

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

THE BUZZER

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CMDC Club Members about to Hunt Calgary Olympic Park (COP)

See Article inside.

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

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CANADA OLYMPIC PARK (C.O.P.) HUNT

By BRETT BUCHAN

Early in the morning on Saturday June 7th, 2014, there was a site never before seen at Canada olympic park in Calgary. People stopped and gazed with puzzled looks as a gopher, badger, bear and walrus were seen moving around in the grass at the bottom of the hill. This was no game farm escape but only a few of the 40 Calgary Metal Detecting Club members preparing for the first annual C.O.P hunt.

Members started arriving at 8:15 am. Road signs placed out early by Albert "Walrus" Cotterhill made finding the CMDC hunt base area easy. The members were greeted with a warm cup of Tim Horton's coffee and muffins that were graciously donated by Shelly and Gord Jackart.



Brad Johnston from Winsport met with hunt organizer Brett (the gopher) Buchan to discuss the C.O.P safety instructions for the hill. Mr. Johnson also provided emergency cards for members to contact hill medical staff if needed.)

In the past, new detectorists might have heard old hands talk about a "test garden". Jeff (the badger) Buchan created a "Testing Bed" of 14 different items people might encounter during a hunt. These included everything from foil to a gold ring. The ring was found by Jeff years ago, and loaned by its current owner, Jeff's father, Ken Buchan. Ken made sure to get the ring back on his finger before the hunt began.



By 9:15 am members began to spread out all over the hill with hopes of finding treasures. The idea was that recovered precious jewellery would be turned in to Winsport - who would try to locate the owners, and return the items. Any modern coins found would be donated to the charity of Winsport's choice..

The members spent the morning scrambling over the hill, and the hunt ended shortly before noon. After looking over the morning finds, and voting for "best treasures" - everyone gathered for lunch.

Members gathered to vote for "best hunt finds", and then enjoyed a wide assortment of subways sandwiches and soup donated by Bill Jones. Bill also donated a silver necklace prize, which was given to Gopher as thanks for organizing the hunt. Ken (grumpy bear) Buchan donated refreshments. Gopher passed out led flashlights he donated as a hunt gifts.



There were some interesting items and some very nice trinket jewellery brought in, but no "treasure" category finds. Club members recovered an abundance of aluminium (broken ski-poles & pop-cans), as well as other items. There were also fewer coins recovered than we expected. With the lack of coin recovery, C.M.D.C President Ron Coppock decided to donate \$100.00 to a charity of Winsport's choice on behalf of the club.

A special mention should also go to Heather Roy from Radioworld Central for attending and bringing some great hats and T-shirts, and for letting everyone know that they are here to support the Club and its activities. Heather also tried her hand at detecting, and had a great time.

The day was a great success even without the hoped for jewellery or olympic items. Everyone enjoyed a day full of bonding and getting to know new members. The C.O.P hunt was the largest in recent club history with over 40 people attending.

LOVE TOKENS

Another metal detecting find on many detectorist's wish lists is a "Love-Token." A love-token is a coin that has been smoothed flat on one or both sides, and then hand-engraved. These coins were made as keepsakes or mementos, intended as a special gift for someone close to the maker. A love-token usually includes a name, or monogram of either the giver or the recipient. The designs can be as simple as a name and date, or have a very complex design.

Although it is traditionally accepted that most love tokens were given by a beau to a girl, they extended far beyond those boundaries. Love-Tokens were also given to family members, or given to close friends in honour of a special relationship. In the Victorian era these tokens were also created to commemorate a historic event, or a significant family event like a birth, engagement or confirmation.

The most common coins used were silver, as these were softer and easier to engrave. Although copper coin tokens are found, it was considered "gauche" not to use a precious metal coin as a "love-token", although some very intricate large cent tokens have been found. Gold coins were rarely used, as gold was much more valuable for use as currency at the time. All of the coin images below are love-tokens made from Canadian (fishscale) 5-cent pieces.



CACHE RECOVERY

Recently a silver cache recovery was made by a teenager in the United States. He was hunting a wooded area with his detector, and recovered an old lead bank from the 1930s, full of coins. A YouTube video of the bank opening was popular with hobbyists this spring. Here is the story of the recovery in his own words:

So here is the story, I went metal detecting yesterday, was supposed to go digging with a bud but my dad couldn't go, he had work in the morning (I have a car, but I am not allowed to drive out of the state). I was gonna sleep in but decided, since it was sunny, that I would take a ride around to metal detect. I eventually ended up following a lead on an old area.

Hour 1: nothing (when I say nothing, I mean some clad and junk)

Hour 2: nothing

End of hour 3: ... things got interesting

I saw an old tree, started detecting and my signals spiked. I dug out an old lead figure, no paint on it, about the size of a half pint blob. Thought nothing of it at first since I have found lead figures and toys both big and small in the past so I put it in my bag, finished detecting around the tree with no luck, went to my car and drove home because by that point my hands turned bright red from the cold.

I get to the garage, where my dad has shelves for smalls (and where I unload my gear) and was about to put the figure up on one of them. Then I noticed some dirt spilled out, I see that on the side it has a small hole, most lead figures even small ones are hollow. I decided to take it home to rinse it out through that small hole (let it fill up with water, then let it drain out). After the first cleaning I noticed that it was still heavy and that no dirt was coming out of it anymore, heavier than it should be. I let it dry and took a look in the hole. I noticed that there was something shining inside. I looked on the back and to my surprise I noticed a slit on the neck of the figure which turned out is a piggy bank. I look in the hole again with a magnifying glass and noticed that there were a few ribbed coins with white sides, that looked like silver dimes.

I Grabbed the camera, and by that time my dad was home, he filmed as I opened the bank and the result was 346 silver coins:

99 Roosevelt dimes

1 Barber dime

245 mercury dimes

1 Washington quarter

ALL SILVER, NO CLAD!!! Another good thing, after I pried open the iron cap at the bottom, it was still salvageable, and the piggy bank is still whole and usable! I plan on just cleaning it up and sticking it on the shelf as is. I don't want to ruin it.



A similar bank



The dug bank



Over 300 silver coins.

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## FINDS OF THE MONTH CATEGORIES

You've found our great hobby, and had fun digging something up – Now it is time for the Calgary Metal Detecting Club meeting. You might be wondering just what category your treasure fits in – The CMDC has four categories that are voted on each month for “Best Find of the Month.”

Each member may enter one item to be voted on in each of those four categories – their own personal “Find of the Month.”

### BEST COIN

Best Coin includes any piece of metal that represented legal tender for the nation or region in which it circulated. If the coin has been incorporated into a piece of jewellery, it should usually go into the Treasure category instead. The coin can be made out of any metal. This would include currencies from other countries, and bank tokens. Any attempts to sneak in wooden nickels or Canadian Tire money will be frowned upon.

### BEST TREASURE

If it's made out of a precious metal (gold, silver, platinum) and isn't a coin, it belongs here. Gold rings, silver rings, gold bracelets, gold bars, gold dust ... you get the idea. Club member Lloyd Haywood actually brought in a gold nugget last year. The best way to tell is if your item is “treasure” is if it has a hallmark, but that isn't going to present in every case. Some jewellery is Artisan crafted, or was created in a country where hallmarks are not the norm. In cases where the finder isn't sure, but is hoping for gold - remember that the Club has a gold-tester and a gem-tester available for any member to use.

### BEST RELIC

The CMDC bylaws considers relics as items over 25 years of age. That might not seem very old, but Calgary is considered a fairly young area. If your item is a non-precious metal, is over 25 years old, and it's not a coin or piece of jewellery, this is where it fits in. Tokens, buttons, bullets, military items, watches, tools, antique toys, medals ... anything that is over 25 years old can be entered in this category. Note that the BoneyM keychain from the 70s might not be considered as significant as a Roy Rogers badge or cap-gun from the 1960s, or a 1930s era cigarette case. But in the end it all comes down to member votes.

### BEST TRINKET

Any other item that you find can be entered under Best Trinket. This can include Costume jewellery, modern toys, newer tools, nifty gadgets or anything that just doesn't look old enough to be really considered a Relic. Think of such things as being “Relics-In-Training”. Sometimes this is the most interesting category as we might have have matchbox toys up against a really beautiful brooch, or a buck knife.

# RESEARCHING HUBALTA RAILROAD STATION

by Peggy Kemp

This article was originally published in the Buzzer in 2010 - as I was going through some documents earlier this month, I found it again, and thought it was worth a re-work, and another look. One of the biggest tools we can use to locate great relics and treasures is research.

Last year I started to do some research about the neighbourhood I live in. I started the search on my favourite research website, ourfutureourpast.ca. This website was a Alberta Centennial project, and contains a lot of historical references, including digitized community history books, aerial photos, and scans of old Alberta newspapers. I found a book on that website that chronicled the history of 3 towns that were created in the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. All of these communities were built within 10 miles of my current neighbourhood. One of the passages within that old book mentioned that the last full railway station on the old Grand Trunk and Pacific Line was built in Hubalta, which is the closest of those communities. .



The Grand Trunk and Pacific Railroad line built the Hubalta station around 1912, and the railroad went bankrupt before 1920. It was later amalgamated into the CPR line. Another railway history website provided a photo of the Hubalta station in its heyday, as well as a tantalizing image of a whistle-stop somewhere close to Barlow Trail. The photo above was taken in 1912. The Hubalta station was in use until the rise in use of the "family car" made it obsolete in the middle of the last century.

My next stop was the aerial photo archive of Alberta. I scrutinized aerial photos from the 1920s that travelled all along the site of the current CPR, which passes by the rear of my property. I located only one site that was a possible location for the railroad station. Comparing those photos to current mapping websites available through Mapquest.com and Google Maps, I located the site of the Hubalta Railroad Station – within walking distance of my own home. It was the only building within miles that was right next to the railroad tracks.

A visit to the actual site of the station revealed a rutted dirt road right beside a current paved road, and remnants of the old wooden railway siding, laying flat on the ground. I also located an old green-glass insulator high in a dead tree, indicating that at one time power or telephone wires had travelled to a building on that site. The actual railroad station building had been moved or torn down years ago.





These two images show the same site, one photo taken in 1926 and the other in 2009. The white building in the middle of the first image was the railway station.

Although it was exciting to locate this historic site, it was not a great site for detecting. Most of the area surrounding it has been graded, according to current railroad practices. The constant railway traffic has compacted the ground. For most of the year, it isn't diggable. One autumn day I spent over half an hour digging down a mere 6 inches. It was like digging through concrete. The site is really only searchable in the early spring, while the ground is still damp from melting snow. I know the chances of finding anything on that site are minimal. Still, I feel a thrill in locating a piece of lost history, and any relic I do find will seem even sweeter because of the effort that I put into the discovery of its location.

I know that I am unlikely to locate any items from the railway station site, but I also used this method to locate the site of a four room school, and a possible church site - all within a 10 minute drive from my house. Take a look at aerial photos and community histories - you never know what might show up in YOUR neighbourhood.

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Beach Metal Detecting Fail

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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The CMDC's yearly dues are:

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

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