



Film maker wades in to city waters; Man plans to document underwater shipwrecks in the Kingston area

Posted By Jordan Press
May 26, 2008



When Kenn Feigelman goes to Cuba, the local divers have a Hemingway-esque nickname for the Kingston resident. "They call me the old man in the sea," the 61-year-old chuckles.

The underwater film maker will be working closer to home this summer. Feigelman's exploration and documentary-making company, DeepIQuest2 Expeditions, has plans to document the underwater shipwrecks around the Kingston area - and hopefully find one that nobody knows about. Then he'll head to the mouth of the St. Lawrence River to document and help with scientific research on the enigmatic Greenland sharks. In between he'll be organizing a first for Kingston - an underwater exploration weekend that will happen on the same two days as one of the city's largest on-the-water events.

In early August while the city hosts the annual Poker Run, Feigelman and a number of underwater exploration companies will showcase some of the work that they do as well.

Besides displays in Kingston City Hall, there will also be demonstrations of remotely-operated underwater cameras around the Alexander Henry at the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes. As well: divers will demonstrate underwater communications technology. Feigelman said he hopes it will come to be an annual event.

How much longer does the "old man in the sea" see himself diving for adventure? "As long as nature lets me," he said. "The older you get, and as intelligent as you think you are," Feigelman said later, "you realize how ignorant you really are." That's what keeps me going. I want to learn as much about the world as I can."

Underwater nature has been in Feigelman's veins since 1973 when he created Deep/Quest 2, ostensibly as a summer research project. The group of explorers searched for underwater wrecks and continued to do so the following year.

Eventually, the company grew as a non-profit organization, but a dispute over government funding of an international underwater research project in Prince Edward County led Feigelman to resign and the company went dormant for more than a decade.

About four years ago, Feigelman restarted the company as a private corporation. In the years since the company's renaissance, the demand for work has increased exponentially-, he said, and he and his dive-mates have been all around the world.

An American based company plans to use underwater shots from Deep/Quest 2 at a public launch for its new line of cameras, meaning the local company will receive attention at an event in Times Square in New York City.

The local company plans to do a documentary on the underwater shipwrecks around the area, a spot known for its high volume of underwater wrecks that has become a popular place for divers. It's an area likened to the Bermuda Triangle, which has become infamous for the strange disappearances of boats and planes.

In this part of the world, the strangeness is in the Marysburgh Vortex, which seemed to suck ships underwater never to be seen again. "The area's pretty mysterious," Feigelman said.

He said there are about 80 shipwrecks known to exist in the area from Kingston to Prince Edward County, but there are likely hundreds more that haven't been found. Many, he said, likely never will be found, but his crew hopes to change that by finding at least one uncharted wreck.

The next big project will see the crew sail up the St. Lawrence to Baie Comeau to film and study Greenland shark, Feigelman's stepson, Matthew Penney, will also be coming along. "It's nice to work with young people. It gives the old fellow some energy," Feigelman said. "It's amazing how much you can learn from young people."

In the fall, the company will help produce a six-part series on aquatic life for local schools. The Coegeco broadcasts will be free for any school that takes part and will be interactive so students can ask questions of the hosts.

jpress@thewhig.com