

**KEVIN VINCENT REILLY**  
**19 July 1954—26 April 2009**



Our club, treasure hunters, and metal detector enthusiasts from all parts of the world lost a kindred Irish spirit with the passing of **Kevin Reilly**. Kevin was the founder of Reilly's Treasured Gold, a successful 20-year-old company in Pompano Beach specializing in the manufacturing of his innovative sand and water scoops and selling metal-detecting equipment. Kevin authored two books on hunting Florida beaches: ***Hurricane Treasure: The 1715 Beach Sites***, which the McLarty Treasure Museum in Vero Beach reports is its biggest seller, and ***The Beach Bank: Your Treasure Teller***. He also made a video on how to hunt the 1715 Treasure Coast beaches.

Kevin joined our club in 1987. Even though he was busy with his business, he supported our club in many ways. His donations toward club hunts and the Holiday party kept the budget under control. He also gave a 10 percent discount on most items he sold to club members. Kevin shied away from formal presentations, but his shop door was always open for advice and sharing of experiences with anyone visiting in the area.



*Photos by Andy Sabisch*



Kevin Vincent Reilly was born in Elizabeth, NJ to **Daniel** and **Veronica Reilly** and was raised in Rahway. As an adult, Kevin lived in California before moving to Pompano Beach, his final hometown. He is survived by his stepmother, **Mary Reilly** of Pompano Beach, seven brothers, two sisters, and 34 nieces and nephews. His services were scheduled for 1 May 2009 at St. Coleman Church in Fort Lauderdale, followed by interment in Pompano Beach Cemetery

*They'd love to see him come, how they'd hate to see him go.*

*Jolly Mon...swam into the heavens...stayed up in the sky.  
 Oh oh oh Jolly Mon sing...oh oh oh make the Heavens ring.*

Reilly's Treasured Gold will continue to do business as usual in memory of Kevin.

**Website: [www.rtgstore.com](http://www.rtgstore.com)**

*Following article on Kevin Reilly reprinted by permission of Lost Treasure Inc.*



By Andy Sabisch

## KEVIN REILLY

**TREASURE HUNTER,  
EVERY TH'ER'S FRIEND —  
A MAN TRULY  
FOLLOWING HIS DREAM!**

**Most treasure hunters** spend time dreaming about a life that would allow them to dive on a sunken Spanish galleon, prospect for gold miles from the nearest road, or just spend the day searching snow-white beaches for coins and jewelry. While these dreams remain just that for most of us, Kevin Reilly has turned his dreams into reality.

Kevin's interest in treasure hunting can be traced back to when he was nine years old growing up in New Jersey. His main interest at the time was coin collecting and he started seeing a number of ads for companies selling metal detectors in the coin magazines he read. While the ad's claims of being able to find buried coins intrigued him, it wasn't until a friend of his bought one and let Kevin borrow it that he became interested in metal detecting. Taking the detector to a nearby park, he unearthed his first coin within minutes — a silver Washington quarter. That find was all it took! Kevin was hooked on the hobby and immediately purchased a White's 1DB of his own. Competition was virtually non-existent at that time and over the next



*Kevin with one of the many scoops he builds.*

few years he spent a considerable amount of time searching the county parks and school yards around his home in New Jersey. Despite the detector's limited capabilities, Kevin was able to recover a wide variety of items including hundreds of silver coins, a number of beautiful pieces of jewelry, and artifacts dating back over 200 years.

A few years later, Kevin's work took him to California where he quickly met other people interested in treasure hunting. One of the people he met was Howard Childress who became his primary hunting partner. Since he lived near the famous gold region, the next logical step for Kevin was to develop an interest in prospecting. Almost immediately he achieved success in his searches, and, with the use of a hydraulic concentrator, recovered a considerable amount of gold from hot spots he and his partners located. Not wanting to relegate his metal detector to the closet, he also spent time searching ghost towns in both California and Arizona. His success continued as he found coins, tokens, and various other artifacts dating back to the late 1800s in his expeditions.

Kevin's belief in the American Dream of owning your own business combined with his interest in treasure hunting led him to start Reilly's Treasured Gold in 1981. Several members of his

*Kevin working on a specially designed scoop for a handicapped customer.*



## Who's Who



*Kevin hunting an abandoned motel dating back to the 1920s.*

immediate family (Kevin is one of 10 brothers and sisters) had moved to Pompano Beach, Florida to escape the winter weather in New Jersey. Kevin decided to follow them and opened a store catering to treasure hunters. Over the past 12 years, Reilly's Treasured Gold has grown into a full service shop carrying metal detectors, books, and a complete line of treasure hunting accessories serving both the retail and wholesale customer.

*Just a small portion of Kevin's inventory of diving and treasure hunting equipment.*



When Kevin got to Florida he immediately became interested in searching for artifacts from the many galleons that sank in the area. Contacting a local dive shop, he received his open-water certification and began diving along the Florida coast. One of Kevin's favorite dive sites is the wreck of the *El Infante*, a Spanish treasure galleon that went down in 1733, three and one-half miles offshore in

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*Hooked on  
TH'ing since age 9,  
Kevin's favorite  
kinds of treasure  
hunting are old  
home sites, old  
yards, shallow water  
hunting and  
beach hunting.*

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*The results of one day's yard hunting in southern Florida by Kevin.*

the Keys. He has made a number of dives on the site making finds that include cannon balls and several coins including silver pieces of eight.

Despite the fact that Florida was reached by explorers as early as the 1500s, most areas were not developed until the late 1800s or early 1900s. As a result, coins recovered by area treasure hunters rarely date much before the 1930s. Despite this handicap, Kevin has been quite successful in locating older coins and his collection includes barber coins, Indian Head cents, and even a Seated dime from the 1876. Due to the scarcity of these coins and the sandy soil which causes coins to quickly sink to extreme depths, Kevin's collection is a tribute to his skill at locating productive sites and using a metal detector.

Treasure hunting is truly a year-round activity for Kevin. In the summer he spends most of his time shallow-water hunting off the beaches from West Palm Beach south to the Keys.

Over the years Kevin has found literally hundreds of gold rings, thousands of coins, along with items such as tokens, keys, toys and other miscellaneous artifacts. When asked about a "favorite find," he said that each piece has a particular story behind it, and as a result, he would hate to single one piece out as being a "favorite." Some of the coins and artifacts he helped recover from the wrecks of the Spanish treasure galleons do hold a special place in his collection, however.

Regarding the equipment he uses, Kevin prefers metal detectors which have accurate discrimination and usable sensitivity to provide the depth needed to find older targets in the sandy Florida soil. He likes a "notch" discriminator to help avoid digging some of the trash so common in the areas he hunts; however, he seldom uses a detector with a target ID meter. Kevin says that

while meters are fine for shallow coins, their accuracy is questionable on deeper coins and he knows that many less-experienced hunters have missed valuable targets by relying on the meter too heavily. Being a multi-line dealer is an asset as he often compares detectors from various manufacturers in order to be sure he is recommending and using the best possible piece of equipment for specific applications.

Since getting into the hobby, Kevin said he has seen a number of changes, not necessarily all good, in the perception of treasure hunting by the general public.

One of the problems that he sees for the treasure hunting community down the road is that of state and federal legislators trying to close down the hobby. He said, "Treasure hunters in the state of Florida have done an excellent job in fighting to keep areas open. We just need more support from treasure hunters across the country. We need to get more publicity which shows the positive side of the hobby such as when a lost ring is returned or assistance is given to the local law enforcement agencies."

Reilly's Treasured Gold not only sells treasure hunting equipment but builds it as well. They currently build electrolysis cleaners and over 15 different models of scoops ranging from small hand-held types to long-handled units for shallow water hunters. Kevin said that he enjoys the challenge presented by requests for a specially designed piece of equipment, and if he can, will build whatever a customer might need. One of the scoops he designed and built was for a friend who has an artificial leg. The scoop allowed the individual to experience shallow water hunting — something he would have been unable to accomplish without Kevin's help. Kevin can custom build equipment for individuals including handicapped people to let them enjoy the hobby.

One of the biggest rewards Kevin has received from running

his own treasure hunting shop has been the friendships he has made over the years. He has friends and customers all over the United States as well as in a number of foreign countries. Many of them stop in to see him when they are in the area and spend some time talking about their common interest. Since opening RTG, Kevin has introduced hundreds of people to the thrill of treasure hunting. He is the type of dealer that this hobby needs if it is to survive — one that is willing to take the time to explain how to use the detector itself as well as how to recover targets without damaging the area.

Kevin's new book sales division, Pirates Express Publishing, currently carries over 1,000 titles relating to all facets of treasure hunting, with more being added on a regular basis. In addition to in-print titles, he also has access to sources which specialize in obtaining out-of-print books at reasonable prices. He recently co-produced a book and video detailing the location of the 1715 Spanish galleon treasure fleet that sank off the coast of Florida entitled *Hurricane Treasure*, and is currently in the process of writing a new book on how to search old home sites which is his favorite type of treasure hunting. Another book on lost treasures throughout Florida is also in the works and will contain a number of lesser-known caches that he has researched over the years.

So, if you are looking for a piece of treasure hunting equipment, a hard-to-find book, or simply some advice from a seasoned treasure hunter, give Kevin a call or drop by if you're in the area. He's always willing to spend a few minutes talking about his favorite subject — TREASURE HUNTING!

*Authors note: Kevin's phone number is (305) 971-6102 and his shop address is 2003 W. McNab Rd., Suite 10, Pompano Beach, FL, 33069. If you get a chance to talk with Kevin be sure to mention you read about his adventures in Treasure Facts. *



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