

Digging deep

NCMD
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR METAL DETECTING

ISSUE 17

All the latest news from the National Council for Metal Detecting

NEWS

New TVC Finders Representative

I am pleased to announce that we now have a replacement for the position I vacated. The position has gone to none other than Harry Bain. I am sure we all wish her well in her new position.

The press release says:

Harry Bain publishes and edits *The Searcher*, a magazine produced for metal detectorists and amateur archaeologists, which she took over from her mother in 2004. She is also the editor of the Digging Deep newsletter of the National Council



for Metal Detecting. Her earlier career was in graphic design and marketing at Design Fulcrum, Communiqué Group, and Lippa Pearce (now Pentagram).

Trevor Austin

A healthy approach to detecting

Metal detecting rarely gives us cause to believe that there might be any health issues associated with the hobby. However, some health risks are in fact identifiable and it is therefore worth considering taking some sensible precautions to avoid potentially serious problems.

Most of us will wear protective gloves when we are excavating finds but I have seen some detectorists using their bare hands to move earth and (more commonly) to rub the dirt from the surface of coins etc. How safe can that be, particularly if the area has been either treated or contaminated with animal manure?

The problem is that we detect mainly on farmland that, because of the presence of livestock, can result in soil which is rich in bacteria that can infect humans.

E. coli for example is one of the commonest bacteria that can be contracted from contaminated

water or food resulting in the classical food poisoning symptoms of abdominal cramps and diarrhoea.

It is therefore important to try and maintain a good standard of hygiene out in the fields by keeping your hands covered and washing them if at all possible, particularly before you tuck into your packed lunch. It is also a good idea to carry a small bottle of antiseptic hand gel with you in your pocket if you have no means of washing.

Tetanus is a more serious but rare infection caused by a type of bacteria called *Clostridium tetani*. It usually occurs when a flesh wound becomes contaminated. The bacteria usually enter the body through a wound in the skin or a serious burn, and once inside, they multiply and release a powerful type of poison, known as a neurotoxin.

The bacteria can live in many

different substances including soil, house dust and animal waste such as manure and it is this last category, manure, that should concern us most because we will tend to encounter a lot of it when detecting whether we like it or not!

Every detectorist should therefore wear non-absorbent gloves and ensure that any cuts or scratches on the skin are properly dressed and ideally, protected with clothing. Whilst the risk of contracting Tetanus is extremely low, you may want to consider contacting your GP regarding an anti-tetanus vaccination, but bear in mind that your age may determine the number of vaccinations required.

Another serious condition (which is on the increase in the UK) is Lyme disease that is a bacterial infection spread to humans by infected ticks. Ticks are tiny arachnids found in woodland areas that can carry a number of diseases of which Lyme disease is of the greatest concern.

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The ticks feed on the blood of mammals such as deer and mice but they can also be carried by sheep. This means that if you are detecting a field with sheep present, you should take particular care to ensure that your arms and legs are fully covered.

Ticks are also likely to be found in

fields with taller, unmown grasses where they wait to attach to a passing person or animal. The following precautions can help prevent Lyme disease:

- Wear a long-sleeved shirt.
- Tuck your trousers into your socks.
- Use insect repellent.
- Check yourself for ticks.

Tick bites often go unnoticed and the tick can remain feeding for several days before dropping off. The longer the tick is in place, the higher the risk of it passing on the infection (a person with Lyme disease is however not contagious because the infection can only be spread by ticks).

If you do find a tick on your or your skin, remove it by gently gripping it as close to the skin as possible, preferably using fine-toothed tweezers or a tick removal tool (available from many chemists, outdoor leisure shops and pet shops) and pull steadily away from the skin without twisting. There

may be considerable resistance.

DO NOT squeeze the body of the tick, as this may cause the head and body to separate, leaving the head embedded in your skin.

DO NOT use your fingernails to remove a tick. Infection can enter via any breaks in your skin, e.g. close to the fingernail.

DO NOT crush the tick's body, as this may cause it to regurgitate its infected stomach contents into the bite wound.

DO NOT try to burn the tick off, apply petroleum jelly, nail polish or any other chemical. Any of these methods can cause discomfort to the tick, resulting in regurgitation, or saliva release.

Finally, there is one more rare type of bacterial infection that you should be aware of called Leptospirosis. You can catch Leptospirosis by touching soil or water contaminated with the urine of wild animals infected with the

leptospira bacteria. Animals known to be carriers of the leptospira bacteria include cattle, pigs, dogs and rodents, particularly rats.

The condition is fortunately uncommon in the UK, and the risk of contracting Leptospirosis is so low that you don't need to take drastic measures to avoid the condition, but take care if you have any breaks in your skin and you are detecting in or around puddles or shallow streams which could be infected.

You can help protect yourself from Leptospirosis by simply wearing appropriate protective clothing and by cleaning and dressing existing wounds.

By way of reassurance, please don't be alarmed by the above information! It may all sound rather scary but the chances of contracting any of these infections are extremely small.

Alastair Hackett

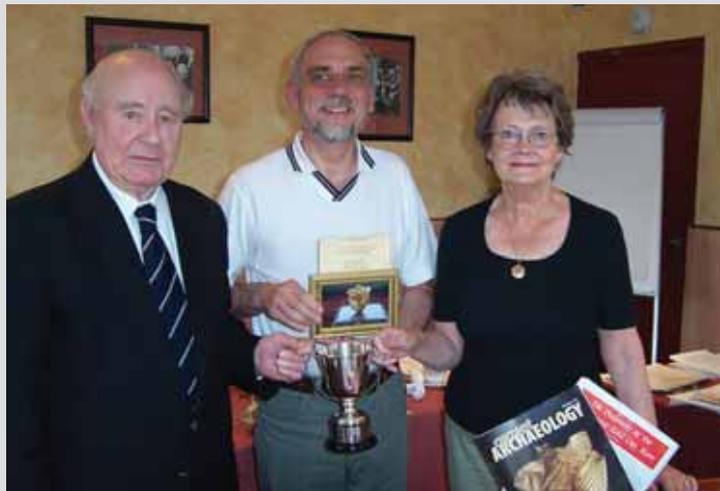
OBITUARY – DENNIS JORDAN

Dennis was born on the 30 October 1920 in Manchester and died on the 3 September 2014 in Norwich hospital after a long illness.

He moved to Norfolk with his family in the 20's and worked for a local newspaper before joining the RAF during the war. He was posted to Canada for training as an air gunner and I recall him saying that he was not very good at this and joked that the Corporal in charge considered him to be of more value to the Luftwaffe than the RAF.

Whilst serving in Canada Dennis met his future wife Jean and she travelled to the UK later in the war and they were married. Jean sadly died in 1991. They had no children only an adopted son Bill.

Dennis reminisced many times about his war service. I understand from these conversations that in the later stages of the war and in the immediate post war period, he was part of Military group charged with hunting down wanted Nazi's. He had by that time become fluent in German which is probably why he was involved. He later worked in the intelligence services, mainly in



Left to right Dennis Jordan, Clive Sinclair and Karolyn Hatt

Germany for many years before going on to be part of the department vetting new staff for military intelligence. He did by the way vet Rhiannon Hart who was the FLO for Cambridgeshire for a short time. She was a former Officer in the Intelligence Corps.

Dennis often, during my stays with him, would open up (once he had had a whiskey or two) and relate interesting incidents of his wartime and Cold War experiences though I am sure none of this can be repeated in print. He was also in the process of writing his memoirs though I am not sure where the draft ended up, and he

related to me details of what he had written at various times. I am sure these would make very interesting reading.

In his leisure time he enjoyed cricket and I believe spent some time as a local councillor. When he retired back to Norfolk in the mid 80's he and Jean ran a B&B and also a restaurant before Dennis discovering detecting and the NCMD. I detected with him many times in the mid 80's shortly after his retirement and often told me of his forays onto the Thames foreshore when he lived and worked in London.

In the late 80's Dennis joined the

NCMD as Research and Public Relations Officer and soon became its President, a position he was to hold for many years until ill health forced him to retire.

During his time with the NCMD he was very active in the discussions with the Dept. for National Heritage, as it was then known, and played a major part in the introduction of the Treasure Act and the Portable Antiquities Scheme. He was a great supporter of the PAS and a good friend of Roger Bland the then Head of the Scheme.

Dennis played a key role in many of the activities and politics the NCMD was involved in at that time and in 1997 became the first Finder's Member of the Treasure Valuation Committee, a role he held for 7 years until I took over the position in 2003.

Dennis was buried at Pulham Market next to his wife in a sunny corner of the churchyard overlooked by a tree Dennis had planted in her memory. Dennis wished for a simple graveside ceremony attended by close friends. All those who knew Dennis will miss him greatly.

Trevor Austin

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR METAL DETECTING

Membership Renewal Form



MEMBER OF: SPORT AND RECREATION ALLIANCE

Dear Individual Member

Your membership of the National Council for Metal Detecting expires on the 31 March 2015. We hope that you have received prompt attention throughout the past year and thank you for your continued support of the hobby.

Subscription for 2015/16 for Individual members on the Central Register, £8-00.

(Please note subscription for individual members of a NCMD region may vary and individual members are advised to contact their Regional Secretary)

If you have not yet renewed your membership, please complete the attached form and return with your subscription.

All cheques should be made payable to the National Council for Metal Detecting and returned to the address below.

Alternatively you may wish to pay online at www.ncmd.co.uk/membership.htm by either PayPal or Debit/Credit card.

Please ensure that all information we hold on record is correct. If you have already sent your subscription for the forthcoming year, please ignore this reminder.

Trevor Austin, General Secretary



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We Change People's Fortunes



The Robin & Karolyn Hatt Memorial Trophy Competition



Yet again the amazing quality of the entries was evident to see. As ever, voting was a long process. Your regional delegates found it difficult to come to a swift decision when faced with beautiful objects of such quality.

Each year as the best and winning entries from club and regional heats come together at the final judging, the sheer quality and rarity of these finds from 2013 never fails to fill me with awe. I can only imagine the feeling of delight on seeing a rare coin, a beautiful artefact and the magnificence of a hoard emerging from the soil.

It is usual to have photographs of entries on the table, as many are now displayed in museums, testament to our unending contribution to historical knowledge of the country.

As delegates gathered round the table to vote for their choice, I listened to personal debates over the rarity of coins, the difficulty of deciding on a hoard and comparing one artefact against another. This process is never rushed as there are always difficult choices to be made.

However, after all the votes were counted and cross-checked I have pleasure in giving you the winners of the 2013 competition as follows:

Coin Category

1st: Leading the field was a Celtic Corieltauvi gold stater, found by Laura Hobson of the South Yorks MDC Yorkshire Region.

This won Best Coin of the Year at their AGM this March.



Celtic Corieltauvi gold stater – Laura Hobson

2nd: A Celtic silver unit, finder Ray Simpson, Coventry Heritage Detector Society, Midlands Federation.



Celtic silver unit, finder Ray Simpson

Other entries were a Denarius of Trajan from North-West Region found by Mark Redfern, South Lancs & Cheshire Club and a William I sword type penny from the South-East Region unearthed by Phil Castle who is a member of the Southern Independent Detectorists Club.



Denarius of Trajan from North-West Region – Mark Redfern



William I sword type penny from the South-East Region – Phil Castle

Hoard Category

1st: An amazing 327 13th Century medieval silver coin hoard. The finders were Derek McLennan and Gus Patterson, individual members of the Scottish Region.

The coins were recovered in exceptional condition from pasture and span a 70 year period



327 13th Century medieval silver coins

including 10 out of the 13 mints in operation under Edward I, II and III; two of the three Irish mints under Edward I; Edinburgh, Berwick and Aberdeen mints of Alexander III and a rare Alexander III with an unknown mint classification.

2nd: Five gold Anglo-Saxon bracteates plus one gold Anglo-Saxon armband, dating to the 5th-6th Century.



Gold Anglo-Saxon bracteates plus one gold Anglo-Saxon armband

This beautiful hoard was found by Glenn Lister, Cyril Askew and Dennis O'Neil of the North-West MDC, North-West Region.

The total weight of this hoard is 93 grams. Bracteates are Anglo-Saxon adornments, bead-rimmed with a suspension loop for wearing around the neck.

This find resulted in a recent archaeological investigation and was again a close vote.

Other entries were a group of 20 early Roman denarii currently with the British Museum, found by Mike Evans, Chris Matthews, Adrian Quinn and Stephen Wright of the Coventry Heritage Detector Society, Midlands Federation while detecting on arable farmland.

Two Ambiani gold staters (Gallic War) 60-55 Century BC. These were found by David Villanueva from the Swale Search & Recovery Club. David has been detecting since 1972 and found the coins on previously detected land.



Artefact Category

1st: A gold early medieval pendant, finder Peter Thomas, Thanet & Wantsum MDC in the Southern Region.

This small artefact is in the shape of a three dimensional animal head. It is decorated with granules and filigree with one garnet inlay surviving, and has a small suspension loop set at the back of the head. It is a testament to the creativity and skill of the craftsmen who created it, using what to us were primitive hand tools.

2nd: A Bronze Age side-looped and socketed spearhead, 1500 BC-1150 BC. Finder Paul Wilson of the Coventry Heritage Detector Society from the Midlands Federation.

Bronze Age side-looped and socketed spearhead, 1500 BC-1150 BC – Paul Wilson



Paul attended the meeting bringing his entry displayed in a superb case he had made himself.

The vote for these two artefacts was extremely close, knocking the Roman silvered trumpet brooch into third place.

This was found by Martin Roche, South Lancs & Cheshire Club, North-West region and was in excellent condition.

Congratulations to the winners and many thanks to all those who took part in the competition.

Hiliary Fagen



Gold early medieval pendant – Peter Thomas



Roman silvered trumpet brooch – Martin Roche

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Treasure Valuation Committee

Finds of Treasure where an abated reward has been made

Trevor Austin

Continuing on from last issue, this time we will look at abatements. We looked in 2010 at the rewards made between 1999 and 2004 that were abated. In this issue I have added further abated finds up to 2014.

The chart below lists all the rewards that were abated during this period.

Paragraph 79 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice lists circumstances in which finders can expect to receive no reward or an abated reward:

'(i) where the finder has committed an offence under section 8 of the Act by failing to report treasure within 14 days of making the find or within 14 days of believing or of having reasonable grounds for believing

that the find was treasure, without a reasonable excuse;

(ii) where the finder has committed an offence under section 42 of the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (unauthorised use of a metal detector in a protected place) (see paragraph 31);

(iii) where there is evidence of illegal activity in relation to a find whether or not a prosecution has been mounted;

(iv) where all the relevant circumstances surrounding a find, including the find-spot, were not reported;

(v) where a finder has failed to deposit a find promptly as directed by the coroner and/or where there is evidence that only part of a find



has been handed in;

(vi) where there are reasonable grounds for believing that a find was made elsewhere than on the alleged site;

(vii) where there are reasonable grounds for believing that the finder was trespassing;

(viii) where significant damage has been done deliberately or recklessly either to the actual object, or to a surrounding monument or to the archaeological deposits making up the contexts which may explain the circumstances in which the

Finds of Treasure Where no Reward or an Abated Reward has been made

Year	Case name/number	Valuation	Reason for abatement	Award	Percentage deducted
1999	Aldborough Anglo Saxon Sword pommel	£50,000	Discrepancy over findspot	£45,000	10% from finders share
12/10/2001	Milton Keynes Bronze Age Jewellery	£290,000	Landowners denied having given permission to finders. After considering statements from all concerned the TVC disagreed.	£290,000	10% from landowners share added to finders share.
12/10/2001	Buckland Monachorum 2, Medieval gold coins of Edward IV. (Ryals)	£2,000	Failure to report after advice within 14 days. Police recovered coins.	£1,500	50% of finders share, i.e. 25% of total.
27/06/2002	Braithwaite Crescentic ornament	£1,600	Straightening of folded metal		10% of total
12/12/2002	Whitchurch Roman silver spoon	£100	Inexpert cleaning	£80	20% of total
13/12/2002	Chelmsford 23 gold staters	£30,000	Failure to report within 14 days. (coins found gradually over 2 years) Untruth about the coins origins told to BM curator. Attempted amateur excavation of site.	£12,000	60% of total
26/09/03	Cannington Medieval gold finger ring	£1,000	Failure to seek permission to detect. 2 months delay in reporting.	£950	5% from finders share.
13/12/2003	High Green 449 Roman bronze coins.	£750	Police had to recover coins. Finder misleading under oath.	£300	60% of finders share.
13/12/2003	West Wickham Romano – British Finger ring.	£125	Heavy cleaning which may have led to loss of decoration.	£100	20% of total
5/03/04	Thorpe Salvin Anglo-Saxon mount fragment	£1,200	Soldering together of two fragments and failing to record find-spot. Also failed to ask permission of landowner.	£1062.5	15% of finders share.

object became buried or concealed, when the object was removed from the place where it was found;

(ix) where there are other factors that the Secretary of State thinks it appropriate to take into account in individual cases.'

Cases often come to the Committee for consideration under paragraph 79(viii). Where significant damage has been caused, the reward may be abated if it was done deliberately (that is, the act was done with the intention of causing damage). Any damage the Committee feels was intentional, whether to the find or the site, will of course warrant abatement.

The reward may also be abated where the damage was done recklessly. Whether an act was done recklessly will depend on the finders' appreciation of the risk in his actions. This will involve assessing the experience of the finder and his comparative knowledge of the Treasure Act Code of Practice and its recommendations on the care of finds. The Committee may well draw a different conclusion between a detector user with many years experience, who may be presumed to be more aware of such issues, to one who is new to the hobby.

Cases considered by the Committee under paragraph

79(viii) include cases where the damage has been caused by inexperienced cleaning. Paragraph 47 and appendix 4 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice gives guidance on the care of finds and highlights the dangers of vital information being lost through cleaning.

It is obvious from the fact that there have been just nine abated rewards since 1999, out of approximately 2,000 Treasure cases which have been reported, that finders do take great care of their finds and are mindful of the damage which may occur through careless excavation and cleaning.

Advice

Some metals, when removed from

the ground, such as gold or silver-gold alloy, can be readily identified without cleaning, however it is best not to attempt to clean any find you discover. Keep the find in a dry stable condition and take it to a museum or your local Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) for professional advice. The original surface can yield important information about the object's manufacture or use.

A series of advice leaflets will be produced shortly by the Portable Antiquities Scheme which should prove an invaluable source of information for the storage and conservation of finds.

Below are the abated finds from 2003 to 2014.

2003 T37	Iron Age and Roman coins (36) and container	South Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire	07/08/2007	£10,350	30%	Finder initially lied to museum, claiming coins had already been reported. Required coroner's officer to compel him to deposit all coins. Afterwards helpful.
2004 T242	Bronze Age assemblage	Northampton	Northamptonshire	27/06/2007	£1,500	40%	Finder not sought permission to detect on common land. Was member of club and tried to seek retrospective permission in evasive manner, but was otherwise cooperative.
2005 T411	Roman coin hoard	Doncaster	South Yorkshire	04/04/2008	£170	35%	Finders not sought permission to detect
2005 T261	Bronze Age base-metal group	Ramsgate area	Kent	07/08/2007	£1,100	100%	Nighthawking; finder removed objects from archaeological site after permission to detect was denied. Did not report finds.
2006 T4	Roman coin hoard	Burwash	East Sussex	22/09/2011	£46,010	10%	Seemed to go on land after permission had been retracted
2006 T298	Post-Medieval silver forger's hoard	Stockbridge	South Yorkshire	06/01/2009	£65	17%	Finder not sought permission, but cooperated afterward
2006 T611	Roman coins	Sherfield on Loddon	Hampshire	04/04/2008	£125	20%	Finder not sought permission to detect
2007 T39	Medieval silver seal matrix	Sealfield	North Yorkshire	27/06/2008	£3,800	10%	Finder delayed in reporting find
2007 T311	Anglo-Saxon coins	Harswell	ER of Yorkshire	01/10/2010	£500	100%	Finder refused to disclose findspot
2008 T485	Bronze Age axe hoard	Uttlesford	Essex	13/01/2011	£1,500	100%	Nighthawking; finders caught in layby by police
2009 T125	Medieval silver coins (16)	King's Langley	Hertfordshire	25/02/2011	£800	10%	Finder not sought permission for detecting on Common land. Signs present but not clear.
2009 T450	Roman coin hoard	Shrewsbury	Shropshire	09/03/2012	£26,958	50%	Detecting on SAM, but cooperated afterward
2009 T656	Medieval silver ring	Bishop Wilton	ER of Yorkshire	20/07/2012	£100	50%	Detecting without permission of landowner
2010 T107	Medieval silver piedfort		Shropshire	28/10/2011	£800	80%	Failure to report, but finder had at least shown it to a museum for recording. Only handed in after police involved.
2013 T188	Viking gold pendant	Spilsby	Lincolnshire	13/03/2014	£4,500	5%	Over cleaning of object

The SMA Rally

Some months ago the Midlands Federation of Detector Clubs was given the opportunity to dig on the estate owned by Andrew Knight a former editor of the Economist who was once named International Editor of the Year by World Press Review. His eminent media career is legendary spanning decades within the media industry.

Naturally the Committee was keen to organise a rally and members were invited to visit the estate office. The office was, at the time, shared by the SMA fundraising organisation a charity that Mr Knight has been keen to promote since his grandson was diagnosed with the condition.

It is probably fair to say that very few people know anything about SMA (Spinal Muscular Atrophy) and the Committee had no idea about the condition that claims so many young lives.

SMA is a genetic neuromuscular disease, which means it is inherited and affects nerves responsible for muscle function. Although classified as rare, SMA is the leading genetic killer of infants and toddlers, with approximately 95% of the most severely diagnosed cases resulting in death by the age of 18 months. Children with a less severe form of SMA face the prospect of progressive muscle wasting, loss of mobility and motor function. One in 40 people is an SMA carrier, i.e. approximately 1.5 million people in the UK. One in every 6,000 births is affected by SMA.

Although there is no cure, advances in supportive therapies have led to increased longevity and improved quality of life,

proving that the disease progress is amenable to change.

Following discussion it was decided that the rally would be organised on one of the estate farms and work began to advertise the event.

In March 2014 after months of planning the rally took place near Shipston on Stour and several fields were made available. The SMA fundraising team provided hot food and drinks throughout the day and a raffle was held with various prizes kindly donated by various organisations. All proceeds were to go towards the SMA funds.

The rally was a big success and some very interesting finds were made, the most notable being a gold James I half crown.

In total the amount raised by the event was just under £3,000 and the Midlands Federation made up the shortfall to that figure. Needless to say the SMA fundraisers were delighted, not only with the effort, but also with the success of the day in terms of the happy atmosphere created and the good behaviour of the visiting detectorists.

It was a win, win situation and one that the Midlands Federation was pleased to be a part of. Hopefully the awareness of SMA and the work that the SMA charity does has been raised and this can only lead to the life expectancy of many affected children being greatly enhanced.

Andrew Knight is a very busy man and it was difficult to find a date in his diary for him to meet with some of the Midlands Federation committee members. He did eventually find the time, however,



Andrew Knight, in pink shirt, being presented with a cheque for £3000 by John Wells and committee members of the Midlands Federation of metal detecting clubs. Also in the picture are members of the SMA fundraising team.



The Midlands Federation of MDC's was honoured to receive the certificate above from the SMA.

and was presented with a cheque for £3000. He seemed genuinely surprised at the amount raised and expressed his gratitude to all

concerned for their efforts. It is hoped that further fund raising rallies on behalf of the charity can be arranged in the future.

New Website

The Midland Federation has been working on a new website which we believe is now ready to launch. It will of course be updated and hopefully added to and improved as time goes by, but in the meantime we invite you to take a look. Any comments, suggestions, criticisms etc are of course welcome. Our aim is to present the hobby in a good light and promote goodwill and

acceptance by focusing attention on some of the good things we do in the communittee.

One of our most recent successes is being instrumental in the re-opening of Berkswell Museum which sadly closed last year due to lack of support and visitor numbers. Following constructive talks with the Museum committee they have decided not only to re open, but also

to give us a room for detecting displays and demonstrations.

I think it is a fact that many museums in the UK have benefited greatly from the contributions of detectorists. Unlike the old days, many archaeologists are now accepting that we have an important part to play and we hope that the Midlands Federation is a good

example of the cooperation that can be achieved. We are proud to say that a Midland Federation member, Terry Herbert, was responsible for finding the Staffordshire Hoard which is now on display at the Birmingham Museum.

www.midfed.co.uk

Alan Charlish

Midlands Federation Charity Event 2014

Members of the committee of The Midlands Federation of Metal Detector Clubs were delighted to be invited to a beer and skittles night organised by the Rotary Club of Coventry Phoenix. The invitation had been extended following a successful charity metal detecting event held on a Warwickshire farm in September. The highlight of the evening was when a cheque for £2,300 was presented to the Chairman of the Rotary Club, Mr John Clegg, a retired Paediatric Orthopaedic surgeon previously based at University Hospital Coventry & Warwick. Every year since his retirement Dr Clegg supervises a

team of ten expert doctors at Aadhar Hospital, Chavatgalli. The event is organised by the Rotary Club of Belgauum North, a division of Rotary International based in Mumbai. During the three day event Dr Clegg and his team conduct 30 surgeries treating musculoskeletal deformity correction for nearly a hundred children. Accommodation and food is provided for the patients and when they are discharged the organisation also provides follow up care and free medicines.

The Midlands Federation is proud to have played a part in raising so much money for such a worthy cause and future metal detecting



Pictured from left to right, Richard Grindal (The Rotarian farmer who kindly donated the land), Ray Simpson (Mid Fed), John Wells (Mid Fed), Alan Charlish (Mid Fed), Dave Rumsey (Mid Fed), Dr John Clegg (Rotarian), Clive Raymont (Rotarian and Brian Pollard (Mid Fed).

events are planned following kind offers of land to detect on from farmers who are also members of Rotary International. The skittles

night was a major success as apart from the £2,300 raised from the metal detecting day a further £630 was raised on the night.

OBITUARY – GORDON FREDERICK COLLETT

24 JULY 1924 – 26 DECEMBER 2014

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the death of Gordon Collett who died on Boxing Day 2014. He was 90 years of age and will be sadly missed by everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him. Our thoughts at this time are with his wife Vera and their son Bernard.

For the past 35 years Gordon, Vera and Bernard played an active role in the life of the Midlands Region and his service in the role of Club Secretary for four years and a member of its committee for 15 years of the Coventry Heritage Detector Society was greatly instrumental in making it one of the best clubs in the region. In 2013 Gordon, Vera and Bernard were made honorary life members.

Gordon participated in all the club activities and his wife Vera, to whom he was married for 57 years, was always at his side and could always be called upon to sell raffle tickets, make teas and refreshments and help out whenever called upon. Bernard, their only son's paintings were highly prized and were eagerly sought after when he offered them up as prizes at club fundraising events.

Gordon was born and raised in Pershore, Worcestershire where he won a scholarship to the Royal Worcester Grammar



School. There he was a member of the Air Training Corps and the Home Guard in the years leading up to the outbreak of the World War 2. On leaving school he moved to Royal Leamington Spa where he joined the staff of Great Western Railways.

He was a quiet intelligent man whose remarkable memory could recount with great detail his years before and leading up to the war, the blitz on Coventry in 1940 and how his love of cycling was used to great effect by the authorities, carrying messages to and from the Command Headquarters in the centre of Coventry to outlying command posts during some of the worst of the bombings during that fateful raid of the 14-15



November 1940.

On 31 December 1941 following the destruction of his adopted city, was all the spur Gordon needed and his eagerness to join the RAF caused him to falsify his age by six months which, following his basic training, found him as a Radio Operator/Air Gunner in Wellington bombers over Germany. Following demobilisation in 1947 he returned to GWR.

In 1957 he married Vera and in 1962 they had a son named Bernard. He was an accomplished artist, a keen fisherman and a very competitive cyclist with the Warwick Cycling Club on the Midlands Circuit.

Gordon, Vera and Bernard took up

detecting as a family activity and enjoyed success over the years finding many interesting and varied objects up until the ravages of time took their toll. He always retained his enthusiasm for his beloved RAF Association, attending all meetings and functions.

His interests in everyone and everything were unbounded. His firm but friendly handshake was always a pre-cursor to chat, a joke and to reminisce. He had a phenomenal memory for minute detail and was a fount of local knowledge that made talking to him a real pleasure that will be sadly missed by those who knew him.

His funeral was held at Coventry Crematorium on Monday 12 January 2014 with a packed chapel attended by family and friends supported by 12 banner carrying comrades from his beloved British Legion, the RAF and other Services Associations. The Last Post was played by a bugler as a final tribute to a caring man, a devoted husband and a beloved father. It was a moving and fitting farewell to a proud, reliable and much admired man.

We in the Midlands Region will miss him greatly.

John Wells
Chairman - Midlands Region

A Jewel of a Day

A beautiful summer Sunday morning in Cheshire, in a field we had not detected before, what could be better? Well, after a quiet morning and with the euphoria fading I decided to switch tactics, with good signals hard to come by I changed the settings on the XP. Then before long, the 'PING' that we all love to hear, I had to dig 10/11" before it came up, a gold and enamelled pendant with a garnet like stone on the face above an agate image of a child.

It was not immediately obvious to me that this was anything special, I showed the piece to my pals and they too were unsure. The



following day I placed images on one of the ID sites, several people gave opinions that ranged from Anglo Saxon to Medieval to Victorian Pinchbeck.



I contacted our FLO with some images, she confirmed that it could be Treasure Trove and a week later I handed the pendant over. In due course the report came in from the

British Museum, imagine my delight reading that it was a Comesso pendant and although it has few parallels it can be dated to 1550. With this information I researched the piece further, unlikely to be English it is probably Italian and the agate child's face may be earlier than the rest of the pendant.

The British Museum have indicated that the Grosvenor Museum have an interest and so the pendant continues on its way through the system. The landowners and I have an agreement in place and so, with luck, a happy ending is in sight.

Kev Gorman

Crewe & Nantwich Rally – Did you borrow a spade?

I just wanted to pass on a huge thank you to all NCMD members of the NW Region who attended the Crewe & Nantwich Rally at Maes-y-groes on Sunday 26 October. We did not have as many detectorists attending as I had hoped for, but I have since learned that there were three other club rallies being held around the region at the same time.

Nevertheless thanks to your help we did raise almost £500 to be presented to the nominated charity.

On the day the weather stayed kind to us all and some nice items were unearthed and presented at the finds table.

Amongst the items found on the rally was a Bronze Age spearhead, a lovely engraved pilgrims ampulla, four hammered coins that included one from James I, the rest were not formerly identified on the day. A beautiful and well-preserved Charles II half-crown, plus a counterfeit coin of the same sovereign and value albeit in fairly rough condition.

An unusual find was a cartwheel penny that was stamped with a crown on both sides ... Quite a few Georgian bronze coins and the

usual collection of pre-decimal coinage, buttons and buckles. A full list of finds is yet to be put together but I believe everyone had a good day and look forward to sharing another such day with you all in the near future ... thanks again.

However ... a kindly retired gentleman who helped me organise the rally performed a good deed by helping one detectorist out of a difficult situation which would have spoilt his day. The detectorist in question, TALL and with GREY HAIR AND BEARD arrived at the rally site in his BLUE RANGE ROVER, only to find he had left his digging tool back at home. The kindly retired gentleman did not wish him to miss out on the day, especially as the detectorist had driven a considerable distance to attend this charity rally, so he drove some miles back to his own home, collected his own spade and drove back to the rally and loaned it to the detectorist so he could enjoy his day ... but my problem is that he did not return the spade to his kindly Samaritan at the end of the day,

Maybe it was an oversight as he wanted to return home which was

quite a distance from the rally site ... unfortunately I do not have the detectorist's name. I do know he drove a blue Range Rover and he said that he came from Lancaster; I spoke to him for quite a while at the rally site entrance as he was waiting for several of his friends to arrive who had gotten lost in the local areas back lanes. Personally I did not see the detectorist who borrowed the spade leave the site sadly ... but someone must have.

The old retired gentleman who had loaned the spade is deeply upset about this issue and naturally wishes for its return, mainly because it was a special gift from his daughter, bought for him because he has a disability and it has an ergonomically designed shaft to made digging easier, the spade is also bright yellow coloured so is quite conspicuous.

My biggest problem with this missing spade issue is that its owner, the good Samaritan, is very influential with local landowners having been a farmer himself before retiring due to ill-health. He has a wealth of knowledge about our local area and has been largely instrumental to myself and

C&N MDS acquiring permissions on otherwise inaccessible land and I would hate to lose such a valuable member of our local detecting community due to an oversight by the detectorist.

I do believe it was a genuine oversight because the detectorist did offer the gentleman a cash deposit to hold until he returned the spade ... the gentleman refused to accept a deposit as such is his kindly nature ... I would urge all those present to ask your members about who attended the rally, and if they could kindly identify the detectorist, or contact him so that the spade can be returned to its rightful owner and I of course wish to retain his expertise and knowledge for future rallies which I trust will be well attended by members from our regions clubs.

I am sure that this was a genuine mistake and we will soon sort it out and we can start planning further rallies with the spade owner's assistance.

Please feel free to contact me with any information you have, my contact details are below.

John Parry, Chairman
Crewe & Nantwich MDS

Battle of Bannockburn – Part 2

In the last edition of *Digging Deep*, Lesley Sleith, Chair of the Scottish Region gave a detailed account of the survey of Bannockburn battlefield area in February this year. The survey was recorded by the BBC, and if you've been watching their recent two-part series on 'The Quest for Bannockburn', you will have noticed a number of detectorists assisting Neil Oliver and Tony Pollard in their efforts to pinpoint the location of this iconic battle fought in 1314.

It's not the first time that Neil and Tony have tried to locate the battlefield. They tried to find it before, on TV, when they did a show called *Two Men In a Trench*, way back in 2002. They tried but they failed ...

This time it was a bigger 700th anniversary deal spread over two episodes, into which they endeavoured to fit the complete story of the two-day battle. They got help from the University of Glasgow, the National Trust for Scotland, Historic Scotland and Stirling Council and of course, the very latest technology – laser mapping and CGI.

Over 50 detectorists comprising members of the Scottish Artefact Recovery Group (SARG) and a number of independent detectorists, were invited to assist, and a lot of digging was carried out revealing, well ... precious little of importance at the end of the day to show for all their efforts. However, everybody agreed that it was a fascinating experience and a unique

opportunity to detect in an area associated with one of Scotland's pivotal historical events.

In total, more than 3,000 metal objects were found in the general Bannockburn area, including an 18th-century coin and a modern-day toy cannon, and pieces of medieval pottery. However, after due dating and verification processes, only a handful, including a heel spur and stirrup, were deemed to be from the correct period and possibly relevant to the battle.

The dig did however throw up one important find which was almost certainly a relic from the battle - a cross-shaped harness pendant (illustrated), typical of the type that would have been used by English cavalry at that time.

Dr Natasha Ferguson from the Treasure Trove Unit, validated the cross as coming from the late 13th to the 14th century. The pendant was found close to the southern bank of the Bannock Burn, near to the area where English troops camped on the Carse, on the other side of the burn.

Bannockburn therefore continues to remain a frustrating and elusive area for archaeologists, and it's possible that anything of significance that still exists might now have sunk out of range of detectors since much of the suspected battleground was known to be soft and marshy in places all those centuries ago.

Alastair Hackett



National Farm Open Day 2014

On 11 June 2014 farms all over the UK held open days to introduce the public especially children to farm life and how farms relate to crops, farm animals and wildlife.

There are usually demonstrations of farm life with tractor rides around the farm, to enhance the visits there were bouncy castles, slides, picnic areas and displays of animals e.g. sheep, goats rabbits etc.

Severnvale Historical Research & Detecting Society (SHRADS www.shrads.org.uk) were asked to hold a display of finds and explain to the public what responsible detecting was about. The society put on a large display of finds and we explained how we went about detecting under the umbrella of the NCMD. It was also planned to allow children to detect using two Fisher 1265s to find

buried pennies and other coins and in addition old copies of The Searcher and Treasure Hunting were sold for 20p proceeds going to charity.

The display of uncleaned finds including pennies, buckles, chains, wire, iron bars etc were shown to highlight the rubbish we remove from the fields which reduces the chances of damage to farm machinery. This pile of

rubbish created a great deal of interest among the children who spent a long time sorting through it to enable them to retrieve pennies to take home.

The day was very successful and did lead to SHRADS being given more land to detect, perhaps other clubs might follow this lead on their local farms Open Day in 2015.

David Whalley

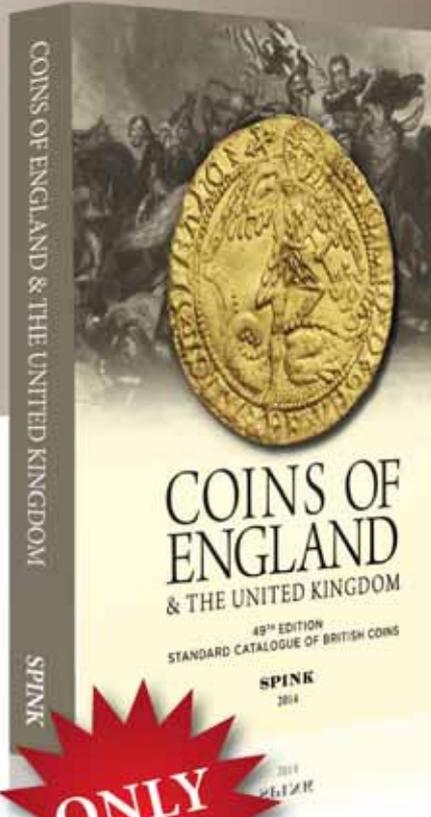
MEETING DATE

NCMD OGM – 1 March
APPAG – May date TBC

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