

CoOI S12 E15 Channeling the Solution

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Synopsis by Jan Anderson

Money Pit

Vanessa is inspecting the area around the caisson for signs of another cave-in. Yesterday, the area around the caisson caved in and in an effort to try and stabilize the area, tons of soil and gravel were used as backfill. Marty thinks the natural seal has been removed from a void and the material in the caisson has fallen into that void. Alex suggests that they could have pierced the roof of a chamber or tunnel. Marty wonders if they have collapsed into the treasure vault. Vanessa comes over and asks the team about getting water to get more hydrostatic head pressure, and tells them she wants to fill the can all the way. The caisson will be filled with thousands of gallons of water to stabilize the shaft and the voids beneath it. This will allow the hammergrab to continue to remove more spoils. The next day, Marty arrives at the Money Pit and is told that TB1 has been stabilized and the dig has resumed. Billy tells them that 48-49 yards of crushed stone were put down the hole. Vanessa arrives and tells them that things are better, the water is helping, and the hole is 164 feet deep, but there is no plug. Next, she tells them that they are hitting something very hard, like rock all the way around the caisson. Terry and Marty then explain that they think the caisson is on the edge of the solution channel. The solution channel runs between 160 and 180 feet underground. Vanessa tells them they are going to add another can and more water so they can continue going down. Later that day TB1 has reached a depth of nearly 170 feet and has reached the solution channel. Gary is metal detecting spoils from TB1 when Alex finds a piece of wood. Alex wants to see if it will float or not. This will help to determine the age of the wood. When he drops the wood in water, it does not float, which means it should be old wood. Alex takes the wood over to the tent and tells Marty that the wood is from the last scoop of spoils and it does

not float. Vanessa then comes over and tells them that the depth of the hole is 168 feet and six inches and the casing is at 171 feet. After the War Room meeting, Vanessa shows Rick, Marty, and Alex that the collapse is not stopping and is going under the crane. Rick asks about depth and Terry says they are at 179 feet. Vanessa tells them that every 30-40 minutes they are having to stop and try to slow the collapse, but it is moving under the crane. She then tells them if the collapse gets too far under the crane, it will become a safety issue. Rick and Marty agree it is time to stop the digging of the TB1 shaft. The team will meet in the War Room and discuss their next step.

Swamp

Rick, Marty, and other members of the team are in the northern part of the swamp. They are continuing the search for hidden structures, artifacts, and clues that could be hidden in the swamp. Alan begins digging and Gary begins metal detecting the area. Gary soon gets a hit and when Marty begins digging they find a piece of brick. Alan removes more dirt, and when Gary goes over to metal detect, he notices a wooden stake. Rick then notices another stake and pulls it out. Tom tells the group a couple of stakes have been found on this side of the road but not in this area. The stakes that were found previously were closer to the road. Rick wants Steve to take GPS measurements where the stakes were found. Steve takes the measurements and tells the team these stakes are in line with the wooden stakes the team found in the past. Rick then notices cobble near the area where the stakes were found. Rick wants Dr. Spooner to take a look at the cobble and give his opinion. The next day, the team is continuing to dig in the swamp. As Alan continues to dig, he unearths more cobble that Tom says looks like the stone path. Scott calls Dr. Spooner and Laird to come take a look at this new feature. The next day Dr. Spooner and Laird arrives to take a look at the cobble feature the team found in the northern part of the swamp. Alex suggests cutting a section and Laird agrees.

The Lab

Marty and members of the team are in the lab to hear the results of testing done on four nails found in the TB1 shaft. Emma tells the group that based on test results, the first three nails are from the early to mid-1800s and possibly the late 1700s. She then tells the group that the fourth nail dates from the mid to late 1700s.

War Room

The team is in the War Room to meet with gemologist Jeffrey Bilgore and CEO of the American Gem Trade Association, John W. Ford Sr. They will be meeting by video conference to hear information about the glass gemstone found on Lot 5. The team is told the gem is European and could be from England, France, Spain, Portugal, or Italy, and it could have been made between 1730 and 1775. When Marty asks them about the gem's use, they are told that it could be for adornment or sewn onto a heavy fabric. Next, they tell the team that the size and the purity of the gem are unusual. They also tell the group the gem is about the size of an eight-carat sapphire or diamond and is something that would not be worn by the average person. The team then learns that the way the gem is fastened and cut indicates wealth, nobility, or part of a military medal. Jack mentions that the dates for the gem line up with the Duc d'Anville theory. The next day, the team is meeting with Steve in the War Room to hear his report on the swamp. First, Steve shows the team the location of the survey stakes the team has found in the swamp. Next, Steve shows them the stakes and cobble found yesterday and how it lines up with the cobble path. He then shows them how the cobble path is connected to the eye and the wooden platform they found this year. He then tells them it also projects to the cobble found next to the brick vault. Dr. Spooner then adds that these features are also related in time. He states that the time period is from the late 1600s to the mid 1700s. Alex then points out that if the line is projected to the northwest it could end up on Lot 5.