

John A Nuttall

My interest in diving started when I completed the army diving course to qualify as a Diving Officer in the Royal Engineers. At the end of my Short Service commission in 1978 I joined the diving company Solus Ocean Systems (SOS) as a Project Manager for underwater inspection projects, including the first underwater inspection of offshore platforms for Shell Brunei.



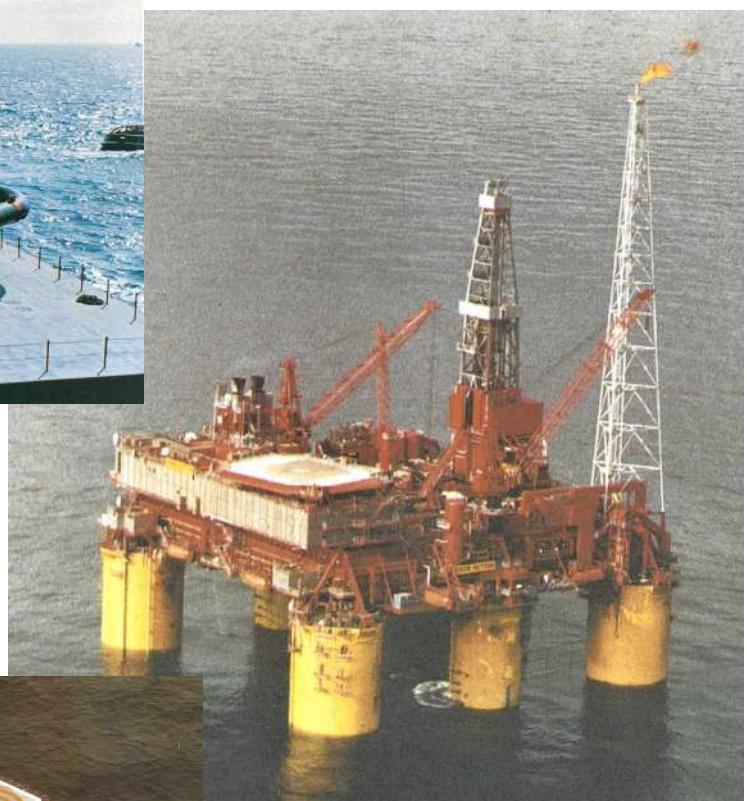
After moving to Aberdeen with SOS, in 1982 I joined Comex Houlder Ltd, a joint venture between Comex Services, Marseilles and Houlder Offshore Ltd, and a major player in subsea operations and innovation. I managed numerous major underwater projects run from Aberdeen and Stavanger, involving air and saturation diving as well as Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs). This was an exciting time to be working in the North Sea; new oil and gas fields were being developed with requirements for underwater support, much of it leading edge.

Some notable projects included:

- The development of deepwater ROVs for drilling support, and for installation of flowlines and remote wellheads
- Subsea support to the innovative Conoco Tension Leg Platform for the template installation and drilling, and installation of the platform
- The innovative recovery of a 7km flowline bundle which was lost in deep water during tow out on the surface
- Operations from numerous Dynamically Positioned diving vessels such as the Seabex One, Uncle John, Orelia and Stephamiturm



My work included offshore platform visits, (by helicopter and in the good old days, crane transfer by basket from the support vessel), working from diving vessels and visits to Comex headquarters in Marseilles. There I had the privilege of meeting the legendary saturation diver Patrice Chemin, who featured for many years on the Rolex Submariner advertisements following his record breaking Physalie 610m deep dive in 1972.



As a key member of the Comex senior management team, I was given the opportunity to acquire a Comex Rolex Submariner watch. While unused for diving, it has been worn with pride and is now offered for sale with reluctance.