

Oak Island Treasure & the closure of the Oak Island Tourism Society: some questions

It's been a hot topic in the Oak Island community these past few weeks. Ever since it was announced the Oak Island Tourism Society would be dissolving, many enthusiasts of the mystery are asking questions, such to what will happen to artifacts and where does this leave public access to the island?

At Oak Island Treasure HQ, we have not been left out of the fray and have been contacted by local press for our view on the situation.

Here follow some interview questions recently asked by Halifax's paper, The Chronicle Herald which will provide you with our view on this news.

Q 1. Well, first off, do you live on the South Shore? I'm wondering how you got interested in Oak Island and what the allure is for you.

I actually live a little further afield than the South Shore - I'm in London, England. I first read about Oak Island when I was a child and my fascination with the mystery has never left me. For that reason, back in 2001 I set up a website, www.oakislandtreasure.co.uk with the intent of bringing together Oak Island fans from all over the world. Around 500 individuals visit my website every day, keen to find out information on the Oak Island mystery.

I have crossed the Atlantic four times for the annual Explore Oak Island Days event, organised by the OITS and it's been wonderful to meet fans of the mystery from all over on Oak Island.

Believe it or not, there is actually a small UK based contingent of Oak Island fans who get together each summer in London and discuss our favourite theories in the Captain Kidd pub on the River Thames.

Q 2. How long have you been involved with the society?

I recall being a member of the Society, pretty much around the same time as setting up my website back in 2001.

Q 3. What do you think of its closure?

Although it is sad to see the Tourism Society close, I feel that there is enough interest and public spirit to carry the vision forward. Whether this will be a local historical society, or a group of Oak Island enthusiasts, I firmly believe that Oak Island has the potential to attract many visitors to the area.

The Oak Island mystery has all the elements of those exciting stories which captured our imagination as children, and in a world where everything is so certain, it's compelling to ponder one of the very few remaining mysteries. Oak Island remains a tale of fortitude, passion and intrigue. For this reason I believe, treasure or no treasure, it would be a worthy tourist destination for visitors to Nova Scotia.

Q 4. What impact will that have on the search and what will happen with the information and the artefacts that have been recovered?

I don't believe the closure of the OITS will have an impact on the search for treasure on Oak Island - the reason being that the excavation relies on the Province issuing the Treasure Trove Licence. There is currently considerable hold up around processing this document, which has resulted in the search for treasure grinding to a halt. In the past when no excavations have been taking place, international interest has remained, so there is certainly a public appetite for information on the Money Pit mystery, despite little or no activity.

As I understand it, those artefacts which have been recovered over the past two centuries remain in the hands of the groups who funded the excavations, such as Dan Blankenship who has an impressive collection of items. As excavations on Oak Island have been privately funded, those owners of such items are by no means obliged to share their findings, but I hope that any group can look forward to a fruitful relationship with those directly involved in the treasure hunt.

Q 5. Do you think this means interest in the mystery is waning or do you think there's potential for others to pick up the gauntlet?

I don't think that interest in Oak Island is waning at all! Every month I hear from people the world over including journalists, documentary producers, publishers and even school teachers, all eager to learn the latest news on what has become known as the World's greatest treasure hunt.