

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

THE BUZZER

Volume 55 – issue 1 JAN / FEB 2025



**This find would brighten anyone's day!
Looking forward to Spring and all the Treasures waiting for us
under the snow – and under 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.

2026 CMDC CLUB MEETINGS

The Calgary Metal Detecting Club holds “in-person” meetings on the first Thursday of every month. We meet up at the Horton Road Legion. The CMDC meeting will start at 7:30 and is planned to end by 9:00 pm. The Horton Road Legion is easily accessible from Deerfoot Trail, MacLeod Trail and Heritage Drive. The address for the Legion is 9202 Horton Road SW.

If there are changes and the meeting is not able to be held on the first Thursday of the month, or is to be moved to another date, the details will be published on the Facebook group page. They will also be emailed to club members.

CMDC Club Membership Renewals

With the arrival of 2026 – we are all looking forward to getting out there and finding new treasures. The Calgary Metal Detecting Club will start collecting 2026 membership fee renewals now that the new year is in full swing. We will be taking payment for club dues at the next few in-person meetings of the CMDC – but arrangements can be made for “E-transfer” if that is your preferred method of payment. Contact cmdcfunds@gmail.com to arrange for electronic payment options.

The CMDC annual membership renewal cost is:

In-town membership	\$30.00
Out-of-town member	\$25.00
Family Membership	\$45.00
Out-of-town Family	\$35.00
Senior’s Membership	\$20.00

Spring is Sprung! Time for Club Hunts to begin!

With the arrival of a few spring birds, we are hoping that winter is far behind us – although you never know when that Calgary spring blizzard is going to arrive. I remember some years when over two feet of snow arrived in May. Let’s be optimistic and get ready for a fabulous metal detecting season. This is a good time to get your detectors out, dust them off, and get all your tools ready to go. If you have an old-school metal detector, get fresh new batteries ready to go. If your detector is rechargeable, get your machine charged up. Warm weather will be arriving soon.

I’m looking forward to joining in with other CMDC members for our upcoming club hunt season. The Calgary Metal Detecting Club plans monthly club hunts from April to October, with the possibility of extra hunts in November (and December) if weather permits. I’m sure our hunt director is hard at work choosing areas for our detecting extravaganzas. He may already have some great places in mind. The dates of the club hunts will be announced shortly, but the location is not published until shortly before each hunt. As in past years, the club hunts will alternate between Saturday and Sundays. This allows club members who work Saturdays and club members who attend church both have the chance to get together for our club hunt outings. Remember to mark your calendar when the dates are published, and plan to attend our awesome CMDC Club Hunts.

Metal Detecting - Leave No Trace

One thing that I can never emphasize enough is the importance of "Leave no Trace." If we are serious about maintaining our hobby, we should be careful of how the area looks when we leave. When we have finished detecting an area, we should be able to look back over the park and not see any evidence of where we were digging out our treasures. This is good for the environment and helps to maintain the good reputation of our metal detecting hobby.

A big part of this is making sure plugs are properly dug, and holes filled in. Nothing will ruin people's perception of our great metal detecting hobby than walking through a park and seeing "gopher holes" or rings of dried grass that someone left behind. It comes down to practice and knowledge – taking the time to learn the hobby. When I started metal detecting my holes were huge. I had a few members of the club take the time to give me some lessons in how to dig a proper plug, and how to retrieve objects with less damage. I stopped digging huge round circles out of the earth and started using hinged (horseshoe) plugs. My ability to pinpoint the target improved, and my holes became much smaller. Most members of the CMDC are happy to take a bit of time and teach digging techniques to someone starting out in the hobby.

Speaking of leaving no trace, that includes properly disposing of your recovered trash items. You are going to find targets - lots of them – and most of them will be trash. A rough estimate is that most of us will find 20% keepers to 80% trash items. You are sure to find some "treasures", but you will also find plenty of bottle caps, pull-tabs, and foil. It is a part of the hobby – but it is also a sign that the area has seen use and might have some good finds. In any case, take the trash out. I have gone into parks with my detector and found unsightly half-filled plugs with the "trash" sitting right beside the hole, even though there was a garbage can less than fifteen meters away. If you dug it up, take the time to make sure that it goes into the trash barrel. I use a finds pouch with a designated trash area for that reason. I am not saying pick up every piece of trash or litter than you see on the ground - just use a bit of common sense and dispose of "non-keeper" target items. Think about it this way – if you were hunting the same park next year, would you want to hear that same signal, and dig it up all over again?

It's easy to leave people with a good impression of our hobby, especially as we practice and become more skillful. It's like golf or hockey - you will never get any better without practicing and learning from others. Then someday you will look back at the end of a hunt through a park, and know that no-one will be able to tell just where you dug that silver quarter or gold ring in your pouch.

Metal Detecting Charity Rally donates to Hospital

A major donation has been made to the Royal United Hospital (RUH) in Bath, UK – by a group of detectorists. The team behind one of the largest metal detecting events in Europe raised £40,000 (the equivalent of \$74,000.00 CAD) for the hospital. The donated funds are earmarked for a new PET-CT scanner, which will help with early diagnosis, treatment planning, and monitoring a range of diseases including cancer, Alzheimers, cardiac and neurological diseases.

The funds came from the Rodney Cook Memorial Rally (RCMR). The Rally has been held every year since 2018. In 2025 was the charity rally event was held over three weekends, and in three separate locations over September and October of 2025 – but based around Wiltshire, UK. The charity was founded by Gary Cook in 2018 after his father died of cancer. Since the charity's creation in 2018, the Rodney Cook Memorial Rally has raised and donated more than £280,000 for the Royal United Hospital. Gary Cook, who lives in Wiltshire, said the care his father received at the RUH was "simply incredible." This charity is his way of honouring his father and assisting those who helped him throughout his battle with cancer.

BUZZER CONTEST WINNER 2025

Our Buzzer Contest for December 2025 was won by Tracy Woods of Edmonton. There were several entrants this year – so we used a random generator (random contest spinner) off the internet to determine the winner. Congratulations and Thanks to Tracy Woods for her metal detecting article. Thanks also go to Amanda West, Janet Hoffart and Angelo Leddo, who all submitted stories to into the contest. Look at future Buzzers to see your stories published. Let me know when you will be in Calgary next, and I will bring your prize.

Metal Detecting – Great Finds and Great People

By TRACY WOODS

Metal Detecting is more than just picking up a detector and finding coins in the ground. It is comradery. It's about the people that you meet just once or many times and within a few minutes you are talking like you are old friends.

This year Jim and I attended a few hunts in Calgary and met many new friends. We hope to see you all again next year. We made two trips to metal detecting hunts. Once again, we met new friends and reunited with some of our friends that we only see once a year.

We also headed to Vancouver Island to go detecting with our long-time detecting friend Ernie. While at Ernie's we were all invited to detect with a mutual friend we hadn't seen in thirty years. We all have a little more grey and have moved on from our old BFO machines, but it was like no time had passed.

For us metal detecting is not just the coins, it's people you meet along the way.

Tip for Day - Places to Check Out

Old churches and school yards. OK I know this is a no brainer, but it is still worth mentioning. Think about it, just about every town or city has one dating back to the early 1900's, and maybe even late 1800's. If you have checked out the old topographical or railroad maps of our area, old schools and churches are included in the details. We have one of these books of Maps in our CMDC Library, but they are also available on-line.

Sometimes the schools or churches have moved, or been built over. I know of at least one instance where a four-room schoolyard was repurposed in the 1960s, and replaced with a new building. You can also read the old newspapers (many are available on-line) for the social events page. They might list church picnics or school picnic locations. In almost every instance these events would have taken place within a short buggy-ride of the school. Now I realize that these locations may have been detected over and over. But with a little patience treasures can still be found.

If any site has been in use for eighty or a hundred years, it is likely there will still be something left behind. In one old school yard I hunted (the one mentioned above) - I found silver coins and some 40-year-old pins. My hunting partner dug up a brass token from Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation. Be sure and hit those grass medians between the sidewalks and the street. Lots of churches are converting grassed areas and playgrounds into parking lots. Keep an eye out for new construction on an old site where the lots may have been stripped of topsoil. You never know just what might turn up in a dirt-pile.

Family Detectorist Trio find Bronze-Age Copper Hoard

The Weller family of Sussex, England made a remarkable recovery in late 2024. The hunting partners include three generations. Chris Weller, who is seventy-nine, his son Simon (forty-four), and nine-year-old Amelia Weller all love the metal detecting hobby. They live and detect around Eastbourne, which is near Lewes in East Sussex.

At first, the family wondered about the eleven lumps of rough metal. "I didn't think much of it," Simon said, "just 'cor, that's a big bit of bronze." The family brought the bronze lumps to the attention of the local Finds Liaison Officer for Lewes. They have since learned that their recoveries were "ancient bun ingots" dating back to 1000 to 800 BC, almost three thousand years old.

These bronze and copper ingots would have been metal ready to be melted down, shaped or alloyed by Bronze-Age artisans. They would have been used to make tools, ornaments or weapons, or perhaps offerings to local deities.

Simon Weller was working on a permission, and informed the landowner about the ancient copper hoard which has been classed as treasure. They mutually decided to donate the items to the Lewes Castle & Barbican House Museum in Lewes, where they will go on display later this spring.

Emma O'Conner, museums officer of the Sussex Archaeological Society, called the donation an important addition to the museum's collections. "This could enhance our understanding of the skills and expertise of metalworkers thousands of years ago," she said.

The Wellers previously located a mediaeval hammer, silver coins, and gold coins, among other things. Simon Weller says the real treasure is spending time with his family. Weller says that he, his daughter and dad love metal detecting. "It is nice the three of us together. The finds are a bonus really. It's just getting out there in the fresh air and wildlife. It is really good fun."

High River Token - Good For One Loaf

By Amanda West

Amanda West's entry into the 2025 Buzzer Contest tells about her experience recovering a bit of Southern Alberta history out of a High River school yard. Thanks for entering this great story, Amanda.



It was a great day for a hunt at Spitzee School in High River, and my detector finally hit on a solid, promising signal. I carefully dug a plug about four inches deep, and as I brushed away the soil, a piece of local history emerged. It wasn't a coin, but a rare silver bread token from K.D. Lung Confectioners in nearby Cayley, AB.

It was an incredible find, connecting the school grounds to the sweet history of the area from decades ago.

METAL DETECTING – MORE THAN JUST TREASURE

Metal detecting is a crazy hobby – Well, at least that is how many people view those silly guys and gals who are wandering around beaches swinging a metal rod with a sensor on one end and gauges on the other and all connected with a set of headphones. Crazy as it may look, to the enthusiastic metal detectorists, the thrill of unearthing the next treasure becomes very addictive.

I have always been a little curious about metal detecting but became thoroughly convinced I had to have a machine of my own after witnessing a friend of mine finding an 1881 US silver dollar at an old site west of Wetaskiwin. It wasn't long before I bought my first Garrett 150 metal detector. I was excited. Just what I had dreamed of, digging in the dirt and sand and finding those elusive old coins and relics.

Thinking back, that was about 30 years, and about 3000 coins, 50 rings, watches, keys and many other treasures ago. I was pretty proud of that very first \$149 machine and even prouder when it discovered my first coin. But that was nothing compared to several months later when it made some positive sounding beeps on a beach at Muriel Lake near Bonnyville. I turned up a King George V nickel and was definitely hooked.

With a new metal detecting season about to begin, over the years I have moved up four levels of sophistication of detector and am now sporting a Garrett 2500. My Garrett 1000 still remains as my reliable backup. My detector travels with me from spring thaw to fall freeze-up and provides me with a few minutes of entertainment during a rest stop or several hours of fun and exercise during serious searching at old building sites or on beaches.

People ask, “what is the most interesting thing you have found?” This is very difficult to answer but I still wonder, what is the story behind the wedding band I found by a group campfire in a residential camp? Or how did the person who lost their large set of keys get home and into their house? Or what did the lady feel when she noticed her ring with 16 diamonds was missing? I will never likely know the answers to those questions, but I do have a feeling of satisfaction when seeing those happy faces after my metal detecting efforts returned the lost special ring, bracelet, keys or other valued items.

Every find is a treasure; even some of the junk can provide a historical message. Mine includes coins dating from 1910 to the loonies and toonies of today; rings, watches and other jewelry, key sets, badges, shell casings and numerous other artifacts. Perhaps the most interesting find, was a totally unexpected one. I had thrown a variety of coins in the grass on my front lawn in Wetaskiwin to fine-tune my new Graphic Target Imaging Garrett 2500 detector. I started to find the nickels, quarters and loonies I had seeded, but my astonishment, amongst them was an 1867-1927 Confederation coin buried beneath the grass on my very own front lawn.

Who knows, maybe this year will turn up an older coin, a ring with more diamonds, or a more interesting artifact. Regardless, I am looking forward to another season of metal detecting and the healthy and relaxing three mile walks and numerous knee bends during each outing.

This story was written in April 2015 by Wetaskiwan Detectorist Barry McDonald, and printed in the Pipestone Flyer, which is the newspaper for the town of Millet, Alberta & area. It was lightly edited for time-sensitivity and size.



RESEARCH – ACTION - RESULT

In metal detecting you will often hear that the key to a good find is “RESEARCH” – Many think that is using maps and photos to discover the location of an old building. but that is only part of it. It is easy to learn about a “Place” in history – the next part of research is to learn about the people in that place before you make the decision that that is where you want to hunt. Figure out parts, and you are on your way to some great finds.

Research is the act of gathering knowledge. The point of research in metal detecting is to acquire an understanding the area or specific site that you think might be worth hunting. Your goal is to learn the location of promising sites by studying not only the “location”, but also the “history” of that location. Understanding where buildings were is only one part of what you need to know. In order to gain insight into the best places to look for treasures, you also need to try to learn about the culture or the community of the people who lived there. This is where old newspapers, oral history, and books about the community help out. It will help to know what type of people who lived in that area – the culture of an area can be just as important as where the buildings stood.

For example – if your hunt-site was a wild and woolly mining or lumber town that was only in existence a few years – there aren’t going to be many home-sites or lost luxury items. The culture of the town leads more to locating recreational locations like saloons or “red-light” zones. However, if it was a growing town with churches, schools and community market areas – the different culture gives you different areas to hunt. Was the area considered “worker” or “professional”? Was the area neighbourly – did they have outdoor meeting places or were they more private and elitist? All are things to consider when thinking about a possible hunt site

Old newspapers will often give you a feel for the community – small town papers will publish articles about the location of the local community market, or where people would gather for a picnic lunch after church. They also might mention where special events were held, like outdoor band performances, or local fairs. Many town newspapers are available through Peels Prairie Provinces, a digitization project run by the University of Alberta Libraries. As always, when we discover something about a privately owned location – you need to get land-owner’s permission to hunt.

Another thing to look at is what the community is like now. It may seem odd, but sometimes things don’t change much over the years. There is one park in Calgary that I have seen aerial photos over 60 years, with the same path across the park in exactly the same place. People will always sit in the shade of trees, and will usually walk on an established path than bushwhack, and some landmarks will not change.

Looking at old photos of an area will sometimes give you valuable clues. Sometimes you need to consider the background of a photo. Is the treeline or hedge in about the same area? Chances are that the dirt under that hedge has not been detected. Is there another building in the background that isn’t there anymore – that is another good clue.

Local town directories may be available through the library. Henderson Directories were one of many community directories used across the prairies, and in use until the middle of the last century. In some of the early directories, they not only listed names and addresses, but also listed the occupation of the homeowner. This can be important in research as well. Will you be more likely to find lost coins at a residence that once housed a doctor, on that of a night watchman. These are two of the occupations I noted in my recent perusal of the 1910 Calgary Henderson’s directory. I have used the book for Lethbridge and Calgary. They used to publish every year, but limited years are available online through Peels Prairie Provinces.

When you have done the research and discovered your potential hunt-site – then the job is almost done. Get permission, and consider the layout of your area. Look for where people would have congregated. Remember that 60 years ago kids were outside all day, playing. Many families spent their summer evenings out of doors until the house cooled down. The clothing line and out-house path are always good places to search.

As you continue to develop in your metal detecting hobby, a lot of this research becomes “practical”. When you drive through an older area you will notice the houses and say to yourself “1930s style” - maybe I should look into this area. A bit of research and a potential hunt-site can lead to a world of treasure

Metal Detectorist Types – Which Are You?

When looking for a “metal detecting in the news” story for the Buzzer, I came across this little article written by Dick Stout and in “Stout Standards”. Dick Stout writes “Musings from an Old Beeper” and has a lot of great articles to help out people in the hobby, and a few humorous or tongue-in-cheek articles. The entry below would be classed in the latter category, but made me laugh – as I recognize myself and a few of my metal detecting friends listed below..

The Accomplished – *Detectorists who have detected for some time and who know what their detectors are telling them.*

Technical Wizards – *Tekkies who just have to wow you with their knowledge of how a detector functions, as in filters, multiple frequency transmission, target resolution and piffwanger discrimination.*

Survivors – *Detectorists who love to show you how tough and durable they are. They hunt in ten feet of snow, bug infested jungles and can light a match on their ass.*

Entertainers – *Tekkies who have you coming back for more.*

The Cool – *Tekkies who have all the gear and more, even if they have no idea how to use it. Appearance is what matters.*

Entrepreneurs – *Detectorists who are more interested in subscribers, followers, likes, shares and money. Can you say YouTube?*

Pioneers – *Detectorists who helped get this pastime started and were responsible for its success.*

Experts – *Tekkies who have all the answers, right or wrong.*

Characters – *Tekkies who leave you shaking your head and saying WTF?*

Personalities – *Tekkies who amuse and who have a persona unlike any other.*

The Savvy – *Older tekkies who have been around long enough to know that a lot of detectorists today are BS artists.*

- Quick Tips for Successful Detecting -

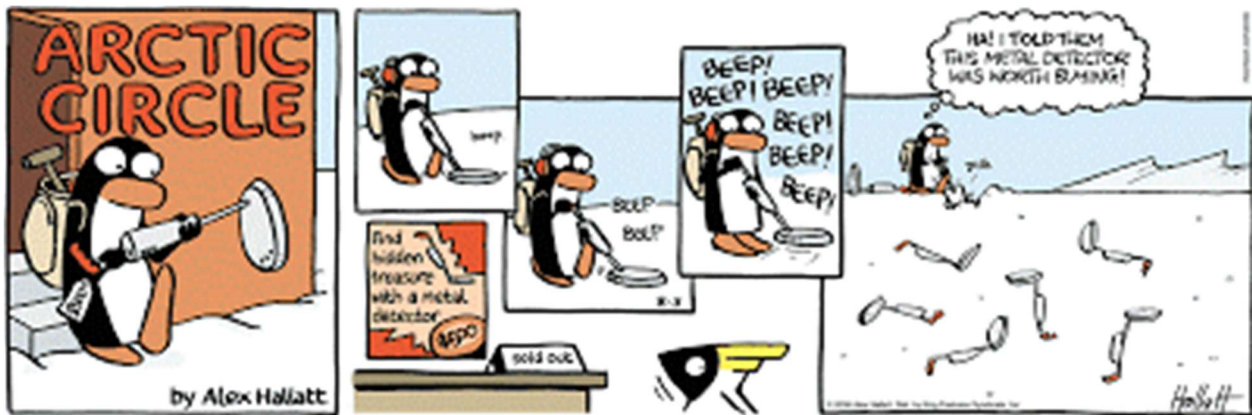
Some sites can be extremely busy at times. Work out when your preferred sites are being used and aim for the quiet times so that you are free to swing wherever you want. For example, sports fields are often used for Saturday morning sports events, or for training in the early evenings. Try heading out early in the morning, or before supper to hunt your preferred site when others are not around.

Cover the site from multiple angles. An experienced treasure hunter will cover the same ground many times from many angles if they believe that there may be a coin cache beneath. Different angles will give off different signals and ensure that you fill any gaps that were missed when you were trying to overlap swings.

Metal Detecting Humor

SIGNS THAT YOU NEED TO GO TO METAL DETECTORS ANONYMOUS

1. All of your pants have grass stains on the knees
2. Anytime you are walking, you look at the ground and scan -- even indoors
3. When you are in church and the minister says, "Please be seated," You respond with "Amen, brother! Or at least a Merc."
4. When using your weed whacker, you're concerned about your "sweep speed."
5. When you plan family vacations around places that are good to detect.
6. Eveready and Duracell send you birthday and Christmas cards every year.
7. Your spouse hints at wanting jewellery, so you grab your detector and hit a local park instead of the local jeweller.
8. Your trash cans are full of pull tabs, bullets and nails -- but you don't drink, hunt or do carpentry.
9. Your clad finds pay for a good dinner for you and your spouse at least twice a year.
10. Your detector has a name other than the one the manufacturer gave it.
11. You step over pennies and nickels on the sidewalk, but will dig six inches for a dirty penny.
12. Hearing maxims like "every cloud has a silver lining" or "making golden memories" make you think about a good metal detecting hunt.
13. You offer to mow your neighbourhood vacant lot if the owner will give you a chance to detect it.
14. You find your spouse using your best digger in the garden, and you feel like it's been abused.



LOCATION AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

CMDC meetings will be held at the Horton Road Legion and are scheduled for the first Thursday of every month. The meeting dates will be published on the CMDC.org website calendar, on the CMDC Facebook group page. We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming meeting.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

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Metal Detectors, GPS Units, Radios, and other electrical equipment & tools. Visit them on the web at gpscentral.ca, or the store at:

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Do you have an interesting story,
An idea for an article, or a comment that you would like to see in "The Buzzer"?
Write it down and email it to cmdclub@gmail.com
with
METAL DETECTING STORY
in the subject area.



"I think he misinterpreted the metal detector analogy in your 'seek and ye shall find' sermon!"

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