

AROUND THE WORLD PILOT: ROSS EDMONDSON

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AOPA Australia Director, Gerard Kitt, catches up around the world pilot, Ross Edmondson, to learn more about his global

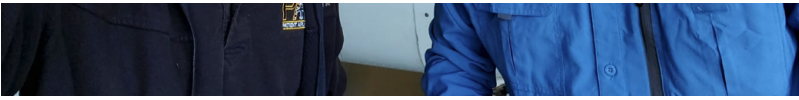
adventure.



The idea of flying around the world is a fleeting ambition of many pilots, but rarely is the plan put into action and made good on. UK pilot, Ross Edmondson, is one example where a strong sense of flying adventure, combined with a determined plan has resulted in an incredible aviation journey that has seen him fly across the United States, Africa and now venturing on an around the world flight to raise money for charity.

AOPA Australia Director, Gerard Kitt, caught up with Ross in Maitland NSW, where his aircraft will be hangared whilst Ross returns to Iraq for contract work, flying back to Australia on the 9th December, when he will continue his global aviation safari.





ABOVE: Ross Edmondson (left) and AOPA Australia Director Gerard Kitt (right).

Gerard sat down with Ross to learn more about the man and the global mission;

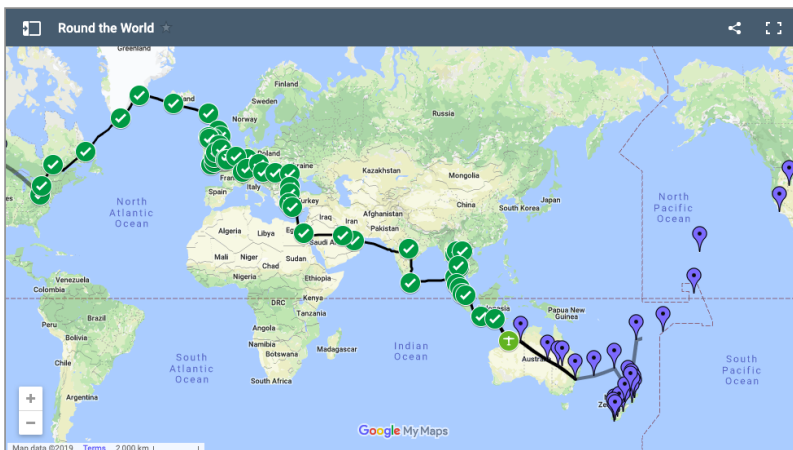
When did you first become involved in flying?

I obtained my Private Pilots License back in 2005 and quickly discovered that I had a big interest in 'adventure flying', preferring to travel to interesting places, rather than hopping about the local area stopping in for cups of tea.

After gaining some experience, I set myself three aviation goals; one was to fly across Africa, the second was to fly across the United States and the third was to fly around the world.

I work as an Engineer on Natural Gas projects around the world, and through my work I have been able to explore some really interesting places, which has helped inspired me to undertake my extensive adventure flying.

Having completed my first two goals across Africa and the US, I am now mid way through my third, which is taking me around the world in my trusty Cessna 182 Skylane.



Could you share with us a little about your aircraft?

I started off like most pilots renting aircraft and then in 2016, I had an opportunity to purchase a Cessna 172 Skyhawk, which I really enjoyed. I flew the 172 for about a year, and then got frustrated with its limited range, speed and avionics.

One day, I found myself beating into a 55kt headwind on one of my flights and made the decision that if I was going to be flying long distances I needed an aircraft of higher performance with better range.

I decided on upgrading to a Cessna 182 Skylane as it had better speed, far longer range and more modern avionics. I purchased this aircraft in 2018 and set about

planning and implementing my various upgrades in preparation for my around the world flight.



My aircraft has the P-Ponk engine upgrade, which installs the IO-520 cylinders onto the IO-470 engine giving a 35-40hp increase in performance.

I installed the extended tip tanks which provide an extra 100 litres of usable fuel. I also installed high-intensity LED lighting on the aircraft and they have proven to be essential on my around the world flight.

I upgraded to a new Avydine GPS, which I must say is a really great product that is easy to use and intuitive. I upgraded to ADS-B in and out, which has been helpful on my long ocean crossings, enabling me to see airlines around me and to communicate with them to relay messages. I also installed a pair of Garmin G5's and removed the vacuum system, as I have never had much luck with GA vac systems during my flights.

The last big modification was the installation of a 600litre turtle pack in place of the rear seats, which couples with the standard fuel system by electric and gravity feed.

Can you provide some information on the charity you are fundraising for?

My around the world flight is being used as an opportunity to support the 'African Promise', a charity dedicated to supporting and enhancing the primary education in Kenya. African Promise currently works with 7 target schools in Kenya, serving around 2,700 children.

The charity was established by a friend of mine that I went to school with, and has achieved some great outcomes during their 10 years of operation in Kenya.

African Promise has upgraded 75 class rooms, supplied more than 15,000 text books and provided more than 1.5 million essential school meals. Their building and redevelopment programme includes the construction of classrooms, libraries, resource and computer labs, dining halls, kitchens, washrooms, toilets and more.

living room, kitchen, bathroom, toilet and more.

Aviators who would like to make a donation, are able to learn more about the charity and Ross's flight at: www.katamarino.co.uk

Tell us a little about your arrival into Australia?

I arrived into Australia via Broome Airport in Western Australia and the arrival procedures, customs, bio-security, were all easy navigate and were overall a good experience, delivered by friendly and professional representatives.

I did have a little trouble, however, obtaining AVGAS to refuel, with the local BP aviation fuel outlet uncertain if they could refuel my aircraft, before obtaining an approval from head-office. After some time and phone calls, it was determined that they could and everything sorted out.

In hindsight, maybe the situation was a slight over interpretation of the rules, but we eventually got things sorted out.

From Broome I departed for Halls Creek, then flew to Birdsville where I spent the night, which was a great experience. The following day, I departed for Bourke where I refueled again for my last leg to Maitland in NSW, where I have hangared the aircraft.

What would be your message to pilots wanting to undertake an around the world journey?

Go for it, be cautious and do your research.

There will be lots of people telling you it's too difficult or impossible, but it's not. There is considerable experience and support among the aviation community, it just takes time to research and plan, along with preparing your aircraft accordingly.

I have developed a website that follows my journey and I would encourage anyone interested in tackling an around the world flying adventure to take a look.