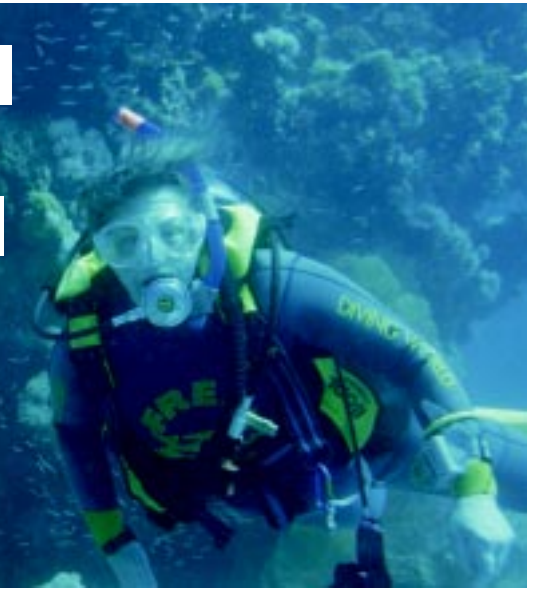




ScotSAC's new Child Protection Officer Marion Brown fell in love with diving while living abroad in the 80s. Arriving back in Scotland her passion continued and now she is equally at home in a dry suit as a wet suit ..



■ **WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO DIVE?**

● I lived in Abu Dhabi for 7 years; 4 years in I decided to turn my hand to learning to dive at the local pool by way of passing the time while my husband worked out in the desert. My first open water dive was at Khor Fakkan on the Indian Ocean side of the UAE and it was just amazing. It was about 1984 at the time and so the area was relatively undived, teeming with colour and awash with all sorts of marine life. Needless to say I was hooked and continued to dive for the rest of my time in Abu Dhabi. On my return to Britain in 1987 I couldn't contemplate giving it up and so joined Forth Valley Club and continued diving – the wetsuit lasted for a short time, but eventually I had to give in to comfort and appreciate the benefits of a dry suit in Scotland.

■ **WHAT TYPE OF DIVER ARE YOU?**

● I am usually a laid back kind of a diver – unless there is another less laid back diver zooming all over the place and heading off in all directions when I am around, ruining my dive. That definitely makes sure I am less chilled out under the water.

■ **WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF KIT?**

● This has to be my Buddy stab jacket. The reasons are simple; it is a really sturdy piece of kit, gives me all the buoyancy I need and is very dependable. I wouldn't be without it!

■ **DIVE BUDDY – WHO DO YOU ENJOY DIVING WITH MOST?**

● I don't have a favourite dive buddy per se, but taking trainees out gives me a real buzz and is something I love doing. Being there with someone on their first open water dive really is a wonderful experience and seeing their enthusiasm for the smallest, most common of marine animals is infectious.

■ **BEST COUNTRY VISITED?**

● I still haven't found anything that beats the Omani Coast as at the time there were so few divers and everything was pristine. It was a 4 hour drive across the country and my husband and I would go and dive there quite regularly (since our return to Scotland he has swapped the ocean for the golf course – dry suit diving did not appeal!). That said diving off South Cuba was great with lovely corals, a great variety of fish, wrecks and clear waters – perfect!

■ **BEST DIVE EXPERIENCE**

● Kenya holds special memories for me as not only was the diving great but it was here that I had the opportunity and pleasure to spend ten minutes snorkelling alongside majestic whale shark – it was unforgettable.

■ **WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GO DIVING?**

● The sense of freedom and the chance there is on every dive of experiencing something new. Another bonus is the number of remote and new places around the country that I have had to visit to satisfy my love of diving, places that I would never have thought of going to but have been wonderful to see.

■ **DREAM DIVE BUDDY?**

● Two words – Daniel Craig. I don't think I need to explain why! The ladies out there will understand perfectly.

■ **DREAM DIVE DESTINATION?**

● I have always had a notion to dive under the ice and so a trip to the Arctic would be wonderful – although I am not sure if this will ever actually happen, it might be just too extreme.

■ **BEST DIVE BOOK EVER READ?**

● This would be my very first manual, which I read from cover to cover and still find useful to this day.

■ **WHAT BUGS YOU MOST ABOUT DIVING?**

● Divers who constantly update their kit and then spend the whole dive trying to figure out how to work it – I have to say this usually applies to men. It's a macho thing obviously.

■ **HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE DIVING TO NON-DIVERS?**

● It gives you the freedom to explore where few others go.



Daniel Craig looking buff on the beach