

# NESS INFORMATION SERVICE

## NESSLETTER 161

JULY 2014

### RIP'S PIECE

The process of putting a Nessletter together always begins some time before a finger touches keyboard. Thoughts running around, bits of paper with jottings on, newspaper cuttings, a jumble of your letters with ideas, information, reports, many thanks for these contributions. They are very much appreciated, and needed, and even if they do not make it into a finished Nessletter, they are an encouragement.

As that process began for this Nessletter it registered that it is forty years since the first Nessletter was sent out, January 1974. I may have written in a similar vein at the turn of previous decades, but FORTY YEARS, good grief, that is more than half a lifetime, three score and ten, where has it all gone? So much has happened, I suppose most of it ordinary everyday things, then there are the very many happy things, along with a very few unhappy things. As it happens it seems my life has been divided, more or less, in two; pre and post Nessletter. I met Doris way back in 1955, but did not marry until 1974. I had been a time served baker until 1969, first visit to the loch 1965, then worked in forestry for a few months before doing a full season, 1970, at Achnahannet with the LNI. Another month or two, this time Groverake mine in Weardale, before it was Achnahannet again, in January '71, to renovate the headquarter site for the future seasons. Returning home to Weardale in October, Doris, with her children, and I were able to be together, at last. I went back to the mine and for the next twenty years was a hard-rock miner, extracting the mineral Fluorspar. Big changes in life, all in the early '70s, from baking to hard-rock mining, hard to imagine now; marriage, children, never the less, a fairly ordinary life. The odd thing I would suggest was starting the Ness Information Service, and writing the Nessletters.

If I remember correctly, it was August '73, three or four independent watchers, as I thought of us, were spending the evening with a young Nick Witchell, still a student at Leeds University. We were in his 'hide', which had been a simple open fronted shed-like structure the LNI had been allowed to put up on roof of a garage at Strone, with an extensive view out over Urquhart Bay, and the main loch beyond. The garage was that of Winifred 'Freddie' and Basil (Wing Commander Ret.) Carey, a remarkable couple. They had been of great assistance to the LNI, as well as to all the other groups and individuals involved in the search for an answer to the mystery. Their cottage at Strone, with its view over the loch, became a meeting place for so many of the investigators, Tim Dinsdale, David James, Lionel Leslie, Ivor Newby, Ted Holiday, Bob Rines, just some of the names. I am sure there were very few of the people involved in the work, many we all recognize from the Loch Ness literature, who did not enjoy time with the Careys, at Strone. With permission, Nick had moved this shed from the garage roof, and sited it behind the hedge just over the road, at the top of the field over-looking Castle Urquhart. Putting a front onto it, the top half of which hinged down, with one of the LNI cameras, tripod mounted, he had a wonderful base for loch watching. It became his home for many months. Not too sure how we came to there that evening. But there we were, discussing our mutual aim, how best to get evidence to prove Loch Ness was home to something large and unusual, possibly hitherto unknown. Somewhere in this conversation, I suggested that someone should publish a newsletter to keep interested people informed about the search. That had been one of the things the LNI had been doing, with the various reports sent to members. After they ceased field operations at the end of the 1972, I had thought about such a newsletter, hoping to receive a letter from someone saying they were going to do that, and would I like to be included. The others thought that really it was not necessary, as 'the scientists' were now involved and soon the answers would be found. I said that even when those answers were found, I thought a source of information could be useful. Bear in mind all those years ago there was no 'internet', no 'social networking', no 'world wide web', information and news was broadcast, Radio and TV, or printed, newspapers, magazines. Word of mouth of course, but no mobile phones, how ancient it all seems now. I remember seeing a tourist at the loch with an early 'Camcorder', which recorded onto VHS, or perhaps even Betamax, tape. There was a small suitcase sized battery, on little wheels, to power it! Having voiced my thoughts that evening, over the following months I began to put them into action. I had the LNI connections, and many friends around the loch, so had some access to news and information to put into a newsletter. I still hoped that perhaps someone else would do it, as I was not too confident in my writing

ability, but that did not happen. The first Nessletter was sent out in January 1974. Never giving a thought as to how long I would do it, two or three years, or a set number of newsletters, just try to provide a service for interested parties.

Here we are forty years later and I am still trying, in my small, often inadequate way, to provide useful, interesting, thought provoking, Nessletters for our members. What is a matter of more concern is that we are still waiting for 'the scientists', or for that matter anyone, to answer our question, what is in Loch Ness? The main scientific drive came from Bob Rines and the Academy of Applied Sciences; over the years they brought together numerous people from different disciplines of the scientific world, and many varied pieces of equipment. Despite all the resources and effort they put in, the results they produced were not the definitive answer we all hoped for. The sonar readings and the underwater photography, are all still debatable, not the unequivocal answers looked for. They were seeking a 'monster', as yet unidentified large animals living in Loch Ness. Scientific work has continued to be done over more recent years, under the auspices of 'The Loch Ness Project', under the guidance of Adrian Shine. Much has been done, by groups from Universities and others, to find out more about the loch itself. Their work has increased our understanding of the loch, the ecology, currents, and many other aspects. The Simrad sonar people first visited the loch, after Adrian's invitation. They returned later, with Nick Witchell, and produced a truly awesome underwater contour map of the loch. No 'monster' has been found, they were not looking for one, some of the findings seem to indicate, that perhaps, such phenomena does not exist in the loch. Or should that be, no longer exists in Loch Ness. Could it be that in the lifetime of the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau, and the NIS Nessletters, we have experienced the loss of the creatures were seeking? I do not think so, I believe there are answers to be found. So onwards, with the NIS and Nessletters for the next ———?

#### KEN WALLIS

Wing Commander Ken Wallis (Retired) died on the first of September 2013 at the age of 97. Wing Co. retired, definitely, but he continued to fly into his 96<sup>th</sup> year, possibly the oldest pilot in the country. His pilot's logbook listed very many types of aircraft, from a replica 1910 Wallbro Monoplane through to the Convair B-36 nuclear bomber. His career may have never got off the ground (sorry), as he was almost blind in his right eye. When he tried to join the RAF Volunteer Reserve, in the mid-1930s, he was turned down at first. He got round that by qualifying for a private pilot's A licence, at Cambridge, and according to his daughter, memorizing the sight chart, to enable him to pass the test. At the outbreak of war he was called-up into the RAF, 268 Squadron, flying Westland Lysanders. He then did a direct transition to Vickers Wellingtons, 103 Squadron, where as a pilot he was fortunate to complete 28 operational sorties. Not without incident, on one abortive sortie to Frankfurt, he and his crew had to bale out when their aircraft ran out of fuel. On another occasion returning from a sortie, with engines losing power due to icing, he made it back over the English coast only to hit barrage balloon cables near Immingham docks. With a wing flapping dangerously he brought the Wellington safely down in a crash landing, narrowly missing a quarry face. He said he owed his life to the Wellington, remarking, "it was a tough old thing". In 1944 others decided that he should cease operational flying, because of his eyesight, his engineering skills were then put to good use as Armament Officer. He eventually filled that post with the first Canberra units, at Binbrook. He was never 'grounded', converting to flying jet aircraft, such as the Gloster Meteor, and de Havilland Vampire. As an Armament Electronics Specialist he became part of an exchange posting to Strategic Air Command H.Q. at Offutt AFB Nebraska U.S.A. While there he flew very many types of USAF aircraft, including the B-36 Peacemaker nuclear bomber. "While I was in the States", Ken remembered, "Dr Igor Bensen came up with plans for a do-it-yourself gyroglider. I decided that when I came back from America I was going to build mine with an engine and conventional controls. Also deciding that if it worked, it was not going to be just the one; it would be the stepping stone to something more practical." It did work, and Ken quickly went on to build an innovative autogyro of his own design, that incorporated many newly patented inventions. In total he patented 17 pieces of hardware for autogyros, and over the ensuing years he went on to build another 18 or 19 aircraft, including a two-seater. Ken flew them at numerous air-shows, as well as many other worthwhile and fascinating sorties. Being involved in the police search for Lord Lucan, at one stage. He also did NATO Special Forces trials in the Bavarian Alps, as well as radar equipped 'airfield battle damage assessment' for the Ministry of Defence. It was hoped that military interest, in such a versatile, economic, aircraft, able to undertake many of the tasks done by helicopters, at greatly reduced costs, may have resulted in orders. Then Wallis Autogyros could have gone into commercial production, but it did not happen. What did bring lasting worldwide fame was his involvement in the 1967 James Bond film 'You Only Live Twice'. Although it was his Autogyro WA116, 'Little Nellie' that was famous, as it was not piloted by James Bond, or Sean

Connery, but by Ken. In his time developing, and flying Autogyros he set 34 world records, recognised by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI), posthumously he still holds eight.

His connection with Loch Ness came about when Tim Dinsdale was approached by the LNI, and took on the post of Field Director at Achnahannet in 1970. Tim recalled seeing Ken demonstrating an Autogyro at a Farnborough air-show, and thought that could be just the aircraft for aerial surveillance at the loch. It had been long thought that such work at Loch Ness could be productive. Peter Scott, before the 'Sir', had considered using a glider. The lack of convenient airstrips, and of suitable areas for forced landings in the event of problems, ruled out the use of conventional aircraft. Here was a 'Short Take off and Landing' aircraft, very maneuverable, economical as well. Tim and Ivor Newby paid a visit to Ken at his home, Reymerston Hall, near Dereham, Norfolk, with the proposition. While perhaps not a staunch believer in Nessie, he was intrigued by their case they put, also the opportunity to do some flying with a difference. So in August '70 he arrived at Achnahannet, a wonderfully self-contained outfit.

Driving a Mini, towing a lightweight trailer with his beloved 'Little Nellie' Autogyro strapped on, with fuel cans and toolbox, that was it. When arriving at an airstrip he could be airborne in fifteen minutes. He had fitted the Autogyro's Rolls Royce Continental 100 hp engine with silencers, so it was less noisy than usual, also an array of cameras, 'still' as well as 'cine', with telephoto lenses. Three areas suitable for take off and landing were quickly identified, as well as others around the loch, that in an emergency, would provide somewhere to put down, quickly. The favoured 'airstrip' was situated on the left of the road between Drumnadrochit and Lewiston, the flat fields stretching to the Urquhart Marshes and woodland. The long grass (hay) needed cutting to a reasonable height, this was done by Basil Cary and Ken Wallis. The sight of two Wing Commanders (Ret.) each 'flying' a hover-mower, in formation, down the field was a truly unforgettable, surreal, experience. They cut a strip about fifteen feet wide, and more than the 100 feet which Ken needed to get aloft, to be on the safe side, and Ken was ready to go.

I think Ken brought some form of sponsor-ship with him. During his time with us, I used to drive one of the expedition Bedford vans to Inverness airport to collect his fuel. Aviation fuel, a 45 gallon oil drum safely (?) tied down in the back. I remember having a book of Shell-BP vouchers, which I had to present to the airport staff, for each filling. I also drove the van, with Tim's inflatable (Moo-scow) on the top, drum full of fuel inside, with other bits of gear, when Tim, Ken, and others went over to Loch Morar for a week when Ken was with the LNI. He found that flying at about 1000 feet he had a good view of the full width of Loch Ness. Also by positioning the aircraft over one side or the other, relative to the position of the sun, he could eliminate the problem of reflection, which you have looking down on water. Judging by the underwater shoreline, and other things like boat mooring ropes he said he could see twelve to fifteen feet below the surface. The photographs he took supported this, although the clear water of Morar gave a much greater depth of vision. As with watching from the shore, calm conditions were preferred, rougher water surface could be like looking through a net curtain, he said. In his time at Loch Ness, Ken was airborne for over twenty hours, spread over the weeks, covering a huge area of water. Regrettably, as with all our efforts, he did not obtain the evidence we had hoped for, but it was a marvellous try. I was privileged to be part of that work, seeking fuel, hunting in Inverness for a particular spare part, generally helping out. To be in the company of such a charismatic character, even as short a time as it was, indeed was an unforgettable, once in lifetime experience. Wing Commander, Retired, Ken Wallis, MBE, an extraordinary life, one to be celebrated. God Bless.

Wonder how the Angels are getting on with their newly 'Wallis' modified wings?

#### PHOTOGRAPHS ?

Late last year ('13) a photograph appeared in some national papers, showing a 'black object' on the surface of Loch Ness. Taken by David Elder, of East Kilbride, close to Fort Augustus he had been photographing swans, when from the corner of his eye he caught sight of a black area of water. About 15 feet long, it developed like a bow wave, he was sure water was going over something solid, then it began moving sideways up the loch. This was a shot of a boat wake, a very good one, but I have similar ones in my collection. To be fair the paper did headline it 'Nessie give us a wave'.

Another very similar photograph appeared earlier this year. Again near Fort Augustus, disturbance attracts attention, low black object in water, witness sure it is solid with water flowing over it, photograph taken. Result, once again a photograph of a boat wake. At least people are still taking note, and photographs.

In mid-April '14, another photograph appeared in some newspapers, this one taken from a satellite. Some time early in '13, Peter Thain and Andrew Dixon had been looking at Apple's satellite map, checking out their local area,

Middlesborough. Andrew, a 'Great North Air Ambulance Service' worker, thought he would try Loch Ness, he has never been but has an interest in that kind of thing. There he saw a large water disturbance with what seemed to be a pair of flippers, his reaction was, 'that's the Loch Ness Monster'! This image found it's way to the Official Loch Ness Monster Club, where 'President' Gary Campbell studied it for many months, finally concluding it was the monster. He said it looks like a boat wake, but a boat is not there, there are boats moored by the shore, which are easily identified. Saying, 'Whatever this is, it is under-water and heading south, unless there have been secret submarine trials in the loch, the size of the would make it likely to be Nessie.'

This is, I am sorry to say another huge disappointment; not that it is not Nessie, but that someone who professes to be an 'expert', can come to such a conclusion. Looking at the newspaper photograph, there is an expanse of dark water, as expected, with the large disturbance showing white streaks, also an area of shore. This has a distinctive bay, backed by woodland with a road running through it. Taking the width of the road as a guide, the disturbance is about 50 feet wide and more than twice that long. The 'distinctive bay' is quickly identified as that by Dochfour Castle, which is under a mile from the Bona Narrows where all the boat traffic enters Loch Ness. Surely it is a disturbance caused by a boat? No boat is apparent in the photograph I have seen, however another source recommends adjusting the contrast, of the original, when a dark blue rectangle becomes discernable. The Jacobite Cruisers livery is, dark blue! I am certain that given a time frame for the photograph and consulting the Jacobite timetables, it would be possible not only to say it was a boat, but which one. Not many months of study, but fifteen minutes of careful use of common sense.

#### BOOK

'The Man Who Filmed Nessie: Tim Dinsdale and the Enigma of Loch Ness' by Angus Dinsdale, Surrey (BC, Canada); Hancock House, 20'13. ISBN 978-0-88839-0. Reviewed by Henry H. Bauer.

The strongest evidence that the Loch Ness Monsters are real animals is the film taken in 1960 by Tim Dinsdale. It remains unique and remains the evidence that debunkers have most determinedly attempted to undermine. In trying to assess the merits of the film and the criticisms, one wants to see the film itself and learn about the circumstances of the filming and the trustworthiness of the photographer. This book by Dinsdale's youngest child is illuminating about the circumstances and the photographer, and the book's website (<http://www.themanwhofilmednessie.com/>) presents the film in informative annotated fashion. The book includes more than 30 pages of colour photos showing people and historical events associated with the search for Nessie.

This reviewer is utterly biased, having come to know Tim Dinsdale as a trusted friend. Readers of this book are presented with enough plain facts about Tim to appreciate the genuine enthusiasm he had for establishing Nessie's reality and identity, and to learn about the support from his wife Wendy that allowed him to carry on his quest without neglecting his family of four children; to the contrary, the Nessie hunt was a family adventure. Of course the book itself is also biased. Angus, the author, himself accompanied his father on Nessie hunts and himself had a sighting. But bias in favour of the reality of Nessies does not detract from the book's recounting of events during the 1960s and '70s, which recaptures the considerable public interest during those years that saw a variety of individual Nessie hunters as well as organized expeditions of volunteers led by the colourful M.P. David James. Already well known in earlier years for his adventurous escape from a German POW camp during WW2. Anyone who has been at all interested in the Nessie controversy will find this book highly enjoyable reading. Anyone who has not taken much interest in the matter before can get a marvellous feel for several decades of happenings from this readable account, enlivened by tidbits about the host of memorable characters who have had their hand in Nessie-seeking over the years.

At long, long, last I have finished putting this Nessletter together. I have rambled on too long as well, to get it all on the four pages I have reduced font size, sorry. Please remember your news, views, and thoughts are important, even more so now. Subscriptions, if you are good enough to continue to subscribe, remain UK, £3.00, that is covering postage for now, USA \$10. The address remains:- R.R.Hepple, 7 Huntshildford, St John's Chapel, Weardale Co Durham, DL13 1RQ. Visitors always made welcome, Tel: 01388 537359. Mobile 07989813963.

Rip

Ness Information Service  
Newsletter No I  
January 1974.

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 a 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 Vickars "Pieces" being chartered were after all unfounded. Eventually a trawler was hired from Bunkie, 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., was 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 Egerston, 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.

Now on to the news most of us find most interesting, sightings!! I have limited news of these unfortunately, only three, and two maybe sightings, but after Ted (F.W.) Holiday did his little bit of exorcism along with the priest, who early in the season did their services from a small boat on various places in the loch, it was on television. Ted has his theory about pseudo-animals, discs and so on, fully explained in his book The Dragon and The Disc, a must for students of Nessie literature, anyway Ted reckoned that the correct services would calm the sprits and ---no more Nessie! so even three sightings are good news.

The first one I have no real details of, but it was a springtime sighting off Point Claire bay two boys who saw a large hump which then moved off at considerable speed.

Second was at Foyers, I have a statement by one of the witness' courtesy of Nick Witchell:-

Account of Sighting at Foyers Hotel- July 27 1973.

witness Mr J. Shaw of London S.E.-27 + others. His account is as follows:- At about 9.00p.m. on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July while standing on the forecourt of the Foyers Hotel, my cousin and I and another guest at the hotel saw appear approximately 100 yards from the shore of the loch a long black object. The surprise of something suddenly appearing in the loch came as something of a shock, and caused us all to wonder what it could be. We listened intently, but no noise similar to an outboard motor or wash from a boat could be heard or seen. Our respective wives were sitting in the car, and when we drew their attention to join us they confirmed what we had seen and joined in watching the object move across the loch until it disappeared approximately 50-100 yards from the other side of the loch. It definitely did not go to the other side, which we could see very clearly. About 10-15 minutes later, a sailing boat came down the centre of the loch travelling from the Inverness end towards Fort Augustus. This sailing boat could be clearly seen with its white sail and 2 occupants, and assuming the boat to be of a 10 foot class, the object that we had been watching was approximately 3 times that length and at least 5 feet above the water.

It went along in surges, not in an easy flow as a boat would in calm water. Estimated time for the object to cross the loch from appearance to disappearance- 10 minutes.

We regard ourselves as responsible adults. I myself have had experience in coal-mining and engineering. My cousin, Stan George, is a pattern and model-maker, one of his hobbies being skin-diving and he is a member of the British Sub-Aqua Club (Famworth Branch) of which he was secretary for 6 years.

It is said that seeing is believing- we definitely saw something which we cannot positively identify, but whatever the object is, we are now of the opinion that something must exist in that loch.

This sighting was very like and also, in the same area, to the one that gave Tim Dinsdale his classic piece of film in 1963, as yet the best piece of Nessie film taken.

The third one occurred about Sept 8/9th, two young Dundee men, Ian Henderson a Zoology student at Aberdeen University and Harry Jarvis studying engineering at Dundee Technical College, were fishing from the shore near the Abbey at Fort Augustus when they saw the back of a creature, the well known upturned boat type of sighting, they said it drove the fish away!

The two maybe sightings both happened in Urquhart Bay one on August 5th the other on about the 20th. Nick Witchell and three others watched a disturbance, on the evening of the 5th, about a third the way across the bay a wake formed and moved slowly around, Nick shot some film but says it will look very much like duck wake, but having studied the area through a x60 telescope he stress there was no duck. Then Graham Snape, who was up there from Aug 10th to 24th, late evening of the 20th saw in the bay a shape he took to be a boat but on reaching the shore and sweeping the area with a powerful light-- no boat! Both these people don't claim sightings, but they are both very experienced on the loch and it is certain they were close to good sightings.

That brings me to a close hope it does what is intended, I will welcome any comments, items for inclusion, etc.

Rip.