

James' Sea Hunt

In this edition of **SCOTTISH DIVER** we speak to James MacInnes, who tells us about diving in the 60s and the TV star who ignited his love for the sport ...



Then ...



... and now

● **SO IT'S 50 YEARS SINCE YOUR FIRST SPLASH?** It is indeed; it has flown by. I joined ScotSAC in 1964 as a 14 year-old but couldn't do lung (scuba) training until November of the same year. By the summer of '65 I had qualified as a third-class diver at Paisley Sub Aqua Club and was appointed as a training officer by the close of the year.

● **WHAT FIRST ATTRACTED YOU TO DIVING?** I was a very keen swimmer as a boy and my favourite programme was Sea Hunt, which starred Lloyd Bridges as a sort of detective scuba diver. I was captivated by his character and wanted to go on similar underwater adventures.

● **SO LLOYD BRIDGES WAS YOUR INSPIRATION?** Absolutely! Those days it was quite difficult to get into the sport so one day I went along to the open-air pool in Greenock and I got chatting to one of the swimming instructors, who by chance was also a diver. I told them about my love for Sea Hunt and he suggested I consider joining ScotSAC.

● **AT THE MOMENT I'M ...** A part of the Glasgow Underwater Group (GLUG) and have been a member there since 2010. We have a fantastic dive officer in Richard Adair; the club is really well organised and there's no politics!

● **GLUG ARE ...** Extremely active, we go out at least once at the weekend and occasionally during the week and meet every Thursday in the West of Glasgow to discuss (over a few drinks) what lies ahead. Excursions are likely to be at Loch Fyne or Loch Long during the winter and Sound of Jura or Scapa Flow when light permits. There are around 30 of us in the club which I think is perfect, any more and it can become unmanageable.

● **TWIN PEAKS ...** My twin brother Duncan is also a keen diver and we've been diving together since 1965. It has been something that has kept us close



It was Lloyd Bridges' Sea Hunt that inspired James to take up diving

over the years and even though he now lives in Copenhagen we still make the effort to get out whenever we can.

● **BEST DIVE SPOT?** Has to be my annual trip to Downings in County Donegal, there's a bunch of us that meet up every year for deep-wreck diving. There are some amazing WWI and WWII shipwrecks, liners, U-boats, cruisers and battleships. We use re-breathers and the diving can get quite technical at points, but I look forward to the challenge every year.

● **FAVOURITE DIVE BUDDY?** I'd have to pick three! Richard Adair is fantastic to work with, Tom Hughes is a superb technical diver and going out with my twin brother is always a delight.

● **WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON?** I still dive every weekend but I'm conscious of the fact I'm 65 and that this is a physically demanding sport, so the winding down period will have to start at some point. I'll keep on going though until my body tells me to stop, there's life in the old dog yet!

● **ADVICE FOR POTENTIAL DIVERS?** There are always new people moving into the sport and it's a great pleasure to see how much they enjoy it. I'd say to anyone interested that with diving there's an incredible amount to see and to do; it really will open up your life to so many opportunities. If I could, I would go on diving forever.