

Ross Edmondson takes on aerial round-the-world challenge

Ross Edmondson (CH 97-02) takes on 40,000-mile flight in support of African Promise

📅 1 May 2019

📁 Travel



Featured

 Charity Network

In May, Ross Edmondson (CH 97-02) will embark on an ambitious, 12-month round-the-world flight in his light aircraft, in support of a charity set up by his former classmate, Charles Coldman (CH 97-02).

Ross hopes to cover more than 40,000 miles in his 1981 Cessna over six, one-month periods – returning to work as a project engineer in Iraq in-between legs – as he sets out to become one of only 200 small aircraft pilots known to have circumnavigated the globe.

Although the reason for the epic trip is to complete a long-held dream, Ross is using the challenge as an opportunity to fly the flag globally for the charity [African Promise](#), which was set up by Charles to improve the quality of primary education in schools in rural Kenya. The charity currently supports seven schools – serving more than 2,500 disadvantaged children – by upgrading infrastructure, funding the salaries of extra teachers, and providing a daily lunchtime meal to every pupil.



African Promise works to improve education in rural Kenya

Ross is aiming to raise at least £5,000 towards the charity's work.

Ross told the Tonbrige Society: "I have watched with interest as Charles discovered his passion for Africa and developed the charity. In 2013, I had the opportunity to act as pilot on a four-month medical flight through Africa with a British Obstetric surgeon, visiting 26 African countries to provide medical training to combat maternal mortality in childbirth. This further developed my interest in Africa, and desire to do more to contribute to its development when the opportunity presented itself."



Ross will depart on May 9th from Zelienople, Pennsylvania and hopes to complete his challenge by April 2020. His route is as follows:

- Section one, May 6th-17th: Pittsburgh PA, USA, to the Netherlands via Canada, Greenland, Iceland, and the UK.
- Section two, July 1st-24th: Netherlands to Thailand via Europe, the Middle East, India, and Sri Lanka.
- Section three, August 26th-September 18th: Thailand to Australia via Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Indonesia.
- Section four, December 9th-January 1st 2020: A flight all around Australia
- Section five, February 3rd-26th 2020: A flight all around New Zealand
- Section six, March 30th-April 22nd 2020: New Zealand to Pittsburgh, PA, USA, via Fiji, American Samoa, Kiribati, Hawaii, California, and Texas.

Although an experienced pilot, Ross is expecting the adventure to present a number of daunting challenges. Notwithstanding the difficulties of navigating airspace in a light aircraft in many parts of the world and the extreme and unpredictable weather he is likely to encounter, Ross will also face a single leg of 2,400 miles from Hawaii to California that will require him to take off at 10% over the aircraft's usual weight in order to hold the extra fuel required and then to spend the next 17 hours over sea, far from anywhere to land in the event of an emergency!

Charles, who founded African Promise in 2008, told the Tonbridge Society: "Ross has always had an adventurous spirit even during our school days together nearly 20 years ago. We'd fallen out of touch since leaving Tonbridge so I was surprised and delighted in equal measure when he approached me with his idea to use this challenge as an opportunity to raise awareness of and funds for African Promise. We have an ambitious challenge of our own over the next 12 months – to raise £250,000 to build a new school for 500+ children – so I hope that OTs around the globe will give wings to his fundraising efforts and help us make this new school a reality."

Ross' flight will see him visit many countries across four continents in the next 12 months. Any OTs living in countries on Ross' route are encouraged to get in touch if they are able to offer any support or assistance - even if just a bed for a night.

To find out more about Ross' flight, including a [detailed itinerary](#), please visit: katamarino.co.uk

Contact Ross at:
ross.edmondson@gmail.com

Donations can be made at justgiving.com/round-the-world and since Ross is fully covering the cost of the flight 100% of donated funds will be received by African Promise.
