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CARBON DATING

COCO FIBER

October 6, 1993

Dear Oak Island Participant:

I just received via telephone the C-14 results from our recent coconut fiber test. The date is 820 years before present ± 70 years. The before present refers to prior to 1950 AD, thus dating the sample to $1950 - 820 = 1130$ AD ± 70 . This sample was physically obtained by David Tobias from Smith's cove behind an old board wall (first section North side) and spent the last 20 years or so in the Island museum as sample 'S-2'.

Beta Analytic, the C-14 lab that performed our test, indicated that coconut fiber is an ideal substance to date since the coconut is a growth that occurs annually. When compared to dating tree material which can be grown over some considerable period of time, coconut material is much superior since a new harvest occurs every year and a comparatively accurate date may be determined. Wood from trees, on the other hand, is subject to considerable variance depending on the location of the sample. Samples, for C-14 purposes are presumed to come from the outer 20 series of rings and if that is not the case, then the date could vary considerably. Or if the sample is obtained from a branch, then the date of the branch could be significantly different from the outer 20 series of rings.

Beta also informs me that wood samples obtained from coastal areas are also subject to another potential inaccuracy. If the sample was obtained from a camp fire, or any other application where driftwood could have been included, then the desired date could be significantly influenced.

Finally, C-14 dates as modern as 300+ years are highly suspect from a scientific standpoint and are only to be used as confirmatory data and not the only source of dating.

I will forward a copy of the report when received.

Keep Digging or Detecting,

Dick