



St. Abbs (Kirkby Lonsdale in practice!)

4-6th July 2003

[Trip Report Index](#)

Organised by Marc Gillingwater
Trip report by David Martin

Divers:

- Steve Clark
 - Keiron Fraser
 - Marc Gillingwater
 - Ian Gregory
 - Robert Helling
 - David Martin
 - Ugo Mayor
 - Matt Worsley
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Boat: (none)

Accommodation: [Scoutscroft Holiday Park](#), (1 x caravan, 2 x tents)

Transport (main party): Small Transit van - 260 (SWB, Low-roof), Keiron's car – Audi A4 estate.

Gas fills: [Scoutscroft](#)

(Note that despite the suggestion on Scoutscroft's website, the compressor at St. Abbs harbour appears not to be in use)

Costs: £75 per person, (accommodation, transport, breakfast)

Links:

[St. Abbs Marine Reserve](#)

[Divernet trip report 1](#)

[Divernet trip report 2](#)

Books: Dive St Abbs and Eyemouth, (1996) Wood, L., Underwater World Publications (£13.95)

Friday 4th July

I collected the van at Peterborough early in the afternoon, and called in at [Mike's](#) to collect some equipment from servicing. Sadly the stop was a little longer than anticipated, since the van's central locking decided to break, locking me out. It took the RAC-man over an hour of repeated attempts to gain access. He thought that the fault might recur, so we needed a replacement van. An ultra-efficient stop at the kitstore before heading back to Peterborough before the office shut for the weekend was required. We made it - just, not helped by haphazard parking by mothers collecting their children from school near the kitstore, or general Friday traffic. A mere fifteen minutes after arriving, we set off in our new van.

Keiron set-off separately, and by the time we were back on the A1 was well ahead. As the journey went on, the gap increased; we also stopped for longer. By the time we arrived at 11:30, Marc and Ian had set up their tents, and all four were safely ensconced in the bar. Fortunately for us, Scotland has a rather more flexible attitude to licensing hours than most of England, and the bar was still open. Unfortunately it was packed with middle-aged Geordies and Glaswegians attempting to sing karaoke.

Saturday 5th July

It had been quite windy all night, and whilst the wind had died down, the wind was onshore, which didn't bode well for the diving. Ian, Keiron and I headed down to assess the situation, if diving was "on" would leave the van in a parking space, and return for breakfast. But, even en-route it was obvious that conditions were unfavourable. We could see white horses breaking whilst still on the coast road, and when we arrived at the car park, we could see waves breaking over the harbour wall.

The obvious backup site was Pettico Wick, a site about a two miles further north, but with a north-facing, rather than east-facing shore. The entry/exit is 50m down a steep slope there is a path with steps for the top half, but a small landslide has left an inconvenient gap part-way

down, forcing one to scramble straight down a steep and slippery grass slope. The entry point itself would be diveable, but just 10-20m further out the waves were too large. The possible risks just didn't justify a dive, so we headed back to break the news to the others.

After breakfast we all headed to St Abbs harbour, the others wanted to see the waves for themselves. We walked to the end of the harbour wall, hoping not to get drenched by a wave...sadly Ian did. After this quick detour, we headed to the [Deep Sea World in Edinburgh](#). After paying an entry fee we could walk round and pretend that we were diving off the coast. You can dive at the centre - sadly it costs £125pp (or £65pp on dive-nights), so we gave it a miss.

We ate at the restaurant at Scoutscroft. The food was OK, but booking a table at one of the pubs is probably a better idea.

Sunday 6th July

With no sign of the weather letting up, it was obvious that we weren't going to be diving today either. After a quick discussion, we established that we wanted to dive - somewhere. Robert described the river dive at [Kirkby Lonsdale](#). None of the rest of us had done it, and it seemed a bit more appealing than Capernwray, so we headed off across from the East to the West coast, and then down the M6.

The divesite is the river Lune underneath the dramatic iron bridge. There were quite a few other people around, and whilst there are often a couple of divers on a weekend, we still drew some odd looks. The river is 10-15m wide and 2-3m deep, although there were occasional deeper hollows; there are small rapid at the upstream limit of the dive, and a stretch of 2-300m that is diveable downstream of this. The water is a deep peaty brown. There wasn't much to look at, and after about 1/2 hr most of us were more than happy to surface.

After packing up the kit, we said goodbye to Steve, before getting back on the M6 for the trip to Cambridge. I certainly wouldn't suggest that Kirkby Lonsdale is worth a trip from Cambridge, but if you're passing the area with nothing to do, and a set of dive gear, it might be worth a short detour.