

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

The Buzzer

Volume 50 – issue 5 September 2021



Looking forward to Autumn, cooler weather, and mysterious items to
recover and rescue from the dirt.

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.

Metal Detecting - Attitudes for Success

With all the recent treasure hunting and metal detecting television shows - it's no wonder so many new people are getting into the hobby. Who else remembers how many of the Metal Detecting "Code of Ethic" rules were broken by the ex-wrestler with his "Boom Baby!" mentality? Other reality shows talk about finding hundreds of thousands of dollars in jewellery, huge gold nuggets, or selling artifacts for huge prices. Those of us in the hobby shake our heads and hope that not too many people were taken in by some of the hype.

Unfortunately, this has always been an issue in metal detecting. Some folks who get into the metal detecting hobby look at it as a "get rich quick" scheme. They think that they will find gold on their first outing, and that finding treasure in the hobby of metal detecting will come easy. Some are so disappointed that they give up after half a dozen outings. What doesn't come out in the TV shows is the hours of research that goes into locating where to dig, or in cases of private property, even obtaining permission to dig. Others may not realize the amount of "trash" that we find, or realize that the many interesting and unique objects we recover may have "history" but have no "historical value" – if you are hoping for dollars.

Most people who are successful in this hobby research enough to find this out ahead of time. They realize that you have to work at it to be successful. Think of it as a sport – you don't get better at anything without working at it. The same applies to metal detecting – you have to learn your machine – you have to do the research to find out where to hunt, and you have to appreciate the stuff you do find. It is good to get some of your satisfaction from digging up something that was dropped or buried years ago, and thinking about the story behind it, the mystery of how it got there, who may have held it last?

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying you can't or won't find valuable items while metal detecting. One of the stories in these months Buzzer is a flashback article about the recovery of a 1921 fishscale 5-cent piece, which was later sold for over \$4000. I have found some nice gold and silver rings. Metal detecting is one of the only hobbies that pays for itself – its just best not to look at it as a get rich scheme. That is one of the reasons I stopped dropping my subscription to some of the youtubers I was watching– it became all about the gold rings or silver coins, and there is a lot more to this hobby than that.

This is a great hobby – I have never gone home skunked (although some nights it might only have been pennies). I have found gold and silver jewellery, and I have found some unique historical finds. If you ask whether I go home with silver or gold every outing – the answer is a big fat NO!!! I am able to pay for my hobby with some of the spendables (clad) that I find – and I've found some very cool jewellery pieces – some gold or silver, but most of it not made from a precious metal.

Get excited about the unique finds that you recover. My recent outings gave me more than enough money in spendables to pay for batteries and coffee, several costume jewellery items (still cool to find) and a set of vintage (1960s) keys. They were all really fun to find. Maybe this hobby is not making me "rich" in the monetary sense, however it does make me "rich" in other ways.

For one, I get to find cool stuff. I get to enjoy the beautiful outdoors – at the end of a tough day at work, this hobby is a perfect stress reliever. All I have to do is start swinging my coil, and all the problems of the workday evaporate. So for me, metal detecting isn't about getting rich – it is about a lifestyle. And who doesn't like going out into the great outdoors – and knowing that at the end of the night you will have more money in your pocket than you left with – maybe also finding a relic or a unique find, and always the possibility of gold or silver.

GPS Central Barbecue and Hunt – Coming SOON

For the last few years GPS Central has held a Barbecue in September. Recently a brochure was forwarded to the club. GPS Central had sent out an invitation to people in the hobby that they would be hosting their fifth annual Seeded Hunt and Barbecue. The invitation was received with cheers, as people from Edmonton, Red Deer, and areas around Calgary made plans to attend the hunt. A copy of the flyer is below. The hunt will be held on September 18, 2021. You will have to register and pay a small fee to participate, but take it from one that has participated in the past – the hunt and the barbecue was well-worth it!

central Radioworld



5th ANNUAL SEEDED HUNT & BBQ SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2021

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

- Come out and join us for great finds, fun and share your stories from the hunting season!
- The seeded hunt will begin at 10:00am! Show off your skills for a chance to win some great prizes including **GOLD!**
- Show off your finds from this season. There will be prizes for Best Treasure, Best Trinket, Best Coin and Best Relic.
- Each registered participant will receive a swag bag of goodies from Minelab!
- **FREE BBQ** lunch and refreshments for all participants!
- Registration is **\$20.00/adults, free for kids**
All proceeds help fund the seed
- Please email registrations to events@gpscentral.ca

Sponsored by:



LOCATION:
Elbow Park
800 34th Avenue SW

Seeded hunt begins at:
10:00 am

BBQ and Storytelling

NOTE: Some event activities may be cancelled dependent on the public health situation.

School Ring Mystery solved – Returned after 70 years

Allen Walters expected a fun afternoon – but what he found led to a real genealogical hunt, but in the end was able to return a high school class ring to the grandson of the original owner. Allen was trying out his new metal detector, scanning a vacant lot behind his local Burger King in Ashland, Oregon, when he heard the strong tone indicating gold.

He dug 4 inches down and pulled out a clod. Breaking it apart, he found himself looking at a gold Ashland High School ring dated 1931. It was a girl's ring, and inside were the initials MRN. Walters, a retired forest officer for the Oregon Department of Forestry, immediately knew he had a mystery on his hands, one he must solve in order to return the ring to the owner's family. Ashland realized that the owner would be at least 100, and her children would likely be in their 70s or 80s. Walters thought it possible that three or four generations could have passed since the ring was lost. Finding descendants might be hard.

Dashing to the Ashland library and pulling out Ashland High School yearbooks, Allen Walters could find no one with those initials in the 1931 class. He did, however, find a Ruth Newbry in all four of her high school years and reasoned she might have chosen to go by her middle name. Her charming senior picture said she was in the octette (8-person choir), operetta, glee club and the "Rogue Annual," the yearbook. Her photo carries a verse: "Ruth has a voice that's strong and true; it led the whole operetta crew."

Allen wondered how the ring got lost in the vacant lot. A bit of research answered that question. Decades earlier, the big, grassy field was a horse arena – and later a car-racing track. A local historian suggested that an equestrian might have removed the ring while saddling or grooming a mount. The historian explained that the ring was found in front of what would have been the Equestrian ring bleachers.

A local genealogical expert provided more clues – and within a week Allen Walters had the information M. Ruth Newbry, who was born in 1912 in Idaho to Reazin and Maude Newbry. Ruth's family moved to Ashland in 1924 and were related to other Newbrys here. After high school, Ruth got a bachelor's degree from University of Oregon and taught elementary school in Ashland and Grants Pass, according to her obituary in findagrave.com. She moved to Eugene, Oregon in 1944 and married Cyril Crabtree in 1946. She taught in Eugene for 32 years and died there in 1995. She loved music, oil painting and swimming, the obit said.

The obituary stated that Ruth had a daughter, Marianne Shorack (later Johnson) of Edmondton, Washington, who died at 80 in December 2018, leaving behind son Curt, of Eugene, plus, at the time of her death, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She devoted her life to missionary work and Christian counseling in the USA and in Uganda. Ruth's son wasn't reachable, but Google quickly turned up a grandchild, Matthew Shorack, who is pastor of Community Bible Fellowship in Seattle. Contacted on FaceTime on Wednesday by Walters and the Tidings, a beaming Matthew Shorack expressed surprise and amazement that such a cherished memento (and high school yearbook photos) of his grandmother could suddenly jump (digitally) across 88 years and three generations.

"This is pretty exciting. I was close to my grandma," said Matthew. "She was a very special woman and was the very first funeral I ever performed, in 1995. She was your classic grandmother in many ways, and she had a different side to her, fun loving, adventurous, and when we came to her farm in Eugene, she always put out curly hard candies for me and my brothers. She took us to lots of places. Her farm was heaven. She and my grandpa Cyrus had bees for honey and grew Christmas trees."

When Matthew heard about the ring from Walters, "I had tears of joy. It was really nostalgic, and I'm thankful to find out more about that side of the family. As a kid, she was just 'grandma,' and you don't know there was a whole life before that."

HINTS ON CLEANING DETECTED COINS

Metal Detectorists who collect coins are always very careful about how they clean the more valuable coins that they find. Many coin collectors are adamant that improper cleaning will lessen the value of a coin. However, we all know that dug coins are sometimes encrusted with dirt and materials from the ground, and proper cleaning will not only enhance their appearance, but may improve their value. Here are a few techniques that are used by museums and archeology departments in Europe. They will work on Canadian coins and, if performed carefully, will not hurt the value of most dug coins. Archaeologists in Europe who deal with ancient coin finds use the following methods:

1. Soak the coins in distilled water for a day or two, and then put them in your freezer. The water penetrates the dirt and the ice crystals expand and break the dirt apart. Rinse them off without rubbing, and repeat. It may take several repetitions of the process to remove all of the dirt; however, the coins are not damaged.
2. Lay the coins on a piece of wax after covering them with a layer of Elmer's(or a similar brand) white glue. Let the glue dry thoroughly and then pull it off the coins. A layer of dirt will be removed without damaging the coins and again several repetitions may be needed to completely clean them.
3. Another method used by many Metal Detectorists is "soaking in oil". While some will use olive oil, others find that high-grade mineral oil will work equally well. This method may take a while, as the coin may need to sit in the oil for several weeks in order to soften the crusty surface of the coin. Then it can be removed from the oil, and carefully cleaned using a VERY soft brush and a toothpick. More than one repetition may be needed. If using this method, it is recommended to find a way to prop the coin up so that both sides of the coin are in contact with the oil.



Open Positions on the CMDC Executive

We have a few open positions on the CMDC executive. Dale Morasche and Iain Paterson have stepped down from their roles for health reasons, and it would be great if some of our other members would step in to help out. Dale was the membership director, and Iain was in charge of the club library. Neither role takes a significant amount of time, and by sharing the load we all help the club become better. If you decide that you might be interested in trying a stint as membership or as librarian, please reach out to a current board member, or send an email to the CMDC website.

Thank you Brett Buchan, who has stepped into the role as CMDC President, and Allen Billy, who is stepping into the role as CMDC Publicity Director. As James Belke up in Edmonton says, to keep a club fresh – sometimes you need fresh perspectives on the Executive. Think about whether that might be you.

We hope that soon the Covid health concerns will ease, and we will soon be able to get together again for meetings, for our fabulous club-hunts, and other fun activities. Let's work together to make 2021 a great year for the Calgary Metal Detecting Club, and to make the CMDC the best club we can.



A DO-IT-YOURSELF SAND SCOOP



I know it is late in the year, as sand scoops are more a summer item – and Fall is just around the corner – However, for some September is a perfect time to hit a beach area, as all the kids are back in school and you might have the beach all to yourself. It seemed like an easy to make last-minute sand-scoop might be a great addition to someone's Metal Detecting kit bag. Here is an easy home-made version using a Folgers plastic coffee container, although the large size peanut-butter container or laundry detergent container would work just as well. Just take your container and drill holes (slightly smaller than a dime) in it, and you have a sand-scoop that will work well for a couple of hunts.



“There comes a time in every rightly constructed boys(or girls) life when he has a raging urge to go somewhere and dig for hidden treasure.”

Mark Twain 1835 - 1910

Dating Canadian Military Items

This is a reprint of an article created for the Buzzer in 2014 - With so many great Militaria finds over the past year, it seemed like it might be worth another look.

Finding Military cap-badges or buttons is exciting, but the next question is usually “how old is this?” The Crown design associated with the item is one of the simplest ways of dating a cap-badge or button. Most Canadian military badges and buttons will have a crown in the design. The shape of the crown is an indication of the age of the cap badge and the sex of the monarch. Key dates in cap-badge dating are 1901 and 1952 as that is when the shape of crowns on badges changed. They are generally known as the QVC, the Kings Crown, and the QEC (or QC). While there may be a few exceptions to the rule, such as the Guelphic crown (family crown of Prince Albert) during Victoria’s reign, or a few QC type crowns during George VI’s reign – but for the most part, these are rarities.

A QVC is the name given to a crown design used during Queen Victoria's reign. The design is based on “St. Edwards Crown”, and there were several variations used on cap-badges or buttons during the reign of Victoria, including an angular crown, a rounded crown, and a more flat topped crown (shown below). Note that the QVC crown often has a very wide center-post and wide side-posts.



QVC (Queen Victoria's Crown) indicates pre-1901. It has thicker sidebars and a flatter top section than the Elizabeth QEC shown below.

The RNWP button to the left showing the QVC was recovered by CMDC member Randy Joy in 2004



The designation KC is the name given to a crown on a badge during the reign of Edward VII. This crown is a domed design, and quite different in shape to both the QVC and QEC crowns. The KC was also used by all the Kings from Edwards reign starting in 1901 though George VI - so will be found on cap-badges and buttons associated with First World War under George V, and those associated with World War II under George VI.



KC (King's Crown) indicates 1901-1952, and is also called a “Tudor Crown.” .

The WWI era cap badge to the right showing the KC was recovered by CMDC member James Belke in 2009

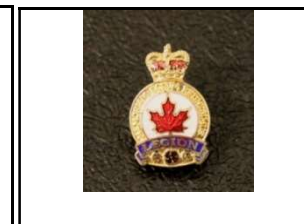


The QEC (or QC) crown was used on badges and buttons after 1952 when Queen Elizabeth II was crowned. The design is based on the “St Edward's Crown” and is a dropped centre design. Unlike the QVC which has several variations, the QC badge used during Elizabeth the Second’s reign has changed very little. Note the side-posts and center post are much thinner, and that the design is much more delicate than the QVC.



QC (Queen's Crown) is post-1952. The sidebars are thinner, and the top is more rounded than the similar QVC.

The Royal Canadian Legion pin to the right showing the QC was recovered by CMDC member Dale Downing in 2010



CALGARY'S RUNDLE RUINS

Calgary is a fairly young city, and as such you might not think that there would be any "ruins" in the area. While researching an article about place names I discovered one such place. 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. This is not the case for the old stone General Hospital built near the River, and close to what is now the Stampede Grounds.



Rundle Ruins – circa 2011

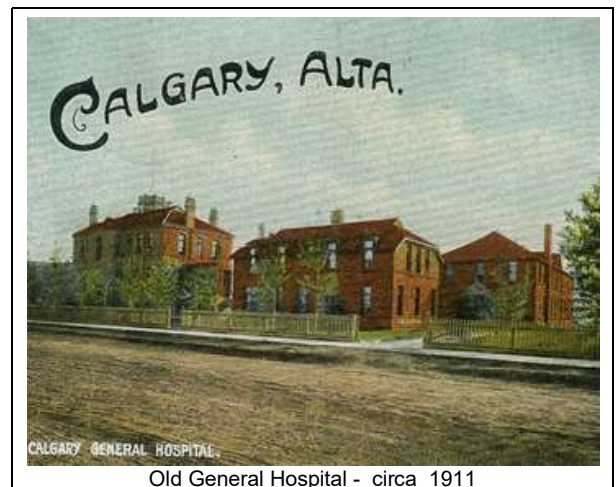
At one point in time Calgary was called the "Garden of Stone" because of the number of beautiful sandstone buildings in use. After a horrible fire in 1886 that destroyed most of the Calgary down-town core, a law was passed that public buildings must be made out of sandstone. This was maintained until just before WWI. Roughly 250 sandstone buildings were constructed between 1886 and 1914. Many are considered historic, and 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 no longer around is the original sandstone General Hospital.

Walking or driving home from a game at the Saddledome or an event at Stampede Park, 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. The hospital was erected in 1894 to help keep our young city healthy. At the time it was state of the art, and Calgary was proud of their modern hospital.

The sandstone building remained in use as a hospital for many years, although its later uses included a chronic illness ward, an isolation ward, and a seniors residence. The sandstone building that was once the General Hospital was demolished in 1973, and the City of Calgary decided to turn the area into parkland. A few walls and the grand entrance were 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.

If considering metal detecting the park around the ruins, you should know that the area is bound to be trashy – any demolished building leaves behind a multitude of nails and other construction materials. However, over the years many people used these buildings, and some would have visited their relatives outside on the grounds of the hospital.

The area is now a beautiful city park, and is a picturesque area for an evening walk or an afternoon picnic. Add the fact that the area was in use in the 1800s – and that there is a chance for new use and replenishment today – you never know what you might find around the old "Rundle Ruins".



Old General Hospital - circa 1911

Blast from the past -

Wayne Teske of the CMDC found his 1921 fishscale 5-cent piece in Spring of 2012. This is one of the rarest Canadian coins - and amazingly, this was the third 1921 Fishie that had been recovered by a CMDC member. The other two 1921 fishscale 5-cent pieces were recovered in the 1990s. A 1921 fishscale 5-cent piece is considered by many to be the find of a life-time, and tops almost everyone's wish-list. The story was originally published in the Buzzer in July of 2012.

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 pinpointer. 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!

Fishscale Facts




Up until 1921 the 5-cent piece was about half the size and half the thickness of a dime. This makes it one of the hardest coins to find with a metal detector, and also makes it a much sought after coin on many a detectorist's wish list. Canadians who used the coins thought the early 5-cent pieces resembled the scales of a fish because of their tiny size, and gleaming silver appearance. That is how the 5-cent piece got the nickname, "fishscale".

In 1921 the 5-cent piece was changed to the current size and made of nickel (hence the name). That year both sizes of the 5-cent piece were released by the mint, but most of them were the larger size "nickels". The number of the fishscale silver 5-cent pieces released in 1921 was small, and they are very rare. There have only been a handful found by metal detectorists – and those have all been recovered in Western Canada.

LOCATION AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Although cancelled until further notice because of Covid 19, the Calgary Metal Detecting club had been meeting 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 would 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="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">Kevin Niefer</p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>See Below</i></p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Finding Houses - Creating Homes</i></p> <p style="margin: 0;">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>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 5px;"><i>"We'll find the money for that. My guy is on it right now."</i></p> </div>
<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; font-size: 1.1em;">smi-elec.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ANDY COWARD Custom Coin Jewellery</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">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.