

GMDC NEWS

September 2018



“Can you dig it? We can!”

Club Email:
detectinghistory@
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Club Officers:

President
Susannah Kriegshauser

Vice President
Mackie Douglas

Treasurer
Rich Bereswill

Secretary
Pat Reece



President's Corner

By Susannah



Hello fellow dirt fishers!

With all the hoopla about mid-term elections going on, it seems pretty small potatoes to talk about our own club elections. But having a full complement of officers means our club remains viable and any workload is spread out so as not to take much of anyone's time. Tightening up the voting procedure this year will help us have officers in place ready to go for the new year. We will accept nominations (you can nominate yourself or someone else) in October, vote in November, and announce the winners at the Christmas party. It's very easy to sit back and say "let someone else do it", but if we all did that we wouldn't have a club. It took guts for myself and seven other people to say let's start a club when none of us knew anything about it, but we did, and you and 70+ members are enjoying the fruits of that decision every year. So I ask that you would take a minute and ask yourself--if they can actually **start** a club, could I help it go on by becoming an officer?

This year the Vice-president and Secretary positions will be voted on. Pat is not returning as Secretary, and Mackie is undecided. **The VP's duties are to back up the president, oversee the Hospitality Table, and oversee part of the BBQ. The Secretary's duties are the newsletter, printing out signup sheets, sending thank you cards, and overseeing part of the BBQ.**

This newsletter is filled with articles by members. Fantastic! We love to see members giving us snippets of detecting stories or research. Keep them coming!

We have an exciting Mystery Hunt coming up. Well, two, actually. Our second one of the year will be September 15th and should be interesting as it hasn't been detected before. I am still working on the one in October. That one will be near Rolla, and I am working on the final details. Stay tuned!

Since the club BBQ was cancelled, the officers are meeting to discuss what we should do--reschedule or cancel. We have to look at several factors including a pavilion, date availability, and more. We will let you know very soon.

Happy Hunting!

2018 CALENDAR

Feb 06: GMDC meeting
NO HUNT IN FEB
Mar 06: GMDC meeting
Mar 10: GMDC hunt
Mystery Hunt
Mar 17: Metal Detecting
Basics Class
Apr 03: GMDC meeting
Apr 14: **CW Park Day**
May 01: GMDC meeting
May 05: GMDC hunt
Hencken Place
Mar 26: Metal Detecting
Basics Class
Jun 05: GMDC meeting
Jun 09: Cancelled
Jun 23: Metal Detecting
Basics Class
Jul 03: **NO MEETING**
Jul 07: GMDC hunt
Francis Park
Jul 28: Metal Detecting
Basics Class
Aug 07: GMDC meeting
Aug 11: GMDC hunt
Greensfelder Park
Sep 04: GMDC meeting
Sep 08: GMDC **BBQ**
(rained out)
Sep 15: GMDC hunt
Mystery Hunt
Oct 02: GMDC meeting
Oct 06: GMDC hunt
Mystery Hunt
Nov 06: GMDC meeting
Nov 10: GMDC hunt
Site TBD
Dec 04: GMDC holiday
party

NO HUNT IN DECEMBER
NO MTG OR HUNT IN JAN



Monthly Meeting Notes

Attendance at the September meeting was an impressive 35, and we welcomed new club members Philip Newell, and Kent and John Wilke (father and son), and visitors Carter and Jeff Cruzen (who we hope will also become club members!).

We have a new procedure for the board nomination and voting process. Nominations for positions will be held in October, voting will occur in November, and the election results will be announced at the December meeting. Positions are held for two years. This year the Vice President and Secretary positions are up for election.

On September 15th, our club hunt will be a Mystery Hunt which will require everyone to sign a waiver. We will meet in the parking lot at Eureka High School at 8:30, and leave at 8:45. Our club hunt in October will also be a Mystery Hunt, located near Rolla. Susannah will send out an email the night before our club meetings or hunts should there be any last-minute changes or cancellations.

The Volunteer Contest runs from September to September, so if you do any volunteer activities after this September, your entries will go into the new contest.

General Atkinson was quite lonely on September 8th, when the annual BBQ was rained out.



Attendance prizes: Eric Hanewinkel – 1921 Silver Dollar, Pat Boos – 1853 Large Cent, Rob Willett – 1899 Barber Quarter.

50/50: Pat Reece – \$48.00.

WHAT THE HECK?

By Jim Hammond

Sometime when you are detecting you come across something that makes you say “What the heck” and that’s what happened to me. I was detecting with Susannah and got a nice signal so I dug it up and “wow”, what appeared to be a gold ring was sticking half way up out of the ground. With excitement I pulled it out of the dirt and then said, “What the heck?”. This is what I found.



Well, being the jokester that I am I hid the long part in my hand and just had the ring part showing, went over to Susannah and said look at the gold ring I found. She got all excited too, until I revealed the rest of it and she said, “What the heck?”

I took it to the August club meeting and showed it around to some of the members, and there were a lot of good ideas as to what it might be but no one was sure. Then I asked Mark, the director of the Civil War Museum, (where we hold our meetings), and he said, “Yes, I know exactly what it is.”



He pulled up pictures of trumpets and said this is the third slide finger ring on a

trumpet. This is a picture from the internet of an old trumpet with that exact piece on it.

I believe the trumpet shown below is from the 1940s, but I’m not entirely sure. The modern trumpets today have silver or stainless steel slides. I’m not sure how old the one I found is, but it’s exciting to think it may be from the big band era when they held concerts in the park where I found it.

Bottom line: Sometimes your “What the heck?” finds may have some unique history after all!

Picture source:

http://www.paulayickvintagebrass.com/Trumpets/1%20Custom%20Trumpets/Custom%20Conn%2041-68/IMG_9609.jpg

WATCH THOSE IMPLANTS!

By Rich Bereswill

Last Fall I went down to a swimming hole with a magnet and my pinpointer. I fished some deep holes with my magnet and came up with nothing. Then I noticed a stretch of bedrock in some shallow water. I thought that it might have caught treasures in the crevices.

Hoping to at least find a Civil War bullet, I ran my pinpointer in the cracks and crevices. I didn’t find any Civil War bullets, but I did find some .22 cal. bullets, nails and four pennies. (Next time I will run my magnet over the cracks first to pick up nails.)

Funny thing is, I had both my knees replaced June 2017. While I was searching the cracks I was sitting on some bedrock and I ran my pinpointer under my leg. It went off like a big signal. I moved over a bit to search that spot. Nothing?!? I did this three more times before I realized it was my knees throwing off that big signal!

WHO IS “BILLY DINGS”?

By Marvin Gilliam

I always enjoy finding artifacts and researching the origins of their purpose and backstory. Recently while hunting a private permission I dug a crusty little piece about .5” by 1-1/2”. On the front was an impression which resembled a log. An owl was perched on the log, and on one end of the log it said “¼ sawed oak”. On the back it reads “Billy Dings St. Louis” with a patent date of Feb 12 07. At that point I knew I needed to find out what this was, where it came from and who “Billy Dings” was!



It is still up in the air as to what the item really is. Someone suggested that it might be a watch fob but it seems too small. It reminds me of the small key chain charms that were shaped like license plates. On the end there is a slot with some type of closure to cover the slot. (You can see it in the photo.) I think it was probably some kind of advertising item meant as a promotional give away.

The charm gave me a clue about its origin, so I googled the name “William Dings”. From the internet I found a listing in *The Book of St. Louisans*, which listed William Dings. William Dings was born in St. Louis on January 26, 1841, and was a farmer in St. Louis County from 1867-1874. He was in the lime and cement business from 1873-1874, a bookkeeper from 1875-1883, and a Vice-President and secretary from 1884 to 1907. He went into business for himself with his sons in 1907, and worked there until his death at 83 years of age in May 1924.

I continued my search of the internet to identify the item and to find out more about “Billy Dings”. I assume that William Dings was called “Billy Dings” and the patent date on the item of February 12, 1907 coincides with the timing of his opening his own business, *William Dings and Sons Lumber Company*. The information I found was intriguing.

Another google search gave me the best part of the story. It was an article from the *Confederate Veteran* magazine dated August 1924. The article listed Dings' obituary, and that he was buried in Bellefontaine Cemetery.

As it turns out, William Dings was a Captain of Company C, 8th Missouri infantry, Confederate States of America (CSA) under General Sterling Price until the end of the Civil War. After surrendering in Alexandria, LA under General Buckner, he returned to St. Louis to pursue his life. He was married in 1868, had two children, and spent 40 years in the lumber industry. I was also surprised to find out that the son and grandson of General William Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition were also members of the CSA.



In my research, I also discovered that many prominent families in St. Louis fought on the side of CSA. They include:

- *Capt. James Kennerly, 1st MO Artillery*
- *Capt. Lewis Kennerly, MO Brigade*
- *Capt. Samuel Kennerly, MO Brigade*
- *Major William Clark Kennerly*
- *Major James M Loughborough, General Staff for Sterling Price*
- *Brigadier General John McCausland, Cavalry*

- *Colonel Trusten Polk, Judge Advocate for Sterling Price, Governor and U.S. Senate*
- *Capt. David Sappington, Company D 4th MO Calvary*

All of these men have roads and streets named after them and their families in St. Louis and St. Louis County.

I am sure there is a lot more to the story of the crusty little artifact that I found, but at least I know a little more about “Billy Dings” and in the process learned a lot more about St. Louisans who fought in the Civil War for the CSA. My search for information on “Billy Dings” will continue, and I will continue to dig for these crusty and unremarkable relics that represent interesting stories!

Sources:

Geanology.com, us.archive.com, and pricecamp.org/graystlouis.html



LOOKING TO ESCAPE: WWII Compass Buttons

By Susannah Kriegshauser

During World War II, the U.S. Army Air Forces flew missions over Germany and the occupied countries of Western Europe. In the event of being shot down, airmen were faced with a dilemma: How to navigate through hostile territory to reach safety? How, in the event of capture, could they escape a prisoner of war camp and know which way to go to a border or port? How could they carry something that would defeat a search by the enemy?

As the war progressed, these questions came to concern all branches of the military in combat zones. The answer was compass buttons, which the British were the first to develop. One button on every Royal Air Force (RAF) tunic screwed off to reveal a

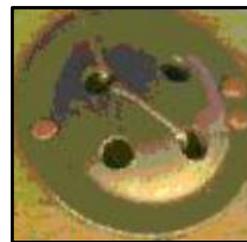
miniature compass. The American version had a hinged cover. As the war went on, and



using information from escapees who had used them, the compass underwent various revisions and was also used in different forms, including studs (scratch off the surface paint to reveal the compass), and trouser buttons (tying a string passed through the holes, then dipping the whole thing in water. The magnetized button began to turn, with a single yellow dot or smaller hole indicating north).



Military compass buttons are becoming



quite scarce. If you find a WWII military button that rattles when you shake it, or your button has a yellow dot, it's possible you are holding an item that could have meant life itself to a prisoner.



My detector beeps at the end of my swing.

Have you checked your coil cover lately? Dust, grit, and sand can bunch up on one side of the cover, causing the machine to “see” it as an object. Clean the inside of your coil cover once in a while. You’ll be amazed at what you find in there.

FINDS OF THE MONTH

Oldest Coin



Russ B.: 1918 Mercury Dime
Prize: 1928P Standing Liberty Quarter

Most Valuable Coin



Mackie D.: 1964 Rosie Dime
Prize: 1869 Three-cent Coin

Interesting Artifact



Kathy C.: Federal Engineer Button
Prize: Silver Peace Dollar

FOM Contest Rules:

1. Fill out an entry form at the beginning of the meeting, and hand it to a member of the FOM committee.
2. Only one entry, per person, is allowed (not one entry per category).
3. **Finds must ONLY be from the previous month** (honor system).
4. Everyone making a submission will receive one point. Category winners will receive two points.

Points will be recorded and tallied by the FOM committee. At the end of the year, the winner will receive a **FABULOUS prize**.

INDIAN ARTIFACT IDENTIFICATION DAY

Just a reminder...

For those of you who are interested in Indian artifacts, Cahokia Mounds is holding an Artifact Identification Day on Sunday, September 16th at the Interpretive Center.



Several archaeologists familiar with local artifacts will be available to identify the culture, time period, material, and function of the items. No monetary appraisals will be given. This is a free event that is offered once per year at Cahokia Mounds in September.



TOWER TEE ADVENTURE

By Lee Nunnally

One of my childhood hangouts was Tower Tee on Heege Road. I

fondly remember my adolescence there swimming in the pool, playing miniature golf, and using the batting cages. I think a lot of people who grew up in St. Louis shared the same experiences. I now live within walking distance of Tower Tee, and pass by it on a regular basis and reminisce.

In December of 2017, I talked to Tom Rother about possibly detecting Tower Tee, before the scheduled unpopular closing in January 2018. One day Tom said to me,

"Let's do it.", which meant we were on a mission to get permission to detect there. I had previously

talked to a maintenance worker there who told me the owner would probably approve. After meeting with Christina, the secretary at Tower Tee, and leaving our contact information, Tom and I left. By the time I arrived home, Tom called to inform me, "Lee, we got it. We have permission to detect Tower Tee!" We immediately responded that afternoon.

Steve Lotz, the owner/operator, was very gracious and supportive to us at all times. He just told us to stay out of the way of the golfers and that we could detect anytime we desired. After a while, Steve even purchased a detector for his daughter, whom Russell Bowman volunteered to help train.

After a while, Tom and I realized we could never detect the 26.2 acre property alone, so

we started to invite other club members. Soon, Marvin Gilliam (Quarter-man), Pat Reece and others joined us. Steve had told us that golfers had been losing jewelry, coins, and tokens for over 60 years. The great hunt was on and soon we found out that Steve's statement was true.

As the weather became extremely cold, I began limiting my hunts at Tower Tee. Tom, Marvin, and Russell continued to hunt, along with other club members. Susannah, our Club President, was the first to find a gold ring. As it turns out, there were a lot more gold and silver rings, silver jewelry, coins, tokens, and relics that were subsequently found.

On one of my hunts at Tower Tee, I was almost struck by a golf ball that shot by within inches of my head. I decided to limit



my Tower Tee hunts even more. I did witness a golfer hit a hole-in-one, on hole #2. That was

very exciting and I can now scratch that off my bucket list.

The closing of Tower Tee was extended to July 2018, so we decided to work on a club hunt there of some kind, but the idea was dropped due to the site still being an active 18-hole golf course. More club members were invited to detect, but were told to avoid interfering with the operation of the golf course.

In the process of detecting Tower Tee, we met many people and created a lot of good will. One golfer who showed an interest in our detecting subsequently joined our club. Jim Gansner is that golfer and he has become an accomplished detectorist.

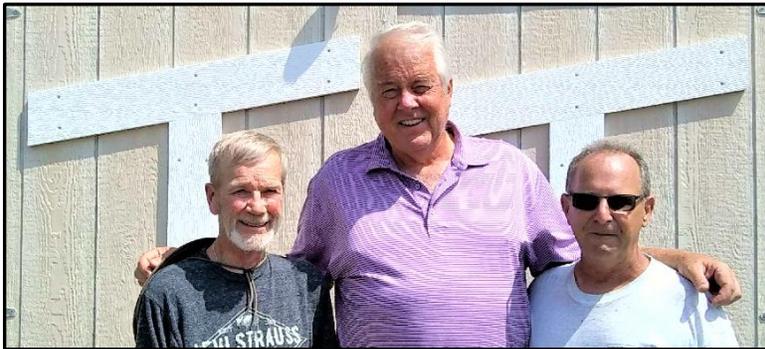
As we switched, from winter to summer (no spring to speak of), the temperatures became too hot for me. I also do not like to be cold, hot, or wet. On July 8th, Steve, put on a free concert at Tower Tee in a show of appreciation to the community. Tom, Marvin, Russell, and myself volunteered to handle the traffic and parking at the event. That was one hot day, with temperatures hitting 110 degrees heat index!

As a thank you to us, Steve allowed our entire club to hunt Tower Tee the following week, without golfers or interruptions. A Facebook detectorist group was later

included as a show of good will. Many splendid items were found that week, including two gold rings and two silver rings, along with tokens, modern coins, and artifacts. Our good detectorist friend Dave Steck even showed up a couple of times and scored some finds.

Overall, Tower Tee was a great hunt site which happened just by simply asking for permission. Much history was preserved and friends made. Tower Tee is closed now, but if it ever ends up becoming a county park, it will be, as the French say, "De ja vu all over again!"

TOWER TEE FINDS AND MEMORIES!



Gateway MD Club

<https://gatewaymetaldetectingclub.com/>

detectinghistory@yahoo.com



"Can you dig it? WE can!"

CLASSIFIEDS

If you want an ad in the CLASSIFIEDS or HUNT BUDDIES sections, please send them through: detectinghistory@yahoo.com

Club short- and long-sleeved tee shirts and fleece hoodies are available in various sizes. \$15 tee, \$20 long sleeve, \$25 hoodie. See a club officer for more information.



FOR SALE



- Garrett ProPointer with box and instructions: \$45 (used)
- Garrett Clear Sound Easy Stow Headphones: \$15 (brand new)
- Garrett Edge Digger W/Sheath: \$25 (brand new)
- Garrett Edge Digger W/Sheath: \$20 (used)

Contact Information:

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WHO WE ARE

We are a group of detecting enthusiasts whose aim is to get out there and have fun, find fellowship, and find and preserve our nation's history. We dig responsibly, act respectfully, and operate legally. We invite you to join us. You won't be disappointed!



MEETINGS

We meet on the first Tuesday of every month at:

**Missouri Civil War Museum
222 Worth Road
St. Louis, MO 63125
7:00 pm (Doors open at 6:30 pm)**

Open to the public!