



THE LEAVERITE NEWS



January, 2015

Rusk County Treasure Hunters Association * Henderson, Texas

Member of Texas Association of Metal Detector Clubs (TAMDC)

2015 RCTHA OFFICERS

President - Michael Heim (903) 241-4723

V. P. – Rick Hurlburt (903) 445-9691

Treasurer – Mary Hurlburt (903) 445-9591

Secretary - JoAnn Dunn (903) 392-3575

Hunt Master – Wayne Adkison (903) 928-9135

Board Member – Keith Wills (903) 734-7773

Board Member – Larry Wilkerson

Meeting Place: South Main Church of Christ (back parking lot building) 402 S. Main St. Henderson, TX

Meeting Time: 7:00 P.M. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Visitors welcome.

Email Contact: michaelheim39@gmail.com or jadunn0113@gmail.com

300th Anniversary of Historic 1715 Fleet Sinking

2015 marks the 300th anniversary of the sinking of a dozen Spanish ships known as the 1715 Plate Fleet; “plate” being the Spanish word for silver. On the 30th of July 1715 twelve galleons, overloaded with Mexican gold and silver, left Cuba and sailed north carried by the Gulf Stream. Just off the coast of Florida between present day Sebastian and Fort Pierce they were struck by a ferocious hurricane. Some of the ships sank in deep water, some broke up in shallower water, and others ran aground near shore. Only a tagalong French ship named Grifon, managed to survive, sail on, and report the disaster. It was one of the greatest tragedies to befall any Spanish treasure fleet with the loss of more than 1,000 lives and 14 million pesos, plus an equal or greater amount of contraband, all swept into the sea. The cargo was scattered over several miles and to this day Spanish coins still wash up on Florida beaches.

Over the next four years the Spaniards undertook several salvage operations and managed to recover a significant portion of the treasure; about half the registered part. This still left a vast amount of gold and silver lying on the ocean floor. Modern day salvage began in the late 1950s. It all started when a local resident, Kip Wagner, found a Spanish coin called “piece of eight” on the beach after a storm. His curiosity piqued, Wagner rented a small plane and flew over the shallows just off the beach until he spotted what appeared to be the remains of a ship. Traveling to the site by boat, he verified it was a very old wreck. Wagner then obtained a permit from the state of Florida, gathered a team of divers and began recovering treasure. They quickly discovered getting to the booty was not an easy task. To remove the sand required use of a dredge and suction apparatus, which eventually evolved into the “mailbox”, a curved pipe that was used to divert the prop wash

down onto the wreck site. The state stipulated that it would take 25% of the finds of their choice, with the rest going to the salvors. The state typically claimed the artifacts; the gold and silver coins, ingots and bars were kept by the salvage company. This arrangement between salvors and the state went on for years with many divers obtaining permits for large plots of the ocean floor and trying their luck at the treasure hunting game. Some, like Mel Fisher, hit it big and became celebrities.

Another of the more remarkable men drawn to this life of adventure is Captain Carl Fisser. For more than 40 years “Fizz”, as he’s called by associates, has traveled the world searching for, and recovering, treasure and artifacts. He’s often referred to as; a real life underwater Indiana Jones. He worked with Mel Fisher on the world famous Atocha shipwreck and dove on ancient sites in Sri Lanka with “2001: A Space Odyssey” author Arthur C. Clarke. Fizz also chased treasure with celebrity diver, John Chatterton, co-host of History Detectives TV show and subject of the book Shadow Divers. Because of his extensive experience Fisser was chosen to host his own show, the Dish TV series “Treasure Divers”. Capt. Carl has recovered millions in gold in silver over the decades, and is still diving on 1715 wreck sites today. Some of his best finds include a conglomerate with more than 500 embedded silver coins weighing almost 30 pounds and several beautiful 300 year old gold rings assumed to have been worn by ship’s officers or aristocrat passengers. Fisser is a recipient of the prestigious Mel Fisher Lifetime Achievement Award which is presented annually to a person who has shown “immense perseverance in following their Quest in Life. Such a quest would exemplify the person’s ability to achieve in life what others might only dare to dream.” He recently inherited all the records of another famous treasure hunter, Jack Haskins, who researched and dove on wrecks for decades. With information culled from these documents Fizz and his team are now working several new wreck sites in the Caribbean and central America. His tool of choice for finding underwater treasure is JW Fishers Pulse 8X, a commercial-grade detector in use by professional treasure hunters, marine archaeologists, commercial divers, police and military units worldwide. The Pulse 8X is so widely recognized as the “tool of choice” for recovering underwater treasure it was featured in several Hollywood movies including *Fool’s Gold* and *Into the Blue*.

A few of the many other groups using this detector in their shipwreck recovery work are the Odyssey Marine, the Center for Archaeological Studies at Texas State University, the Archaeological Institute at the University of West Florida, the Office of Underwater Science and Educational Resources at the Indiana University Bloomington, the underwater archaeology program at the University of Rhode Island, the Center for Marine Archaeology and Conservation at Texas A&M University, and the Israeli Antiquities Authority, and the African Slave Wrecks Project.

For more information on JW Fishers complete line of underwater search equipment go to www.jwfishers.com.

Happy hunting and keep your coil to the soil because you never know what you might find next.

Michael L. Heim, President RCTHA



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

FINANCIAL REPORT – January 2015

Balance as of December 2014

\$1869.42



RCTHA CALENDAR EVENTS & SERVICE PROJECTS

RCTHA Night Hunt (club outing)	Needs to be rescheduled
ETTHA 4 th Annual Piney Woods Relic Hunt	March 7 th
TAMDC Convention	April 11-13, Longview, TX
RCTHA Club Auction	April 14 th during the Club Meeting to raise money for Spring Silver Hunt

2015 Club Service Projects:

Food Boxes: Bring can foods and non-perishable food items to each club meeting for food boxes to be donated by the club during the 2015 holidays.

Trash Buckets: Don't throw away your metal trash after you're through detecting. Separate your aluminum, brass, copper and lead items and bring them to the club meetings and place in RCTHA Buckets. At the end of the year we will cash all the metals in and give a gift certificate for a kidney dialysis.

Wounded Warrior: More information will be given later

PARK TOKEN REPORT



NOTE: Tokens will be placed in area parks and locations will be given at the February meeting.

WINNERS of the FINDS OF THE MONTH – January 2015

Coin-	1st	Tom Moss	1893 V Nickel
	2nd	Michael Heim	1882 Indian Head Penny
	3rd	Wayne Adkison	1897 Indian Head Penny
Jewelry-	1st	Michael Heim	Silver Chain Link Ring
	2nd	Heart Necklace	Joel Barton
	3rd	Wayne Adkison	Silver Plated Ring



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Token-	1st	Michael Heim	1921 German Sawmill Token
	2nd	Rick Hurlburt	Longview Election Token
	3rd	Wayne Adkison	Gilmer Sawmill Token
Relic-	1st	Tom Moss	Sheriff Badge
	2nd	Rick Hurlburt	WW1 Military Button
	3rd	Michael Heim	1909 Model T Ford Valve Stem Cover
Judges Choice-	1st	John Ramsey	Slave Medicine Coin
	2nd	Tom Moss	Republic of Texas Coin
	3rd	Joel Barton	Cross
Consolation Winner-	Michael Heim	Nickel Coin Spill (1908, 1912 V Nickels; 3 1916 Buffalo Nickels)	

RCTHA Rules for "Finds of the Month"

- 1) To enter any item(s) in the **Finds of the Month** you must be a member of RCTHA and club dues must be current for the year.
- 2) Finds of the month consist of what you have dug or found while metal detecting from the club meeting of the previous month to the current club meeting. For example, you cannot use an item that you found in June 2013 to be placed in January 2014. Finds of January 2014 must be found between club meeting in December 2013 and club meeting in January 2014. Only finds found from the monthly meeting until the next monthly meeting will qualify for the Finds of the Month. **Finds of the Months can only be used once.**
- 3) Any item in any category may be removed by the Hunt Master and one other Board Member or Officer at their discretion if the item does not comply with the Finds of the Month rules. Only one item per member for each of the categories will qualify.
- 4) Any bottle found while in the process of metal detecting on the surface of the ground needs to be placed in the JUDGE'S CHOICE category. All other bottles dug while metal detecting is to be placed in the RELICS or JUDGE'S CHOICE categories. If placed in RELICS, it must be 75 years old or older.
- 5) If you find multiple items of the same category, the first one must go in the applicable category. The additional item(s) can be placed in JUDGE'S CHOICE or RELICS. If placed in RELICS it must be 75 years old or older.
- 6) Pictures and descriptive materials may be substituted for an item if the item is unavailable for display.
- 7) **You must be present at the club meetings** to submit your finds for The Finds of the Month.

FIND OF THE YEAR: Only items entered in the "Finds of the Month" and winning **first place** during the year may be entered in the Find of the Year competition. This runs December through November each year and the Board members will elect and announce the winner during the December club meeting.

DIGGER OF THE YEAR: The Digger of the Year Award will be determined by total amount of points won from the years Finds of the Month competition. First Place = 3 Points, Second Place = 2 Points and Third Place= 1 Point. There will be a monthly score sheet listed in the newsletter who the leading digger is.

COINS: Must be dug while in the process of metal detecting. No coins found in planted competition hunts or won by previous wins in the Finds of the Month can be used in this category. If more than one coin is found, one coin must be placed in the COINS category. Additional coins may be placed in JUDGE'S CHOICE of any date or in the RELICS category if it is 75 years old or older.

JEWELRY: Must be dug while in the process of metal detecting. No jewelry found in planted competition hunts can be used in this category. If more than one piece of jewelry is found, one piece of jewelry must be placed in the JEWELRY category. Additional pieces of jewelry may be placed in JUDGE'S CHOICE or RELICS if it is 75 years old or older.

TOKENS: Must be dug while in the process of metal detecting. No tokens found in planted competition hunts can be used in this category. If more than one token is found, one token must be placed in the TOKENS category. Additional tokens may be placed in JUDGE'S CHOICE or RELICS if it is 75 years old or older.

RELICS: Anything 75 years old or older and must be dug while in the process of metal detecting. No items found in planted competition hunts can be used in this category.

JUDGE'S CHOICE: Anything dug while in the process of metal detecting, bottles, relics, additional coins, additional jewelry and additional tokens. No items found in planted competition hunts can be used in this category.

RCTHA Leading Diggers: Leading diggers will change from month to month based on the points given with each win from the *Finds of the Month* competition. These points will determine in December who will be the *Digger of the Year*.

Tom Moss	21 Points	8 wins
Michael Heim	14 Points	6 wins
Rick Hurlburt	5 Points	3 wins
Wayne Adkison	5 Points	4 wins
Joel Barton	4 Points	3 wins
Mike Ross	3 Points	2 wins

TICKETS, RCTHA CARDS & 50/50 DRAWING

Each month we will have ticket and Bingo Card (every other month) sales to raise funds for the club. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. You can buy tickets for the following:

Coins- there are five drawings each club meeting for quality coins and sometimes even a gold coin.

Quarterly Giveaway- each quarter we will have a drawing for great prizes such as detectors and silver bars.

Bingo Cards- every other month we will have Bingo Night during the time allotted for a speaker. The cards are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. There will be nice quality prizes to be won.

50/50 Drawing- write your name or initials on a \$1 bill, or as many as you like, and place in the 50/50 Bucket and at the close of the meeting we will draw for a winner. If we draw your name you win and split the pot with the club.

Last Month's Ticket Winners:

Ticket Drawings:

Park Tokens:

Gold Coin Drawing:

50/50 Drawing:

METAL DETECTOR'S CODE OF ETHICS

1. Respect the rights and property of others
2. Do not detect without the land owner's permission
3. Observe all laws, whether National, State, or Local
4. Aid Law Enforcement Officials whenever possible
5. Never destroy historical or archeological structures
6. Never destroy, damage or deface public or private property, or what is left of ghost towns or deserted structures
7. Leave land and vegetation as it was
8. Remove and properly dispose of all trash and litter when you leave
9. Leave gates and enclosures as found
10. Do not tamper with land owner signs, structural facilities, or equipment
11. Take precautions when digging towards a target where underground conditions are unknown.
12. You may be judged by the example you set so always be courteous with consideration for others.
13. ALWAYS COVER YOUR HOLES!





NEXT MONTH'S MEETING

March 10th @ 7:00 p.m., 402 South Main, Henderson, TX.

Speaker: TBA

-RUSK COUNTY TRESURE HUNTERS ASSOCIATION-