



National Council for Metal Detecting

Member of: The Central Council of
Physical Recreation.

NCMD News and Views. ***SPRING 2007***

The National Council would welcome
replies and comments on the information
contained in

News and Views. Email editor at:
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NCMD Membership.

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information and fees please contact:
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Enquiries.

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NCMD Forum: <http://ncmd-forum.com>
Or www.ncmd-forum.com

1. NCMD Annual General Meeting.

The A.G.M. of the NCMD will be held on
Sunday 10th June, 2007 at 10.00 am at
The Innkeepers Lodge, Northampton.

Nominations for the positions of the
officers for 2007/8 should be made in
writing, to the General Secretary.
Nominations should be signed by both
the proposer and nominee.

Propositions for changes to the current
Constitution should also be submitted in
writing. Copies of the current constitution,
(version June 2006), are available from
the General Secretary.

Note regarding the NCMD Constitution.

The publication, in 2006, of the voluntary
'Code of Practice for Responsible Metal
Detecting, in England and Wales' is
endorsed by most metal detecting,
archaeological and Landowner
organisations including the NCMD. It is
considered that the NCMD Code of
Conduct as contained in the NCMD
Constitution should be reviewed and
updated to reflect our support for the new
Code. It is therefore to be considered at
the next NCMD A.G.M to be held on 10th
June 2007. Anyone with proposals or
opinions on this item should contact their
Regional Representatives or by e-mail to
the address shown at the beginning of
this newsletter by 30th April, 2007.

Submissions for any of the above items
must be received by the General
Secretary 28 days prior to the meeting.

2. Club Details.

Clubs are requested to ensure that
details of their contacts are updated. This
can be done through Regional
Representatives or direct to the General
Secretary or Regional representative.

Would clubs please make known the
contents of News & Views at their club
meetings.

3. NCMD Forum.

If your club or members wish to take
advantage of automatic e-mail of NCMD

information then please use the facility provided on the NCMD Forum. Just log-on to www.ncmd-forum.com, fill in the simple registration using your NCMD membership card number and you will receive NCMD News & Views automatically. Additionally you will have access to a vast library of metal detecting related information.'

The same facility is available to independent members.

4. Countryside Stewardship.

The NCMD has now received the contact points for Local Historic Environment Officers appointed by Natural England. These officers will be able to provide up to date information and guidance regarding metal detecting on land under Countryside Stewardship Scheme arrangements. Members can obtain their local contact point on application to their NCMD representative.

5. NCMD National Finds Competitions. 2006.

The Annual Karolyn and Robin Hatt Memorial Finds Competitions.

Robin and Karolyn Hatt, as original editors of The Searcher magazine, gave considerable support and encouragement to the NCMD in its early days. In order to mark its continuing appreciation of that contribution the NCMD initiated annual memorial finds competitions in the names of Karolyn and Robin which are open to every NCMD member.

The annual competitions are based upon metal detecting finds made by members during a calendar year 1st January to 31st December. The competitions comprise three separate categories:-

Robin Hatt Memorial Competitions for Best Individual Coin and Best Individual Artefact.

Karolyn Hatt Memorial Competition for Best Hoard (Coins and/or Artefacts).

Entries for the competitions are submitted by NCMD Regions and the Central Register of Clubs and Individuals who will have held their own competitions to select objects for entry to the national finals.

The 2006 National Final will be held at the NCMD Ordinary Meeting in October 2007. Voting will be by secret ballot of the nominated Regional and Central Register delegates.

We are hoping for an interesting, large and varied selection of finds to be entered in the three categories and would encourage both clubs and members to take part in order to make this competition one of the best ever.

Finders are encouraged to attend the Finals along with their find where possible.

Good quality photographs with a short description are requested. If your entry is a hoard please ensure that all items are photographed together and not singly.

Further details can be found on the NCMD Forum in "Announcements and Updates".

6. Portable Antiquities Scheme Appraisal Questionnaire.

The NCMD have decided to seek comments of the membership exploring the operation of the Portable Antiquities Scheme after 10 years.

The NCMD has prepared and is in the process of distributing a short questionnaire to members asking for their experiences with regards to the PAS and appraisal of the service provided by their respective Finds Liaison Officers (FLO's). The questionnaire will be distributed to all NCMD regions for onward distribution to all clubs and individual members. The return date for completed questionnaires is by 31st October 2007.

An independent organisation will carry out the scrutiny and analysis of responses.

Editors Note. *A copy of the Questionnaire and the associated notes are attached to this newsletter.*

7. Heritage Bill. Heritage Protection for 21st Century.

The White Paper for this Bill was presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State in March 2007.

The objectives of the Bill will be: To update and improve the heritage protection system in England and Wales to produce.

(a) A positive approach to managing the historic environment which will be transparent, inclusive, effective and sustainable and central to social, environmental and economic agendas at a local as well as national level.

(b) A legislative framework that protects the historic environment but enables appropriate change.

(c) To update and improve the UK wide heritage protection system relating to the marine historic environment.

The White Papers runs to some 70 pages with a 16 page explanatory document.

NOTE: *The heritage protection system in England comprises the systems of listing buildings, scheduling ancient monuments, designating historic wrecks and registering historic parks, gardens and battlefields.*

The heritage protection system in Wales comprises the systems of listing buildings, scheduling ancient monuments, designating historic wrecks and registering parks, gardens and landscapes.

8. Treasure Act Review.

It is expected that the next Treasure Act review will take place during 2007.

Among the proposed changes being considered are:

- (a) There should be a duty to report items that may be treasure by anyone who is in possession of the item, this of course may not be the finder.
- (b) An extension of the time limit to prosecute. It is being considered that this should be six months from the time of evidence being available.
- (c) A duty of those in possession of treasure to deliver the item to the appropriate authority and would include penalties for non-delivery.
- (d) The introduction of the ability of the Secretary of State to disclaim an item prior to investigation by the Coroner. This may of course cause unnecessary investigations.

Transfer of Treasure Administration to the British Museum.

This has been debated in both Houses of Parliament and now needs to complete its journey through the house. The next stage is the production of an MOU, memorandum of understanding, between DCMS and the British Museum.

Review of Coroners Services.

Editors Note. *–This item was not included in the Queens Speech so is likely to be deferred and not progressed in the current parliamentary session.*

9. Portable Antiquities Scheme and Treasure Annual Report launch.

David Lammy, Minister for Culture, launched both of the above reports on 17/1/07 in the British Museum. Ask your Finds Liaison Officer for copies.

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is a voluntary scheme to record archaeological objects found by members of the public.

Here are a few key items from the Portable Antiquities Report, 2005/6.

A network of 36 Finds Liaison Officers (FLO's) covers the whole of England and Wales and are supported by a central unit.

The FLO's have liaised with 5,855 finders, attended at least 697 metal detecting club meetings.

A further 57,556 archaeological objects have been recorded on the PAS finds database in 2005/6, double that of 2003/4.

There have been over 53 million user hits on the Schemes website –

www.finds.org.uk

The website allows public access to 129,613 records and 93,337 images.

The number of Treasure cases continues to increase.

In 1996 there were 24 Treasure cases reported. In 2000 this had risen to 233 and in 2005 to 595.

10. NCMD 25th Anniversary Notice

As a contribution to the 25th Anniversary of the NCMD the Midland Region is again supporting the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution Fosse Way Detecting Event this year. **The date is Sunday, September 23rd. 10am till 5pm**

Lots of new land adjacent to the mediaeval village of Hunningham in Warwickshire and the Fosse Way have been acquired for this year's rally.

The cost will be £12.00 per adult detectorist and £6.00 for under 12's. Further details and booking arrangements will be distributed as soon as possible.

Appraisal of the Portable Antiquities Scheme: 2007

For several years' members comment and anecdotal accounts concerning the operation of the PAS have been brought to the attention of the NCMD Executive. A number of these were dealt with

through liaison with the PAS management or through NCMD officers and regional delegates.

However it is now opportune with the approach of the PAS's tenth anniversary, to seek the comments of the membership on a more formal basis as a measure of the performance of both the scheme and the FLO's. A formal request from the Western Region made at the February 2007 OGM for the NCMD to carry out an appraisal within that region acted as the basis for the current issue of the questionnaire.

As a part of the NCMD remit we have a responsibility to our membership to ensure that they continue to receive a comprehensive, fair and accurate service from the PAS. It is regrettable that there continues to be some perceived difficulties with the operation of the scheme and the levels and quality of service it provides to our members.

In order to understand more fully the background to any such problems and their magnitude, the NCMD needs to have written comment and accurate details of any difficulties that have been experienced by its members in order for it to make representations to the PAS management if necessary.

There is no intent to carry out a "witch hunt", but merely to gain a more complete understanding (good or bad) of the operation of the PAS in relation to our member's needs and expectations. Data from the completed questionnaires will be collated by an outside organisation to ensure that there is an unbiased presentation of the responses for discussion at the November 2007 OGM. Should it be necessary the NCMD may enquire further into individual situations hopefully with the full co-operation of the PAS management to seek to rectify any anomalous problems. It is also the intent to appraise the PAS management on the outcome of the exercise following discussions of the result at the November meeting.

The outcome of the exercise may indicate new opportunities to expand the NCMD's liaison with the PAS for the benefit of the members. We will have to wait and see if the response is substantive and statistically sound. It is a first venture into uncharted territory and is as such very much a learning process and one that may prove to be a useful information-gathering model for the future.