



Blackmore Vale Magazine

Jason's odyssey - around the world by pedal boat and roller-blades!

THE mythical Greek hero Odysseus took 10 years to journey home from the Trojan wars to his island of Ithaca and his patient wife Penelope. A West Dorset adventurer, Jason Lewis, is planning to take the same time to complete an even more daunting journey - a complete circumnavigation of the globe, by human power alone! There's a chance to hear some of Jason's adventures - including a brush with a white tip shark, breaking both legs while roller-blading in the USA, having his pedal-boat upturned by a nosy whale and sleeping under water to avoid the attention of biting bird-sized insects - at Dorset County Museum, Dorchester, on 29th March. Jason (34), from Askerswell near Bridport, has already roller-bladed and pedalled his boat and bicycle for 20,000 miles, and there is an exhibition of photographs from his travels so far at the museum in High West Street from 15th March.

As well as being an immense physical challenge, Jason's Expedition 360 is an educational tool for teachers. Through a video and photo exchange programme, Jason and his education team enable groups of young people to make short films about life in their local community, and these are then shared with other groups around the world, by "stepping into the world" of someone of a similar age in another coun-

try it is hoped that youngsters will develop skills as world citizens.

As well as the exhibition of photographs and talk, Jason will be working with children from the Museum Club on 24th March.

On 15th May he plans to return to Australia to prepare for a 100-day overland expedition off road by mountain bike, with four teenagers from schools in the US, Australia and the UK, plus six adults, two of whom are teachers. Viewers of the television documentary and internet updates will become involved with the personalities as well as following the trials and tribulations of this expedition into the Australian out-back.

The next stage of Jason's journey will be a three-week crossing to East Timor in the pedal boat. This will be followed by a five month kayak expedition through the Indonesian islands to Malaysia after the 2002-03 cyclone season. Future stages will include Thailand, Laos, China, across the Himalayas into India, over to North Africa, through Europe, to finish at the Greenwich Meridian, the original starting point.

Phone the museum on 01305 262735 for tickets for the talk on 29th March at 7pm. Proceeds will be split between funding the next leg of Expedition 360 and the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, which owns the museum.