

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

THE BUZZER

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Just a reminder of the great fun we had at the "Fall Extravaganza" last year -
The next "Fall Extravaganza Hunt " is September 07, 2013. Hope to see you there!

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.

Gold Ring return in Drumheller



Iain Paterson's job took him to Drumheller in late July. He brought along his metal detecting for some R&R after work. One evening after he dropped off his tools, he headed off to spend some time hitting a local park with his detector.

After about 45 minutes of not finding anything, Iain noticed a boulevard across the street, so he and his detecting buddy gave it a try. There really wasn't much to find at first - then Iain got a 62 on the AT-Pro.

Normally that indicates a pull-tab, but there is always a chance that it is a ring.

Iain started digging, and BOOM out pops a chunky grad ring from 2000 - the details on the ring were for a "Ryan", who played football under # 27. At first it appeared silver, but the AT-Pro number was too low for silver. Iain cleaned it up, and looked closely. 10K gold! The Jostens ring also had some engraving on the inside band. but it wasn't readable.

Iain Paterson knew this ring meant something to somebody, so he tried to do some research at the local High School - unsuccessfully. The next day Iain took the ring into the plant, and found a couple of guys that looked like they might have graduated about the same time. They didn't remember a Ryan, but one of them recalled that his sister had a yearbook from that year. The next day he came in, and provided the name "Ryan Conley."

The funny part was that the plant manager was also named Conley - the workers asked if his son ever played football, and what his jersey number was. They found that the ring belonged to his son, and had been lost over a decade before. The manager was a little shocked to see it again - but real happy. Iain Paterson's comment on the incident was simply "It's really cool to return something like that."

This story was written by Peggy Kemp, and with the permission of Iain Paterson. The information was taken from a posting he made on the Calgary Metal Detecting Facebook group page in late July.

CMDC / EMDC Fall Extravaganza

On September 22, 2012; members of the Metal Detecting community from different areas of Alberta made their way to the tiny hamlet of Rochon Sands on Buffalo Lake for the first EMDC/CMDC Fall Extravaganza Hunt. Approximately 36 hunters took part in the hunt, and a few spouses and friends showed up to show support.

The fun began early on Saturday morning, with members and volunteers getting together to seed the playing area with silver coins, prize tokens and silver jewellery donated by members of both clubs. The beach was liberally seeded with clad and a multitude of foreign coins (especially British two pence coins). Close to 1000 coins and prize-tokens were seeded in the beach for the hunters to find. By 10:00 in the morning, eager Metal Detectorists were arriving at the beach and looking forward to a day of fun and fine recoveries. Hunters were each provided with Minelab shirts, hats, totes, and other loot, provided by Minelab Canada, who also donated an Xterra705 as a prize. After a pre-hunt photo shoot (see front page) the excitement was ready to start. It was a long, full - and very enjoyable day. The event concluded with a beach full of people making sure that no coin was left unturned, and seeing what else had been left behind by years of activities on the beach. We were all amazed to find Edwardian through George VI coins in areas of the beach that had not been seeded, including fishscale 5-cent pieces, large-cents, and various other silver coins.

This year's Fall Extravaganza will take place on September 07, 2013. We are expecting just as much excitement and fun. Prizes and coins have been collected, and the day promises fun and excitement. There is an online registry, and a brochure on the CMDC.org website. Remember - the Last day for on-line registration and event fee collection is August 31st, 2013. If you readers haven't registered yet, contact the CMDC or the EMDC - and they will be able to point you in the right direction. This is an event you won't want to miss!!!!



SILVER RING RE-RECOVERY

By Jose Chong

At the June 29th the CMDC Club Hunt there were a nice selection of club members and guests hunting. The club hunt was held in a park in the community of upper Mount Royal, and there were 22 hunters present, with a very nice mixture of ages - all eager to get some good findings.



CMDC Member Jose Chong

Jose Chong is a long-time member of the CMDC, and wrote the original story of Fred's lost ring, but his story was slightly expanded to include other details of the June 29th, 2013 CMDC Club Hunt.

The youngest member present (7 years old) was keen and always following his dad wherever the coil was leading them to. Bob C. and his son, Sam, had a great system going - the Dad swings the coil and the kid digs up the treasure - Team Spirit.

On the other side of the coin - We had one of the senior members, Fred V. (84 years old), in the hunt. I'm glad to see how the people are hooked to the metal detecting hobby. It's not really a sport, as such - but at least is an outdoor activity. Somehow he managed to bend down to dig what the coil asked for. For one target he dug and dug and nothing was showing up, but the coil was insisting there were some goodies down there.

After digging 8"~9" inches he finally was rewarded with a beautiful silver ring with a Artisan worked West-Coast Native design. He proudly showed his ring to the other hunters. After some pictures were taken, the ring was mysteriously lost. Other detectorists went back to the area that Fred had been hunting in, and tried to swing their coil to help to re-find the ring. All their efforts did not succeed. They decided to go for the Club-Hunt prize distribution and to help Fred search for the ring later on.

Before leaving for the ring-hunt, one of the other hunters decided to use his pinpointer on Fred to see if the ring might have been moved to one of his other pockets. He started with his left pocket and all the coins were emptied from the pocket, but there was no ring. After the coins were emptied from the right pocket, still the pinpointer was beeping. So Fred put his hand in the small pocket at the top of the jeans and BINGO! The ring was there, and no further search was needed. Fred's silver ring had been re-recovered.

It was a great day for a hunt - pleasant and warm, with enough damp in the ground for excellent conductivity. Fred's silver ring won for Best Treasure, and other cool finds were a 1907 Indian Head penny, a few silver coins, and 2 other silver ring. s Sam C., the youngest hunter at the club hunt, was delighted when he went home with a found toonie to spend, and won the Best Trinket prize for his recovered dog tag.



More Great Hunting Tips

"If you know of someplace that has been well hunted or overhunted, try detecting it after a big rain when the ground is soaked. The wet ground has more conductivity and you will find deeper and older targets."

Hot weather sites: "Wooded and non grassy areas, gravel roads, old railroads, swimming holes, fishing areas, beaches. Stay away from the grassy areas in this heat, as it only kills the grass, and we don't want to lose our invitation.

To find out places where people used to congregate around a long time ago, look for and old map of your town/area. You can usually find one at your local library or online. Places to look for on maps are old homes that don't exist anymore, schools, business's, and camps.

Cleaning Coins with a Rock-Tumbler

By the end of the Metal Detecting Season, many of us have a collection of coins that have no particular value, but are fairly dirty or grimy - they look like they've been under the ground for years! Oh, wait - that is exactly where they've been. So, if you have recovered a jar full of coins that need to be cleaned, one quick and easy way is to use a rock-tumbler. A simple, inexpensive one will do the job nicely. If you don't have one around the house, there are inexpensive models available on-line that will do the job.



There are a couple of things you should know before you consider using this method. First, many coin collectors do not like "cleaned coins". If you have coins that might have numismatic value, this is not the cleaning method you should use! Serious coin collectors expect to see some tarnish on circulated coins. In fact they have a special name for the tarnish that develops naturally on the surface of circulated coins: "patina." If the patina has been removed they usually don't want that coin in their collection. If you have any questions about

collectible coins in distressed condition it is best to get advice from an coin collector. We have several club members whose entry to the hobby was their coin collections.

Second - know that Cleaning coins in a Rock-Tumbler will damage the coins. Cleaning coins with a rock tumbler give them a brighter appearance, but it also wears away a small amount of metal from the surface of the coins. When you are finished tumbling the coins their surface will be covered with minute scratches and some of the details will be worn away.

The only coins that should be cleaned using a rock tumbler are those that have only "face-value", and that you intend to return to circulation. Many banks will not accept dirty or discolored coins. It really isn't them so much as their customers, who expect and demand shiny clean coins distributed from their bank. However, we must understand that uncleaned coins can also raise havoc with the bank's coin-counting machine.

Once you've located a tumbler, you need to determine the recipe you want to use for cleaning. There are several recipes available on line, but one that was often used was to place the coins in the container along with a handful of ground walnuts, a squirt of liquid dishwashing detergent, a couple tablespoons of vinegar and some fine polishing grit. If you don't have grit, you can try course sand or aquarium gravel. Other recommended cleaning ingredients include baking soda, creme of tarter, or Borax Cleaner. However, if you use baking soda, you must avoid using vinegar or any other acidic solution - the chemical reaction is volatile. Remember those elementary school science fair volcanoes?

Add a small amount of water, enough to cover the coins and make a slurry. Don't overload the tumbler barrel. A general rule is to use no more than half the barrel, including the coins. The tumbling process goes better this way. Seal the barrel and start tumbling. If you are cleaning a mass of coins, you must clean the pennies separately from the other clad coins. The electrolysis action between pennies and other coins causes those coins to turn a rosy pink color if cleaned together.

The amount of time required to clean the coins depends upon many factors. As a rule, do not let the tumbler run more than 30 minutes before opening the barrel to check the coins. Take only a few coins out when checking to avoid making a mess around the barrel opening, which will cause a peer seal. Rinse these test coins off, and check them - you will know if they are clean enough. If they need more tumbling, return them to the barrel and continue for another half hour or so. Remember - you want them to look clean , but not to damage the surface.

After the first half-hour run, most coins come out rather clean -- not sparkling and shiny and looking new, but clean and passable. Some coins will not come clean no matter what you do. Once the coins are cleaned to your satisfaction, remove them from the barrel by pouring the contents into a large kitchen colander or similar device, over a large pail. Do not pour the contents of the slurry down the drain. It's not only wasteful, but it can plug up your system if done repeatedly. The slurry can be used again and again. Just let the contents settle in the pail, decant the water and add a little more fresh grit, some more ground walnuts, vinegar and detergent for your next batch.

Rinse the coins in the colander until most of the residue is washed away.. Place the cleaned coins on a towel in a sunny place and let them dry, or dry them off with a soft towel. Take them out and spend them, or take them to the bank.

What is Ground Balancing?

The amount of minerals in the soil varies from location to location. Sometimes the composition of minerals change within a small amount of area. Other locations, the mineral composition in the soil will be fairly consistent over a large area. The type of minerals contained in the soil will also vary according to location. For instance, one of the more common minerals present in soil is iron, and some areas of the country have high concentrations present.

Without some method of "ground balancing", the metal detector would be detecting all the minerals present in the soil, therefore not seeing through them, and thus, small or deeper targets would not override the signals produced by the minerals. In extremely mineralized soil, the metal detector would hardly be able to detect a target laying on the surface of the soil.

Ground balancing the detector is simply, the term used to describe the function of adjusting the metal detector to ignore the minerals in the soil so that they are not detected by the metal detector. Various manufactures utilize different ground balancing options offered on their models such as:

- Preset Ground Balancing
- Auto Ground Balancing
- Manual Ground Balancing
- Combination of any preset and manual ground balancing preset Ground Balancing

If the metal detector has the preset ground balancing feature, it has the ground balance adjusted in one set position by the manufacturer, and cannot be adjusted by the user. The manufacturer has adjusted the ground balance of the particular model to an adjustment that they feel will allow the detector to function properly over a wide sampling of soils with varying degrees of mineralization, from highly mineralized to none. The results of using the factory preset will enable the detector to function through-out the world with its area of varying mineralization. However, since the detector has the ground balance adjustment preset, areas of mineralization which are higher than the adjustment from the factory will cause the detector to have a "positive" ground balance, and likewise, an area of little or no mineralization will cause the detector to have a "negative" ground balance. To try to better simplify all this, let's assume that the factory made the metal detector with the "preset" ground balance feature.

The detector's ground balance adjustment has been set by the factory to ignore "X" amount of minerals. Now suppose you are in a location of the world which has a high concentration of iron in the soil, and the amount of concentration was "X plus" . Since the detector was set to only ignore "X" amount of minerals and your area had more than that present, the metal detector is going to detect the extra amount of minerals present. Likewise, if your location has a concentration of "less than X" minerals, the mineral concentration would be less than the metal detector has been preset for, and would be trying to ignore more signal than it needs to. The factory preset method of ground balancing will enable the particular metal detector to function pretty good in any location, but performance will vary greatly from location to location. In some locations, the degree of loss of performance will be minimal, in others it will be quite profound.

Auto Ground Balancing - If a metal detector has an auto ground balancing feature, it tries to compensate for the varying amount of minerals in the soil, by sensing the mineralization and automatically adjusting the ground balance to achieve the best performance. The good side of this feature is, it gives a little more accurate control of the ground balance of the metal detector versus mineralization, as compared to the preset ground balance feature mentioned above. Also, normally, the metal detectors with this feature are a little more expensive than the ones with the preset feature. I have read that if the detector by chance happened to be over a target at the exact time that the "auto" feature was ground balancing the detector, that the target would not be detected. I do not know this to be a fact, only what I have read, but it kind of makes sense to me.

Manual Ground Balancing - A metal detector which has the manual ground balancing feature is just what it says, the ground balance adjustment has to be done manually by the user. The adjustment will be made by means of a "knob" or "touch pad" control, depending on the particular metal detector and model. We will touch base next on how to manually ground balance the detector. Imagine you are listening to music on a radio. To increase the volume, you would adjust it by raising the volume control. To decrease the volume you would lower the volume control. What has this got to do with ground balancing a metal detector? Well! The way I figure it, if you cannot operate a radio, you should not purchase a metal detector with a manual ground balance! Not really, manual ground balancing a metal detector is quite easy. Almost all metal detectors have to be in the "all metal" mode before making a manual ground balance adjustment to the metal detector. Also, most metal detectors have what is called a "threshold sound" when in the "all metal mode." The threshold sound is simply a background sound or noise that the metal detector produces when in the "all metal mode." The volume of the "threshold sound" should be set to the level that enables the user to faintly hear the consistent sound.

GROUND BALANCING - continued.

Now to actually go through the process of manually adjusted the ground balance of the detector, the first, and probably the most important factor is to find a spot of ground you are going to be detecting, which is not close to any large metal object, and free from any metal targets. Once the metal detector has been placed in the "all metal" mode of operation, and the "threshold sound" level has been adjusted to be able to steadily, but faintly, hear the threshold sound, raise the metal detector coil above the ground about one and a half or two feet. From this point on, until the metal detector has successfully been ground balanced, it will be most important to focus on the audio level of the threshold sound. While focusing on the audio level, lower the coil of the detector to the ground. Now, remember the radio volume we talked about earlier? If the audio level of the threshold sound became less or went completely quite, raise the adjustment on the ground balance control, exactly the same way you would increase the volume on a radio. Now, likewise, if the level of the threshold sound gets louder or increases, decrease the adjustment of the ground balance control, just the same way you would decrease the volume level of a radio.

Continue to raise and lower the coil, as described in the fore-mentioned paragraph. This can be in a continual "pumping motion" of raising and lowering the coil and adjusting the ground balance control until the audio level of the threshold sound is steady or unchanging. Remember, if the threshold volume level gets louder when the coil is being lowered to the ground, turn the ground adjustment down. If the threshold volume decreases as the coil is lowered to the ground, increase the ground balance control. Once you have the metal detector adjusted so the threshold sound level is the same while pumping the detector up and down to the ground, the metal detector is properly ground balanced. Some metal detector users prefer to have the ground balance adjustment set slightly on the positive side (so the threshold level faintly increases as the coil is lowered to the ground.) Adjusting the ground balance in this slightly positive level will enable a little more depth in areas which have little to no trash targets present.

One thing to remember is that the advantage of a metal detector with the manual ground balance control is that it enables the metal detector to be more versatile in a wide variety of ground mineralization conditions. A proper adjustment of the manual ground balance will enable a little more depth over most equal detectors without the manual adjustment. However, an improper adjustment of the manual ground balance could and in all probability decrease the depth performance of the metal detector greatly.

This Article is was published on treasurefinders.net. Treasurefinders.net has many excellent articles intended to increase knowledge of our great hobby.



CMDC Newspaper Article 2008

Newly married and just shy of his first anniversary, William Forbrigger lost his wedding ring at a community lake while throwing a football around in the summer. After countless hours of searching, all seemed lost. Forbrigger turned to the Internet to look for a state-of-the-art metal detector and found the Calgary Metal Detecting Club. He sent an e-mail and within days, club treasurer James Belke came with his metal detector, plugged in his headphones and found the ring in about five minutes . . . much to Forbrigger's relief.

Established in 1972, the Calgary club is the oldest of its kind in Canada. Its 40 members include history buffs, treasure hunters and outdoor enthusiasts just looking for something to do outside. "Without them, I wouldn't be wearing my wedding ring. It hasn't come off since," says Forbrigger. "I spent every day after work looking for it. I think people thought I was crazy. I'm forever grateful. For James, it was only about the challenge and helping somebody."

Metal detecting has many facets of interest for its hobbyists from finding collectible artifacts, valuables, gold panning or even just satisfying a curiosity in the history of the area. "Usually it starts in an interest in history and looking for old locations with things you think may have interest," says Belke, who was turned onto the hobby by his father in the early 1980s.

Some go looking for old coins, relic collecting or finding trinkets. There's a smaller subset who will use high tech equipment to go gold panning in rivers where there's a gold deposit, as the detector could pick up on that," says Belke. "The key thing for most members is the interest in history and research as well as exploration and the mystery of the next dig." Scanning fields in and around Calgary with a four-foot long detector and wearing earmuff-style headphones, metal detecting hobbyists like Belke carefully listen to the tones emitted by the materials underground. They are able to distinguish between different metals that may be hidden up to 12 inches deep.

Some of Belke's recent interesting finds include a small, 1916 aluminum licence plate for a bicycle as well as a coin good for a \$1 discount at the Big Four Furniture Company from 1910. The biggest find the club has discovered is a rare 1921 'fish scale' Canadian nickel that is valued from \$3,000 to \$10,000, depending on its condition.

"There is the kid-at-Christmas feeling (when you find something of value). You're pulling something out of the ground, maybe more than 100 years old and handled by an individual who built our city or province," says Belke. "You wonder who was the owner of license plate 506? You're interested in finding the history, to find that connection to that item. It's a neat exhilaration and something to research. Who would have thought the city would licence bikes?"

Although the activity is a solitary one, club members gather monthly to share each other's finds, discuss detecting strategies, attempt to figure out the history of the items and award 'finds-of-the-month' prizes. The club has also been used by insurance companies to help locate lost valuables too expensive to simply pay out a policy on. Along with helping the occasional couple locate wedding and engagement rings, they have helped police locate evidence.

With detectors priced at about \$250, the cost of entry into the hobby is relatively low. But Belke warns there is some education and etiquette involved prior to just wandering onto private or public property and digging. The only places you can dig without permission is in a public park or boulevard, but you still want to take care. You have to be careful how you dig, replacing plugs and knowing the proper techniques to dig," says Belke. Many items found have little to no avenues to finding the original owner or securing their history. From high school graduation rings, necklaces, football team rings and other valuables, Belke and the club does its best to track down its owner.

This Article was originally published in the Calgary Herald December 24, 2008. It has been edited for size, but the entire article can be viewed at <http://www.canada.com/story.html?id=15cfaef0-675e-49ab-b09b-ee24bf561aa2>.



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 to the meeting room.

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