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# Monmouth MERLIN & Diary



## A Greenland experience

MONMOUTHSHIRE school children last week heard the inside story of The Crossing of Greenland 2008 - a major new British two-man expedition, crossing one of the world's largest glaciers, and unique in that it has at its heart an educational objective.

The 'ice-team' members, Alan Chambers, MBE, and Peter Herbert, were at Haberdashers' Monmouth School for Girls on Tuesday 19th February, along with Dr Richard Hale who leads the Bristol-based Feet of Green project, an exciting new initiative which seeks to inspire school children and focus on positive cross-curricular projects which relate to environmental issues.

Pupils from a number of state and independent schools (12 in total: Overmonnow, Osbaston, St Weonards, The Grange, Gilbert Inglefield House, Cross Ash, Llangattock, Goodrich, Kymin View, Llandogo, Monmouth School and Haberdashers' Monmouth School for Girls), ranging in age from 9 to 16 years, have been invited to come together to meet the Feet of Green team and learn about the May 2008 expedition.

Alan and Peter will describe how they will be entirely self-sufficient - with no aid from dogs or machines or any external assistance - and drag sledges weighing in excess of 200lbs whilst enduring some of the most extreme temperatures known to man during the 40-day, 400mile trek.

They talked to the children about their preparations, including exercise, diet and nutrition, about their previous experiences (Alan was awarded his MBE after leading the first British team to walk unsupported to the geographic North Pole from Canada in 2000) and about the environmental issues impacting upon this landscape and its

wildlife. Teachers will use The Crossing of Greenland 2008 as the basis for a diverse range of classroom projects - from geography and history to technology and science.

Alan and Peter aim to raise awareness of environmental issues amongst young people, as well as to motivate by example and to demonstrate practically the benefits of determination, commitment, training and ability. In addition to talking to the young people present they will also bring with them some of the equipment required for their trek and give practical demonstrations.

Dr Richard Hale, Education and Business Director of Feet of Green, commented 'The response from schools and young people to this project so far has been magnificent. Alan and Peter are great role models, working to broaden the horizons of young people and helping them to realise what they can achieve.'

A spokeswoman for Haberdashers' Monmouth Schools added: 'We were introduced to this project by a local parent, and once we learned more, we were very excited by The Crossing of Greenland 2008 expedition. We host a variety of workshops for local primary schools and felt 'Feet of Green' would be an excellent way to engage young people and relate curriculum subjects to real experiences. We are delighted to be involved with it and have the team here today.'

Colette Mooney, Sustainable Communities Officer at Monmouthshire County Council, was also present.

She will give a short presentation about local environmental grants and projects that the children can engage in on an ongoing basis - reinforcing one of Feet of Green's core objectives of encouraging young people to feel that they can make a difference.

