



# Maryland Free-State Treasure Club

Recovering & Preserving History

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**A mini-hunt** as a start to our first in-person meeting in months was held at the Victory Villa Community Center in Middle River starting at around 6:20 PM because of threatening clouds. The grass was thick from all the rain and the targets were spread out to allow social distancing while beeping.

**The meeting was called to order** at 7:25 PM by President, Mike McCullough in the large auditorium. Mike introduced the club officers: Gary Pennington - Vice President, Steve Cunningham - Treasurer and Webmaster, Andy Cooper (Acting Secretary, sitting in for Chris Wisnom, Secretary and Newsletter). Mike acknowledged all of the additional volunteers and thanked them for their service, including: Dwayne Meanor – finds board & club outings, Abby and Olivia – Raffles, John Vice – library & door prize, Ron Riggs – legal beagle and photos.

He then welcomed everyone to only the 3<sup>rd</sup> in-person meeting of 2020. The club plans to have in-person meetings every month for the rest of the year, including mini-hunts in September and October. Mike also noted the following: Thanks to everyone for following the rules, including filling out required paperwork, wearing a mask and maintaining safe intervals. Thanks also to Robert Fertig who oversees the facility and sanitizes everything before and after each event.

**Due to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic**, no” in-person” meeting was conducted in the months of March, April, May, June or July.

**New Members:** We welcomed Steven Ralston and Tom Burleson in person, after meeting them virtually at the previous meeting. There were no guests.

**Generous Donation and Words of Wisdom:** Bud Lamb, a charter member of MFSTC, stressed the importance of volunteering for the club. He then presented a check for \$500 to the club as a donation.

**Treasurers Report:** We have a total of \$149.54 in the bank, having recently purchased coins for the upcoming closed Members-Only hunt in October.

**Members-Only Hunt:** The Members-Only hunt has been moved to Saturday October 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the entry fee will be \$35, due to higher silver prices (60% higher than this time last year). Members are welcome to sell coins or prizes to the club at a discounted rate for use in the hunt. Contact one of the officers if you are interested.

**Old Business:** Mike announced that we have received permission to hunt on twelve acres (most under crop at this time) on a mid-1800’s property located on Mount Carmel Road. The owner will select any finds that they wish to keep, and will make a donation to the club. The Club Outing is scheduled for Saturday, September 19 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

City Parks will be available to hunt again starting September 1. A permit is required (although a permittee is allowed to have a guest), and the City detecting permit lists what properties are off-limits. Also note that permit renewal is now on-line.

Members-Only Hunt – as discussed above is scheduled for October 3, 2020 at Victory Villa. Cost is \$35.

Andora Farm Civil War Hunt in Culpepper, VA is October 23 – 25 (Fri-Sun), cost is \$200.

Old Dominion hunt in Ashland, VA is November 7, cost is \$125.

Check the MFSTC website for details on upcoming hunts.

### **New Business:**

Club Newsletter for July is available on the website. The guest speaker was Joe DiMarco. A link to his detector sales website can be found on the MFSTC website.

Future Club Meetings will be held on Sept. 24, Oct. 22, Nov. 19 and Dec. 17, 2020. The November and December meeting are held a week early due to the holidays. A check-in in the lobby will still be required for these meetings. Snacks will be available outside, near the mini-hunt.

Minelab has a new update for the Equinox. Bring your machine to the meeting and Gary can help install the software update.

There was no club outing to report on for July and August.

**Program:** Club President Mike McCullough presented on the history of the **James E. Kirwan Museum and Kirwan Farm** on Kent Island. MFSTC has had permission to hunt the 300 acre farm for several years, and recovered the first JEK pickers checks for the Kent Island Heritage Society (recovered by Nick Franz and Brad Johns).

James Kirwan was born in 1848 and worked on ships in the Chesapeake Bay. He was a proficient sailor and commanded his first boat at an early age. He became part of the Oyster Navy, which enforced harvest rules in the Bay. He later settled as a farmer, purchasing the Kent Island property around 1870. He ran a general store in addition to the farm. The general store is the site of the current museum.

The farm is currently under crop, but watch for future outings at the site, perhaps this Fall. Permission is needed to hunt the site – we can't just show up. Linda Collier is the docent at the museum and oversees the property.

There were several great finds at the property this Spring 2020, including: Many 19<sup>th</sup> century silver coins, Spanish 1600s hammered silver 1 Reale Cob (Brad Johns), JEK pickers checks (Mike McCullough), Dutch 1600s cut silver dollar (John Curtis), Capped bust half dollar, and half dime (Andy Cooper)

**Board Contest Results:** Coins: 1. Mike McCullough, 2. Andy Cooper., 3. Eric Ritter; Bullets and Buttons: 1. Mike McCullough., 2. Gary Pennington. and Eric Ritter (tie), 3. Andy Cooper.; Club Favorite: Phoenix Button found by Mike McCullough.

**Raffle Results:** 50/50: Gary Pennington; Silver Round: Andy Cooper; Leg of Gold: Bob Rinker; plus 8 door prizes given away.

**Attendance:** 24 members attended the meeting.

**Next In-Person Club Meeting:** September 24, 2020 at 7:00 PM. Mini hunt starts at 6:30 PM. Arrive early to get screened.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM, with thanks to the attendees and especially to Bud Lamb.