

Ness Information Service
Nessletter No I
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The first of many I hope, N.I.S. has been started together information news and views, to file for future interest and to help keep interested members in touch and as far as possible up to date. Also and just as important to provide some background for newcomers to this fascinating subject of "monsters", now onward.

1973 could be termed the year of the Japanese, their well publicised expedition arrived during the first week of September, 8 strong and with promoter Kou who has handled concerts by Tom Jones as well as the Mohammed Ali fights, the expedition leader Shinsaku Yoshida, is President of a Japanese printing firm, there were also a disc jockey and a singer who was in charge of the sonar equipment, also others about whom I have no clear information. They were surprised when they saw Ness for the first time, it would seem they had not done any homework about the conditions up there, even the size came as a shock they expected something very much smaller, and the peat, that ever present problem, was another surprise, but in the event it did not raise a problem as the expected submarine did not arrive. The press had been full of news about the equipment and submarines, but the expedition was poorly fitted out, they had some sonar but this was fairly ordinary stuff, and as I've said the sub did not come, there was talk of a deal with a German firm to hire one from there but nothing developed, also rumours of one of vickers "Pisces" being chartered were after all unfounded. Eventually a trawler was hired from Buckie, a 40 year old 54 footer named, as if it matters, "Laureen", this was skippered by Dick Raynor, who along with Holly, both L.N.I., were giving what help they could to the Japanese, the trawler spent much of the time moored in Urquhart bay. To sum up this expedition, it got off to a poor start by not doing homework, and despite the publicity did not have the equipment we might have hoped for, so there weren't any useful findings.

I'm not in the position to knock this attempt, not that I want to, all I can say is I am, as are many others, very disappointed but knowing the loch and how difficult it is, not too surprised. I can now hope this year they will come back better prepared and equipped and have much more success, they were reported to go away muttering "computer" or the Japanese for it anyway.

Professor Roy Mackal visited the loch during the first two weeks of November, he was keen to meet the Japanese but was disappointed at the organisation, he had also hoped, I understand, to raise money for the two year research programme he has all worked out along with Bob Love, all ready to go but as yet no finance. Having met Roy and Bob, this project I know, would be very worthwhile.

During 73 Bob Rines, Academy of Applied Science, chartered Basil Carey's yacht "Smuggler" which was left at its mooring by Goat Rock, just into Urquhart Bay from the castle, and underneath was mounted the underwater camera and lights that were developed by Professor Harold Edgerton, who is responsible for much of the equipment used by Cousteau, this had been set up to trigger automatically. It proceeded to run off its film, a very fast ASA 8000 black and white, in a much shorter time than had been expected, seeming to point to spurious echoes or that the place is really crawling with creatures, the gear had been set to trigger with an echo of something of the region of 5 ft long. Most of you will remember seeing the gear being lifted on the Blue Peter T.V. programme, the film was taken back to the States for processing. The last news I had about this, is that there seems nothing of any great interest in the film as yet examined. This year Bob is intending to try a number of smaller strobe light/camera units at various sites around the loch. Since Bob first visited Ness during the 1971 season he and his associates have done much very good work, with the minimum of fuss and unnecessary publicity, a very worthwhile contribution to Loch Ness research, many thanks Bob.