



***Amelia Earhart Soars  
into South Bend***

*The month of July, 2007, marked the 70th anniversary of the disappearance of the famed aviatrix Amelia Earhart as she attempted to become the first female pilot to fly around the world.*

*Earhart came to South Bend three times between 1933 and 1936, the last visit being just a few short months before her ill-fated venture.*

*Her first visit to South Bend was on October 27, 1933. It was sponsored by the local Progress Club and over 600 people attended her talk.*

*Earhart's second visit to South Bend was sponsored by the American Association of University Women (AAUW). On February 14, 1935, a sold-out crowd in Central High School's auditorium heard her speak about the future of the airplane industry.*

*During Earhart's last visit to South Bend, she met a number of times with local businessman Vincent Bendix. He was very much interested in the airline industry, as evidenced by his sponsorship of the Bendix Air Race.*

*Earhart was hoping that Bendix might contribute financially to her upcoming around-the-world flight. Bendix did supply her Lockheed Electra with a Bendix Directional Finder, a new piece of navigational equipment. Some sources say that Earhart's lack of familiarity with this new technology may have been a factor in her disappearance!*



**Amelia Earhart during her first visit to South Bend on October 27, 1933. This photograph of her appeared in the *South Bend News-Times* that same day.**

*Trib* BY BESS STAPLES. 10-28-33  
**S**HE CAME. We saw. She conquered. With few reserves we could say that practically every one of the 600 people who came out to the Progress club Friday afternoon to hear Amelia Earhart left the clubhouse as an admirer of this modest unassuming woman, who for two years has been the country's heroine. She told the story of her thrilling solo flight across the Atlantic as simply as though she were relating a fairy story to a group of eager children. In fact her audience received the narrative in almost breathless silence. Few local audiences have been so attentive. Everything was so vivid all through her 15 hours flight, from the time of her take-off from Harbor Grace until she landed in the Irishman's pasture, every woman sat tense, and the few men, who ventured in, were completely absorbed, too.

**This story of Earhart's visit was filed by *South Bend Tribune Society* Editor Bess Staples on October 28, 1933.**

EDITED BY LEILA BRECHENSER ROSTISER

## IN WOMAN'S REALM



AMELIA EARHART



A formal portrait and an informal pose of Amelia Earhart, America's popular aviatrix, who was the city's most distinguished visitor this week. She appeared in a lecture Friday afternoon before a general meeting of the Progress Club, her subject being "Flying for Fun." In private life Miss Earhart is Mrs. George Putnam, wife of the New York publisher, explorer and author. Her most recent record was her non-stop flight across the American continent. In 1928 she crossed the Atlantic on the famous "Friendsh'p" flight. On the fifth anniversary of Lindbergh's pioneer adventure, she flew alone from Newfoundland to Ireland and is the only woman to have flown the Atlantic solo. She was the first to fly an autogiro solo across the American continent.

**South Bend Mirror, October 27, 1933**

## Famed Woman Flier Here



In her room at the Oliver hotel, Amelia Earhart Putnam, famed ocean flier, was deep in a discussion of variable pitch propellers, superchargers, carburetion and other technical phases of flying when this News-Times picture was taken Wednesday afternoon.

**During Earhart's second visit to South Bend, she took time out from her busy schedule to visit with a reporter from the *South Bend News-Times*.**

# Amelia Earhart Predicts 600-Mile Airplane Speed

## Says Oceans Soon Will Be Flown Across Regularly.

Regular airplane travel at speeds of 600 miles an hour in the stratosphere within the next ten years was forecast by Amelia Earhart Putnam, world's foremost woman flier, in an exclusive News-Times interview during the course of her South Bend visit Wednesday.

It was the first time that anyone in the industry has gone so far as to predict this possibility, although it is the goal toward which scores of aeronautical experts are today aiming.

Of course Miss Earhart hedged in her predictions with several "ifs," but she admitted that the machinery exists today that will make such travel possible. She said:

**We'll learn a lot from Wiley Post after he makes his proposed transcontinental flight eight miles above the earth. We've already learned a lot from free balloon flights into the stratosphere. We've learned a lot from engineers who have theoretically flown airplanes up there, but Wiley will show us how an airplane can be expected to perform under actual conditions on a long trip.**

The slim, blond, perfectly poised and internationally-famous air pilot then launched into a lengthy discussion of propellers, engines, carburetors, superchargers and other equipment necessary for high alti-

tude flying in the extremely rarified atmosphere.

She asserted:

**Engines, planes and everything that enters into flying gets better every year—even weather reports. When I crossed the Atlantic with Wilmer Stultz and Lou Gordon six years ago, weather reports were inaccurate and from 12 to 24 hours late. Today they are almost instantaneous.**

She declared that although she used the same 550-h.p. Wasp engine on her Hawaii-California flight that she used when she flew the Atlantic alone in May 1932, all her equipment on her latest flight was much better than it was then. This time she used a variable pitch propeller, a supercharger and more efficient carburetors. She said she figured her chances were ten to one against completion of the 1932 ocean crossing, while because of better weather and better equipment she figured the odds were only four to one against her on the Hawaii-California flight. She concluded the interview with this prediction:

**"Trans-oceanic flying will come in your and my lifetime. We'll take it as matter-of-factly as we look upon transcontinental air travel now. Flying is far safer than any other form of transportation at speeds greater than 45 miles an hour, so why not utilize everything aviation can offer us? Already passenger plane routes are laid out across both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans and it is only a question of time until regular schedules will be established.**

**The photograph (left) appeared in the February 14, 1935, issue of the newspaper. Above is the interview that accompanied it.**

## Amelia Earhart Lands Purdue Plane At Port



Amelia Earhart Putnam, noted aviatrix, is shown here on her arrival Friday noon at the Bendix Municipal airport. Miss Earhart flew here from Purdue university, where she is consultant in aeronautics, to demonstrate the Electra, her "flying laboratory," to Bendix officials and to be the guest of Vincent Bendix at the Northwestern-Notre Dame football game Saturday. (News-Times Photo.)

**Earhart arriving for her third and last trip to South Bend. *South Bend News-Times*, November 19, 1936**

## EARHART TO FLY TO LOCAL PORT

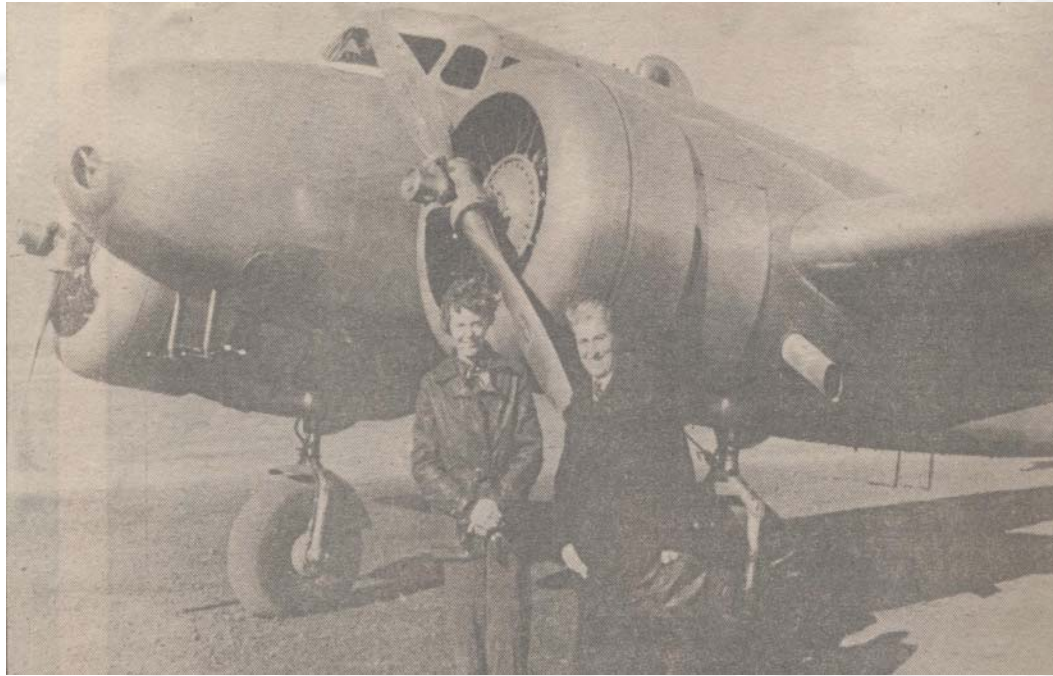
### Famous Aviatrix Will Confer With Bendix And See Game.

Amelia Earhart Putnam, famous aviatrix, and her mechanic, "Bo" McKneeley, Thursday tuned up the motor of her giant "flying laboratory" airplane at Purdue university preparatory to a flight to South Bend Friday. The aviatrix planned to fly here to confer with Vincent Bendix about a new "homing" instrument for the plane. She is expected to remain Saturday to be a guest of Mr. Bendix at the Northwestern-Notre Dame football game.

The plane, provided by the Purdue foundation and friends, has been in the hangar at Purdue since September 18, when flown there from Burbank, Calif.

From South Bend the woman flier plans to take the plane to New York for adjustment of radio equipment and then will fly to California for further experimental work.

**Everyone loves those Notre Dame football games! *South Bend News-Times*, November 20, 1936**



Earhart is pictured above with Herbert Sharlock, Public Relations Director at Bendix, during her visit in November of 1936. This image of the two standing by Earhart's Lockheed Electra was taken on November 20, 1936, and appeared in the *South Bend Tribune*.

On July 2, 1937, Amelia Earhart's plane went missing. Just four days later, the *South Bend News-Times* ran this story about the financial help given to Earhart by the Bendix Aviation Corporation. No mention was made of the Bendix Directional Finder that Earhart's plane was outfitted with. Later, some experts would speculate that Earhart's inexperience with it contributed to her plane veering off course.

## BENDIX AIDED EARHART PLANE

**South Bend Corporation  
Financially Interest-  
ed In Craft.**

The Bendix Aviation corporation was financially interested in the "Flying Laboratory", the plane piloted by Amelia Earhart on her ill fated Pacific flight, it was revealed here Tuesday.

Bendix officials declined to state the amount of money the corporation had donated to the building of the giant craft. In the interest of aviation science, a number of individuals and corporations contributed to the construction of the ship built on the west coast of the United States during 1936.

Miss Earhart flew the craft on trial trips throughout the nation during the past year and had visited South Bend with the plane.