

Our Story – finding the family air-loom

Where to begin? I think I need to return back to my 19th Birthday & the moment my Dad handed over his Rolex Submariner which had been in the family for a generation.

Over the next 8 years I enjoyed the owning, wearing and looking after the watch and would feel lost without it.

However, on the 17th of July I decided to go to one of my favourite spot along the river Severn, a charming village called Upper Arley. A place I've visited as a child & spent many happy hours fishing, walking & swimming.

During the nice weather in July I went river swimming with a friend, a day I won't forget, while swimming through a powerful natural weir on the river my Rolex sprung off my wrist and into the green, dark murky depths. That day I spent hours searching, however with the depth at around 10 feet all efforts where in vain.

The next day I purchased some very basic diving equipment and spent all day searching snorkelling up & down the stretch, however, 9 cold, wet & exhausting hours later... no luck. I left feeling more upset about the situation than ever, however still not ready to give up.

Plan B... taking a step back from the situation, I wondered if I could seek the help of divers and began thinking about how and who could help, after a number of calls I was directed to the **Sub-Aqua Association**.

I ended up having a really supportive call with Irene at the Sub-Aqua Association, Irene was really understanding and helpful and mentioned she would share my story (so far) on Facebook and news letter (can't thank you enough Irene)!

A few days later I had a call from Lee Poxon, the lead rep for SAA in the South of England. Lee gave me some hope and we discussed the situation at length, discussing the flow and position. To help I went back and took some videos for Lee. After reviewing Lee told me he'd be more than happy to help and would come back to me once he'd spoken to his good friend Scott Barker.

A week later Lee called and suggested he could drive up from South Bristol on Saturday 7th of August, meeting at 10am (an early start for Lee and Scott).

Upon meeting Lee we had our first challenge, getting all the gear along the 2 mile walk & onto the beach, this was a feat in itself as we had to navigate a narrow, muddy and very uneven path (which was wet and slippy from the rain)!

However, after some sweat and many stinger stings later we arrived at the stretch. We had a refreshment & caught our breath. Lee decided to go first and began kitting up alongside Scott, crossing the Weir over to the fast flowing section the watch was lost in.



The flow is some of the fastest flowing water in along the whole River Severn, with a 20 meter wide stretch falling into a 2 – 3 meter channel. This was posing some issues as every time Lee & Scott tried to cross out into the deeper channel it would push you back across and away from the area.

However I was amazed by both Lee and Scott's commitment, using all their knowledge and skill to find a way to overcome the issue.

They both tried lots of different entry points and angles and eventually found a break through, diving into an area below a large submerge tree and pushing across.







We started to have some luck, finding an iPhone 11, sun glasses and even another watch!



This gave us hope!...

Lee and Scott continued to push on, the wind and rain hammering down, adding an extra edge and atmosphere to the day.

Scott managed to find a way to reach the other side of the river and stand in some shallower water out of the main flow.





Again we kept facing challenge after challenge but Lee and Scott continued to battle through & kept fighting the current, however the hours in the day were running out.

We had lunch, Lee & Scott said he'd give it one last go, so they kitted back and across the Weir we went, a few more runs and a couple more lost objects found but the watch still not showing.

We were now approaching 4pm and the end of the day, 'one last run' Lee said. At this point I was thinking about the long walk home, made harder by the disappointment of not finding the missing watch.

This run down was different, Lee went under and was down there for around 10 – 15 minutes, Scott and I waiting patiently for Lee to resurface & when he did, I couldn't quite believe what was handed to me.



Lee and Scott had done it, I wiped away the thick algae that had masked the watch and my emotions took over, I went from huge sadness and disappointment to sheer joy.





I can't thank Lee and Scott enough for all their efforts towards my search, story & ultimately achieving the near impossible.

Both Lee and Scott were such nice company but also clearly good people to the core and have not only restored my watch to my family but also my faith the human race.

I called my Dad and Mum on the way home and both couldn't believe that after a month we had found it.

To finish, a big thank you to the SAA, Irene, Lee & Scott for all their effort.

Please stay in touch!

Will Turner

