

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

THE BUZZER

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Just a photographic reminder of the fun we had at Jerry Leussink's property during the CMDC September seeded hunt held near Sundre last year -

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.

Sikome Lake Hunt

Early in August members of the CMDC had the opportunity to hunt Sikome Lake before it was opened for swimming. This hunt was held between 7:30 and 10:am on a weekday, so only a few members of the CMDC were able to attend. Still a dozen hardy souls braved the early morning, and fortified with caffeinated substances, made the trek to Calgary's South. Armed with sand-scoops and detectors, the beach was closed to swimmers until 10am, and ours to detect for those few hours.

Metal Detecting has not been permitted in the Sikome Lake beach area for the past few years. We have to thank club president, Rod Coppock, for connecting with Sikome Lake management to arrange this amazing opportunity. In recent years, Sikome Lake Park management has used harrowing machinery around the beach in an attempt to clear out litter. I have to admit, it certainly seems to work pretty well. The last time the Calgary Metal Detecting Club held a sanctioned club hunt there, I personally cleaned two full plastic shopping bags of trash from the beach. Between all the members we cleared out a lot more than that. This time out I had less than half a pouch full of trash. I found a lot of pull-tabs, bobby-pins, and bottle caps. I also took away nails and tent-pegs, which I think are far more dangerous to young bare feet.

The members of the CMDC cleared out a bunch of trash, but also found a fair amount of treasure. Judy Taylor found the biggest item when she dug an entire "Tonka-Tough" truck out of the sand. It was over a foot long, and was buried deep in the sand. Other club members found a herd of smaller cars and trucks, and a few earrings, bracelets, and other bits of costume jewellery. Almost everyone found enough clad-cash to pay for their morning coffee. Kevin Niefer found the most jewellery with 4 rings and a Pandora bracelet. Susan Durksen's grandchildren should be excited, as she took home all the cars and trucks for their playtime. All in all, it was a good morning, and we can cross our fingers and hope for another possible hunt when the weather is cooler, and the lake is drained.



CMDC / EMDC Fall Extravaganza

On September 10th, 2016 members of the Metal Detecting community from different areas of Western Canada will congregate in the tiny hamlet of Rochon Sands on Buffalo Lake for the EMDC/CMDC Fall Extravaganza Seeded Beach Hunt.

Last year the Extravaganza was cancelled when the CMDC was unable to get access to the Rochon Sands community hall, so a smaller hunt was held near Sundre on Jerry Leussink's property near Sundre. The hall was booked for this year, and many hunters across Alberta are looking forward to a great Fall Event.

This year the Alberta Fall Extravaganza sounds like a great day out! The plans for the event include a seeded beach hunt in the morning, and again in the afternoon. There will also be a Junior's hunt for younger treasure seekers (under 10). Lunch is included in the event fee. Prizes include Silver Coins, Metal Detecting garb and accessories, and a chance to win two metal detectors. There are many door prizes, as well as the token-prizes. It sounds like it's going to be a lot of fun. I hope you have already registered .

Gentle Methods for Cleaning Coins

You have done your happy dance, and recovered a coin that was on your wish list. You are thrilled with your coin, but you know that it needs cleaning to bring forth hidden details of that precious find. Metal Detectorists who collect coins are careful about how they clean the coins they have found. Note: If the coin has potential value, and your intent is selling it - Do Not Clean It. A coin's value will be lowered by most cleaning methods.

We all know that dug coins are sometimes encrusted with dirt and materials from the ground, and proper cleaning will only enhance their appearance. If this coin is for your own appreciation, here are a few more gentle methods for cleaning valuable recovered coins. Some of these methods are used by archaeologists and museum curators to prepare coins for museum display.

SOAKING THE COIN -

You can soak the newly dig coins in warm soapy water. Soaking in warm water with soap or detergent helps loosen and lift the dirt without doing any damage to a coin. Sometimes hot water and soap do a better job to remove clay and hard-dried mud than using oils. After two days of soaking, the deposits left in details of the coin's surface can be gently picked and removed with a toothpick or a bamboo skewer. Using a toothpick or wood tool will not damage the coin like a metal pick or hard edged tool would, but the coin must be wet while being "picked". If the deposits are really hard, soak the coin again, and for a longer period of time.

Another way of getting rid of encrusted dirt deposits on newly dig coins is to soak them in oils such as Olive Oil or Mineral Oil. Olive oil works great, but don't leave it for too long, or the metal may be affected by the presence of fatty acids and traces of sulfur compounds. Mineral oil can be used for a longer period of time without harm to the coin, but after cleaning the coin must be degreased in order to remove any oily residue from the coin. Use the toothpick method above to work the dirt away from the coin, and re-soak, as required.

Whether soaking in soapy water or oil, the coins should not be laid flat on the bottom of the container. It is best to use an improvised "tray" which have an edge to lean the coin on. Thus, both sides of each coin are exposed to the soaking element.

ICING THE COIN -

Frozen water expansion is another method that can work on coins with dirt encrustation. This cleaning method is simple and consists of only two steps: Place a coin in distilled water and soak it for a while so that the water molecules penetrate the dirt and any other deposits on the coin's surface. Some dirt may be loosened enough by the soaking to brush off with a very soft toothbrush.

After that initial toothbrush cleaning, place the coin in a plastic container and freeze it. An ice cube tray will work, but try to lean the coin on a improvised "tray", so both sides of the coin are exposed to the freezing cycle. As the water freezes, ice crystals expand and break the dirt deposits apart. Melt the ice, and use the gentle brushing to remove the loosened dirt from the coin. This method may need to be repeated several times to completely rid the coin of dirt and grime. It is one of the gentlest cleaning methods.

CLEANING WITH GLUE

Lay the coins on a piece of wax after covering them with a layer of Elmer's white glue, or yellow carpenters glue. Let the glue dry thoroughly and then pull it off the coins. A layer of dirt will be removed without damaging the coins. Again, several repetitions may be needed to completely clean them.

CLEANING WITH MASKING TAPE

Some of dug copper coins have a patina that has become part of the coin. Removing it will leave the coin pitted and less attractive. A simple and effective method to remove dirt from these coins is to apply a strip of high-tack masking tape to their surface. then use a dull pencil point is then used to burnish the tape into all features of the coin. When the tape is removed slowly, some of the dirt from detailed areas will be removed. Repeat the procedure several times with fresh pieces of tape on the coin's obverse and reverse until you are satisfied with the appearance.

City of Calgary - Heritage Publications

If you are interested in historic Calgary communities - you might like to consider looking at the "Heritage Publications and Walking Tours" section available on the city of Calgary website.

<http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Pages/Heritage-planning/Heritage-Publications-and-Walking-Tours.aspx>

This little-known City of Calgary website section" includes walking tours of the historic sections of Calgary's city-center, and of historic communities, like Inglewood, Mission and Cliff Bungalow", Connault and the Beltline, and Parkdale. There are also historic resources outlining the neighbourhood of Mount Royal, Sandstone buildings, and early sandstone quarries around Calgary.

A review of the walking tour brochures found details of some of the earliest settlers in the area, including location details of a pre-1892 shanty-town on the East side of the Elbow river. The brochures mention early homes, and businesses. Most of the homes and buildings listed in the brochures date before 1920. They also give details of where buildings are (or were, in some cases). In some of the older neighbourhoods, the walking tour also provides a map for the building locations (by number) which might give detectorists some ideas of possible hunt locations.



A Blast from the Past

These article was written by CMDC member Jerry hall, and was published in the October 1995 issue of the Buzzer. They all have the theme of returning a recovered ring, which is something must of us would like to be able to do.



I would like to share with the Club a story of three successful hunts, that I engaged in over the past year.

Last Fall, I received a call from a lady West of Calgary who had lost a \$2,200.00 ring while cleaning up her garden. She had carried plant tops from the garden to the hose pasture and was afraid the ring would be trampled. However, after searching for 20 minutes, I recovered the ring from a hole in the garden where turnips had been pulled. She was, of course, delighted.

I serve as Chairman of the 4-H foundation of Alberta. I visited the 4-H Center at Battle Lake this summer, and learned that a young camper had lost a valuable ring in the beach area of the lake. The general area the ring was lost in was known, but this seemed like a real needle in the haystack hunt. However, a friend and I started hunting over an acre of beach front. After an hour and a half of hunting, I recovered the ring in a grassy area about 100 feet from the lake. The ring was a 10kt. gold band with a three diamond setting. Since 4-H had a record of the young people at the camp, the owner was soon in possession of her ring.

In late August, I received a call from Charbonneares Gold and Gem shop, asking for help in searching for a valuable custom-made ring. A lady in Calgary lost it while transplanting her flower garden. This was a tough assignment since she had moved plants in an alley & in her neighbour's yard, as well as her own. I scanned all these areas with no luck. The lady went back in the house while I double-checked the most likely spots. I finally got a good signal near the base of a tree. The ring had been transplanted under a shrub, about 7" deep. When I went to the house and dropped the ring in her hand, the look on her face was worth a fortune!

Finding and returning these valuable items is one of the most rewarding experiences of our hobby. Over the past year I had five calls for assistance and was successful on these three. That is probably not a bad average, but you feel badly about the ones you miss.

Here is a tip for new members: When searching for these valuable items, keep your discrimination very low. High karat gold items discriminate out very easily unless alloyed with silver. Certainly our experienced members know this, but it may help a newer member make a good find.

Some parts of this story were lightly edited, for readability, and size, to fit in the available space.

Old Style "Net-Working" Research

This article was gleaned from an article on Tom's treasure planet, and makes a lot of sense. When my husband lived in England for a year (long ago) his school friend pointed out the window of the local bus one day, and said "that is where the bombs from the Stuka" hit, passing on information he had from relatives. That event happened 30 years earlier. I know someone who heard about an RMCP post on their family homestead through stories told by his grandmother. My own recent recovery of a gold ring was based information my daughter gave me about her old school.

This may prove valuable to Coin, Cache, and Relic Hunters..... Make a list of your family members or friends who are over 60 years old, and who grew up in the area you are in. The reason for this is simple..... When they were kids, teen agers, and young adults...cities, towns, and surrounding areas were much different from what they are today. Houses, school yards, churches, encampments, cemeteries, parks, sports areas, swimming holes, as well as old roads, paths, drive ways, work-camp locations, etc.

In many cases were 50 to 100 years ago the area around you looked much different than today, and those folks would have heard stories from their relatives - you might have access to historical data going back over 100 years. There are many other ways to contact people in this age group. Family Reunions, Senior Citizens Groups, Bingo Halls, Stores and Gas Stations on the edge or outside city and town limits, etc. Maybe you know someone in a rest home. These people will talk with you for hours and be grateful for the company. Use your imagination and soon your information sources will become endless.

More often than not these places will exist someone's memory, not as a written record. Always have a map handy when talking with someone about locations from "days gone by." That way you can mark the general locations and then cross check this data with other people in that same area. If you don't have a map, then paper and pencil to draw one will do.

In a farming area, it never hurts to stop at a farm house and ask directions (even though you aren't lost). You may even find yourself with a cup of coffee, some ice water or tea, and maybe a sandwich, for your trouble. While you are there, mention what your interests are, the response may surprise you. I have had offers to ride down the road and show me a spot just like what I was hoping to find when I started out that day. In some cases they even ask if I would like to hunt their place, or even given the opportunity to look for a lost item.

Look close while you are there! I have seen cannon balls, insulators, and other items being used as door stops, or maybe just laying around the porch, at the end of a flower bed, or around the outside of an old abandoned shed, or barn. Sometimes, for a few dollars I would have a prize. Oh yes; don't forget to look up, not just down ! I have even offered to clean out and haul away all that old "JUNK" in order to clear the way for my metal detector. Regardless of what is left behind for the ShadowX2 to sniff out, I will already have some valuable "JUNK" in the back of my truck. Learn to SEE, not just LOOK ! Become a name dropper.....I have used this ice breaker many times over the years. Use the name of someone you've met in the same area.

Also, it never hurts to take a minute and lend a helping hand to some in need of it. That person as a rule will be extremely grateful and tell you anything you want to know, or refer you to someone else that can put you on the right track. I have learned of many new (untouched) locations just for helping to carry a little fire wood and stacking it on the back porch. By the way.....pull tabs, gum wrappers, and other undesirable items, as a rule aren't a problem with these types of locations, which number into the millions in this country alone.

In closing just remember.....There are more valuable items yet to be found, than the sum total of everything found to date. The more creative you become the better your chances of finding your fair share. Let us all practice good Metal Detecting & Treasure Hunting etiquette so that not only us, but those who come after us may enjoy the thrill of the find for many years to come.

Picnic Grounds - Western Treasure Troves

The settlement of the Canadian Prairies brought over two million people to the West between 1882 and WWI (1914). They worked hard, cleared the land, built homes, established businesses, and settled down to enjoy a new adventure far away from their old homes and familiar landscapes.

Many of these Settlers left behind extended families and social networks in their area of origin. One family out of an entire village in Germany or Scotland might have emigrated. These pioneer adventurers created new support systems in the New World. In lieu of family, many early pioneers developed community relationships and friendships as close as those loved ones left behind. In many communities the isolating long, cold winters were countered by opportunities to get together in warmer weather. Picnics were one of the ways the early pioneers congregated together.

These picnics were very different from today's idea - It was a social "get together" of the entire community. As one early pioneer woman states "In very early times (a picnic) was an all day affair, commencing about 10:30 am, with both dinner and supper served on the grounds. First there had to be a suitable place selected. Men were busy the previous day making rough lumber tables and setting up."

Another pioneer recalls everyone dressing up in their best for these events, as she stated "It didn't matter how poor you were, whether you had a dirt floor in your house, you went to the picnics in your finery."

A history of the Milk River area recalls picnics where 60 or 70 families got together for an all day event, including meals, games, races, baseball games, and in some cases - camping overnight. When researching this article I reviewed picnic stories in several community histories.

Many Alberta community histories are available on the website "ourfutureourpast.ca", an online digitization site for Alberta history. The books are searchable, and I found stories about whole communities gathering for picnics dating as early as 1882 in some of those books. The website also includes dozens of early Alberta newspapers, which are another great research tool. Another wonderful tool, and the source of the community picnic photographs below, is the Glenbow Museum photographic archives.

These stories tell the modern treasure hunter a great deal. Picnics were common occurrences in early western life, and were large gatherings in almost every community. The picnics were considered grand events, and looked at as very big news at the time. Everyone showed up, with all their best garb, and some of the activities were active. Where these people gathered in their finery, playing games, dancing, holding races - there would be lost items. Those old picnic grounds could hold coins, jewellery, and other artifacts.

Historical recollections are available in the community books mentioned earlier, or in local newspapers of the time. Early picnics could be organized by communities, families, faith groups, clubs, businesses or schools - but everyone would look forward with excitement to a day away with friends and family. There is a good chance that researching the site of a community picnic ground will lead to the recovery of many coins, treasured items, and relics from Alberta's earliest history.



Community Picnic - Leo, Alberta



Conference Picnic - Lethbridge, Alberta



Church Picnic, Bowness Park, Calgary

New CMDC Sponsor, Bonna-Jean Campbell

Check out the back page of the Buzzer, where we list CMDC and Buzzer Sponsors. Andy Coward's wife, Bonna-Jean Campbell, is our newest CMDC and Buzzer Sponsor. Bonna-Jean is starting an Health and Wellness business, as a Le-Vel Independent Brand Promoter. It is a product both she and Andy use, and Thrive with. Bonna-Jean has been a big supporter of the club in the past, providing meals at Rochon Sands and last year's Sundre hunt, and a helping hand at many other CMDC events. So, as we say on the back page of every Buzzer, please Support our Sponsors.

Rainy Day Treasures and Slow Sweeping

This has been one of the wettest Augusts on record. Still, for Metal Detectorists that may be a good thing. If you go metal detecting right after a soaking rain, when the ground is wet, the metal detector is much more sensitive. You will be able to detect deeper objects because the ground has higher conductivity. If you try this, you will likely find items that your detector normally would not have given you a signal for. Be prepared to dig in the mud, however. The signals you will get on a wet day will likely be deeper than on other days.

Slowing down your Sweep, and keeping your coil close to the ground may also bring increase your treasure thresholds. It is easy to swing the detecting coil too fast. It's hard to acquire the patience to slow down, but remember that the coins aren't going anywhere. (Especially not into your pouch, if you fly right past them).

Using a slow sweep with the detector can pick up much deeper, and smaller, signals. You can prove this to yourself by putting a coin on the ground. Swing your detector coil over the coin at different speeds, and raise and lower your coil to see what speed gives you the best signal. Note that it is possible to swing some detectors too slow, so be sure to experiment, and find your best personal speed with the detector you use.

Also, if you swing your coil 40 mm above the ground, you are costing yourself those millimetres in depth. Keeping your detector coil close to the ground will give you that extra amount of depth, which may be very important in detecting deeper coins, and older finds.



I still say you shouldn't have glued that penny
inside his search head cover.

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
 Family Membership \$40.00

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BONNA-JEAN CAMPBELL

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.

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