

Frequently-Asked Questions:

“When’s your museum in Provincetown open, and where is it located?”

See the bottom of this page for hours and directions:

http://www.whydah.com/pages/our_work_pages/museum.html

“How much is the *Whydah* treasure worth?”

No one knows—and it is impossible to estimate. For example, the Akan gold recovered from the *Whydah* represents the *only* datable examples of such jewelry created between the 15th and the 19th centuries. We believe that the coin collection is unprecedented in the range of dates and origins represented so far as shipwreck treasure is concerned. Indeed, there are a number of coins which are, so far as we know, unique examples of their type. Given this, it is simply impossible to arrive at a cash value. In any case, the true value of the collection is in its contribution to a greater understanding of the past.

“Can I buy a *Whydah* coin?”

No. We do not sell coins or other artifacts. We plan to keep the collection intact, as a unit, so that it can continue to be studied and displayed.

“How do you fund your work?”

The archaeological excavation and conservation work is funded by proceeds from our Museum, Giftshop, Webstore, and other activities. Also of critical importance are donations from people like yourself; see:

http://www.shipwreckcenter.org/pages_chsp/donate.html

“Why, after twenty years, are you still coming up with exciting finds from the wreck of the *Whydah*?”

The *Whydah* is scattered over a wide area of ocean bottom and is covered by a thick blanket of sand. Due to recent advances in technology and equipment, we now know that much of the wreck is buried deeper than originally thought. So not only do we still have much of the debris field to explore, but we are also coming up with fantastic discoveries from areas of the site we’ve worked in previous seasons.

“How deep is the wreck? How far is it offshore?”

It is anywhere from thirty to fifty feet down, depending on the exact area of the site, and is less than a half-mile from the beach. This actually makes archaeological recovery work more difficult for us. Since Cape Cod is an exposed coast, adverse strong winds can easily put us into the surf zone. This is why we only dive on the site from June to early September.

“Can I dive with you guys?”

Not at present, but we are considering this as a possible program. Watch our website for future announcements.

“What protects the site from being looted by modern pirates”?

We have been awarded full legal ownership of the wreck by the courts. But our best security system is the deep layer of sand that covers the wreck.

“Why are some artifacts still being displayed in water?”

The artifacts of the *Whydah* have been in the ocean for so long that they are completely saturated with sea-water. If we allow them to dry out without first putting them through conservation treatment, the salt in the sea-water will crystallize, and cause much the same sort of corrosion to the artifact that salt does to your car. Recovered materials are therefore kept wet until they have gone through treatments to neutralize the salt.

“I recently found something man-made that was in the ocean. How do I go about conserving it so it won’t deteriorate?”

Since the treatments for each material differ, this is not an easy question. For a complete manual, see this webpage from The Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A&M University:

<http://nautarch.tamu.edu/class/anth605/File0.htm>

Should you have further questions, please don’t hesitate to email us at:

whydahmuseum@yahoo.com

Thanks!

