

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

The Buzzer

Volume 49 - issue 4 JULY 2020



Looking for Roundness -
We all wish for Silver in the hole

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.

CMDC CLUB MEETINGS STILL CANCELLED

As most of you know, the Calgary Metal Detecting Club was contacted by the Brentwood Co-op in March, and informed that they would be closing their meeting rooms until the Covid 19 crisis was over. We usually meet at the Co-op on the first Tuesday of every month, but by the middle of April the Alberta government banned all meetings of over 15 people. Even our good friend Susan Durksen attended a wedding this spring as one of only 15 guests allowed. There was no way around cancelling our monthly club meetings until things got better

We are seeing an improvement in Alberta, and the government recently opened up gatherings to include 50 people or less. The co-op has not yet opened its meeting rooms, but we hope that as the recover progresses, we will be able to get the meeting room, and start our club monthly meetings soon. Even so, it appears likely that the CMDC monthly meetings will not be occurring for a while.

All of you keep healthy and well. Get out and hunt – enjoy the summer weather and great digging conditions. I'm amazed at some of the finds people are displaying on the Facebook group page. Remember to be safe while enjoying the hobby - ensure safe distances and social distancing. I look forward to seeing you at a future CMDC meeting. We will send out more information when we have it - it will go out on the Facebook group page and by email.



CMDC CLUB HUNTS CANCELLED

The CMDC tries to get together for a club hunt one or two times a month. With the onset of Covid 19, and the concerns about contagion and social distancing, the CMDC has decided to cancel its Club Hunt get-togethers until the government restrictions have eased up a bit more.

As CMDC Hunt Director, John Paterson, reminded us, "Many of our members are either of an age or immune-compromised where they're susceptible to the covid19 virus." Others work with the elderly, or with children. It is better to err on the side of caution than to endanger our friends and families.

Thank you, John. I know it was a tough call to make, but sometimes it is important that to consider the safety of all the members in our club, especially those with compromised immune systems, or elderly relatives. We are all hoping to get together for our group Club Hunts again when this all blows over (hopefully soon).

LOST CHAMPIONSHIP RING RETURN

After more than 6 years, a AAA Mac's Midget Championship Hockey ring has been returned to its owner, thanks to CMDC member, Chris MacDonald. In May of 2020, Chris was out for a day of detecting. He chose to search the sports field of a local High School, which was closed due to Covid 19. Chris heard a high-pitched tone on his AT-Pro. It was a such a clear signal that Chris knew that he had found something really good. That unmistakable tone usually indicates something silver just below the surface. When he dug it out, and saw the inscriptions, Chris quickly realized that it was worth a lot more than money to someone.

"The second I pulled it out of the ground, I saw 1999 Champions, and I said to myself OK – I can tell who owns this ring." Chris MacDonald knew that he might be fulfil one of his metal detecting wish list items, which was returning a sentimental object to the original owner. Taking another close look at the ring, Chris MacDonald found that the ring listed a team logo for the "Strathmore Bisons", and a personal name inscription of "Coach Rick".

Chris MacDonald reached out to the current "Strathmore Bisons" team, who were able to quickly connect Chris with Rick Puttik, the Bison's Coach during the 1999 Championship season. After winning the 1999 title, Puttick did not wear the ring very often. He kept it with other jewellery at his home in Strathmore. The residence was broken into in 2014, and thieves made off with the special memento , along with a number of other items.

Rick Puttik was associated with the Bisons for over 10 years. The team was in the Mac's AAA Hockey Tournament three times during the 1990s, before winning the tournament with Rick as head-coach in 1999. Rick was proud of that ring, as it provided a tangible connection to all the young men he coached during his time with the hockey team. After it disappeared, Rick Puttik thought he would never see the ring again. He was thrilled to get it back. "It's the value of remembrance", said Puttick, "the commemorative value". Rick Puttik and Chris MacDonald both think that the unique design of the ring caused the thief to throw it into the grass where Chris found it 6 years later, as it would have been very hard to "fence".

Chris has been detecting for about 5 years. He says that the hobby is a fun way to stay active and explore the city. "it's a great way to get of the couch, keep busy, and clean up garbage". Some of his more interesting finds include a six-shooter replica, a 1950s Alberta truck license plate, a diamond ring, over 100 fishing lures, and a silver Celtic Cross with hallmarks, traceable to 1907, in Dublin, Ireland.



Counterfeit Coin Purchases

Some CMDC members not only love to find coins, but also are coin collectors, and purchase coins online. CMDC member Jim Culver brought an incident to my attention earlier this year. A friend in his building thought he had purchased a “real” 1804 American silver dollar. When he received it, it was magnetic, and had other imperfections. It was a counterfeit collectable, and a total fake. Recently I heard about a young boy who saved the money from his lawn-mowing business all summer to purchase a gold coin for his father. When the father needed to liquidate his coin collection to pay for cancer treatments, he took that coin (along with many others) to a reputable dealer, who wanted nothing to do with it because the coin was a gold-plated counterfeit. I purchased a fake coin myself a few years back. I knew it was a fake - it was so badly made that I wanted it for the laugh. I knew that King George V was not the ruler of the British Empire in 1908, and the bust of the King looked Chinese. Unlike Jim’s friend and many others, I paid less than \$5.00 for my “fake coin”.

It helps if we remember the adage “If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.” It is important to ask several questions when buying a coin online. Where is this coin being sold from? If a Canadian Royal Mint silver coin is being sold from China – there might be an issue. How long has this seller been in business – counterfeit coin dealers will often flit from business name to business name. If it is a new dealer, there might be an issue. What are the reviews like? If the online dealer has no reviews, or questionable reviews, there might be an issue. As in all things, Buyer Beware!

Counterfeit collectable coins have become such a big issue in the numismatic community that the Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC) and the Professional Coin Grading Services (PCGS) have released the following tips on discerning whether that “one-of-a-kind” silver coin you purchased is real, or a faker.

1. Look for the seam

Counterfeit coins typically have casting seams, which can be very apparent to the naked eye. Fake coins often times will contain hole markings. Additionally, many coins have intricate designs or textures that are associated with that particular coin and its series. If anything seems inconsistent, it’s best to inquire elsewhere.

2. Pay close attention to markings

Many times, fake coins do not contain all the same mintmarks consistent with a certified authentic coin. In a situation such as this, be sure to do as much research as possible about the common marks and designs that are consistent with the piece you are considering buying. Upon inspection of the gold or silver coin you are about to purchase, if certain marks do not add up, ask if the seller has the paperwork to back up their claim of said coin being real.

3. Find the relief

Counterfeiters have a hard time getting the relief of a coin just right. Typically they are too high or much too low. A prospective buyer can test the authenticity of a coin by stacking it up with coins from the same series. If the stack topples over, you have a reason to become more cautious with the transaction.

4. Opposites attract

Magnets are not attracted to elements such as gold and silver. Therefore, if a magnet is cozying up to the newest addition in your coin collection, it’s more than likely a fraud.

5. I’m melting!!

Silver is a conductor of heat and as such, will continue to emit enough thermal energy to immediately begin melting an ice cube without assistance. If you place an ice cube on your new “authentic” silver coin and it does not immediately begin the melting process, odds are you have a fake on your hands.

Star Dust and Space Stones

When we think about metal detecting and finding treasures, we usually think about old coins and relics. These finds are exciting, and we are thrilled to recover a bit of human history, and hold it in our hands. But Imagine – detecting and discovering something older and much rarer - something with cosmic significance. Some members of the CMDC have been lucky enough to recover an object that did not originate on Earth. The cosmic treasures I am talking about are meteorites.

A meteorite is a fragment of meteor, which is rock debris that has fallen from space, and entered earth's gravitational pull. They are pieces of asteroids, comets, or planetoids that make a fiery entry through earth's atmosphere and come to rest on the surface of our planet. Meteorites vary in size, shape and composition. They often look like regular rocks. If we find one with our detector, we might label it a "hot rock" and toss it away. Look at that "hot rock" carefully – it could be a meteorite. Meteors are made of stone or iron-nickel metallic mix, or some combination of both. Some even have gems inside. The higher the level of metal in a meteorite's make-up, the more likely we are to find them with our detector.

Meteorites have been found all over North America, with well over 500 verified finds in the last 50 years. Although a meteorite can be found anywhere, desert or dry areas are among the best areas to hunt because low vegetation and limited rainfall make weather erosion less likely. It is also easier to hunt for meteorites without heavy brush and trees around. A while ago a few CMDC members scouted for meteorites near Whitecourt, Alberta, where a 35-meter-wide meteorite crater was discovered over a decade ago. They said that the long trek in and the thick brush surrounding the area made the hunt very difficult, but they did recover some fragments of meteorite.

You might wonder how to tell if you have dug up a real meteorite, or just an old rock. Of course, one indicator is that your metal detector targeted it, but there are "hot rocks" that are not meteorites. There are a few other easy ways to determine if you might have a meteorite in your hands. The first clue that you may have is if the rock is pitted or dimpled, and if it feels much heavier than its size indicates. Meteorites are much denser than earth rocks and are surprisingly heavy for their size. Another test is to see if it is magnetic. A meteorite will usually be strongly attracted to a magnet because of the high iron content. You can also use an unglazed piece of ceramic tile to test your find. When you rub a regular rock on the surface of the tile, it will leave a streak on the tile. A meteorite will not leave a streak at all. Performing these simple field tests are good indicators. If your meteorite passes all three tests, in order to certify the meteorite, you will want to send your specimen off to an official lab for testing.

The exhilaration you feel when recover an actual meteorite isn't the only payoff - there may be a financial one as well. Meteorites are rarer than diamonds, gold, and other precious metals. Even a small meteorite shard could be worth a lot of money! So next time you're out detecting, don't overlook the "hot rocks" that you come across. You could be detecting a fallen star!



The meteorite examples above were all found in Western Canada.

TIPS FOR FINDING COINS

Looking for coins is a great introduction to the hobby of metal detecting. The beauty of "coin-shooting" is that every metal detecting machine is designed to locate coins, and that even the most basic detector will find them. Millions of coins have been recovered with metal detectors - but there are millions more still in the ground waiting to be found. As we all know from the number of pennies and dimes we have dug up over the years, more coins are being lost every year. Coins are a self-replenishing item to hunt. If you are excited about the idea on coin-hunting, let the adventure begin.

Coins are lost everywhere people frequent, or where people congregated in the past. It would be almost impossible to list every potential place to search. Coins often fall out of pockets wherever people sit or relax on the ground. Old sports field bleachers are cited as lucrative coin hunting grounds. Another great area are old picnic grounds where people lay down for a nap or sat around sharing a sandwich and a soft drink with friends. In parks I always hunt shady areas under trees..

One has to keep in mind that you have to hunt the older places if you want to find old coins. A metal detecting hunt looking for coins at a school that was built in the 70's is typically not going to produce silver coins, or pre-1960s coins. In order to find George coins and wheat pennies, you are going to have to look at older schools, or parks in older neighbourhoods. You can tell a lot about the age of the neighbourhood by the "design" of the houses around it. Houses built in the 1920s were tiny compared to houses built in the 1940s or 1950s, and houses built in the 1980s have a different architectural look than those from the 1950s. Even old schools will have a different architectural design than newer schools. But be careful - for just as some older houses are being replaced by "infills", in some areas older schools are being torn down, and new schools are built right onto the old property. This is where research really pays off. .

Another great place to search will be picnic areas or parks that had bands, music, or other entertainments. These venues were usually center stage for gatherings back in the early 1900's to 1950s (before television provided that entertainment for free). Older parks with entertainment venues provide the bonus of a people seating themselves on grassy areas to enjoy the music. Look for an area with a slight elevation, as that would be a popular spot to see over the heads of those in front. . Around Calgary some local outdoor skating ponds and rinks had concession stands selling hot drinks right off the ice. Researching the location of those concessions could pay off in finding dropped silver coins, or rings slipping off cold hands fumbling for coins, and a great hunt.

There are a host of other locations to coin shoot and the list is as long as your imagination. Coins are found where money exchanged hands or could fall out of pockets or purses. Do you know of an old farmer's market, or sports field that provided refreshments, or souvenirs of the event? Old drive-in movies are good sources. There may be a lot of trash, but there are ways to get around that. A smaller coil will allow the coin-hunter to actually detect between pieces of trash. Discrimination options can cut a lot of the trash out. Most drive-ins had a playground, or a concession stand, which are both excellent places to hunt.



BLAST FROM THE PAST

This Buzzer Story was written by Wayne Teske, and published in the July 2012 issue of the Buzzer. Wayne was a CMDC member when he found this rare and special Canadian coin in 2012. Wayne Teske's coin was in pretty rough condition – even so, he later sold this coin to a collector for over \$3000. Three 1921 silver five-cent pieces have been recovered by CMDC members over the years. The other two 1921 fishscale five-cent coins were recovered at CMDC arranged club hunts outside of Calgary city limits, both in the 1990s. 1921 silver five-cent coins and 1921 silver 50-cent pieces are among the rarest circulated coins in the world, and are considered the find of a life-time by most detectorists.

1921 FISHSCALE 5-CENT PIECE RECOVERY

The year is 1921. The city, Ottawa, Ontario. The place, The Royal Canadian Mint. Someone says "Dump the coins!" and almost 3.5 million silver Canadian 5 Cent pieces are melted down. The government has chosen to go with the cheaper and larger nickel format for the coming year. But wait, some people have already purchased the 1921 5-cent piece, and about 300 have gone into circulation.

Fast forward 90 + years. An avid Mine-Lab E-TRAC user goes over some of the same ground that he and another E-TRAC user have been pounding over for the last 2 months. So far 9 holes, no treasure.

But wait, a repeatable signal in the coin range. Could be junk in this nail infested sight, but experience tells the detector to dig these signals. The plug is dug and removed. The soil is combed with a pinpoint. BRreeeeeeeep. And out pops a silver coin.

"But what is it"? the detectorist asks himself. It's small enough to be a "fishscale" 5 cent piece. A video camera is turned on as slowly the detectorist pours water over the coin. "Oh please, oh please" he pleads as the date on the coin is slowly revealed. **1921!**



A 1921 Fishscale! One of the 300 or so of these coins in existence. The Detectorist is knocked flat on his rear and proceeds to phone his friend who knows the value of such a coin. Possibly \$7000.00, depending on condition! Wow! What a great day, and what a great machine!

The 1921 Canadian Half Dollar

The 1921 fishscale 5-cent piece is not the most valuable Canadian circulated coin. Amazingly, another Canadian silver coin from 1921 is even more valuable – a coin on most wish lists is a 1921 fifty-cent piece. Even though the coin was available for circulation, I don't think that one has been dug up in Western Canada.

During the early to mid-1920s, demand for half-dollar coins was minimal. Very few of the coins were requested by banks. Most people preferred quarters or silver dollars. Most of the 50-cent silver coins minted in 1921 sat in the vault. With the arrival of the depression and lower wages - there was a greater demand for half-dollar coins after 1929. The Master of the Ottawa mint thought that people who received "new-looking" 1921 half-dollars would think they were counterfeit. The Mint was also aware of the depression era Canadian economy and thought it would be wise to save Canadian tax-dollars by 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 less than 200 of the original 1921 silver 50-cent 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 2015. A recovered coin in "good used" condition could fetch over \$20,000.

Carrying your Finds Home

So you've been out metal detecting, and have some hit some targets. You probably will have dug up a bit of trash and maybe a nice item or too. If you remember the metal detecting code of ethics, you will want to dispose of any trash responsibly, while keeping your good finds safe.

That's why you need a belt pouch that has at least two pockets - one for your good finds and one for your trash. I personally use a carpenter's nail-belt with three pouches – I use one for tools, one for trash, and one for finds. Being able to separate out the trash from the good finds makes disposing of unwanted targets at the end of your hunt much easier. It also makes it easier not to accidentally throw away a "good target".



if you were to find something really nice. like a silver dollar or a gold ring, you probably will not want to throw it in with the rest of your finds. Most detectorists will include a small plastic case with some cotton balls in with their gear, to protect their "best" finds, and prevent damage. Some people use a small pill bottle, while others will use an aluminum wallet, or a small fishing tackle case. It doesn't have to be fancy. You just want something that you can transport valuable finds home without getting damaged.

METAL DETECTING TIPS FOR SUCCESS

I was looking through some American Metal Detecting Club newsletters, and I came across the following "Tips for Success". They are some basic suggestions about our hobby that might translate into better finds for our Canadian hunting season.

- "Scouting" really helped me to zero in on caches of coins and other items. I spend a weekend day going to parks, soccer fields, and local outdoors events. I check to see where the most people are playing, or picnicking etc. I will take a picture of these locations. Having a digital camera phone with a camera on hand is great for refreshing the memory the next day. One soccer field I visited yesterday had a temporary shelter set up where they sold refreshments. This morning I made out in the coin department by going in front of and around this tent.
- Save film canisters and/or pill bottles to take with you when you go detecting. Fill them half full with water and add a few drops of detergent. When you find coins and items, put them in the containers to start the cleaning process. It makes it a lot easier to clean when you get home.
- Where are some good places to find rings in the summer? One of the best places is in the water. Rings tend to fly off when people are splashing and swimming, and sunscreen makes fingers slippery. Since the swimmer may not know when they lost the ring, and they are hard to see at the bottom, many go unfound. The areas around swimming holes, lake-areas with beaches, or where people sun-tan can also produce jewelry, since swimmers often take off their jewelry off to apply sun-screen or lotion, and then forget about it, or it drops out of a towel on the way to the car.



LOCATION AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Although cancelled until further notice, the Calgary Metal Detecting club usually meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the auditorium of the Brentwood Co-op store, 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. We will restart the monthly meetings after the Covid 19 crisis is over.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

<p>GPS Central & RadioWorld</p> <p>Central</p> <p>Metal Detectors, GPS Units, Radios, and other electrical equipment & tools. Visit them on the web at gpscentral.ca , or the store at:</p> <p>#8, 711 - 48 Avenue SE Calgary AB Canada T2G 4X2 403-239-1400</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The CMDC's yearly dues are:</p> <p>In-town membership: \$25.00 Out-of-town membership: \$20.00 Family Membership \$40.00</p> <p>Contact the Calgary Metal Detecting Club (CMDC) c/o 6201 Penedo Way SE Calgary, Alberta T2A-3N2 email: cmdcclub@gmail.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CIR Realtor – Relocation Specialist</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Kevin Niefer <i>See Below</i></p> <p><i>Finding Houses - Creating Homes</i> 403-968-1496</p> </div> <p>To find out more information send Kevin an email @ kevin@kevinniefer.com, or give him a call at 403-968-1496</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BONNA-JEAN CAMPBELL Brand Promotor The Thrive Experience by Le-Vel</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Introducing BURN BURN calories, BURN fat, and Ignite your body into Thermogenesis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Introducing PROTEIN BARS Premium Nutrition – Sequential Bar Technology Lemon Meringue – Cinnamon Roll – Cookies & Cream – Birthday Cake Check this out and more on my website: www.Thrivewithbjc.thrive2point0.com Email: Thrivewithbjc@gmail.com</p>
<p>SMI PROSPECTING & ELECTRONICS</p> <p>The SMI Prospecting & Electronics web site offers a wide range of products to metal detectorists, gold-panners, prospectors, and other outdoor enthusiasts.</p> <p>Based out of Langley BC, SMI Prospecting provides an on-line presence. Visit them on the web at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">smi-elec.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ANDY COWARD Custom Coin Jewellery</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COINS2RINGS</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Facebook - coins2rings2 IG - @coins2rings Email coin2rings2@gmail.com</p>

HELP SUPPORT THE BUZZER!

WE NEED STORIES. 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 kemp@telus.net with METAL DETECTING STORY in the subject area.