

# CENTRAL FLORIDA Treasure Tales

FEBRUARY 1999 EDITION

## January Minutes: By Chuck Hosbein

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM. Several guests were at the meeting and were recognized (Burt Neil, Butch ??, Tom Dan, Mike Riles, Rich Green). Birthdays and anniversaries were

Treasurer's report was read and accepted with a December balance of 1705.51

Ray introduced the guest speaker Tom Dankowski. Tom gave a good presentation on how Mike ?? had located a cache of mercury dimes and two barbers. Tom also gave out a lot of good metal detecting hints and tips such as the type of soil, shovels to use, and the use of a test garden. He also read an article on how objects sink in the ground and the importance of depth. He also demonstrated the new Minelab SD2200 detector.

Al discussed how he had done training sessions in the past and the need to do some with the club. He's looking for volunteers to help out.

A vote was taken on whether to bring back the plaque prize for find of the month instead of the silver halves. The vote was turned down and the silver halves will continue.

Ray asked for volunteers for the site committee and several members volunteered.

The club scheduled a club hunt for Sunday (1/10/99) at Fort Mellon Park in Sanford. Meeting time was set at 10:00 a.m. Flyers were available for the Weeki Wachi Hunt.

## New Members:

Al Rinaldi and Richard Green

## Finds of the Month:

Single Coin	Dave Gascone
Single Artifacts	Dave Gascone
Group Artifacts	Dave Gascone
Single Odd/End	Bill Bergdoll
Group Odd/End	Jerry Hinson

## Finds of the Year:

Single Coin	Dave Gascone
Group Coin	Ralph Flippo
Single Jewelry	Mike Myers
Group Jewelry	Ted Smith
Single Artifacts	Grady Cox
Group Artifacts	Dave Gascone
Single Odd/End	Frank Barnes
Group Odd/End	Alden Mitchell

## January Field Trip By Douglas L. Melvin

I think that our January field trip turned out to be one of the most interesting and successful ones! It was a chilly and overcast day but about two dozen club members showed up at the meeting place on Sunday morning.

Ray gave a short talk about where to metal detect and he informed everyone that cash prizes would be awarded for the best finds in various categories, that certainly made it interesting and gives you an incentive to do your best.

Shortly after 10am everyone dispersed into small groups to different sites with instructions to meet back at the starting point at 2pm.

Four hours seems like a long time but when you're having fun and finding some goodies the time goes real fast. I had to really force myself to call it quits where I was detecting but I did want to see what everyone else had recovered. Enough was recovered to have a good "Find of the Month" competition.

Ray gave \$10.00 to the person who had the best find of each category. The categories were: Most coins found, Oldest coin found, Most unusual find recovered, Best artifact(s) recovered, and Best jewelry piece recovered. (*I didn't plan to do this article, so didn't take notes-sorry folks*)

Lots of the items found will be at the next meeting, you can bet.

### How to find Land Sites to Hunt!

First and foremost is your mouth. Talk about and promote the hobby everywhere you go. Friends, the barber, the hair stylist, the person next to you in a restaurant or at a wedding, ect.

Talk about the types of things you find, how you find them and types of places you found them in. Then the question, "Do you know of any places like this?" Take good notes, you'll be overwhelmed with the information you get.

Second is "Sidewalk construction" really any construction in general has so much potential. Its major drawback is timing. You need to get there before fill has been added, but even after is ok. If the fill has treasure in it, where did it come from? Also check any dirt that has been removed and dumped elsewhere.

Maps ! Pick up old maps anywhere you go. Compare these to modern ones. You'll be amazed at the many sites you'll find. Old schools, parks, railroad stations, churches ect. ect.

Road names - i.e. - Church street, Railroad Ave., Park Ave. Academy St. ect. All these can lead you to some interesting sites in any town.

And last but not least, the Libraries and Historical Societies in the area. *This is a great rainy day activity.* Talk with the person in charge; explain what you are looking for. Once again promote the hobby. Photo albums are a wealth of information - "A pic is worth a thous---", then area history books and last newspapers.

Never believe that there are not any places to hunt, what's been described here will last a lifetime.

Good hunting!

### Items for Sale

#### Tesoro Stingray II

Water and land machine. This machine is like new. Can be used on wand or hip mounted.

Asking \$400.00

#### Garrett AT-4

Surf and turf machine, instruction booklet included. Used as hip mounted machine.

Asking \$300.00

Contact for both: Ray Leist (407) 322-5509

#### Animal license tags wanted

Will pay 50 cents each for pre 1990 tags.

Contact George Livingston 896-3585

#### White XLT

Asking \$400.00

Contact Aldin Mitchell 886-0708

**The Central Florida Metal Detecting Club Meets the second Friday of each month. Meetings are held at the AutoNations Dealership, 4911 Wayside Dr. near the intersection of I-4 and SR 46. Meetings start at 7:30 PM**

### 1999 Officers

President Ray Leist

Vice-President Ted Smith

Second Vice President Bill Bergdoll

Secretary Chuck Hosbein

Treasure Lonna Leist

Newsletter Editor Vince Faulkner

(Ph: (407) 679-9557 e-mail:

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Refreshments Ray & Gerry West

Find Table Rob Loucks

Prize Table Fred & Nancy Schimmel

### Choose the right Metal Detector

When shopping for a metal detector, there are several factors to consider. What type of hunting are you most interested in? What part of the country do you live in? What will the mineralization in the soil be like? Are you a coin shooter, a water hunter, or will relic hunting or prospecting be your thing?

If you will be mainly coinshooting, you have several options. All the major metal detector manufacturers make several models of machines, from the most basic VLF discriminator, to the highly complex computerized ID models. The difference in these models is mainly in the options. Think about it as if you were buying a car. Do you really need the power windows, the CD player, ect.? Or will a good, solid vehicle, with a few extras do the job? Buy what you

need, but buy the best detector that your budget will allow. You won't regret it.

Many folks beginning in the hobby make the very common mistake of buying a cheap "toy" detector. Now, if digging large pieces of shallow metallic trash and unearthing crushed beer and soda pop cans is your thing, by all means buy one of these machines. That's not the type of treasure I'm looking for.

Another thing about these "cheepo beepo" machines. Don't buy one for a child either. There is no quicker way to destroy a child's dreams of finding gold and silver than to have him spend a day of digging up nails and bottlecaps.

Before you buy, check out the local clubs to see what works best in your area. If you're a newbie to the hobby buy from a local dealer. Sure those mail order prices look great, but Don the Dealer, close by, will be there when you have questions or need tips. While "Budget Beepers", several states away, will tell you to read the manual or call the manufacturer.

#### Archaeologist Finds Treasure Chest

An archaeologist has found a wooden chest filled with gold and silver coins that may have been hidden during an ill-fated Gold Rush expedition across Death Valley.

Archaeologist Jerry Freeman uncovered the treasure in November as he recreated the steps of a group known as "The lost pioneers of 1849". He and four others retraced the entire journey in December. "I was blown away," Freeman said Monday. "Nothing prepared me for this."

The chest was in a cave, propped up on boulders and a board in mint condition. The find is worth \$500,000 said Freeman, a 56 year old semi-retired substitute high school teacher.

The National Park Service is examining the find to determine if it is authentic. They have raised no questions so far. Freeman said he hopes to donate it to a museum.

With the coins were well-worn baby shoes, photographs and a letter documenting the wagon train trek of '49er William Robinson, who was among some 100 men, women and children seeking the gold-laden foothills of the Sierra Nevada. The group wound up in the merciless California desert. The letter was tucked inside a small hymnal.

"My Dear Edwin," Robinson wrote. "Knowned, now we should have gone arownd. ... Ifen I don't raturm by end of fifty I wont never come."

#### River Boat Stops

Take a minute and look into the past. Picture a steamboat loading at the docks. This picture was repeated more than you could imagine in the early days where the railroad didn't provide easy transportation. Steam boats of wide variety made their way from port to port in places where you would be shocked to view the flow of commerce, raw products, and manufactured goods. There was a heavy demand on steamboats to provide transportation for large crowds of people both coming and going. As you look into the picture did you notice the buggy tracks along the docks where early versions of taxi's moved the folks back and forth and did you notice their clothing? No bluejeans and tennis shoes there, they were decked out in fine clothes and even the children were vastly different than crowds of today. I believe that their level of affluence was very high compared to ours and around the large northern port cities there were sleek steam pleasure yachts in abundance.

Even in very remote parts of this country river boats and even the larger steamers made port of call in places that are not on your map today as a port at all! Some of the ports in the smaller rivers and streams in Texas would stagger your imagination at their level of activity. We tend to view the steam era as the old sepia toned pictures have shown us as a static moment in time, frozen and immobile, however the steam boats were the life blood of this growing country and a very dynamic and active industry. As transportation by steam boat

provided a way, trade developed at every small stop up and down stream.

Goods were taken on and left off and passengers with them. Like the railroad stops the river stops grew prosperous and small industry and farming took a giant leap. Many ports had boats coming and going all day and you could buy a ticket on a steamer for almost any port you wished. Schedules as it turned out was the reason many boats would speed up to make their port on time and explode the boiler.

I have described a scene which may not have been the topic of your history class and I believe we have a poor view of our past today and large segments have been exaggerated and many things have been left out. Almost everyone has heard of the railroad and what it did in the growth of our country but the commerce by steam boat was at least a strong rival. We can find sites to metal detect today which may have never been thought about as sites before. I am looking into the ghost town ports that remain locked into the past to this day and many of these are accessible by boat in more remote areas. We all know the river towns that remain today but anywhere a group of farmers could produce a crop along the rivers and streams often became ports in the past. Begin your research by obtaining old maps and locating the ghost towns along these streams where you might be able to gain access.

In the infamous days of the old South, slave trade brought fantastic amounts of money through these ports as the trade built huge plantations that accounted for tremendous crops for export even as the slaves were imported to work the fields

and build the fortunes of the powerful owners. Transactions for products or slaves were often completed at the scales on the docks and the platforms of the slave traders. I have discovered that awesome amounts of gold were traded at local ports for every kind of product. Here cotton growers became wealthy very quickly as it became possible to export their goods. There were towns that grew and as the era of steam boats came to a close many of the small towns died like they did along the early railroads. Look for a few timbers or pieces of broken glass that may signal the location of the old ghost port and observe where old roads led to the river where they are no longer in use today.

One growing problem with early steamboats was the problem of boiler explosions. Our bays and rivers are full of steamboats that exploded and sank quickly. A boiler explosion was devastating to those aboard because apart from explosion and fire there was the steam which had built up in excess and expanded into a huge cloud over the sinking boat. Not many survivors among those explosions but that didn't worry those crews that had to make a tight schedules as all they did to make their port on time was to tie down the relief valve so it couldn't work and then throw in pine knots full of resin which would heat the boiler very hot and turn the propeller ever faster... faster that is until the inevitable explosion. Since there was poor communication in those days and things like explosions were likely kept very quiet.

Another sidelight about the old steam boats is that they would stop anywhere and pick up passengers. All anyone had to do was just tie a rag onto a long

stick and wave it from shore and the big boat would come over and pick them up. In my backyard at least, this proved disastrous as the local savage Indians learned the trick and would stand on the shore and wave the flag until the boat came over and then the Indians would swarm aboard and kill everyone and steal all of the goods aboard.

An interesting time, and a time which may have more interesting sites for us to explore today. As you stand at one of these old ports just take a minute to picture the activities of yesterday once more and see if you can't hear the faint sounds of the steam boat coming up the river.