

# Sharks - Find Out More at Deep Sea World

A COUPLE OF issues ago SCOTTISH DIVER featured the Shark Dive Experiences on offer at Deep Sea World in North Queensferry, where divers and non-divers alike can sample the thrill of diving among the one of the planet's most feared animals. Now Deep Sea World has launched another shark related diving experience, however this one is strictly for experienced divers only!

Shark Awareness Courses are to be held at Scotland's national aquarium at North Queensferry, their primary aim being to enhance the participants' knowledge and understanding of sharks and to teach them how to dive safely with these fascinating creatures in the open sea.

The one-day course includes a series of talks on techniques for diving with sharks; where the best places to see them around the world are; identifying different species and footage of them in their natural habitat. Conservation topics related to sharks will also be discussed,

in particular the alarming issue of shark finning.

Of course the day wouldn't be complete without the opportunity to dive with the sharks themselves, and so to finish off the learning experience those attending will descend into the depths of the aquarium's 4.5 million litre underwater safari. The aquarium is home to over 200 sharks, including the 10ft long sand tiger shark, Tinkerbell, so there are plenty of opportunities to put all that learning into practice.

This course is ideal for those divers who are interested in learning about the more 'thrill-seeking' side of diving and is the perfect way to introduce yourself to the 'kings of the ocean'.

The full day course costs £175 (including lunch) and participants must hold a PADI Open Water or equivalent with



*The Shark Awareness course includes*

a minimum of 20 logged open water dives. Courses are held regularly and there is one scheduled for Saturday, July 16.

## HSE Warning

EVIDENCE FROM divers who have struggled with 'octopus' breathing systems in real life emergencies, coupled with the fact that the British Standard EN250 fails to explain how two demand valves perform when using a single first stage regulator, has prompted research into the breathing performance of 'octopus' regulators by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The results of this research have now been published, the contents of which show that even though single valve systems meet the EN250 requirements they do not necessarily perform well when used as part of an 'octopus' system.

It also explains that the quality of a first-stage regulator is a significant factor in its overall performance – testers were shown to experience poorer breathing ability with the less

expensive models than with their more expensive counterparts.

From this research the HSE recommend that divers should use a completely self-governing gas supply system as an alternative air resource during emergencies, such as a pony cylinder set-up. This would mean that if there was a problem with the octopus system or indeed if a buddy pair were to become separated, the diver would have a greater chance of surviving the trauma of running out of air.

If divers should choose to use an octopus system, they should know: \* Although CE marked valves to BS EN250 may be considered fit to use alone, their performance cannot be guaranteed when configured as part of an octopus system.

\* Octopus systems should be based on a high-performance first-stage regulator.

\* Systems should be configured

with demand valves of similar performance.

\* Older valves and valves whose performance may have degraded should not be used.

\* Be aware of the effects of breathing in and out of phase and whenever possible breath out of phase.

HSE Chief Inspector of Diving Chris Sherman commented in an HSE press release, "This research highlights a potential problem that may be encountered in an emergency situation using an octopus regulator.

"HSE recommends the use of a completely independent secondary gas supply system; for example, a pony cylinder set-up. That way, if there is a problem with the octopus system or if a buddy pair become separated, divers have a much increased chance of survival in the event of running out of air."

# Lochaline Weekends

LOCHALINE DIVE Centre are planning to organise two historic wreck diving weekends in the Sound of Mull during July and August 2005. The package (price not available at the time of printing) will comprise hardboat diving (including a dive on the wreck of the *Swan*), air and accommodation.

The *Swan* was a 17th century warship sent by Oliver Cromwell to attack Duart Castle and subsequently wrecked off Duart Point in a storm. The site of the wreck has had 'protected wreck' status since 1991, and has been excavated over the last 10 years by a team lead by Dr Colin Martin with funding from Historic Scotland.

The weekend will also include a visit to Duart Castle to view the exhibition on the

*Swan* and a slide presentation on the wreck and its excavation.

The proposed dates for the Historic Wreck Weekends are July 9/10 and August 20/21. For information on availability and prices contact Mark or Annabel Lawrence at Lochaline Dive Centre tel. 01967 421627 or 07812 010234, [www.lochalinedivecentre.co.uk](http://www.lochalinedivecentre.co.uk) or e-mail [lochaline.divecentre@virgin.net](mailto:lochaline.divecentre@virgin.net)



# St Abbs Harbour Trust Looks For Support



*The new honesty box at St Abbs*

# Message In A Bottle

A MESSAGE sent in a bottle by a German more than 500 miles away was found in December 2004 in Portland Harbour, Dorset. The message from Wilhelmshaven, a North Sea navel port in Lower Saxony, was found on the middle of the harbour by staff from the Breakwater Diving Centre based in Castletown.

Boat skipper Andy Lawrence and diver Jason Hogg (pictured right) were repairing a marker buoy above the wreck of the Countess of Erne when they came across the bottle. The message asks the finder to write.

Andy has written to the sender of the message, Michael Slammer from Wilhelmshaven and hope he and Jason have translated the address correctly and Michael can write back.

Portland Harbour and Wilhelmshaven share historic links

with the navy from the 19th century, although the navy has since moved out of Portland it remains an active port.

There are many wrecks in and around Portland and diving there is considered to be some of the best in the UK. For more information on diving Portland see [www.divedorset.com](http://www.divedorset.com) or contact Andy Lawrence on 01305 860 269 / e-mail: [andy@uk-blue.com](mailto:andy@uk-blue.com)



LENNY CROWE, the new Harbour Master at St Abbs on the Berwickshire coast, has installed an honesty box on the harbour walkway to encourage visitors to St Abbs to donate towards the upkeep of the harbour.

Last year the St Abbs Harbour Trust spent over £120,000 on much needed repairs to the harbour including essential underpinning of the harbour walls. Further funds are now needed to maintain the harbour, and there is talk of improving the access to the water for divers in the future.

As well as the honesty box, the Harbour Trust raises money by running a Divers' Car Park, which is located in the centre of the harbour close to the dive boats. The Trust has decided not to raise its charges this year, and at £5 a day per car it is a considerable saving on the £10 a day being charged at weekends for the use of the adjacent council car park.

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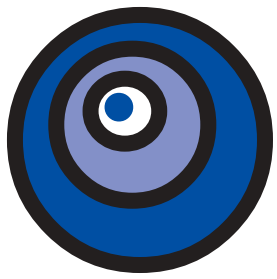
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# Lawson - Elder of Atlantis

LAWSON WOOD, the underwater photographer and writer, has been made the first elder of the 'Lost City of Atlantis'. Lawson is well-known to readers of **SCOTTISH DIVER** as a contributor to the magazine over many years, and his feature stories appear regularly in the main UK dive publications. He is also a prolific author of dive guides and other diving-related books.

Lawson's elevation to elder of Atlantis has taken place on Cayman Brac in the Cayman Islands, where he has set up home with wife Lesley. A local artist on Cayman Brac is realising a long cherished dream to build the 'Lost City of Atlantis' and to have it on permanent underwater display. Now with the full go-ahead from the Department of Tourism and the Department of the Environment, the artist, known as 'Foots', will unfold his vision of Atlantis. The first sections will be placed underwater off the northern shore of Cayman Brac in the Cayman Islands later this summer. Eventually there will be over 100 pieces underwater

weighing upwards of 300 tons, constructed on land and placed underwater in a series of phases.

The proposed area is a popular scuba diving and snorkelling location midway along the northern protected shores of Cayman Brac at a site known as Radar Reef off Stake Bay. The Department of Environment have examined the site and have deemed it perfect for a structure of this magnitude. The massive columns are constructed in such a way that they will attract and even aid marine life to adhere to the surfaces, thus advancing the colonisation of natural marine organisms.

Each sculpture is set on a massive base, that, should another hurricane come by, their alignment and stature will be minimally impacted by a major storm. Should the columns be knocked over, they are built in such a way that they will anchor themselves to the seabed, thus further protecting the marine environment.

The city will consist of various different types of sculpture including a sundial; variously sized temple columns; a giant archway and a pyramid that will weigh in at over 30,000 pounds. The first phase is now underwater and consists of eleven columns and along with the first of the eleven Elders of Atlantis.



*Wife Lesley with the statue of Lawson, elder of the Lost City*

Phase two will include the giant archway, more columns and the sundial, they are collectively known as the 'Inner Circle of Light'. Once the other ten elders are modelled, they will surround the Inner Circle of Light, their closed eyes and clasped hands signifying their long wait for Atlantis to rise again. The models for each of the City Elders will be moulded from life. The Eleven who are deemed worthy will be immortalised by 'Foots' and known as the Elders of the Lost City of Atlantis.

The first of these Elders is Lawson Wood, and his selection is recognition of his involvement in marine conservation for over 25 years. Lawson has written and co-authored over 35 diving related books. He is the founder of the first marine reserve in Scotland and a founding member of the Marine Conservation Society. His wife Lesley said: "It is wonderful for Lawson to be honoured this way. It is a testimony to his active life in conservation, protection and promotion of the marine environment".



*A scene from the Lost City of Atlantis at Cayman Brac*

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