

Sebastian Man Wins Treasure Hunt Title

SEBASTIAN — This year's Mr. Treasurer Hunter is one of those rarities of rarities, a successful treasure hunter, and the even rarer finder of a wrecked Spanish galleon. There have been many finders of large treasure troves, but we must go back to the days of Sir William Phipps, to find a successful one that was not completely or at least largely accidental.

Kip Wagner, of Sebastian, and a few friends calling themselves the Real Eight, set out to find a wrecked Spanish treasure galleon and they did just that.

This was one treasure hunt that was operated on a scientific basis. They studied all the available clues, selected the probable location and went there and found their galleon. They now have a license from the state of Florida to salvage it.

This was not done that easily, in fact they had several brushes with modern pirates, who were looting their treasure ships in their absence. The Mr. Treasurer Hunter award of a gold cup and medal is made each year by the Treasure Trove Club on June 1 to the leading personality in the treasure hunting field.

The purpose is to honor all treasure hunters of America from the first Christopher Columbus right up to the present day "beach combers" and skin divers prospecting with their un-

derwater dredges.

IN ANNOUNCING the selection of Kip Wagner, Raymond Dow, the president of the club, called attention to the long list of leading personalities that were Mr. Treasure Hunter in the past. The first was Lowell Thomas, of radio fame, not to mention his travels and writings.

He was followed by Prof. J. Frank Dobie, the leading historical authority on the Southwest and author of the treasure books, including the treasure hunter's bible, Coronado's Children. He was followed by Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the arctic explorer, now at Baker Library at Dartmouth College.

Then there was Kit Carson, nephew of the famous Col. Kit Carson and famous Indian guide in his own right. The late Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews, the explorer of the Gobi Desert and finder of the dinosaur eggs was the next.

Others were Robert I. Nasmith, the leading authority on pirate treasure and ourator of Foul Anchor Archives, John W. Hazard, author and playwright, Fred Howard, oldtime prospector and hunter of lost mines for half a century. Last year it was the late Henry E. W. Wilson, cowboy, hotel man and hunter of the Lost Peg Leg Mine for 50 years.

THE TREASURE Trove Club is composed of treasure hunters, treasure and pirate lore collectors. It was established in 1938 by a small group of treasure hunters and each June 1 encourages local treasure hunts in honor of all treasure hunters.

The president, Raymond Dow will continue in this office, as will Thomas Schultheiss, of Clifton, N. J., the editor of Pieces of Eight. Schultheiss is also the Buried Treasure editor of two leading men's adventure magazines, attends Montclair College and is a part time assistant librarian at the Clifton Library.

The American treasure hunters have had one long list of leading citizens from the Conquistadores, Captain John Smith, the Georgia Gold Rush, the 49'ers up to the present day electronic detector hunters. Included in these were three Presidents, Grant, Hoover and Roosevelt, Kings and Emperors have been among them.

The proverb "Leave no stone unturned" was the result of a kingly treasure hunt. The "Dead Sea Scrolls" tell of buried treasure. Joseph Smith and his father were treasure hunters before they founded the Church of the Latter Day Saints.

The news is always full of hunts for the hidden treasure of distafors, Hilar, Picon, Trujillo and the rest. Somehow no one in the public's eye can die without a story of buried treasure, real or imaginary. People just don't believe that some of these people are little more than publicity hounds, who somehow get the world to accept them at their own face value. When they die and leave little or nothing, their friends conjure up imaginary hidden treasure

HOWEVER, EVEN more often real treasure comes to life accidentally, as happened recently in Utah, where a lot of gold coins were dug up in the garden of a relative of the governor. Then there is the Chicago stock broker, who buried a quarter of a million dollars and left a treasure map to his heirs, who promptly went into his backyard and dug it up.

Just a few weeks ago two American boys found a sunken treasure while taking underwater movies in Ceylon. Few are that lucky. Even the unfortunate Samuel Pepys had some very trying moments, when he tried to relocate the gold he had buried a few hours before, when the British feared a Dutch invasion.