History of the Oak Island, NS, Treasure Hunt

Presentation by
D'Arcy O'Connor
to
Independent Activities
Period 2008
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, MA
January 28, 2008

Oak Island 1986

Oak Island 1992
The Beginning in 1795
Money Pit Profile 1804 (Onslow Group)
Facsimile of Symbols on Inscribed Stone 1804 and Message Decoded by James Liechti 1860s
Early Oak Island Digs
Main Findings of the Truro Company in 1849

1. In 1849 the Truro Company excavated the Money Pit to 86 feet and then the pit flooded to sea level.

2. Drilling with a pod auger found timber platforms and evidence of assumed coins in chests.

3. No materials were recovered from the zone of assumed coins.
Results of Exploration in a Cofferdam at Smith’s Cove by the Truro Company in 1850

Reasons for Cofferdam
1. Realized Money Pit contained salt water
2. Water draining out of tidal zone at low tide
3. Boulders removed over 145 feet along shoreline of Smith’s Cove

Ref: Booklet – The Story of Oak Island 1895 (Based on work by the Truro Company in 1850)
“I forwarded four samples of the fibrous material from the beach at Smith’s Cove, Oak Island, to Dr. J.H. Soper, Chief Botanist, National Museum of Natural Sciences. Coconut fibers were identified in three of the four samples.”
Comparative Photos of Smith’s Cove
1860s and 1897

Smith’s Cove Looking toward Isaac’s Point 1860s

Smith’s Cove Looking toward Isaac’s Point 1897 (R V Harris 1958 and 1967)
Photos of South Shore 1860s and Old Shaft

Money Pit Area from South Shore Cove 1860s

1895 Sketch

Old Exploration Shaft South of Money Pit Area
The Oak Island Association 1861 to 1864
The Halifax Company 1866 to 1867

1. The Oak Island Association tried to approach the assumed chests at 100 to 105 feet by offset shaft and lateral tunnel. The resulting undermining caused a major collapse of the platforms and assumed chests in 1861.

2. The Halifax Company carried out extensive tunnelling and constructed a cofferdam at Smith’s Cove to block the flood tunnel.
Frederick Leander Blair, Ahmerst, N S
Involved from 1897 to 1951
Oak Island Dig 1897
Results of Drilling by the Oak Island Treasure Company in 1897 and Parchment Location

13 Feet

Parchment Recovered During Drilling Within Assumed Cement Vault

Parchment Recovered by Pod Auger at 155 Feet
Photo of Parchment Recovered by the Oak Island Treasure Company in 1897

Parchment is $\frac{5}{16}$ inches long

Photo from Triton Alliance
Flood Tunnel and Filter Bed Based on Work by the Oak Island Treasure Company in 1897

5 holes at 30 ft spacing and 5’ diameter drilled and blasted by OITC in 1897

Hole 3 water at 80 ft 160# dynamite

Tunnel length shown as 460 feet and rise is about 10 to 15 feet

Ref: Booklet - History of Oak Island, Nova Scotia, and of the Work Done There at Different Times to Recover Buried Treasure 1926
Henry Bowdoin, Franklin Roosevelt and Others 1909
The Chappell Shaft in Progress 1931

Chappell Shaft
12 X 14 Feet
Chappell Shaft 1931
Melbourne R. Chappell, Sydney, N S
Involved from 1897 to 1980 (Age 10 to 93)
Gilbert Hedden, Chatham, New Jersey
Involved from 1935 to 1937

Hedden Shaft
Hoist Section

Hedden Shaft
12 X 24 Feet

Chappell Shaft
12 X 14 Feet

1955
Professor
Erwin Hamilton
New York
Involved from 1938 to 1942
Exploration at Money Pit from 1931 to 1941

- Hamilton explored Chappell and Hedden Shafts from 1938 to 1942
- Chappell Shaft: Extended to 165 feet, Pick, Axe and Anchor Fluke 1931
- Hedden Shaft: Extended to 124 feet and drilled to 167 feet 1937
- OAK ISLAND TREASURE COMPANY SHAFT (1897)
- MONEY PIT (HISTORICAL LOCATION)
Robert Restall, Hamilton, Ont
Involved from 1959 to 1965

Robert Restall and family at Money Pit
Robert Dunfield, California
Involved from 1965 to 1966

Robert Dunfield (right) in South Shore Trench Nov 1965
Fred Nolan, Waverley, N S
Involved from 1959 to Present

Fred Nolan at his Joudrey’s Cove cottage

Nolan’s Brass Casting 1\(\frac{1}{4}\) Inches Long
David Tobias, Montreal, Que
Involved from 1966 to 2006

At Becker Drill 1967

Scuba diving
Smith’s Cove 1976

In the Montreal Office 1996
Dan Blankenship, Miami, Florida
Involved 1965 to Present

Working on churn drill at Money Pit 1977

Gardening on Oak Island 2005
Smith's Cove
Smith’s Cove Log Structure
Logs with Dowels
Spanish American Scissors
Preparing to Dive in 10X Casing Aug 1971
Setup for Diving in 10X Casing Sept 1972

Setup at 10X

Winches from Keystone Drill

10X Casing

10X Casing

Dan B
1. While jetting in an inspection hole at 143 feet, Dan Blankenship observed clay being squeezed out of inspection holes below and was raised a few feet.

2. After 30 seconds, Dan heard rumbling from above and shouted to be raised immediately.

3. 35 seconds later Dan was at 90 feet and the casing collapsed below him.

4. 3 minutes later Dan was raised to surface and after 5 minutes went down to 80 feet to inspect the damage.

Ref: Triton Nov 1, 1976
Recovered Section of Collapsed
27 Inch Casing from 10X

Section of collapsed casing recovered below 92 feet
Start of Shaft Construction
Depth 28 feet July/Aug 1978

Railway tank cars trimmed for use as shaft liner

Formwork for top 25 feet of shaft

Top of concrete shaft liner

Looking Down shaft
Shaft Excavation Approaching Bedrock
Depth 170 to 181 feet Feb 1990

Excavation below concrete liner at 170 feet

Preparing to cut 27 inch casing

Hoist bucket and excavation below concrete liner

Exposed till below liner and 27 inch casing
Da Michigan Mob, Traverse City, MI

Rick Marty Scott Craig
“THE MORE I INVESTIGATED THE OAK ISLAND ENIGMA, THE MORE SKEPTICAL I BECAME”

“GEOLOGIST RUDOLPH FAIRBAULT IN A 1911 REPORT CONCLUDED THAT THERE WAS ‘STRONG EVIDENCE’ TO INDICATE THAT THE PURPORTED ARTIFICIAL STRUCTURES ON THE ISLAND WERE ‘REALLY BUT NATURAL SINK HOLES AND CAVITIES’”

“THE MONEY PIT AND ‘PIRATE TUNNELS’ ARE NOTHING OF THE SORT, BUT ARE INSTEAD NATURAL FORMATIONS”

March 2000
Bay of Fundy – Large Tides
Low Tide - Bay of Fundy
• Not a hoax
• Not a natural geological phenomenon
• Not designed for any purpose except to hide something of great value
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