

BI-CENTENNIAL ISSUE

1795 - 1995

Welcome to Oak Island, its history, its legends, its ghosts, and its tranquility.

Today, Oak Island Exploration Co. is engaged in treasure hunting activities on the privately owned island, having taken over from Triton Alliance Ltd. in January 1990.

Triton Alliance Ltd. is a syndicate of Canadian and American businessmen that was incorporated in 1969, and is currently a "Holding Company" that controls the shares.

Many theories have been put forth regarding what treasure lies beneath Oak Island. One legend claims that the Money Pit is the hiding place for the plunder of Captain William Kidd. Others claim it is the resting place for booty of Blackbeard or the notorious Henry Morgan. Other possibilities include the hiding place of the long lost manuscripts of Francis Bacon.

More recently, a very good circumstantial case can be made for the Templars of Europe. In his book "Holy Grail Across the Atlantic", Michael Bradley, the author refers to the voyage of Samuel Champlain in 1604, in which he mentions of finding old, abandoned mines.

In 1976, these tours were taken over by Triton Alliance Ltd. The present tours are under the auspices of Oak Island Tours Inc. Comfort stations and picnic tables have been placed along the route for your convenience.

MCINNIS HOMESTEAD SITE 1

The remains of the first foundation on top of the hill, called Site 1 belonged to the McInnis family, descendants of one of the original finders of the "Money Pit".

UNDERGROUND WHARF SITE 2

In 1971, Triton Alliance discovered this underground wharf. Nails found in the oak log pilings were sent, as all findings on the island are, to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., for verification. Analysis indicated fabrication prior to 1800. This is the area from which two old shoes were recovered, while excavating the wharf like structure at a level about six to seven feet below the existing beach. Treasure seekers have surmised that this wharf was an early form of dry dock, built by pirates so that boats could be hauled up for repair or for the winter. This side of the island is completely hidden from the open bay, thus an excellent anchorage for those not wishing to be seen by passing ships. At this time in history there were no settlers in the area. The first town was Chester, founded in 1759.

OLD MILL SITE 3

Mr. Clarence Beamish built the saw mill in the early 1900's, using reinforcing steel to strengthen the concrete pillars. As the bay is very deep, and wide enough to turn a ship around at this end of the island, it was ideal for large ships of the time to bring their cargo of logs to the island. The mill, however was not popular with the local people who had to float their logs across the bay, then make arrangements to transport the cut lumber back to the mainland. The causeway, of course, did not exist at that time. Mr. Beamish and his family eventually left the island due to harsh winters and settled on the mainland.

Several small cottages were built on the island by Mr. Beamish from logs sawn on Oak Island. Five or six of these cottages were hauled across the ice in the winter by horses and now comprise "Lockie's Cottages" in Mahone Bay.

Near the end of the road you will see a wire fence and two stone

columns. From these columns eastward is property owned by Nolan. There are 32 lots of 4 acres each on Oak Island and Mr. Nolan owns seven of them. The balance of Oak Island is owned by Mr. David Tobias and Daniel Blankenship.

TRITON SHAFT SITE 4

This shaft dug by the Triton Alliance Corporation is in the centre of the small building you see through the trees. It was started in 1973 and finished in the spring of 1974, it goes down over 100 feet and is completely cribbed by stout planks all the way down. It was named in 1974 by the Triton Alliance project co-ordinator, Dan Blankenship, from Miami.

All earth was removed by hand and a man-operated pulley system. While doing exploratory drilling a small piece of man made wire was found while core drilling at an undisclosed depth. This led to the decision to place a shaft in this location.

Men worked in this pit during the winter of 1974 but seepage of natural water into the shaft caused bad colds and pneumonia. Work was abandoned because of pumping difficulties.

This is the first dug shaft on Oak Island to reach the depth of over 100 feet since the 6'X 6' one put in by Professor Hamilton in 1942 in the Money Pit area.

RESTALL CABIN

This cabin was the home of Robert Restall, his wife Mildred and two of their three children from the fall of 1959 to the summer of 1965. Their two sons slept in a small cabin across the road. The Restalls spent winters here, with only a gas-bottled stove and heater for warmth. From a pit dug across the road, they obtained fresh water. When asked if she enjoyed living on the Island, Mrs. Restall replied that she did indeed, but often found it lonely. She educated her youngest son, Ricky, here, as it was impossible for him to get to the mainland each day for school. Mr. Restall was the first man to have a car on the island, bringing it across the ice in winter. Before coming to Oak Island, Mr. and Mrs. Restall were motorcycle stunt drivers. The Restall cabin is now occupied by Daniel Henskee of upper New York State, one of the Triton Alliance's treasure seekers.

BORE HOLE-10-X SITE 5

Originally, this was a 6" exploratory drill hole put down in October 1969. It was drilled with a rotary drill. Voids or chambers were struck at three different elevations. Later, while placing 6" steel casing into the hole, large amounts of thin metal were recovered. After being analyzed by "Steelco of Canada" as being "low carbon steel" showing evidence of being worked on while cold and predating 1750, it was decided to enlarge the hole to 27", casing it as work progressed. While this was being done, four different kinds of metal were recovered, including several pieces of chain, predating 1750.

Several times, underwater television cameras were lowered into a large cavity in bed rock. Pictures taken seem to show two chests, a wooden column, and two different tunnels, all at a depth of 235 feet. These pictures were taken from one inch, reel to reel Sony film in 1971, by C.B.C. of Halifax.

This film "flips" so much that it was impossible to discern for a certainly, exactly what was on the film at the time. Consequently, the film sat on a shelf from 1972 until 1994, when Bob Atkinson, a new member of Triton Became aware of this film and asked Dan Blankenship to try and find somebody that had the old equipment needed to lift the magnetic image from the tape and reproduce it on V.H.S. tape. After advertising in a Video magazine in New England, Blankenship located a Mr. Paul Beck of Emerson College in Mass. that had the proper equipment, and he succeeded in bringing out the images and transferred them to V.H.S. tape. However, the images still flipped. In the spring of 1994, we managed to freeze two frames and got computer print outs. It was not until February, 1995, that we managed to freeze some 14 frames on this V.H.S. tape, some of which are included in this pamphlet.

The two tunnels leading into this chamber at 235 feet are quite clear, and the wood beams over one of these tunnels is unmistakable.

However when diving was attempted two years later, the cavity had eroded and the chests were no longer visible as mud and silt covered everything.

A severed hand was also seen on the T.V. by four different men.

In 1977, while cutting exploratory holes in the 27" steel casing at 144 feet down, the 1/4 inch thick walls started to buckle in well above the head of Mr. Blankenship, and stones as big as a fist, started to hit him on the head. He hollered at his son, David over the radio that connected them, "Take me out", "Take me out" David was quite quick and had his father out of the hole and on top of the ground in 34 seconds from 144 feet down. With-in two minutes the steel shell had collapsed completely from 77 feet to 99 feet. All of the above excitement was duly recorded on tape

for posterity.

Currently, an 8 foot diameter steel shell goes from grade to about 90 feet, at which point we had to change to a reinforced concrete wall averaging ten to twelve inches thick. The concrete shaft is anchored into bed-rock with one inch reinforcing steel at 181 feet below grade.

From this point a 27" hole in bedrock continues to 235 feet. However, this 27" hole, as well as the chamber at 235 feet is filled solid with debris and the 27 inch hole also has a 26 foot long drill bar wedged tightly, that weighs about 2500 lbs.

CAVE -IN PIT SITE 6

Mrs. Harry Sellars, wife of one of the four farmers living on Oak Island, was ploughing this field one morning in 1878 when the team of oxen she was using fell through the ground. In an attempt to rescue the team, she herself fell and was pulled out soon after, along with one of the oxen. The other had broken its leg and had to be shot. Where the ground had fallen, a man-made opening was revealed. On investigation, the treasure-seekers found shoring timbers. It is now known that this pit was originally constructed as an air shaft at the time the money pit was built. The funnelshaped shaft has certainly earned its name, although the actual count of cave-ins has never been calculated.

This shaft was re-excavated by Bob Dunfield, in January and February of 1966, using a large "Orton" crane, with a clam-shell bucket.

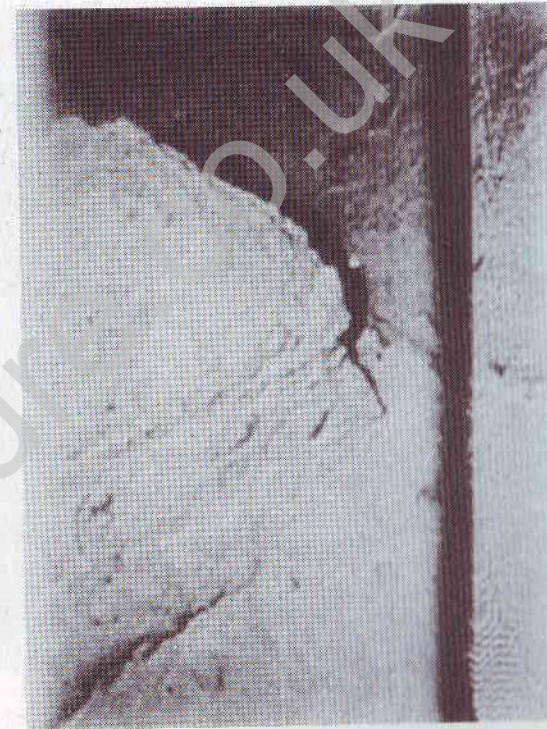
He managed to reach the depth of about 105 feet, with an open excavation, at which point, salt water started to come in at the bottom and the hole was abandoned.

This open pit quickly collapsed the same day. As a matter of fact, Dan Blankenship had rode the bucket down for a fast look at the walls and with-in minutes after being brought to the surface the walls collapsed and this episode was captured on film.

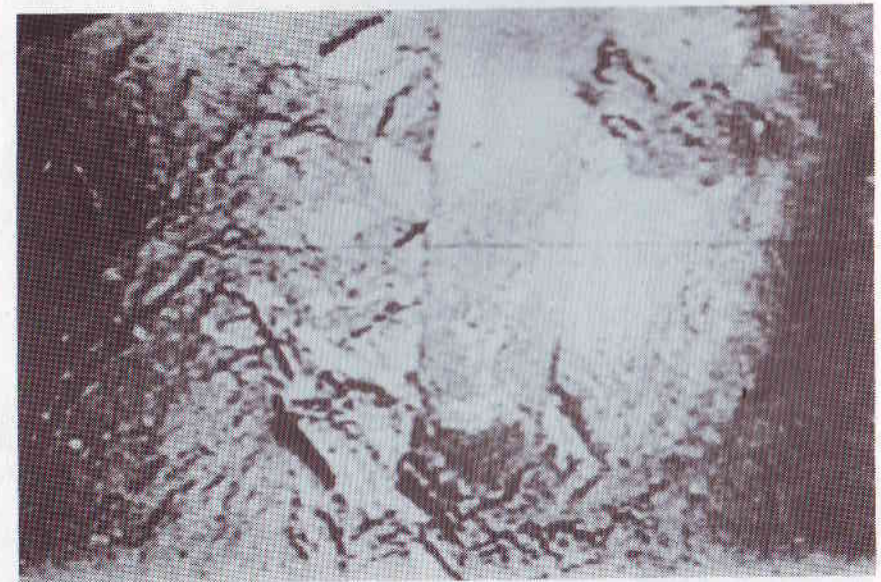
TRAGEDY PIT SITE 7

In this pit, Robert Restall, his son Robert Jr., Karl Graser from Long Island and Cyrill Hiltz from Martins Point all lost their lives on August 17 of 1965.

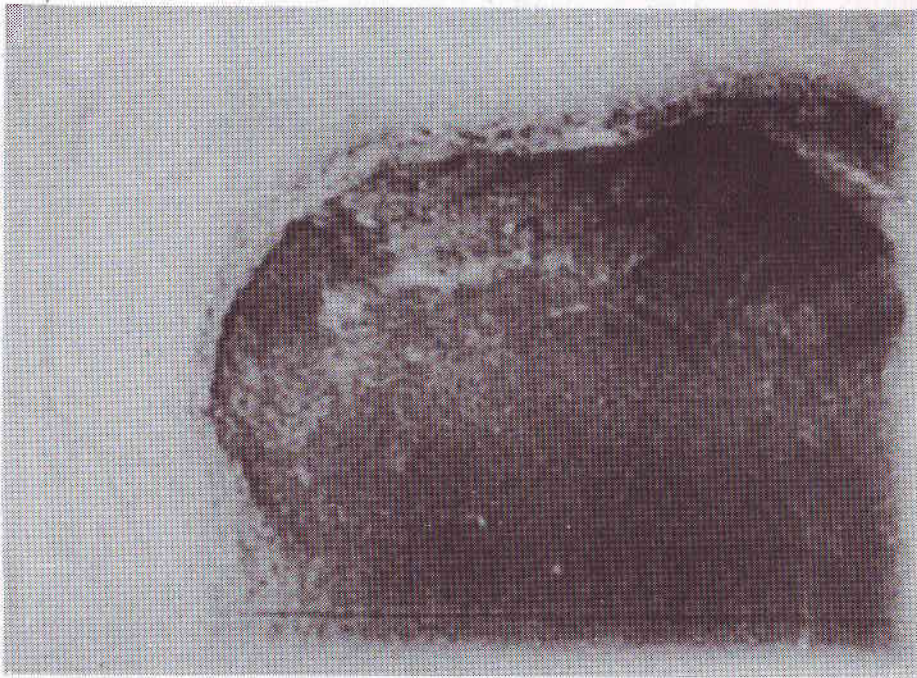
It is believed that while leaning over the top of the 27 foot deep pit to examine the water level in the bottom, Bob Restall became over-



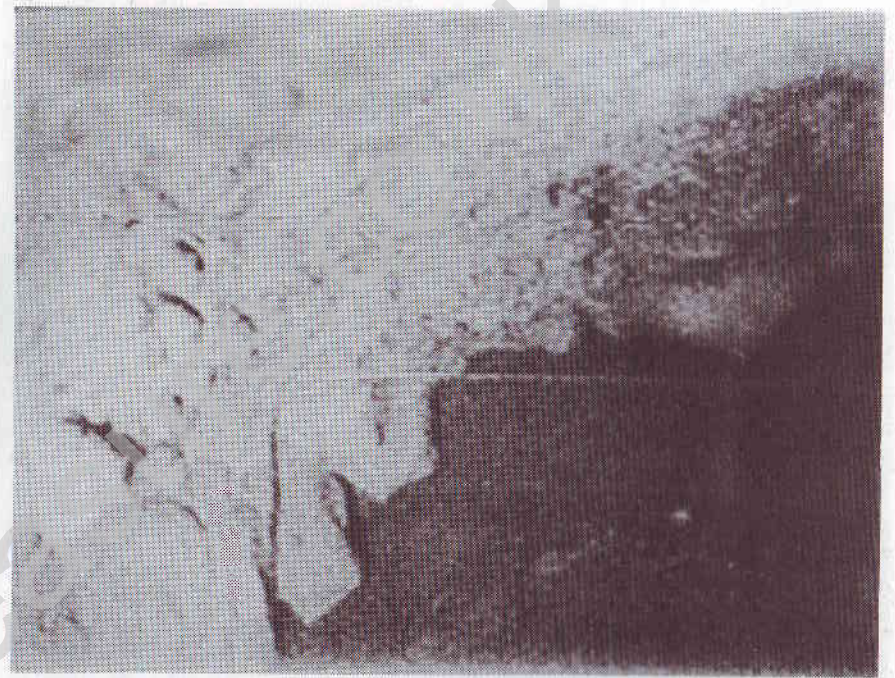
#1. Shows end of a chest, with rounded top.
Vertical wall about six inches away.



#2 Vertical wood column in the centre with chest behind.
Screen at base of column to left with round handle.



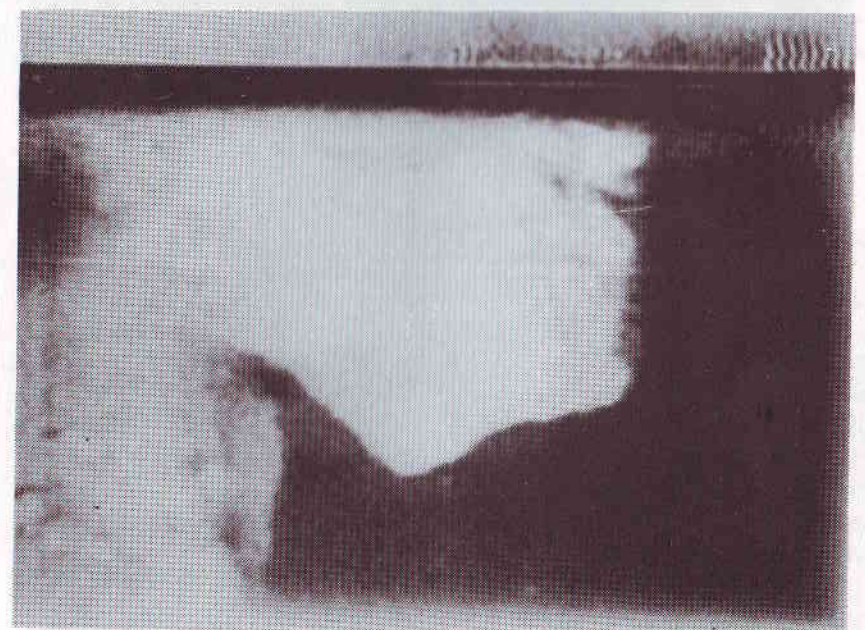
#3 Tunnel at 235 foot level.



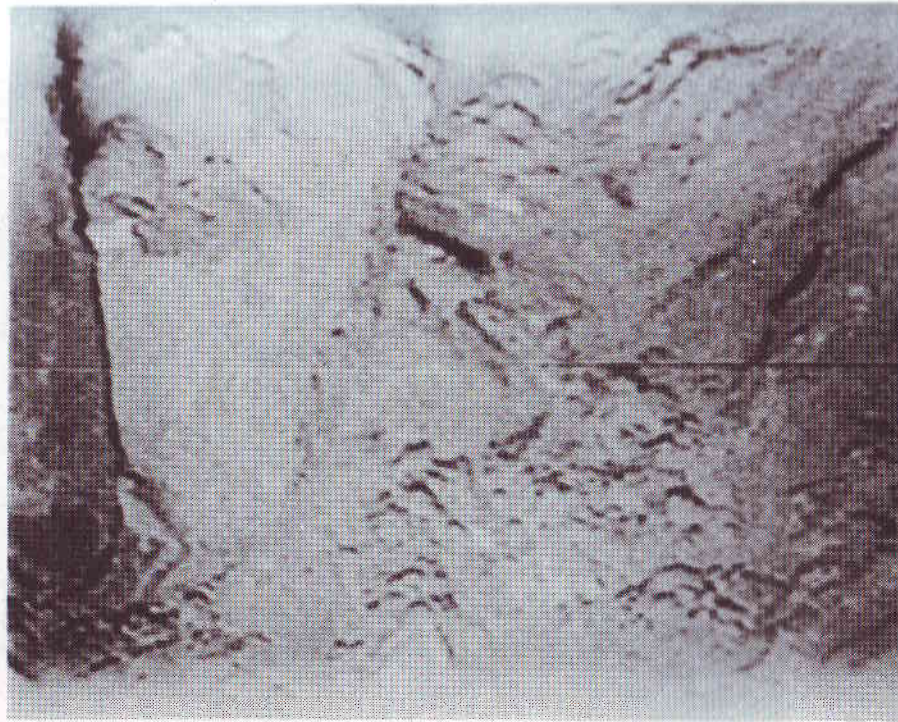
#5 Wood cribbing over tunnel with packed clay above.



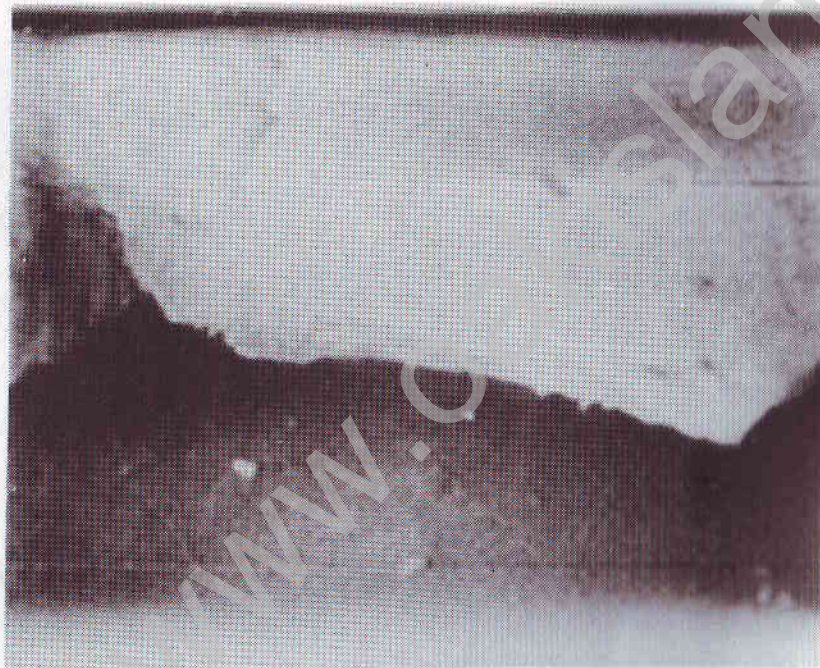
#4 Opposite side of tunnel.



#6 Blow up of #5



#7 Verticle wood column to left with chest behind and to the right.



#8 Shaped wood overhead with tunnel under.

come by a heavy accumulation of carbon monoxide fumes and fell into the shaft. His son, seeing this, jumped down into the pit to save him and others quickly followed. At one time, seven men were in the pit. Three of them were saved and the others died.

Some witnesses say that green bubbles were coming from the bottom and they had a pungent odor. The autopsies showed that all four had drowned.

COFFER DAM IN SMITHS COVE SITE 8

The original dam was built by pirates in an attempt to hold back the tide, while building the flood tunnels system. The second dam was built by the treasure seekers for the same reason, but was not strong enough. History records that it was not even to survive the first tide. Triton Alliance constructed the last dam and, at that time, found the five fan-like drains leading to the Money Pit, part of the flood tunneling system in their original condition; square, boxlike, held together and sealed by cement and manilla grass. Pirates of that era used a type of concrete made in Jamaica of molasses and sand to which they added manilla grass for strength. Two independent Laboratories verified the material as such.

It was while exploring behind the dewatered coffer dam in 1971 by Triton Alliance that an odd structure was uncovered. Roman numerals were cut into a large round tree and different length cross members were notched and held tight by two inch oak dowels. This wood carbon dated as having been formed in the mid 1500's.

MONEY PIT SITE 9

You have now come to the most legendary part of Oak Island. In 1795, three boys, John Smith, Anthony Vaughn and Daniel McGinnis, on a camping trip from the mainland, discovered a large oak tree with a block and tackle dangling from a branch. Directly below was a large depression in the ground and, a few feet away, securely attached to a rock was a ring bolt. Curiosity aroused, the boys began to dig. Just below the surface they found a layer of flat stones, not native to Oak Island. Digging further they found a layer of fitted oak logs imbedded into the hard walls. Removing these they continued digging and found similar layers of logs at the 20 and 30 foot levels, at which point they became discouraged.

It wasn't until six or seven years later that they were able to inter-

est a group to undertake the digging. This group continued the digging until reaching the depth of about 90 feet, finding layers of logs cut into the walls about every ten feet. They also found layers of charcoal, putty and coconut fibre at different levels.

Upon reaching 93 feet, they found a large stone not native to the island, with strange markings on it. Several interpretations have been advanced as to what the markings said including one, "Buried ten feet below is two million pounds". Shortly after this stone was removed, they were flooded out with salt water and had to discontinue the digging.

Many other attempts were made from 1804 to 1849, at which time drilling with a pod auger bit was done from a platform 30 feet below the surface. They struck a wood platform at 98 feet, five inches thick, an open space of 12 inches, 4 inches of oak, 22 inches of metal in pieces, 8 inches of oak, another 22 inches of loose metal, 4 inches of oak and 6 inches of spruce. The only things recovered were three pieces of gold chain which later disappeared.

In 1850, while tunneling to the Money Pit from an adjacent shaft at 109' the bottom dropped out of the Money Pit and everything dropped to about 150 feet.

Later a flooding system was discovered in Smiths Cove, put there by the original people to protect their treasure. A coffer dam was attempted to enclose this area in 1850 and again in 1865 by searchers. Both were unsuccessful.

Over the years many subsequent attempts have been made to reach the bottom of the "Money Pit" and as far as is known, all have failed.

Drilling in 1897, recovered a small piece of parchment with the letters "VI" from a depth of 155 feet.

In 1931, M.R. Chappell put down a 12' X 14' wood shaft to a depth of 165'. He recovered a pick at 127 feet, an axe-head at 123 feet, an anchor fluke at 116 feet and parts of a miner's seal oil lamp. All of these were probably from searchers before.

The remains of a 12' X 24' shaft is all that is visible today. This shaft was put down by Gilbert Heddon in 1937 to a depth of 125 feet.

After the tragedy in 1965, Bob Dunfield from California installed a causeway from the mainland to the island. Over this he brought a large crawler crane. In trenching on the south shore, he uncovered a hidden shaft which stopped about 15 feet below the surface. This shaft was mechanically excavated to about 100 feet at which point salt water broke through. Many large, round stones were removed from this depth but the sides started to erode and work was terminated. The crane was moved to the "Money Pit" area and an open excavation dug to about 135 feet at which point it too collapsed. Later the "Cave-In" pit was excavated by the same machine to a depth of 105 feet, at which point the walls collapsed.

In 1967, David Tobias of Montreal spent over \$200,000.00 drilling in the "Money Pit" area, succeeding in finding a large hole in bedrock

about 20 - 25 feet wide, which is probably the original site. Man-made tunnels were also found below 200 feet.

In 1969, Triton Alliance Ltd. was formed to solve the mystery of Oak Island. An extensive drilling program has verified man made workings in several locations. Pumping tests have been done to establish which of these areas are connected. Several kinds of metal have been recovered from different bore holes.

BEACH PIT - HIDDEN SHAFT SITE 10

The Hidden Shaft was discovered in the fall of 1965, 15 feet below the surface of the ground, while cutting trenches on the south shore in an attempt to intercept flooding tunnels. The Beach Pit was dug by clam shell bucket to a depth of 100 feet where salt water broke through.

FACTS AND FOOTNOTES:

To search for treasure in Canada, a person requires a Treasure Trove License. If you own the land where you believe treasure is buried, you have the right to search or grant others the right to search. If the land, however, is owned by another, that person's written permission must be obtained before you apply to Nova Scotia's Minister of Mines for a Treasure Trove License. If a license is granted, a \$25.00 fee is required for a two year period, providing you do one hundred dollars worth of actual searching each year. Should you find treasure on the land, you keep 90% of what you find, and relinquish 10% to the Province of Nova Scotia.

It has been reported in one of the three books written on Oak Island that, in the 1960's the Beamish Expedition, while spending several weeks on the island searching for clues to the treasure, found a Spanish coin, inscribed "II Maravedi", dated 1598. They also report the finding of over 300 metal objects of archeological interest including old irons, axe heads, files and an anchor.

There are several good books written on Oak Island; The Oak Island Mystery, by R.V. Harris, published by McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Canada, and The Money Pit Mystery, by Rupert, Furneaux, published by Dodd, Mead, and Company, New York. Another book about Oak Island was written by D'Arcy O'Connor in 1978. It is called "The Money Pit" and published by Coward, McCann and Geoghegan of New York. He took over two years in researching all available records and interviewing various people.

More recently, "Oak Island Gold" was written in 1993 by William S. Crooker, and is considered to be an excellent book on exploratory work

done by Mr. Fred Nolan of Bedford, Nova Scotia, over the period of years. Mr. Nolan has a treasure trove license on his seven lots on Oak Island, and has done extensive surface work. He is an accomplished land surveyor and his profession has served him well, in unraveling part of the Oak Island Mystery.

Even more recent, is a book that has only come out in 1995, written by the Rev. Lionel Fanthorpe and his wife Patricia. The title of his book is "The Oak Island Mystery"

His theories partially based on his subjective mind are to say the least, thought provoking as he invites the reader to draw his own conclusions, after giving them substantive background material.

Tours of Oak Island are carried out under the auspices of Oak Island Tours, Inc. Neither Oak Island Tours Inc., Oak Island Exploration Co. or Triton Alliance Inc. assume responsibility for any injury or loss of life to visitors to Oak Island.

