

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

The Buzzer

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HAPPY NEW YEAR from the CMDC



Brisk Day for a Hunt! We're all looking forward to an early spring!

The Buzzer is published by and for the membership of the CMDC – Canada's oldest Active Metal Detecting Club.

Visit us on the internet @ www.cmdc.org.

Happy
New Year!

*All the Best for the
2016 Metal Detecting
Season!*

We've reached the end of another Metal Detecting Year. 2015 was a fabulous season! CMDC members recovered everything from gold rings and gold coins to axe heads and musket barrels.

Some of us are still detecting in the snow, while others dream of warmer weather or warmer climates before they get out their machine again.

We hope all the members of the Calgary Metal Detecting Club had a wonderful Christmas, and wish you and your families a safe, healthy and prosperous New Year, full of many recovered treasures and great memories.

Metal Detecting story from Newfoundland

As some of you may know, CMDC member David Roberts used to spend half of the time in our fair province, and the rest at his home in Newfoundland. David recently retired, and relocated to Newfoundland where he has enjoyed both diving and detecting around the area.

He has done some detecting on his own property, and that of friends, and has come back with some pretty amazing finds. In November of 2012 he shared one of those amazing finds with us, when a 1813 George III "stiver" showed up on the finds of the month table, Here are some recent stories from David which he has given me permission to share.

In Newfoundland this summer we had a weird summer weather wise, June was only fair, and July was a disaster of cold and rain. I hardly got out detecting at all. The fall was unusually good but I had other projects keeping me busy.



However I did add to my collection of musket parts. I found most of a barrel, without any fittings of any sort. It is about 30" long of which 18" is octagonal. The rest is bent and rusted very thin and it seemed to have ended its life as a stake hammered into the ground before being discarded into a shed which long ago collapsed where I found it. There are signs on it that show somebody tried to

cut the barrel but failed, the butt end is hammered and the touch hole is still visible.

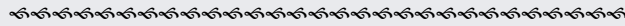
And I got me moose! By virtue of a moose hunter losing his 3rd wedding ring. He was in trouble.



The short story was that he knew about where it was, and it was not in the gut pile. He pointed to where he had wiped his hands in the grass. 3 minutes later I found it about 10 feet away. For the hour spent getting to and from my house I was given 6 pot roasts and 4 steaks weighing 15.7 lbs. Yes, I got me moose, bye!

Finding the Holy Grail (a 1921 Canadian Half-Dollar Recovery)

On Sunday November 15th, Chris "Fishscale" Bourget decided to take some time to enjoy one of the last good hunting days before winter weather hit. He got his gear, and travelled out to a favourite spot (undisclosed, and for good reason), a place that had produced some very nice finds in the past. This time Chris recovered the Holy Grail of Canadian metal detectorists and coin-collectors. That chilly autumn morning Chris recovered something on a LOT of wish-lists ... He dug up a pristine 1921 Canadian 50-cent piece. Here is his story, as pieced together from facebook entries.



I posted about meeting up with some of the EMCD club members, but then I decided to go out instead to the spot where I had found my bail seal...I just knew that there had to be more. I also knew that the vegetation had been knocked down, so more ground would have opened up for me. My first target that day was a flat button, and only 5 feet away was my Chinese coin. At that point I was already smiling from ear to ear, so I continued to work the ground 1 square foot at a time, cleaning out all the trash out that I could.

Around 3:30 pm my battery died. I knew in my mind that this was going to be my last opportunity to get my fingers dirty this year. My wife, Sarah-Lynne Bourget, needed to be picked up from work at 5 pm, but I pleaded my case and she kindly agreed to take a cab home. I grabbed my battery pack and made my way back to my location of longitude (I'm not telling) and latitude (I'm still not telling).

The weather had taken a turn for the worse, and it was getting a lot colder. The wind had picked up... my fingers were freezing, and my screen was blurry and almost unreadable as I was sweeping my coil. The coil was banging off bulging roots and small trees, but I heard a whisper of sound - much like a small cent. It was coming in 12/11-39/41 - if you are familiar with the 3030 you'll understand right away that sounds just like a small cent. I forgot my shovel in my company truck, so I was using my trowel to dig - and that may have saved me from gouging the coin.

I pulled the dirt away from the side of the hole.. and a large white glow appeared from the deep dark soil. I knew it was silver. I scooped it up and put it directly in the truck. I scanned the rest of the area quickly as it was around 7ish, and getting dark. I knew I had to leave the city for work between 5:30 and 6:00 am the next morning.

I hopped in my truck looked down at the coin and said, "**** yes! " I called Sarah to let her know I was on my way home. By this point my mind was set on work and my build order, and I completely forgot about the half dollar sitting in my pouch. I grabbed my pouch and pulled the few coins from my small pocket and posted the rest of what I found that Sunday. I was thrilled to have found a Chinese coin dating from 1800 - 1850 - my oldest coin to date, and happy with the few other silver coins I dug up. It had been a long day, and I went to bed early. I fell fast asleep, and didn't remember the 1921 half-dollar until the next morning.



In the morning, I hopped in my truck, and headed out. I didn't remember the half until after I picked up my coffee from Timmys and turned on my interior lights. I said to myself, "Shit - I forgot to post that! " I snapped a few photos of it, and that was that.

I got off work around 7:30 on Monday went back to my hotel and did the evening routine. Then I decided to look up the half. I knew that the 1921 fishscale nickel was worth something, and didn't think that the 1921 half-dollar had any significant value.

1921 Canadian Half Dollar Recovery - continued

I got on the internet at the hotel, and I pulled up Canada and coins.com. I scrolled down until I hit 50-cent and clicked 1911-1921. The picture on the website for the 1921 50-cent was of a 1920 coin. I kept clicking back and forth as I was wondering if I clicked 1920 instead, but all the text said 1921 - and that's when I knew I had something special.

I was in my towel freshly out of the shower...all by myself doing the happy dance!! Jumping on both of the beds in the hotel screaming "HELL YA!" I was fist pumping, and the whole nine yards. I got dressed and went to the hotel clerk who I had asked about locations to hunt around the area, and showed him the coin, grabbed an old high five, and went back to my hotel room!

I thought the 1921 fishy was the big prize, and never realized that the 1921 50-cent was an even bigger prize. Everybody talks about the 1921 fishy and really the 1921 50-cent never comes up in conversation.....maybe because nobody ever found one before.

The Story behind the 1921 Canadian Half Dollar

During the early to mid-1920s, demand for 50-cent pieces was minimal. Very few of the coins were requested by banks, and most of the coins minted in 1921 sat on the shelf. With the arrival of the depression - era wages, there was a greater demand for the denomination in 1929. The Master of the Ottawa mint thought that people who received "new-looking" 1921 half dollars would think they were counterfeit. The Master of the Mint was also very aware of the Depression Era Canadian Economy. He saw an advantage in not purchasing silver ingots when there was plenty of silver sitting on the shelf. The Mint decided to melt the remaining stock of 1920 and 1921 silver coins, and use that silver to create new 1929 50-cent pieces. It is believed that 75 or so of the 1921 coins could have survived, mainly from mint-sets that were sold at the time.

The 1921 Canadian Half-Dollar has long been known as the "King of Canadian Coins", and is believed to be one of the rarest circulated coins of the modern era. A 1921 50-cent piece brings a price worthy of its rarity and reputation. A coin auction listed a high grade example of the 1921 Canadian half as selling for well over \$200,000.00 in 2010.



Using Google Maps in Metal Detecting

I suspect that most of you are already using Google Maps, although it may just be to locate an address you need, or to get directions. However, have you considered using the program to assist you in your hobby as a detectorist? If not, you may want to experiment, and learn some of its secrets. One feature I like is the "street view". It gives the ability to toggle between the satellite, or map - and then take a look at the same area from the ground. In many instances it will save you valuable time. The Google Maps program can also give you directions to get to the area you have decided to hunt.

I experimented recently using Google Maps with a few parks around my area, and was able to see raised ground in a large oval in the park when using the satellite view. I recognized the old "berm style" skating rink layout - that I know dates a park to the late 50s. I then used the "street view" feature of Google Maps, and was able to see what the park looked like today, and to plan my best starting point for that park. Many features can be seen by satellite, including slight disturbances, old foundations, or trees that look older than the surround areas. All are features that are worth taking note of.

When you can also use the availability of historical aerial photographs, you can see changes that have happened to a park over time - or not. I remember being amazed at a modern satellite photo of a park, and noting a path the cut kitty corner from one end to the other - and that the same path was visible in a historical aerial photo taken 60 years prior. That is something to make note of and hunt around.

Another way to use Google Maps is to compare the satellite and Street view imagery with "old" historical maps. Many community histories will have a map of older neighborhoods, and if you are lucky - you may even have access to some of the old railway maps that date back to the early part of the century. I think the library may have a copy of those. If you can identify a feature on the maps, you can often exactly pinpoint the same area using the Google program, and find out if any of the local area might be considered a "public area".

You may remember my story a while back about locating the Hubalta Railway Station using Aerial photography. You can see the article in the July 2014 Buzzer, if you don't recall it. I used the aerial photos from the mid-1920s, and then used the Google Map site to see what the location looked like in a modern satellite image.



These two images show the Hubalta Site, one photo taken in 1926 and the other is a satellite image retrieved using a Mapping Program in 2009.

If you are not familiar with the mapping program, and all that it offers, be sure to check it out. It's free, and you will be amazed at all the many features available to help the detectorist.

JEWELLERY STANDARD MARKS

When we find a piece of jewellery that has a hallmark it is pretty exciting. TREASURE!!! The next question is almost always `What does this mark mean?` The most common Marks or Stamps are used to identify things like Metal type, Carat Weight, and sometimes Country of origin or designer. .

The Standard Mark (Metal Stamp) shows the amount of gold in the piece, and the Karat Weight of the Metal. If you look you'll usually see the Karat Stamp. 10k, 14k, 18k or 24K are the most common markings (usually indicating gold). But you'll also run across Titanium, Stainless Steel, Tungsten, Sterling Silver, or Platinum.

The stamp will be in a different place dependant on the type of item found. In rings and bracelets the mark will be found on the shank (in the side of the item closest to the skin), with chains the mark is most often found on the clasp, brooches or pins on the back, and earrings often on the hook or stud. Pendants or charms will usually have a mark on the back, or on the clasp. The K on gold rings stands for Karat Weight, which is the system used to describe the percentage of pure gold an item contains. The higher the karat number, the higher the percentage of gold in your gold jewelry.

- 24K gold is pure gold.
- 18K gold contains 18 parts gold and 6 parts of one or more additional metals, making it 75% gold.
- 14K gold contains 14 parts gold and 10 parts of one or more additional metals, making it 58.3% gold.
- 12K gold contains 12 parts gold and 12 parts of one or more additional metals, making it 50% gold.
- 10K gold contains 10 parts gold and 14 parts of one or more additional metals, making it 41.7% gold. 10K gold is the minimum karat that can be called "gold" in the United States.
- 9K gold contains 9 parts gold and 15 parts of one or more additional metals. 9K is the minimum karat that can be called "gold" in Canada, Britain and parts of Asia.

European gold jewelry might also be marked with numbers that indicate their percentage of gold, such as:

- 18K gold marked 750 to indicate 75% gold
- 14K gold marked 585 for 58.5% gold
- 10K gold marked 417 for 41.7% gold
- 9K gold marked 375 for 37.5% gold

Other markings that you might on a gold ring or other piece of gold jewellery could be GE for Gold electroplated, GF for Gold filled (Usually has a fraction i.e. 1/20 10K GF), GS = Gold Shell, and GHE for Heavy Gold Electroplate. In order to be marked GF, at least 1/20th of the weight of an object must be gold.

Other metal stamps found on precious jewellery include:

SILVER

925 (92.5% silver) = Sterling. 835 - A lower quality of Silver (83.5%) - Common in Europe.
950 (95% silver) - fairly rare. STERLING or STER for Sterling Silver.
TAXCO or MEXICO for Mexican Silver
COIN for Coin Silver (80% silver)
.999 FINE = Pure Silver

PLATINUM

PT (ATOMIC SYMBOL)
IRID. PLAT..
PT 900

Other Marks could include TUNGS for Tungsten, S.S. or St. Steel for Stainless Steel, or PD for Palladium.

❄️❄️ Winter Metal Detecting ❄️❄️

For many of us the Calgary Metal Detecting season is at an end, but you do not have to give up your favourite hobby just because it is winter.

There are a few hardy souls in Alberta that go out detecting every month of the year, and come home with some pretty spectacular finds. Even in winter there are treasures to find, and there are people to be helped. Several of our Calgary Metal Detecting Club members have taken time out of their busy lives to locate a missing ring, pendant, or set of keys lost in the snow.



In Calgary we do get some nice chinooks and very sunny days in the winter. Even though the ground can be pretty hard to dig into, there are still some nice finds to be made. In fact, CMDC Club president Andy Coward found one of his nicest rings in a snowbank in early January.

If you do plan on metal detecting during the winter months, here are a few basic rules for warmth and safety. It is important to dress for the weather. It is important to go out dressed for not only the weather of the moment, but to be prepared for the weather in the forecast. Remember – this is South Alberta. If you don't like the weather, wait a minute. It will change.

Before you go out for a winter hunt, familiarize yourself with the signs of hypothermia. Watch yourself, and those you hunt with. Make a plan to take a break someplace warm if someone's health seems at risk. Dress in a way that eliminates wind, and use water-resistant clothing. Nothing will speed up bone-chilling cold more than being in "wet gear".

Always have a cell phone with you, especially on a trip to an isolated area. In the case of an unexpected event (an injury, or getting stuck in the snow) it is important to have a way to get help. If your plan is to detect in an isolated area, make sure someone knows where you are. It is a good idea to hunt in isolated areas with a partner, but always let someone know where you plan to hunt.

Plan your winter treasure hunt as a recovery of surface or near surface finds. The winter chilled earth will require some vigorous digging if you are trying to retrieve something deeper than that - which could damage whatever you are trying to find. If you suspect that deeper object has historical value, or is a precious metal, make a note of landmarks or of the GPS location and plan for recovery when the weather is warmer, and the ground softer.

Spring will be here soon. We have already seen the back of the shortest day of the year, and are less than four months to the beginning of our Calgary metal detecting season (we hope). So while winter doesn't necessarily mean the end to our season – it also a great time to do research and make plans for future hunts.

If you are like most people, the most valuable commodity we have is time. Wouldn't it be great to have a number of potential good sites all lined up and waiting for you to hit in Spring? Use time while the ground is snow covered and frozen to hit the local library. Read some local history, dig out some old maps, or visit a historical society or local archives.

Remember the CMDC still meets during the winter. It's a great time to get together and talk about our hobby. I hope to see you all out at the next meeting.

LOCATION AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The club meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the auditorium of the Brentwood Co-op store which is located just off Crowchild Trail between Charleswood Drive and Brisbois Drive N.W. You have to enter the store and go down-stairs (door by the Bakery) to find the meeting room.

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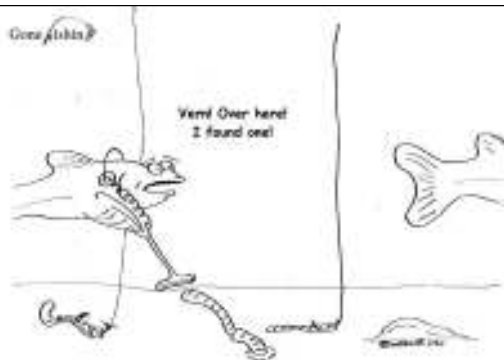
To view Kevin's listings visit him on the internet @ www.kevinniefer.com - or give him a call at 403-720-9501
Email: kniefer@calgaryrealestatepros.com

The CMDC's yearly dues are:

In-town membership : \$25.00
Out-of-town membership: \$20.00

Contact the Calgary Metal Detecting Club (CMDC)

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Calgary, Alberta T2A-3N2



YOU COULD BE A PUBLISHED AUTHOR!

Do you have an interesting story, idea for an article, or a comment that you would like to see in "The Buzzer". Write it down and email it to kempp@telus.net with METAL DETECTING STORY in the subject area.
