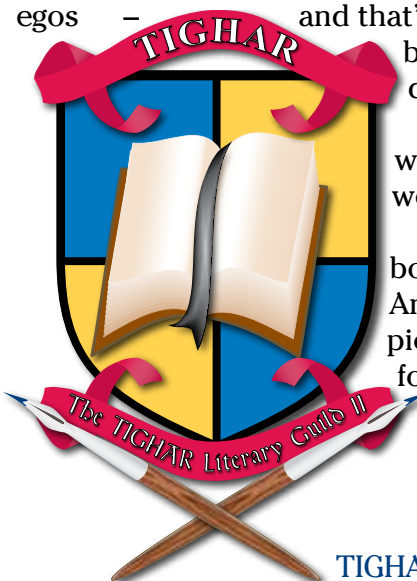
The first book, *Finding Amelia – The True Story of the Earhart Disappearance*, was published by the Naval Institute Press in 2006 and tells the story of Earhart's world flight, her disappearance, and the massive U.S. Government search that failed to find her. After four hard-cover printings the book was released in soft-cover in 2008 and continues to sell well. An electronic (Kindle™) format edition was recently released. Signed hard-cover copies can still be purchased while they last.

Volume Two will begin where the first left off – with the 1940 discovery of the remains of a female castaway on Gardner Island – and continue as a chronological narrative of what became a cultural phenomenon: the passionate public imperative to discover the answer to the riddle of Earhart's fate. The book will explore the World War Two origins of the Japanese Capture Theory, its flowering in the 1960s, and the Crashed & Sank backlash of the 1970s. TIGHAR comes into the story in 1988 with the launching of The Earhart Project. There is much to tell.

Finding Amelia – Volume Two (we'll think of a better subtitle) will feature many of the same elements as Volume One: unrealistic expectations, remarkable successes, crushing disappointments, false starts, inflated egos – and that's just describing myself. Most important, like Volume One, this will be a history book, not a polemic that espouses a particular theory. The book will lay out the documented facts and let them speak for themselves.

As we did with *Finding Amelia – The True Story of the Earhart Disappearance*, we'll publish draft chapters in TIGHAR Tracks and on the TIGHAR website. I'll welcome your comments, suggestions and criticisms via the Forum.

There is, admittedly, a great temptation to write a here's-what-really-happened book, but a dozen or so have already been written and the world is still looking for Amelia. I learn something new almost every week that changes some part of the picture. I hope and trust that there will come a time when I can write the non-fiction, foot-noted Volume Three but, until then, I hope you'll help me write Volume Two by using the enclosed flyer to join the TIGHAR Literary Guild.



Ric