

WELCOME TO OUR NEW PATRONS' NEWSLETTER

As the number of our Patrons and supporters grows, I thought that many of you would be interested in keeping up-to-date with all things Polar Academy related. I hope that you have managed to catch our four-part documentary 'Arctic Academy' on BBC Scotland. The final episode will air on Wednesday 30 October but all episodes are available on BBC Iplayer. We have been absolutely blown away by how incredible it has turned out and cannot thank the team at Freak Films enough.

This year has been our busiest year to date - we completed a successful expedition with the 2019 Bathgate Academy team in April, worked with some of the girls from Lochgelly High 2018 team to initiate a Greenland student exchange programme in summer, and we are well underway training the 2020 Bell Baxter team from Cupar. I'm so impressed by these hardworking young people.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest Patrons who have joined this year and a massive thank you to all of you who give on-going support to help us change the lives of young people across Scotland. Without you, none of this would be possible.

Craig

MEET THE NEW TEAM



CRAIG MATHIESON
FOUNDER AND LEADER
OF THE POLAR ACADEMY

The next group of amazing young people to start their training are from Bell Baxter High School in Cupar, Fife.

I am looking forward to keeping you informed of their progress throughout the year.



www.thepolaracademy.org

THE EXPLORERS CLUB PRESENTS

INTO THE FREEZER

Craig Mathieson
Host - Founder of The Polar Academy

Captain Louis Rudd, MBE
Speaker

Paul Vicary
Speaker

Mark Wood
Speaker

Fundraising event in aid of **THE POLAR ACADEMY**

We hope you can join three of the world's toughest and most seasoned explorers as they visit Edinburgh this November to share inspirational tales and to raise funds for The Polar Academy. Taking place at The Assembly Rooms on Friday 22 November, 'Into The Freezer' will be the first time the New York-based Explorers Club has staged an event in Scotland.

Captain Louis Rudd MBE, Mark Wood and Paul Vicary will share stories and footage from their expeditions in the Arctic and Antarctica and help motivate the audience by revealing what can be achieved when you push mind and body to the limit. I will be hosting this exclusive event and will be joined by some of this year's expedition team from Bathgate Academy.

Captain Louis Rudd MBE: In December 2018, the British Army Captain became the first Briton in history and only the second person in the world to successfully trek unaided across Antarctica to the South Pole.

Mark Wood: A former soldier and firefighter, Mark Wood has completed more than 30 major expeditions. This has included summiting Mount Everest on numerous occasions and an unsupported trek to the Geographic South Pole.

Paul Vicary: With over 30 years military experience, Paul has undertaken many challenging expeditions to raise funds for charity. In 2016, he embarked on arguably one of the last and most difficult arenas in the world, venturing with two colleagues unsupported to the Geographic North Pole.

Please let us know if you would like to attend as our VIP guest so we can allocate a space for you.

Friends, colleagues and contacts can purchase tickets via Eventbrite - www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/into-the-freezer-tickets-69200250813 or The Assembly Rooms box office.



**MATT AND
SUZIE WOOD**

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Reflecting on Matt's Arctic adventure as part of the 2019 Bathgate Academy team, I look back with several overwhelming emotions. As a teenager Matt has bobbed along, always trying to blend into his surroundings. We were aware that Matt often tried to not let things get him down. As a 6ft 3" fourth year, he has been incredibly self-conscious. When Matt told us how keen he was to apply for the Polar Academy we supported him every step of the way. Every time it was discussed around the tea table, there was a real spark of excitement.

Selection weekend involved a presentation which Matt and his Dad both found difficult. In preparation for the talk, I remember Matt was at a complete loss as he found it hard to talk about himself and his feelings. I longed for him to see the intelligent, strong and capable young man he was becoming but this wasn't how he saw himself.

As the year progressed, we noticed he would talk less about the not so good side of school but instead he focused on the Polar Academy highlights and the relationships he was building as a member of the team.

Throughout the expedition I missed Matt dreadfully as I could only imagine what he was going through.

On his return there was an inner strength and confidence that we hadn't seen in Matt before. For days and indeed weeks, he spoke of what he saw, experienced and felt. The relationships he formed with the team, the guides and his teacher Mr McKay, I believe will last a lifetime. The Polar Academy is a magical and powerful thing - it is definitely inspirational and life changing. I feel so blessed that Matt has had this opportunity. This young man is now an articulate, Arctic explorer with an incredible story to tell.

We can't thank Matt's fellow team member Alex enough for applying on behalf of Bathgate Academy, Craig for having his vision and sheer determination, the team and all the sponsors for making it possible.

NEW GREENLAND HQ



Thanks to the generosity of one of our Patrons, we now have a new HQ in the heart of Tasiilaq. This will be an amazing base to set out from and we can ensure someone is stationed here during future expeditions who will be able to be in radio contact with the team. Watch this space to see how this project develops... and if you fancy a trip to Greenland, then I'm sure we can come to an agreement on a good deal!