

What Is the Route of the Bancroft Arnesen Expedition?

The Bancroft Arnesen Expedition is the first all women's crossing of Antarctica. Ann Bancroft and Liv Arnesen will start off in their home countries. Ann will leave Minneapolis, Minnesota in the United States and Liv will leave Oslo, Norway some time in mid-October 2000. They will each fly to Cape Town South Africa. In South Africa there will be "send-off" celebrations. Ann and Liv will also make final preparations for the Expedition. On November 1, 2000 (or soon after, if the weather delays them), the explorers will fly from Cape Town to the Blue One ice "runway" on the Fimbul Ice Shelf in Queen Maud Land, Antarctica. They will fly on a Hercules C-130 plane. This type of plane is very large. It is used by the military to transport supplies, including tanks! From the Blue One ice "runway", Ann and Liv will fly to the Queen Maud Land ice Shelf. They will take a Cessna plane or one like it. These are small planes that hold only a few passengers.

On November 2, 2000 (or soon after, when the weather allows), Ann and Liv will begin skiing toward the South Pole. The explorers will ski south for about 1500 miles (2400 km), up the Sigyn Glacier, until they reach the Pole sometime between December 25, 2000 and January 1, 2001. Ann and Liv will not stay at the South Pole for very long. After receiving a re-supply of food and equipment, they will almost immediately begin skiing toward the far coast of Antarctica, near the McMurdo Sound on the Ross Sea. This part of the trip is about 900 miles (1440 km) down the Axel Heiberg Glacier and through the Transantarctic Mountains. They will reach McMurdo Station on the Ross Ice Shelf around February 15, 2001. The entire Expedition is 2400 miles (3850 km) long. As soon as possible, Ann and Liv will fly from McMurdo Station (the American station at McMurdo Sound) to Christchurch, New Zealand for a welcome back celebration. After the celebration, Ann and Liv will fly home to Minneapolis and Oslo.