

NESS INFORMATION SERVICE  
NESSLETTER 159  
NOVEMBER 2012

STEVE FELTHAM

Received short note from Steve, February '12, along with a very nicely produced Loch Ness calendar. It is the work of two Canadians, Dale Roth and Michele Ramberg, commercial photographers from Calgary, Western Canada. They undertake a photo trip every year, asking their clients to suggest a suitable subject for their company calendar, the winner going along on the trip. The subject for 2012, put forward by Terri Roberts of St John's, Newfoundland, chosen from over a hundred entries was Loch Ness. 23

The calendar is laid out sideways, roughly 12 x 5 inches, with good quality glossy photographs. Every month has a local resident, with a short quote from them concerning the creatures, about fifty/fifty in belief, with a loch or local view on the reverse leaf. The exception are the 'Russians' a pair of well built lads in Speedos, up to their thighs in the water at the inner edge of Urquhart Bay. I understand they had swum across the loch, their quote was, 'We saw no monster'. I have a vague recollection of someone telling me, one of them has something to do with a premier-ship football club, (Chelsea was it?). Back to the calendar. Looking through it first time, I thought, the loch views are nice enough, but was sure I could have found them much better views. Then I realized the views are connected to the people. Steve Feltham is there with his van, and the photo is of his view along the loch towards Urquhart. Rebekah Wynne Evans, the lady who has the pottery up at Bunloit, is in the pottery; her view is just a nice rural scene. She is quoted as saying she was always fascinated with Nessie but, 'Almost instantly stopped believing', when the Surgeon's photograph was revealed to be a fake. Simon Hargreaves (NIS158) is pictured outside the Foyer's shop and café, 'I saw something dark with humps sticking out of the water', is his quote. I was interested to see the accompanying scene was his view of the loch, and relieved to note memory had not failed me and the loch is as far away as I recalled. The other months follow the same pattern.

There are other pieces of interesting Loch Ness information in the calendar, but some of it is not as accurate as it could be. For instance, they suggest that one explanation for some sightings are waves, they then describe the 'seiche effect', which has no effect on the surface at all, completely mixing it up with the boat wakes that I am sure are the cause of many reported sightings. I was tempted to write, pointing out these errors, but thought better of it, by now they will be well into some other location for their next calendar.

Download the app to read the rest of the story, find extra photographs, and behind the scenes stories, or go to [www.rothanddramberg.com](http://www.rothanddramberg.com), is information given on the calendar. I vaguely understand that, not that I have ever done anything like it, it may still be available after all this time.

Steve said life loch-side is good, it had been the mildest winter for three or four years, which makes things generally very nice. He now has a piano in the van! No, I do not how or where, let alone why. He had recently been heavily involved in the William Hill one thousand-pound competition, not officially, but campaigning in support of a sonar contact by Marcus Atkinson obtained some time August/September '11. Steve said the contact seems to defy all explanations, indicating a very large object. The sonar did win, Steve says it is just as well, as he believes the other two pictures entered were of a lump of wood and a seal. Which he feels, had one of them won, could make the subject look a bit of a laughing stock.

The contact. Mr Atkinson, from Fort Augustus, is skipper of a tourist boat and spends his working life on the loch. He was waiting for his passengers, idling in Castle Bay, which is by Urquhart Castle, when the sonar screen showed the unusual image. Realizing it was something he had not come across before, in all his time spent on the loch, he took out his mobile phone. Managing to get a shot of the screen, before the object

disappeared. This picture shows the usual everyday sonar image, a cross section of the loch with the boat in the top right hand corner. The lower part of the screen is the bright green area, produced by the loch bottom, which rises as the water gets shallower. In between are scattered the small green flashes, caused by the usual fish population. The interesting, and exciting, contact is between the 20 and 25 metre depth markers; this is a thin elongated oval streak. The measurements indicate it could be about five feet thick, but with no way of estimating the length. The image did not show up continually, which seems to indicate that it was not connected to the boat, and therefore a separate, free moving, target. This is a very intriguing sonar contact, Steve is obviously very taken by it, but I do have my reservations. It is many years since I had contact with people using sonar, so I will probably be out of date, the equipment improving all the time, but it was always stressed how difficult it was to be accurate about the size of a target. However it is good news that such reports are still being noted, and reported.

Steve went on to tell me, his letter dated Feb '12, about complaining to OFCOM, and the outcome, which I think, deserves passing on. The latest National Geographic Channel documentary, not very good to start with, in his opinion, 'Truth Beneath Loch Ness', he thinks is the title. Mainly featuring the views of Mekko Tickala, Steve was interviewed and features in it. In his bit they managed to slice up his words, by editing it so much, that it ended up with Steve saying, 'I believe that Nessie is a --chop/chop-- Sturgeon'. Which is very much not his view. He was so infuriated by this when he saw it, that he complained to the Broadcasting Watchdog, OFCOM. The result being, the programme has been taken out the schedules until it is re-edited to get rid of that quote, and make his situation clear. He says it is an example of a company putting a documentary together, quickly, with one view 'Sturgeon', and cutting everything else to fit. He has no objection to anyone making a programme highlighting that theory, or any other for that matter, but not to ask for other views and then manipulate them to fit whatever theory is being supported. Not the first piece of bad journalism he has encountered, but he was pleased that OFCOM were able to correct matters.

Nice to know that life is being good to Steve, although, sadly, not good enough to provide him with the sightings and unarguable evidence that we all long for, whatever it reveals the truth to be. His quest continues for us as well as for himself.

#### NEW PHOTOGRAPH

The Daily Mail, 4th August edition, carried a colour photograph taken by George Edwards of a 'hump' in Urquhart Bay, no doubt it is Urquhart Bay as the castle is in the distance at the top right corner of the picture. I received copies of this from NIS members Sid and Doug, thank you both. While they both come from the Daily Mail it is interesting to note that the Scottish issue has cropped the photograph in a different manner to that produced in Northern Ireland. The Scottish paper also gives slightly more information in the accompanying text. Sid then sent me a follow up article from the 5<sup>th</sup> August; this had about the same information that had been given in the Scottish paper. The photograph shows an asymmetric hump, one end pointing diagonally away from the camera, low in the water, tapering up to the other, twice as high. Drab gray/ brownie colour, no distinguishing features. Difficult to judge size, perhaps 4 or 5 feet, looking at the ripples, which seem to indicate the object could be moving slowly towards the camera.

Mr Edwards said he was about to return to Temple Pier when he saw the dark grey object in the water about half way between him and the castle. With his small Samsung digital camera he took a series of photographs. After five or ten minutes the object submerged. He switched on the boat's sonar in an attempt to track it, and waited in the area for about half an hour, but to no avail. Whatever it had been did not register on the sonar, or break the surface again.

Could this be what we all waiting for, the 'proof' of the newspaper strap line. Unfortunately the story, and photograph, leave many things open to question. It is obvious the object is nothing like half way to the castle, which is away in the distance. It is a little difficult to judge without any foreground in the picture, but I

would think the range is more likely tens of yards, let alone hundreds. With his experience on the water this would be clearly apparent to Mr Edwards. Why the long wait before the photograph is released? He says he has friends in the US, with friends in the military, who analysed the photograph and say the object is 'animate'. There are no details given, of who they are, (the army catering corps?) or the methods used, or the explanation of why they determine it is 'animate'. Possibly not his fault, but in the papers he is repeatedly referred to as a 'Nessie Hunter', it is quietly mentioned that he operates a boat taking tourists out on the loch. The newspapers used one photograph, where are the others? I know it is a personal outlook, but if I had managed to get a photograph I considered could be proof of something large and unknown in the loch or any other kind of proof, for that matter; there is only one direction I would have taken. Any proof we may be able to produce has to be acceptable to the scientific community; a very good first step would be to convince the skeptics. One of the greatest skeptics and one of the most knowable researchers on the subject lives just along the road from Temple Pier. I would be knocking on Adrian Shine's door. I have had the privilege of being with Adrian examining various film and photographic evidence, of having the process and computer software, explained to me. While not agreeing with all his findings, I maintain his thoroughness and skeptical outlook will be essential in the final analysis. There is also Dick Raynor, who skippers another of the tourist boats out of Temple Pier, it could be argued he is an even greater expert and researcher than Adrian; having a similar skeptical, and through, approach. Never mind some vague military connections across the Atlantic, my starting point would be Adrian or Dick, both on George's doorstep. To be able to present either of them with a piece of evidence, to try with them, to disprove it, to give an ordinary explanation, and not be able to; of such things dreams are made.

While I was formulating the above in my thoughts, and then getting it onto paper, which takes me too long, hence the time lag with Nessletters. I received a phone call from Steve Feltham. He told me that he had debunked the Edwards' photograph on his website [Nessiehunter.com](http://Nessiehunter.com), follow Facebook lead. Despite being 'quoted' in the newspaper as saying 'George's picture captured the animal I have been looking for all this time. He is convinced it is a fake. He made arrangements to meet Mr Edwards at Temple Pier, but found George was very reluctant to speak to him, even though he had quoted Steve as saying the photograph was the best ever. George was very keen to get the next group of tourist on board and cast off. Speaking to another of the Temple Pier boat skippers, not Dick, Steve was met with smiles and a nudge nudge, wink wink response. He has also been in touch with a local journalist, who had been assured by George that he would let him see the other photographs, taken at the time. As yet these photographs have not materialized. Steve is certain that the object George photographed is a glass-fibre hump that was made as part of a documentary on Loch Ness. He has traced the model hump, it is 'living' in a garden locally, and he is able to point out a number of similarities. Such as a number of ridges on both being the same, and showing just above the waterline at the 'tail' in the picture is a slight hump, which is also on the model. As George Edwards was in the documentary, Steve also suggests the photograph could have been taken during the filming, possibly from the cabin roof, above the film crew.

When Steve's views became known, through his website, interest in the photograph continued. Mr Edwards was asked for his response by STV, although declining to be interviewed on camera, he did say that he denied any knowledge of the fake hump. Although, if he had been involved in the filming of the documentary, he would have seen it, and known about it. He went on to say that Mr Feltham was entitled to his opinion, and that people who make their livelihoods from the Loch should be happy it is in the news.

This latest attempt at publicity really saddens me. At one time I would have been annoyed and angry, but now I am just so sad, getting old I suppose. It is one thing for someone not really connected to the loch and mystery, to perpetrate some kind of hoax, just for a bit of a laugh really; possibly understandable. For someone who puts himself forward as a monster hunter, a genuine researcher, who has spent 26 years 'scanning the loch for evidence', it is just incredulous. It is one thing for George to entertain his passengers

with tales of dubious wakes, humps, and close encounters with strange things, but very different to produce fake photographs. He would be well aware that any photograph, produced by anyone, would be held to very close scrutiny and if a fake or hoax, bound to exposure as such. This will damage his stance as a serious researcher and investigator. Being in the news is not the be all and end all. In my opinion Loch Ness and the mystery, is an exception to the old saying, 'any publicity is good publicity'. Those of us, who think there is a case worthy of serious investigation, need to protect the credibility of that case. Producing fake photos, or being too eager to accept questionable evidence, as has been done in the past, is no way to do that. Such behavior may also have an effect on the general public's perception of the mystery. Which, over the years, could have a negative effect on the tourist trade. Not something that people, who rely on it for their livelihoods, would wish. I expressed similar thoughts to Adrian Shine, over the content of the, then new, 'Loch Ness 2000' exhibition, which seemed to be rather biased towards the 'anti' view.

#### PETER DAVENPORT

Peter rang mid August, with news of his trips to Loch Morar and Loch Ness. He, and his partner Liz, were at Morar for five days in June, very good with excellent weather. When the lady owner of the B&B, by the Morar Hotel, became aware of his interest in Morag, and Nessie, she told him that she knew of three sightings. Most recent, possibly late last year, was of a local man and his two boys out fishing on the loch. Reported seeing a black object, leaving a distinct wake, in front and some distance, to the side of them. Short on detail, but good to hear that something is still being reported. While there the loch was mostly calm, with very few boats. Peter put in quite a few hours watching the loch from the Bracora road, till late at night. Unfortunately, no sign of Morag. One day they walked along the loch-side to just beyond Swordlands, then over the isthmus (sorry I have to say it, that is a brilliant word.) to Tarbet, on Loch Nevis; continuing by boat round to Mallaig. A highly recommended outing to anyone visiting the area, Peter said it was a 'top trip'. They had a day in Inverness, windy but dry, then down to Fort Augustus, the loch with choppy waves. At Dores he saw Steve Feltham, but did not manage to say hello.

In a second call Peter said they intended getting back to Arisaig late August. He commented on the Jobs account in NIS158. Saying it was very unlikely, billions to one, to get photographs two days running at virtually same place. The photograph seemed correct, as Peter has pictures from the same spot, however the shooting lodge is hidden in first set of trees. He also commented on the Edwards' photograph in the Daily Mail, thought it was interesting, but 800yards from boat surely wrong, seemed much closer.

Thank you for the above Peter, it is always good to know someone is there, keeping an eye open for us.

It has taken me months to put this Nessletter together, my apologies. No real acceptable reason, just the usual situation, which I have written about in previous issues, and will not bore you by repeating here.

Now, back to business. Thank you for being the NIS, and tolerating the intermittent service. Please remember your news, views, and thoughts are important, even more so now. Visitors always made welcome, subscriptions, if you are good enough to continue to subscribe, are:- UK 3.00 USA \$10. The address remains:- R.R.Hepple, 7 Huntshildford, St John's Chapel, Weardale Co Durham, DL13 1RQ Tel: 01388 537359. Mobile 07989813963.

Rip.