

FINDING AMELIA



Aviatrix **Amelia Earhart** (pictured) may or may not have passed through Astoria on a road trip to Canada in the 1920s, but she, her navigator, **Fred Noonan**, and their Lockheed Electra plane definitely did disappear in 1937 during a round-the-world flight.

The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (**TIGHAR**) believes they know what happened: The duo were off course, but landed safely on a reef around an uninhabited Pacific atoll, Gardner Island, now known as **Nikumaroro**. Their distress calls were not heard, and waves tipped the plane into deep water, making it invisible from the sky. The pair died as castaways, their remains scattered by land crabs.

TIGHAR has been trying to prove this theory since 1988. They have sent several expeditions to Nikumaroro, but “no single conclusive artifact has yet been found,” according to their website, <http://tighar.org>. Which is why there is an extensive expedition going on right now, especially to investigate the “**Bevington Object**,” something protruding from the water on the island’s western reef, believed to be part of a Lockheed landing gear (<http://tinyurl.com/bevobject>).

The object is named after British Colonial Service officer Eric R. Bevington, who photographed the protrusion three months after Earhart disappeared, but didn’t realize the importance of what he was capturing on film. It took forensic imaging specialist Jeff Glickman to spot the anomaly in the photo in 2010. Expeditions since then have produced inconclusive results.

This time TIGHAR is going all out, with an operated underwater vehicle (ROV), a team of SCUBA divers, and an onshore team who will do a grid map search for signs of a survival camp. Want to tag along? Daily reports can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/findamelia>. If they find something, you’ll be among the first to know the answer to one of aviation’s enduring mysteries.

ASTORIA GETS A MENTION. OR FOUR.



Did you hear **Garrison Keillor** (pictured inset) mention Astoria four times last Saturday on his live broadcast (of the “**Prairie Home Companion**”) from Seattle?” **Janet Bowler** asked. “The first time was in a song and the next three times were in reference to the **Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival** and the band **Skolkis**.”

The group is pictured in a photo from their website, www.skolkis.com, by Scott Aitken. Did you know skolkis means “a person who skips out on responsibilities, a truant,” in Swedish slang? The Ear digresses ...

“Skolkis performed live on Keillor’s show,” Janet explained, “and will perform twice at the Midsummer Festival — once in the late afternoon on Saturday, and again the same evening for the open dance.” By the way, Janet is the entertainment coordinator for the festival. Want to hear what Skolkis sounds like? Listen to the podcast at <http://tinyurl.com/prairiepal> “Maybe it’s time to invite Keillor to Astoria!” Janet suggested. Maybe so.

GOT MILK?



Nice little tsunami **milk crate** that washed up,” **Janelle Hux** of Long Beach, Wash., noted about her photo, shown, which she posted on Facebook. She found it June 6 on Benson Beach on the Long Beach Peninsula. One of those commenting wrote that the Japanese writing says “made from recycled materials.”

“It was rather cool,” Janelle said. “I wish now I had taken it, but didn’t feel like carrying it at the time ... (It was) in real good shape.” “Would have been cute with flowers in it,” she added. “Next time.”

In One Ear



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DENALI



Portland-based action photographer and cinematographer **Ben Moon** (<http://benmoon.com>) has drawn national attention with his moving **video tribute** to his beloved 14-year-old dog and world-traveling companion, **Denali**.

When Ben had a bout with cancer in 2004, Denali stayed by his side, even in the hospital. When Denali was diagnosed with terminal cancer, Ben returned the favor. The video, spoken from Denali’s point of view, voiced by Ben, is about their life and last days together. Denali is pictured in a screen shot from the film, near Cape Kiwanda in Pacific City; both are pictured, inset.

In a recent interview with MensJournal.com (<http://tinyurl.com/denaliben2>), Ben talked about filming the video. “To be able to travel to my favorite places with him, the places we’d been traveling to since he was a puppy, was just really amazing,” he recalled. “We spent the last two days before his death on the beach. He was not doing well, he could barely walk. But you saw him on the beach and he was prancing around like a puppy.”

“Denali” premiered at 5Point Film Festival, winning both Best of Festival and People’s Choice, was an official selection at Telluride Mountainfilm. It is also a Vimeo Staff Pick. “Thank goodness it’s OK to cry at your desk here at Vimeo!” wrote staff member Meghan Oretsky. “This is very special.”

And now “Denali” is viral hit, racking up over two million views online. You can watch it at <http://tinyurl.com/denaliben>. Note to animal lovers: Be sure to get comfy and stock up well on the hankies first. Then hug your dog.

SUBMAN SAYS: ‘WE DON’T NEED NO STINKIN’ WHALE!’



After a recent humorous attempt by fake Willy to frighten the noisy and destructive sea lions off the east end mooring basin docks, **Subman** (pictured) decided it was time for a more local approach to the ongoing pesky pinniped issue,” a little bird said to the Ear. In case you didn’t know, Subman’s lair is the Astoria **Subway**, owned by **Mike and Mary Davies**.

“Enlisting the aid of a classic 1964 Evinrude speedboat, Subman took to the mooring basin waters last Saturday morning,” the little bird continued. “To the surprise and delight of numerous visiting Goonies fans, Subman, wearing only his signature fresh vegetables and a cardboard shark fin, slowly cruised through the mooring basin — quickly and easily clearing the docks of the troublesome mammals!

“After several dock-clearing passes, Subman slowly sailed up the river, declaring, ‘That, Mr. Willy, is how we get it done!’”

ONE, TWO, THREE, ID

Bird aficionados should get a kick out of this one: Gizmag.com reports that Cornell University and the Visipedia research project’s **Merlin Bird Photo ID program** can identify birds from photos (<http://tinyurl.com/merbird>). A screen shot of the program in action, courtesy of Cornell University, is shown.

Want to give it a shot and help test the program? Go to <http://tinyurl.com/merbird2>. “Users start by uploading a photo that they snapped of the bird in question,” Gizmag says, “drawing a box around the animal to help the software find it, and then clicking on its bill, eye and tail to establish its orientation. They also indicate where and when they saw it.” And that’s it. The software then presents matches from its database of 400 North American birds. Pretty nifty.



DON’T LOOK UP



Who can resist a headline like “Yes, It’s Really Raining Vampire Fish in Alaska” (<http://tinyurl.com/fall-ingleamp>)? Well, OK, the Ear couldn’t, anyway. No, it’s not a hoax, and the event even made the national news.

But actually only four **arctic lampreys** — parasitic eel-shaped blood suckers with “circles of teeth and multiple tongues” that can reach 15 inches in length — have fallen from the sky in Fairbanks, Alaska. So far. And apparently this is not the first time it’s happened.

A lamprey is pictured, courtesy of photos from the Alaska Fish and Game Facebook page, www.facebook.com/alaskafishandgame which says the agency, “received calls about arctic lamprey found in strange locations. The local Value Village store found a live lamprey in their parking lot and placed it in a bucket of water. Another resident called and said he found one on his lawn!”

“How is this happening? The answer is probably gulls. Gulls are picking them out of the Chena River with their bills and then dropping the squirming critters while in flight.” The Ear has no plans to ever visit Fairbanks.

WHAT DID YOU SAY?

Planning on traveling to a foreign country this summer, but can’t speak the language? Not to worry. You may not be aware of it, but Google’s got your back in several countries, according to Gizmag.com (<http://tinyurl.com/transgoog>).

Google Translate isn’t just for deciphering foreign-language websites, it’s been **updated**, and with Word Lens functionality, you can point the camera at a street sign for an immediate translation from French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish (with more languages coming), as demonstrated in the photo shown, courtesy of Gizmag.

The update also includes a real-time translator between two people speaking different languages (the previous version could only translate one phrase at a time), so they can have a more seamless conversation. The language barrier is fracturing.



A VENERABLE PATRIARCH



Nostalgia Nook, first ran Nov. 19, 2010: The Ear came across a dandy story, dated February 1946, about a moonshiner and **Paul Kearney**, Clatsop County sheriff from 1937 to 1958, posted on a genealogy site by **Elaine Swan** of Marysville, Wash., who got it from a scrapbook (<http://tinyurl.com/moonmule>).

“In the course of his life of 102 years the late **Clarence O’Hoyt** of Jewell once found himself involved with the law ... Up to that time his record, which included notable achievement in pioneer locomotive engineering, was spotless ...

“At the age of 91, O’Hoyt erected, near Jewell, a handsome still embodying all the latest knowledge in distillation. He went frankly and openly into the manufacture, without a license, of the best moonshine whiskey turned out in Clatsop County. He modestly referred to his stuff as white mule.

“O’Hoyt made no effort to avoid the law. This attitude kept him in business for some time until one of his customers, a particularly noisy chap, finally convinced Sheriff Paul Kearney and Deputy Sheriff **Myron Jones** that O’Hoyt might know something about moonshining.

“O’Hoyt was taken to the county jail but never confined. He admitted everything. When he appeared in court, Judge **Howard K. Zimmerman**, who is a teetotaler, looked after the 91-year-old moonshiner ... Of course, the sheriff had to destroy the still.

“O’Hoyt kept his word not to return to moonshining. After he reached 100 years, Sheriff Kearney dropped off his close watch of the white mule manufacturer. Never in the history of moonshine prosecution has a prisoner at the bar made such a serene appearance. O’Hoyt stood out like a venerable patriarch ...”



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