



## CLUB NEWS



*A young treasure hunter surveys the field looking for coins. Photo by Ed Chaffin.*

# WARRIOR BASIN'S DEEP SOUTH HUNT EXTRAVAGANZA

By Ed Chaffin

The Warrior Basin Treasure Hunter's "Deep South Hunt" has been the

"in" thing around Birmingham, Alabama, for the past ten years. Each year

the event gets larger and larger. This year was no exception.

Over 150 avid treasure hunters from thirteen states and Canada attended the hunt and, as far as we could tell, everyone enjoyed their stay.

Andy Bobyarchick, the President of Warrior Basin Treasure Hunter's Association, could be seen constantly moving from place to place making certain every detail of the hunt was taken care of properly. Andy is a pleasure to talk with and he is not stingy with his years of experience in the treasure hunting field. He will always take the time to answer a question and dispense solid advice about treasure hunting to novice or expert alike. Andy is one of the reasons the Deep South Hunt went so well.

The three day event was held on October 14, 15 and 16th. The Brookside, Alabama, ballpark, located just 13 miles from Birmingham, was the host field for the hunt. Several acres of ground served the hunt nicely. The participants were delighted to find adequate camping facilities for their RVs and a snack bar which was fully operational.

Friday the 14th was reserved for registration of the hunt participants. This was also the time for socializing, getting to meet new friends, and receiving the announcements for the coming weekend. There were two short hunts scheduled for Friday night to "get our feet wet" and to set the mood for the next day.

Considering the way the TH'ers lined up for that first hunt, I suspected the weekend would be a good one. When I found out that there were \$200 in Susan B. Anthony dollars out on that field for the hunters to find and keep, I knew it would be a great weekend.

The Executive Huntchairman was Ottis Murphy, a diligent TH'er in his own right, spending "eight hours each week" in the field. Huntmaster was Richard Gardner, a totally capable manager of the events. Richard kept everything moving swiftly and with few hitches.

Ruby Bryan, factory representative for Wilson-Neuman, was on hand to represent Usika and Daytona detectors. Ruby along with Ruby Ironside, from Canada, was also in position to offer clinics on the use of Wilson-Neuman detectors and related equipment. Ernie "Carolina" Curlee represented Garrett Electronics. Ernie also offered a mini seminar on the use of detectors and on troubleshooting.



The major events at the Deep South Hunt were the competition hunts and the Southern Championship events. These hunts culminated with the Southern Grand Championship hunt on Sunday morning. The hunts all averaged 45 minutes each and the participants were eager as they threw themselves into each event.

It was a good feeling to rub elbows with many treasure hunters I had never met and to benefit from the shop talk that floated around the park. One conversation I overheard made me feel good about my chosen field of pursuit.

While eating breakfast on Saturday morning I overheard one TH'er say to another: "You know, metal detecting is really an economic hobby."

"A good set of gold clubs will cost more than a good detector. And when you add up green fees, cart rental, balls and fancy clothing it's cheaper to treasure hunt."

The hobby of treasure hunting has something for everyone. The camaraderie found at the various hunts is warm and friendly. Some new people at the hunt were nervous, not really knowing what they might do. But even newcomers can win. Mike Wallace, a member of the Northwest Florida Detector Club, attending his first big hunt, was fortunate to win a brand new, not yet marketed, Daytona 3000 detector, by Wilson-Neuman. Good things like that will keep you coming back for more.

There were hunts with an interesting twist. In one of the surprise hunts, participants went out after pennies that were painted silver. They were redeemable for a dime apiece. Hunters who really hustled could walk

away from this particular hunt with a sizeable handful of change. Some did.

Among the dealers at the Deep South Hunt were Tylon Brook of Montgomery, Alabama, representing Tesoro and Fisher. Melvin Parker, of North Georgia Detector Sales was also present.

The Deep South Hunt was location of the 1983 Southern Grand Championship Hunts. These were organized and conducted by Ernie "Carolina" Curlee. Ernie was also a co-sponsor of the Deep South Hunt. Melvin Parker of Norcross, Georgia, walked away with the Southern Grand Championship trophy.

Ottis Murphy circulated in the background recording the weekend's festivities on video tape which he played back periodically for interested viewers. Ottis also provided tapes of other hunts, showing the different types of techniques used by TH'ers to win contests. There was also an interesting tape of water hunting a small group had participated in earlier in the week.

Saturday evening, trophies and prizes were awarded for the hunts conducted so far. Everyone eagerly looked forward to the Gold Coin raffle. With bated breath, they awaited the drawing. Finally, Andy Bobyarchick presented Fred Dunlap of Mableton, Georgia with a shiny five dollar gold coin.

There was another gold coin to be given away. Everyone was curious because a mystery surrounded it. Hunters were told that the hunt they were about to participate in would be the one where the coin would be won. They were not told exactly what token or found piece would win it. Everyone was to keep everything they found because they would not know until after the hunt whether or not they were the winner.

Behind the scenes, the Huntchairman told me in private that this particular hunt would prove that treasure hunters were honest people. I waited to see what was about to transpire.

After the hunt, everyone gathered around the grandstand. The Huntmaster gave them time to quiet down and then he announced:

"Andy Bobyarchick has lost an old class ring out there on the field. Did anyone find that old ring?"

A moment of quiet, then a little girl meekly stepped forward and handed up the ring. She had thought that she had found a real treasure out on the field. She thought no one would



Registration on opening day for the hunt.

claim it. But this little girl was obedient to her father who told her when she found the ring that she would have to give it up if someone reported it lost. Her face showed her disappointment but she was going to do what was right.

Imagine the surprise on the face of Joe Pate's daughter Jo-Anna when she was handed back both the ring AND the gold coin. That's right. . .the ring was the winning token. Honesty does pay.

On Sunday, there were two hunts scheduled. One of them was the Southern Grand Championship Hunt. After the last of the prizes were awarded, a very happy group of treasure hunters began to shake hands and say goodbye to each other. We had all shared a memorable weekend together. Some who were ready to give up detecting had decided to continue on with new determination. Others, never having hunted before, bought detectors and prepared to begin a truly interesting hobby. The old timers in TH'ing began to look forward to the next hunt.

And it was with regret that I climbed into my truck for the drive home.

#### DEEP SOUTH HUNT CONTEST WINNERS

- (1) Mike Wallace, Daytona 3000
- (2) Fred Dunlap, Gold Coin
- (3) Jo-Anna Pate, Gold Coin
- (4) Melvin Parker, Southern Grand Championship Trophy
- (5) Carolyn Greer, Southern Championship 3rd place WBTHA Hunt
- (6) Billy Hammonds, D-Tex Coin King
- (7) Rex McDaniel, Usika Brave
- (8) David Carter, Tesoro Mayan
- (9) Marty Geer, Tesoro Deep Search 7
- (10) Joe E. David, Compass M420
- (11) Bob Demeree, Garrett ADS 3
- (12) Bill Hayes, Usika Brave, Usika Chief
- (13) Wade Gilbert, D-Tex MK
- (14) Shirley Kohn, Usika Chief
- (15) Richard Heen, Garrett Groundhog
- (16) Gary Wade Lewis, Tesoro Amigo •



Ruby Bryan presents Mike Wallace with a brand new, not yet marketed, detector.