

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

THE BUZZER

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Looking forward to Autumn, with the more of the mysterious items we recover, and the history we recover from the dirt.

Enjoy the Autumn Metal Detecting Season!

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.

Rochon Lake Hunt - Cancelled for 2017

After careful consideration and consultation with the new Edmonton Metal Detecting Club (EMDC) President, Ryan Dery, and the Calgary Metal Detecting Club (CMDC) Executive, it has been decided that the 2017 Fall Extravaganza seeded hunt and multi-club get-together Hunt at Rochon Sands on Buffalo Lake is officially cancelled. We could say that the hunt is only postponed for a year, for the plan is to hold the hunt next year.

Thank you for your understanding and anyone interested in contributing ideas for for the 2018 hunt or to volunteer with organizing, please raise your hand and volunteer. Planning will begin for the 2018 Fall Extravaganza shortly.



Postcard - early 1900s



Fall Extravaganza - 2013

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 two. 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 pouch that has at least two pockets - one for your good finds and one for your trash. Some people use a shoulder bag, but most detectorists choose a multi-pocketed belt pouch. This protects your good finds, while making carrying out and disposing the trash at the end of your hunt much easier.



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. Many 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 a aluminum wallet, or a small fishing tackle case. It doesn't have to be fancy. You just want something that will transport valuable finds without getting damaged. Ask members of the club what they use at the next CMDC club hunt. We all have our favourites, and you might see something that works for you.

FLASH FROM THE PAST

"Pocket Spill in Bowness Park" by Andy Coward

This story dates back to the 2009 metal detecting season, and is the tale of a pretty spectacular find at the First CMDC club hunt of 2009. Andy Coward won an award for "Best Coin of the Year" for 2009 for the Morgan silver Dollar in this story. His story about the coin recovery was originally published in the January 2012 issue of the Buzzer.

The day started early (8AM) in late April as 8 members from the Calgary Metal Detecting Club met at Bowness Park for our first Club Hunt of the 2009 metal detecting season. This park has been a recreational area for Calgarians since the late 1800s. The weather was plus 6 degrees Celsius and overcast, and was expected to worsen as the day progressed.

After a quick photo-op, CMDC Club members spread out in all directions. I took a little extra time in the parking lot to help one of our new members fine tune his machine, and gave him a few tips. Then I headed out in my own direction.

After an hour and a half of "doing poorly" even by my meagre standards, I decided to wander a little more and try some areas under trees, but with no success. I finally decided to try along the "rails" of a kiddie train which runs through Bowness Park in the summer time.



I had been scanning only a minute or so when I got a very BIG sound in my headphones and the display on my Garrett 1350 indicated the highest notch on the scale – it said "Silver Dollar". When I pinpointed, my machine said the depth was 8.5 or 9 inches. I tried several times to get a different reading, but just couldn't.

So dig I did! And dug, and dug! I dug through sod, 3 inches of rock (rail bed), and four inches of dirt until I saw this (the picture above to the left) staring up at me. When I saw part of a wreath and the word "Dollar" I almost crapped.

I immediately went to find some of the other club members hunting nearby so I could share the excitement of the recovery with them. When we returned I had the two other members check to see what they thought lay hidden beneath the dirt. Both concurred it was deep silver! When I pulled out a US 1901-O Morgan Dollar, each person stood staring at the coin in my hand.

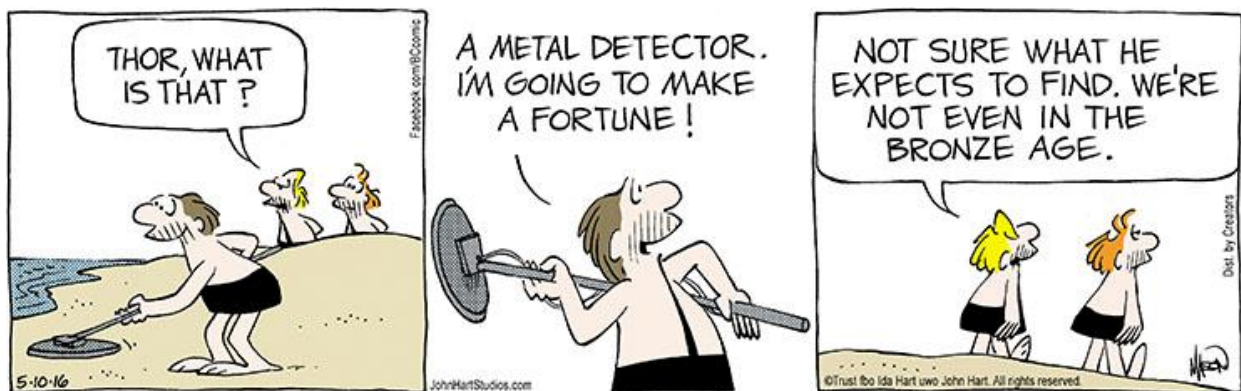
Amazingly, after scanning the hole there was another signal! Some careful widening and excavation turned up a semi-toasted Buffalo Nickel from 1918. Some more scanning yielded yet another signal – and I recovered a Canadian Quarter from 1918. Three Firsts for me! All in one hole!



MY KEEPERS FROM A VERY MEMORABLE DAY!

Well, that pretty much wrapped up the hunt for me. I think I was shaking as I headed back to the parking area to meet back with the rest of the Club! We all compared finds, and there were some prizes allotted in different categories. After that a few club members stayed on to hunt a little more until the promised “worse” weather arrived, and it started to snow/rain.





What's in a Name?

by Peggy Kemp

What's in a name? As it turns out, a lot! When you're driving around, take time to really take notice the names of communities, or some of the street names. Many of them contain hints of their past use, or reference well-known people, and may lead to some new hunting grounds!

Sometimes the only clue you have to an potential hunting area is a historic street name or a name passed down. Think about it - Edmonton Trail was the old stage-coach and wagon trail North to Edmonton - Banff Coach Road was the stage-coach trail to Banff. Macleod Trail was the route South to Fort Macleod. There will be a few historic sites along these trails, as the old stage coaches stopped fairly often. Another example are the street names of what used to be "Base Calgary", which were all named after major WWI battles.

Another example of a Calgary community name with a rich history is the neighbourhood of Mission. The historic area of Mission was named after the Catholic Mission set up by Father Scollen on behalf of Father Albert Lacombe. It originally was the town of Roleauville, established in the 1870s, and contained a strong French speaking community. The town was amalgamated into Calgary in 1907. Before 1907 the Mission street names were all in French, but after the annexation, they were changed to the newly created grid-numbering system favoured by Calgary. The grid numbering system was a "new idea" at the time, and was established only two or three years before. Before 1904 most of the roads in the town of Calgary (now the Calgary down-town core) were named. For example Centre Street was once McTavish Street, 9 Avenue SE was Atlantic Avenue, 11 Street SE was King Street, and 3rd Street SW was once Dewdney Street. Oddly, Stephen Avenue retained its name while others around it lost theirs.

Many other well-known Calgary communities were once separate towns or villages. Communities annexed by Calgary over the years include Tuxedo Park, Forest Lawn, Albert Park, Millican/Ogden, Renfrew, Midnapore, and Bowness. Each of these communities were separate towns established around the original community of Calgary, and date back to the late 1800s or early 1900s. The annexed towns have some great individual history worth looking into. Renfrew hosted the original Calgary Airport, and had air shows in the 1920s. The community of Ogden was named after I.G. Ogden, and VP of CP Railways. It housed many of the workers at the CP rail-yards, built in the area. Millican was named after early homesteaders in the area. Albert Park, Midnapore and Forest Lawn were joined to Calgary as recently as the 1960s and 1970s. Each neighbourhood has areas that date back a century, or more. A little bit of research may open some amazing search opportunities. I was surprised to realize that my 1970s community was only a few miles away a 1920s era schoolyard, where a newer building had replaced the original four-room school. Some communities retained their original street names, while others were changed to that of the Calgary "grid system".

Let's think about some familiar park names. Riley Park is a familiar name in NW Calgary. The area was part of the Riley homestead known as "Cochrane Ranch", and the 20 acre plot of land was donated to the city of Calgary for use as a park in 1904. There is a lot of history in that name. Another Calgary park that hosts a lot of local events in Prince's Island Park. Often mispronounced as Princess Island, the park is named after Peter Prince, a lumberman from Quebec who founded the Eau Claire Lumber mill on the land where the park now stands. The island was created by Mr. Prince by digging a channel (now the lagoon) across a bend of the river, and creating a canal. The hewn logs were floated into that canal to be processed at the lumber mill on Prince's Island. The land was commercially used until 1947, when the City purchased it for development of park land. It housed not only lumber concerns, but hosted Calgary's first hydro-electricity plant. Pearce Estate Park is another bit of land that was donated to Calgary for a city park by an early citizen. William Pearce arrived with the Mounted Police, and after his term was up, selected that scenic area for his homestead. Over the years it had many uses, including agriculture, a WWI camp settlement, and Mr. Pearce's home.

Calgary Ruins and Follies

BY PEGGY KEMP

Calgary is a fairly young city, and as such you might not think that there would be any "ruins" in the area. While researching the previous article about place names I discovered one such place, "Lindsay's folly", which is a sad story from one of Calgary's boom-bust cycles. It is rare to find a ruin in Calgary, as land is valuable. When most buildings in Calgary are demolished, it is usually so a newer structure can be built. That led to a bit more research, and a information on a few historic Calgary ruins.

In the early part of the last century, Calgary was known as the "Garden of Stone" because of the beautiful sandstone buildings. After a fire in 1886 that destroyed most of the Calgary downtown core, a law was passed that public buildings be made of sandstone. This was maintained until the WWI. Roughly 250 sandstone buildings were constructed between 1886 and 1914. Many are still used today — these include notable historic structures like the Grain Exchange Building, Hudson Block and Palliser Hotel, Grace Presbyterian Church, Calgary Old City Hall, and various schools. One building that is not is the old stone General Hospital.

Walking home from a game at the Saddledome, you might have come across giant sandstone ruins just off of 12 Ave. and 6 Str. S.E. One might assume that these are the remnants of some once great fortress used to defend some strategic site by the river, but they are, in fact, all that's left of Calgary's second General Hospital. These hospital, built in 1894 to help a keep our young city healthy. The sandstone building remained in use as a hospital, chronic illness residence, and seniors residence until 1973, when it was demolished. A few walls and the grand entrance were deliberately kept and incorporated into a park in 1974, as a reminder of our proud past, and was renamed the "Rundle ruins". This has become a picturesque and highly photogenic park area, much desired as a venue for wedding photographs.

Another example of a Calgary "ruin" is the sad story of "Lindsay's Folly", near the community of Rideau Park, by the Elbow River. Lindsay's Folly is what is left of a massive sandstone dream home. One of Calgary's first doctors, Dr. Neville Lindsay, planned the grand home, and the work began in 1911. The foundation work was completed, with a gorgeous sandstone portico, grand arches, and wide staircase entrance that indicated the future home that would rival the mansions in Mount Royal. The re-worked sandstone had been salvaged from the city's first Knox Presbyterian Church. Unfortunately, the doctor lost his money in investments gone bad, and work stopped permanently in 1915. The once grand entrance portico has fallen into ruin over the years, and all that remains of the structure is portions of the foundation.

Lindsay's Folly is not an actual folly, as a folly is a term indicating a structure created to look like a ruin. Dr. Lindsay intended his dream home to be built. Calgary actually does have a folly in the community of McKenzie Town, where a structure was built with the intention of resembling a "ruin" in Elgin Hill park. The area is not old enough to be able to detect and recover anything historical, but appears to be well used as a playground and place for wedding photos. This being the case, the park area may be replenished, and there may be new treasures to find.



Rundle Ruins - circa 2011



Lindsay's Folly circa 1941



Elgin Park folly - 2016

Detecting - Year One Wisdom

This is another great article from Detector Diva, Allyson Cooper - and found on her website at detectingdiva.com.

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I'm officially one year into this hobby, (or should I say obsession) of metal detecting. A year is a short time, in comparison with some of the "hard core" detectorists out there. But if you ask some of my friends and family they might classify my enthusiasm as pretty "hard core" too.

Never being a history buff, or very interested in past events of my community (other than my genealogical pursuits), I'm amazed at how much my skills and knowledge have improved. Matter of fact, if metal detecting had been a subject in high school-I might have finally made the honor roll!

So, now that I'm "one year in", what practical information have I learned that could be helpful to new detectorists out there? Well, for starters, get a pin pointer. My first month without one was maddening. It's time consuming to sift through the dirt for a target, and you don't want to leave that target behind it could be something good!

Dig most of it. I've read many articles and books on metal detecting where the advice to dig everything was very clear. Of course I didn't want to dig everything, but I wanted to improve my skills, so I decided to dig, dig, dig. Many times I became frustrated, but some of my best finds barely made a flutter, and quite a few of those signals that screamed junk were actually some nice finds. Rely on your machine, but only to the extent that it's telling you something is there. On that note, common sense goes a long way here. Do you want to spend an entire afternoon digging every pull tab signal in a trashy area? After a while, you'll get to know what's what-just give it time, and when in doubt—Dig!

Join a metal detecting club! The members are generally enthusiastic about digging in the dirt and coin cleaning. You can see what other people are finding, get help identifying an object, get tips on detecting, find new sites to detect, go on group hunts, and meet some truly awesome people. I learned a lot from club members, and it's a great to be able to express and discuss your hobby with others who share your interests.

Learn the art of patience. Occasionally coins or jewelry will just jump out at you, but for the most part, you search. Find the detector that works for you—to heck with what everyone else has. If you decide to buy a more sophisticated machine, be prepared for the learning curve. It's taken me almost the whole season to distinguish some of the tones that come out of my machine, but I figure I only have to learn it once.

Finally, and most important. Research is key! Read books and articles on metal detecting and local history. If you want to find the old stuff, you've got to find the old places.

That about sums it up for year one. So if you're a struggling "newbie", have faith. With time comes success. I can't wait to see what I learn (and find) in year two.

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TIP OF THE DAY

If you find a path in the woods that appears straight (and not a game-trail), your best bet would be to check it out. Most paths are not new, and when there is evidence that a path has been there a while, you never know who might have been using it. It could date back to pre-settler days. Also, note that many old trails were eventually made into roads. Searching near an old road or trail may be a good idea because people walked along the road years ago. They would move off to the side to rest, or have a bite to eat. Keep a lookout for overgrown paths, and old wagon ruts. Sometimes an early air-photo may show a walking path or trail. It might give you a new place to search.

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

Contact the Calgary Metal Detecting Club (CMDC)
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