

Digging deep

NCMD
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR METAL DETECTING

ISSUE 12

All the latest news from the National Council for Metal Detecting

NEWS

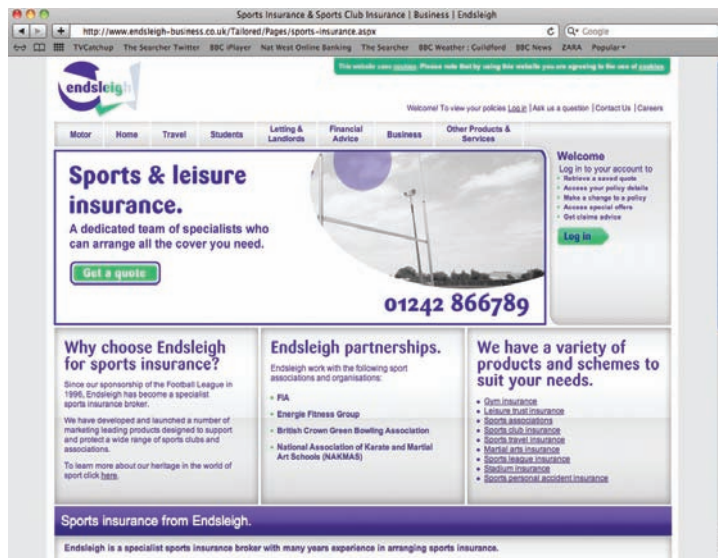
More from your NCMD Insurance



After many years association with Perkins Slade insurance brokers, we have received more favourable terms from Endsleigh insurance brokers, underwritten by Hiscox.

The NCMD spends five figures annually on insurance and is therefore committed to reviewing our insurance terms on a regular basis. Endsleigh have offered our members extra facilities for guests that were not previously available to us and is therefore considered by the Executive more relevant to today's club needs.

As the membership cards are printed up to six months in advance, the insurance details for the year commencing 1 April 2013 are therefore incorrect. The contact details for the insurers are now as below. Anyone wishing further information or in the case of any claim arising, members should contact:



Dan Thompson
Tel: 01242 866789
Email: sports@endsleigh.co.uk
Web: www.endsleigh-business.co.uk/Tailored/Pages/sports-insurance.aspx

From the 1 April new insurance details including the policy document and summary of cover will be available on our website.

Trevor Austin

The Society for Historical Archaeology Leicester Annual Conference

The Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA) held its 46th annual conference on 'Historical and Underwater Archaeology' at Leicester University on the 9-12 January 2013.

Myself and Chairman Steve Critchley were invited by Minelab International, to accompany Sheila

Kelleher (General Manager), Ruth Fuller (Consumer Marketing Manager) and Finbarr Lorden (Customer Service Support Officer), as advisors on metal detecting practice and law. Although Minelab were the only detector manufacturer present, the aim was not to stimulate sales of

their equipment, but to encourage best practice and promote their belief in preserving heritage through stronger links with archaeologists and educational institutions.

The conference consisted of two distinct parts, the first three days was allocated to lectures by

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eminent archaeologist and university lecturers mostly from America, at various locations around the campus. Steve and I attended some of these lectures, consisting mainly of archaeological excavations in America, which were extremely interesting and it was fascinating to compare the methodology of North American archaeologists with their British counterparts. Archaeological finds in North America are never going to compare with the quantity of finds from British sites, especially as the Native Americans went straight from the Stone Age to the relatively modern period after the discovery of the Americas in the 15th Century, having a lack of metallic finds from this period.

'The team' set up in the Book Room, where we engaged with visitors from various Universities in America, although one or two from the UK were present, on the use of detectors on archaeological excavations and described the advantages that metal detecting survey of sites can provide citing various excavations in the UK where detectors had complimented normal excavation processes in helping to recover and preserve our heritage. We also demonstrated the ability of the new Minelab CTX3030 to survey archaeological sites by using its on-board GPS and tracking system, uploading the information to a laptop or PC.

There were also other interesting items on display, not least a handheld XRF (X-Ray Fluorescence) machine, which provided some interesting results

on medieval coins of differing periods and their metal contents. It was fascinating to compare coins from the early medieval against coins of Charles I and the improved refinement of the metal.

The Friday evening saw an awards banquet Mercure Hotel, although the awards were mostly for overseas work, the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology received an award for 'Excellence in public Historical Archaeology', there was also an Award of Merit (posthumously) for Geoff Egan.

Saturday saw the public event, which included both lectures and demonstrations, and it had an excellent turnout. Kevin Leahy was present as well as some other well-known names such as Francis Prior and Carena Lewis, although we were kept so busy on the Minelab stand, that neither Steve nor I had time to attend any of their lectures. During the afternoon Minelab had two 20 minute slots whereby we would demonstrate the use of detecting in the context of an archaeological survey.

For the demonstration we were joined by Dr Matt Reeves of James Madison's Montpelier, Matt is the Director of Archaeology and Landscape Restoration. The organisation offers programmes; *Designed for metal-detector specialists and hobbyists, the program serves to introduce the significance of archaeological methods such as gridded surveys, density plots to define site concentrations, and a deeper understanding of the past. The Montpelier Foundation's Archaeology Department is*



developing leading-edge methodology for involving the metal detector community in the use of metal detectors as a remote-sensing device to locate and protect sites. One of the main emphasizes during the week-long training program is the importance of site context for individual finds. The programme is something which clubs or members may be interested in doing. You can find further information at <http://www.montpelier.org/research-and-collections/archaeology/archaeology-programs/archaeology-expeditions/metal-detectors>

The survey took place outside on one of the grassed areas, where we had set out a grid pattern and after a brief introduction on the CTX 3030 from Finbarr and explanation on how detectors are

used to survey archaeological sites by Matt, I proceeded to detect one of the grids marking each ferrous and non-ferrous finds with different markers, assisted by children from the audience, who I then invited to try their hand at detecting. The demonstration went extremely well, considering the extremely cold conditions. Luckily for Steve he was in the relative warmth along with Sheila and Ruth attending to inquisitive members of the public! Once we had surveyed the 'grid' we proceeded to upload the information, which was then visible on the monitor set up on the Minelab exhibition stand.

All in all a great conference, and Steve and myself would like to thank Minelab in their promotion of responsible metal detecting.

Trevor Austin



Finds Recording with FLOs

Trevor Austin

There have been one or two requests from NCMD Regions, to clarify the criteria used by Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) when determining which items qualify for recording. There have been reports where, due to the landowner not wanting to identify a specific field and the find was being recorded to a four figure grid reference; the FLO has refused to record such finds. Similarly, there seems to be a reluctance to record a find that was not of archaeological importance.

Although most finds presented to FLO's will be recorded, there seems to be occasions where specific circumstances may prohibit the recording. While it is understandable that this may happen from time to time, I asked Michael Lewis, Deputy Head of Portable Antiquities and Treasure, for his opinion on the reasons why certain finds may be 'filtered' out from the recording process.

"While it is welcome news that more and more detectorists wish to record their finds with the PAS, the resources available to the PAS to undertake this recording work has not increased: indeed, in the last Spending Review the Government actually cut the PAS budget by 15%, so in fact PAS has more to do with dwindling resources, and sadly we are not expecting that situation to improve in the foreseeable future. Although the PAS is looking to increase capacity through making better use of volunteers (we have made a bid to the HLF to help us with this) it is inevitably the case that FLOs have to choose carefully which finds to record, and which to leave for another day. That is for their judgement, taking in account their own workload, which varies from area to area. However, most will try and record all finds over 300 years old, prioritising those with precise findspot information; a six figure



grid reference is the minimum requirement if the information is to be useful for archaeology. This does not change our advice to finders – to show all their finds to the FLO – but FLOs can't record everything that is found and therefore they need to be selective."

Although the problem seems to be specific to one or two regions, there is obviously the potential for the practice to be adopted wider. In these difficult times where finances are restricted in all government departments, I suppose it is understandable that the PAS is no exception.



Report on the All Party Parliamentary Group on Agroecology

As part of the on-going campaign to highlight the dangers to the hobby of Contaminated Green Waste, the NCMD represented by its President, John Wells, were invited to send a delegate to a meeting convened in the Palace of Westminster on 6 December 2012.

This APPAG meeting was convened to address the contention that the UK Government commitment is insufficient to safeguard the ability of UK soils to provide essential ecosystem services for future generations (adapted from the Natural Environment White Paper).

Through expert speakers and open discussion, the meeting would outline the current UK policies which exist to help protect our soil resources and to propose positive outcomes.

The meeting heard from academic, practitioner and government perspectives to debate the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for UK policy and research in relation to the management of soils in the farming sector.

One of the key points up for discussion that interested the

NCMD was that UK soils are vulnerable to degradation through mis-management, climate change and importantly to us pollution. To this end it was felt that the UK needed a coordinated Government approach to managing, protecting and enhancing this valuable natural resource to meet the challenges of food security alongside environmental regulation.

That was the official reason for my attendance but the real reason for my attendance was to attempt to lobby against Contaminated Green Waste with those present and to gather information to add to the briefing papers submitted to Sir Bob Russell in advance of his adjournment debate, which in fact took place less than a week later.

The meeting took place in one of the larger rooms in Westminster and was packed out with people standing and some having to be turned away.

The format of the meeting was to listen to each expert and then to hold a following discussion on that particular lecture. It immediately became obvious that the time-limited ensuing comments bore no semblance to the previous lectures and became an opportunity for

lobby groups and vested interests to air their views on their particular hobby horses.

To give you an overview of those I listened to on the day there was:

Professor Nic Lampkin, Executive Director of the Organic Research Centre
Professor Mark Kibblewhite, Professor of Applied Soil Science, Cranfield University
Professor Phil Haygarth, Environment Centre, Lancaster University
Doctor Bob Rees, Head of Scotland's Rural University College's Carbon Management Centre.

To say this series of lectures was technically heavy going would be an understatement and even if I was able to I would have struggled to make pertinent connections regarding Contaminated Green Waste to the topics under discussion.

However I did ask for the lecture notes and slides to be sent to me and I will send these on to anyone who wishes to have them, but be warned they are technically very challenging and extremely boring.

In order for our attendance at the meeting to be meaningful I asked the Secretary to the meeting if he would send the attendees our

current discussion documents. This he said he would.

In addition to this I emailed each of the guest speakers mentioned for their views and responses on Contaminated Green Waste. To date I have not heard back from any of them.

Was it worthwhile attending? YES! At least we have our name on the attendance sheet as interested observers and this has led to more credibility to our endeavours with Sir Bob Russell.

YES! We were able to make contacts and representations to groups and individuals that ordinarily we would not have been aware of.

Should we repeat the exercise? Possibly, if future lectures and discussions were pertinent to the outcomes we desire and that the exercise would be meaningful and cost effective

In conclusion the CGW sub-committee has taken this and every other opportunity to spread the word about Contaminated Green Waste that this Council has instructed us to do.

John Wells
President

Environment Agency meeting: Waste Land Spreading Issues

Following on from the much publicised adjournment debate in the House of Commons on the subject of contaminated Green waste; the NCMD was invited to a meeting with the Environment Agency (EA).

Myself President John Wells and Vice Chairman Byron Tosh, members of the NCMD sub-committee dealing with contaminated green waste, met with Mat Davis Technical Advisor for the EA and Viv Dennis, Senior Advisor Bio Waste.

We explained that the green waste contamination problem came to

our attention about three years ago. Before that there had been hotspots of contamination, but we became aware through our members that it was becoming more widespread, starting in Kent and spreading to Cheshire and Lincolnshire.

Our members were having problems with detecting on farmland – with fields being withdrawn (to detecting) for ever, either because there were too much contamination with metal containing waste or because, once the farmers became aware of this, they were denying any future access to their land. EA's Vital

Earth prosecution case confirmed to them that this is a big issue in England – we are not aware that this is yet a problem in Scotland or Wales.

The NCMD think that some farmers are happy to take this waste and are paid to take it (figures of £35/tonne had been banded about) whilst others are taking it unwittingly, assuming it is 'good stuff'. Additionally in some cases, from the type and extent of physical contamination, it looks like the waste hasn't come from household green waste, but that other waste has been chopped up and mixed with the compost.

Since forming a sub-committee to look into this, we've been in contact with a number of organisations, including Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, The Sport and Recreation Alliance, Councils (about their duty of care and how they police things – the failure to instigate a few announced inspections), McCain's (the potato product processor), Sir Bob Russell MP (who raised this as an adjournment debate in the House of Commons), the press, the BBC and at the Commons All Party Agricultural Group.

The meeting went through the EA's role in relation to waste land

spreading, the role of others such as ORG, WRAP and DEFRA, the EU and domestic legislative and Government policy background (including LA recycling targets, link to Quality Protocols in Scotland and Wales), the line that the EA take on composting and land spreading, and how the EA regulate these in practice.

EA said that they have no evidence to suggest that this is a widespread or big issue. Could we provide the EA with any evidence of the scale of this – numbers, locations etc. and can the NCMD be the EA's eyes and ears and report these cases to them? We said we already do this with The Alliance to Reduce Crime against Heritage (ARCH), but explained that our members are probably reluctant to pass on information as this could antagonise farmers and make their access problems worse.

The EA went through how they deal with incident reports, including from anonymous reporters and how they are now using specialist crime teams. We appreciated EA's need for evidence and will consider putting a message to members, possibly through our in-house newsletter **Digging Deep**.

The NCMD had several questions to put to the Environment Agency, who did their best to answer most of them.

1. How could the implementation of the legislation be improved?
2. How could the filtration of contamination out of green waste be improved?

In general, we have regular meetings with DEFRA and the relevant trade bodies about how we are implementing the legislation and making improvements. More specifically, we are currently reviewing our internal systems for dealing with mobile plant permits and deployments for land-spreading, but there is nothing I can report on as yet.

As a regulator, we need to make the best use of the resources we have and act in a risk based, proportionate way that doesn't impose undue burdens on business and promotes sustainable growth. In implementing the legislation, we therefore have limits on how far we can go with strict, conventional regulation. However we can supplement this through our influencing role, through advice and guidance and by working with others to achieve the outcomes desired by legislation and the government through voluntary means.

An example of how this works is our approach to ensuring that permitted composting sites don't take unacceptable or contaminated wastes. First of all, our environmental permits for composting include conditions that specify the types of waste that can be accepted. Although we can't specify in a permit the level of allowed contamination or what steps the operator has to take to prevent or remove contaminant or unsuitable wastes, we do specify that such things should be included in the operator's written management system. See pages 31-32 of our permitting guidance 'How to comply with your environmental permit' Given that local authorities are probably the biggest supplier of green wastes to composting sites, one of the main causes of contamination problems is likely to be due to the type and quality of wastes that local authorities have delivered to composting sites. We recognised that contamination due to waste cardboard was becoming a problem a couple of years ago, and although we couldn't act on this directly as

a regulator, we did work with the AfOR, Association for Organics Recycling the main trade body for the composting industry, who issued the attached guidance to local authorities. AfOR have also issued the attached voluntary protocol on measuring physical contaminants in delivered wastes.

3. How is the composition of Contaminated Green Waste measured?

We are not able to specify in composting permit conditions what the quality and/or contamination levels have to be in the compost produced. We have had a voluntary certification scheme (that we devised with WRAP) in place since 2007 for composters to produce Quality Protocol (QP) compost. QP compost must comply with BSI's PAS100, which does specify contamination levels and how these should be measured. A large number, but my no means all, composters subscribe to this scheme. Otherwise, we have guidance on assessing the suitability of wastes for land-spreading in our Land-spreading Guidance, written to support land-spreading operators. www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/Land-spreading_guidance_links.pdf This does include guidance on contaminants levels in wastes for land-spreading, including waste compost.

4. How wide-spread is the problem?

As we discussed in the meeting, we have limited evidence of land-spreading contamination problems. We would welcome evidence from NCMD on the scale and extent of the issue and for your members to be our 'eyes and ears' in reporting individual cases.

5. What volume of complaints have there been from detectorists and farmers?
6. Has damage to wildlife, livestock, crops or humans been reported and to what extent?

7. Have the composting contractors been prosecuted and their names publicised?

We always produce a press release following a prosecution, detailing names etc.

8. How many prosecutions have there been on offending processors?

Our latest collated data is for 2011 – there were two land-spreading prosecutions.

9. What controls from DEFRA are in place to oversee local government compliance with the law?

We cannot answer this on DEFRA's behalf.

10. What is the financial arrangement between local authorities and farmers/landowners?

We cannot answer, this, it is outside our remit.

11. What other lobby groups are addressing this issue?

None (regarding this specific issue of metals as physical contaminants) that I am aware of.

12. Are licences for composting processors subject to vetting by the EA and are they monitored regularly?

Yes, permit applications are assessed and determined by our National Permitting Service. All permitted composting facilities are subject to appropriate periodic inspections by our locally based officers. The frequency will partially depend on local priorities and resources and partly on how well the facilities are performing.

John Wells
President

Scottish Membership Update

Individual Members of the Scottish Region will shortly be able to pay their annual subscription online by going to the NCMD's website www.ncmd.co.uk selecting

'Membership', and clicking on 'Scottish Region'. This facility will also permit Individual Members to pay subscriptions on behalf of others, and we hope that it will be

a convenient option for members. Payments by cheque will still be acceptable for those who prefer to pay by post. Please note that the online payment system applies

only to Individual Members; club members will continue to pay as before directly through their club subscriptions.

Detecting on Isle of Wight Beaches

Trevor Austin

Over the last week or so I have been contacted by several people including the press, on the issue of metal detecting on the Isle of Wight (IOW) beaches. The IOW Council have issued an information sheet (below) outlining the ban and their reasons for it.

The banning of metal detecting on beaches which are open to public access is something of a rarity and justifiably so. Where you have members of the public enjoying the beach, with children digging and all that entails, rubbish being dropped, wind-break tent pegs being left behind, presumably because they were hidden in the sand, fishing etc. It is difficult to see what justification the council can have for imposing such a ban on responsible detector users.

In fact the IOW council gives their reasons for imposing the ban in the information sheet. However the reasons would be laughable if it were not for the fact that these reasons have been drawn up by someone, who supposedly knows better. Well I beg to differ; the reasons given show a clear lack of understanding not only of the legal

position, but also their responsibility under the Treasure Act:

Reason (a) *Under the Treasure Act 1996, the Isle of Wight Council's role as owner or lessee of the land could compromise the legal requirements of any Treasure find.*

What a load of gobbledegook rubbish, clearly the IOW council need to consult a legal advisor who understands the council's position under the Treasure Act, indeed if they have consulted one at all. The council's position is this, any item of Treasure which may be found on the beach is the property of the Crown; it has always been the property of the Crown even before it was discovered, so the council has no legal requirement other than giving permission to detect. If someone does not declare an item of Treasure discovered on the beach, it is the finder who has broken the law, not the council, or indeed any other landowner were it found on private land, unless there was complicity or wrongdoing by the landowner to deceive the Crown.



Reason (b) *Unregulated disturbance of the ground surface by detecting could compromise biodiversity and geodiversity, or cause health and safety issues for members of the public using council land - although it is agreed that on beaches this is less likely to be an issue than on dry land.*

Unregulated ground disturbance, come on, how many children are supervised on how to dig sandcastles or bury their dad in the sand, and as for safety issues for members of the public, how

Metal detectors on Isle of Wight Council-controlled beaches

The council does not allow metal detecting on any beaches (or other land) it owns or controls.

Most of the Isle of Wight's popular urban beaches (including Ryde, Ventnor, Shanklin and Sandown) are owned by the Isle of Wight Council, and many other stretches of coast are controlled by the council under lease from the Crown Estate.

There are many other beaches, not owned by the council, on which metal detectorists may be able to enjoy their hobby lawfully subject to necessary permissions. This map is intended to help metal detectorists by giving guidance on where council beaches are located. It does not give information about any other beaches which are not owned or controlled by the council, or other permits you might need.

To gain permission to use metal detecting equipment on other beaches, metal detectorists should approach the owner or occupier of that beach. The council cannot give permission for metal detecting on any other beaches, nor does the council keep records of who owns and occupies beaches on the Isle of Wight.

Crown Estate permits

A Crown Estate metal detecting permit is not valid on Council controlled foreshore.

It is possible to obtain a permit from the Crown Estate to use a metal detector on Crown Estate beaches. However, a Crown Estate permit does not give a detectorist the right to use detecting equipment on Crown land which has been leased to a third party, for example the Isle of Wight Council. So a detectorist who has a Crown Estate permit still cannot lawfully use metal detecting equipment on land owned or controlled by the Isle of Wight Council.

The reasons for this policy

- Under the Treasure Act 1996, the Isle of Wight Council's role as owner or lessee of the land could compromise the legal requirements of any Treasure find.
- Unregulated disturbance of the ground surface by detecting could compromise biodiversity and geodiversity, or cause health and safety issues for members of the public using council land - although it is agreed that on beaches this is less likely to be an issue than on dry land.
- The majority of the beaches owned and controlled by the council are also designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, on which metal detecting is not normally permitted regardless of ownership.

Contact:

01983 821000

<http://www.iwight.com/beaches>

<http://www.iwight.com/archaeology>

deep do they think detector users dig; certainly not as deep as one I came across recently, which was about four feet deep (which we filled in). Biodiversity and geodiversity are other ill-defined issues which just seems to have been thrown in for good measure: are they not aware of how much sand is removed from the beach during winter storms, and deposited again with the next, destroying any bio or geodiversity diversity which was not there in the first place. Beaches and foreshores by their very nature are mobile substrates which are modified by the forces of nature on a daily basis by tidal forces and regularly by adverse weather and sea conditions.

Reason (3) *The majority of the beaches owned and controlled by the council are also designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, on which metal detecting is not normally permitted regardless of ownership.*

This is as usual ill-defined 'catch all' statement that often accompanies Council responses to an issue such as metal detecting access to beaches and foreshores. To remind readers all such designations are made by Natural England and are intended to

protect areas of land in public or private ownership which are considered to be of International and National importance for a variety of scientific interests. These also include many National and Local Nature Reserves, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites. Altogether these make up the countries best wildlife and geological areas and sites and are protected and managed for the benefit of future generations.

Whilst it is an offence to knowingly damage or recklessly disturb any fauna or interest on such sites, the nature of such damage is expected to be from unauthorised activity undertaken by landowner and developers or other third parties rather than in the terms of this article metal detecting on a public beach or foreshore. Natural England is well aware of metal detecting hobbyists carrying out there pastime on beaches and foreshores which are designated wholly or in part as SSSI's. This aspect was looked at by them in 2011 following an Access to Information request, within the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside 1981 Act (as substituted by the Countryside

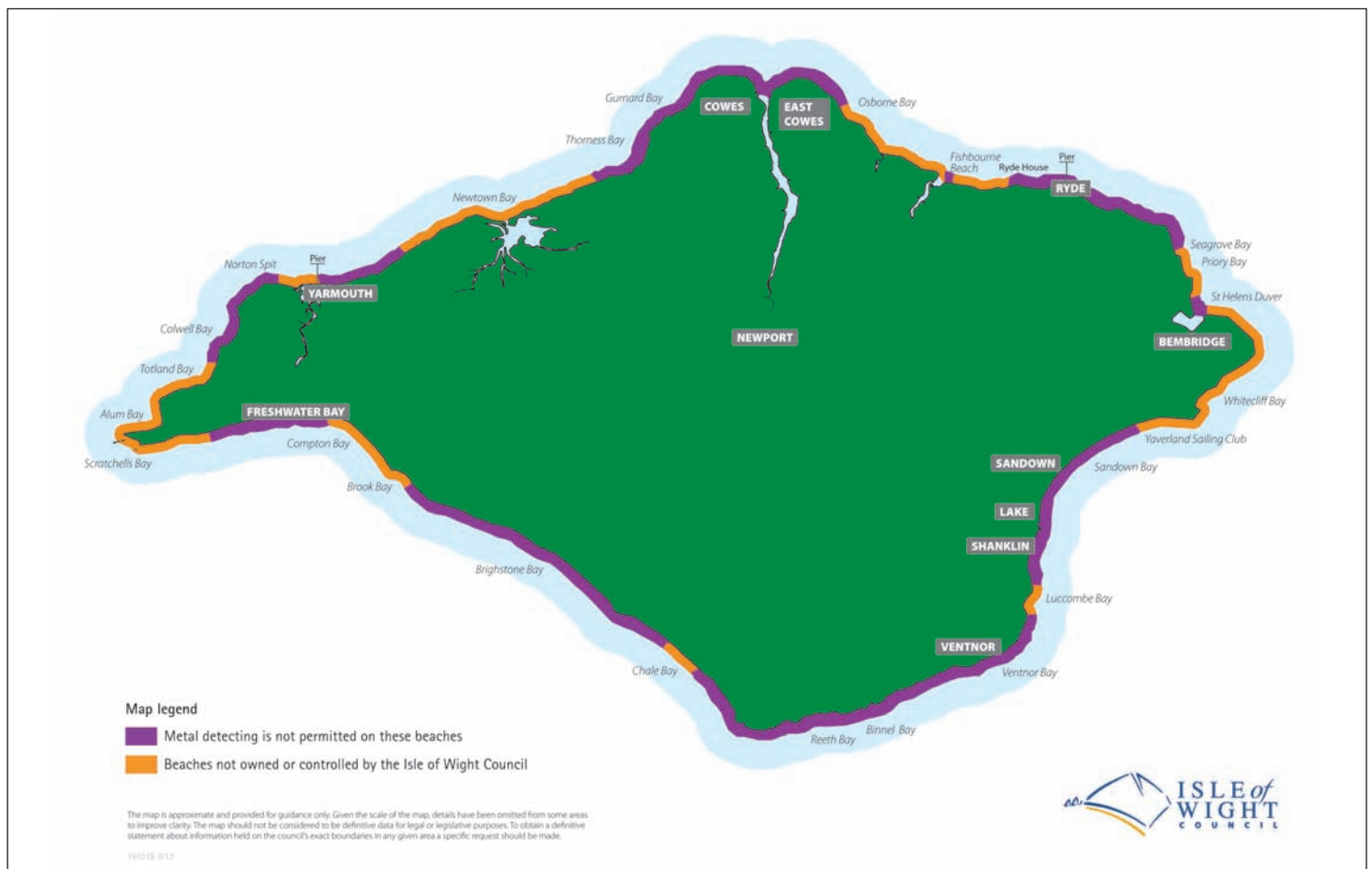
and Rights of Way Act 2000 and inserted by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006). In contrast to the public right enjoyed by bait diggers who may also often be seen on the same beaches and foreshores, metal detecting does not have the same rights and access would be governed by permission from the owner. Ownership can be a complex mix between the Crown Estates, Local authorities and private landowners either owning a stretch of beach or foreshore outright or as lessees.

Natural England takes the view that they would not expect landowners to consult them before permitting individuals to undertake small scale metal detecting on habitats such as beaches or mudflats as a part of a general permission grant or permit scheme. They do however expect that any metal detecting is carried out in a responsible manner to avoid disturbance to large aggregations of bird or other defined interest and are confident that the vast majority of detectorists are responsible and respect the environment. Whilst also acknowledging that there had been no enforcement action taken against anyone for damaging a

SSSI through the use of a metal detector, Natural England would expect to be consulted by landowners considering permitting metal detecting in more sensitive habitats such as on sand dunes or saltmarsh. There is no blanket prohibition for metal detecting on beach or foreshore SSSI's.

Clearly the IOW council have been scraping the bottom of the barrel to come up with these reasons for imposing the ban. Perhaps some jobsworth simply does not like metal detecting per-se, either way it shows a complete lack of understanding of the hobby. Metal detector users usually search the beach either in winter or when holiday-makers have left the beach, no one would search between families enjoying a day out at the beach. Similarly, detector users are well aware of digging in to the hard pack when it becomes exposed by heavy storms, such an agreement to avoid this layer was written into the terms and conditions of the Crown Estates permit scheme.

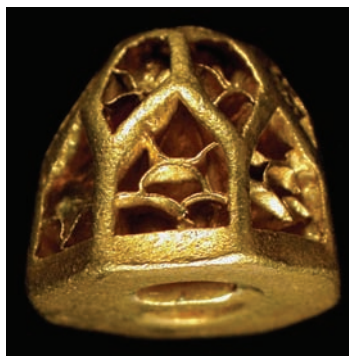
Although it is rare for Treasure items to be discovered on public beaches, there has been one or two from the IOW. As a member of the TVC I remember well an Anglo Saxon pommel found on one such beach,



even though it was gold, it was heavily corroded by salt water, and if the item had not been discovered, would certainly have been subject to further corrosion over the years and likely never found.

The NCMD are well aware of the need to manage beaches for the benefit of all and understands the need in some instances to restrict certain pastimes from the beach, however where there is no rational reason for doing so, it is difficult to see how the NCMD could support such a restriction.

An appraisal of the increasing number of finds of archaeological interest being reported by detectorists operating on private land to the Historic Environment Records, confirms the benefits



afforded to the landscape history of the island by responsible metal detecting. It is therefore an anomaly that this Council, the recipient of such data which is used in its duty to respond to the archaeological impact of proposed developments, should seek to deny access to recreational metal detecting by responsible individuals on the beaches and foreshores it either owns, leases or administers.

The same conclusion could also be drawn over the current exclusion of detecting access to other suitable land under the Councils ownership, where additional information could be gathered to add to the Historic Environment Records at little or no cost to the public purse. It would seem somewhat remiss that on the one hand the Council is happy to benefit from findspots information willingly given from private land and yet on the other hand refuses to allow information to be produced from its own land. Perhaps it could be argued that the information flow from detectorists operating on private land should be restricted or held back until they have reconsidered this unwarranted imposition.

STOP PRESS

METAL DETECTING 20 FEB UPDATE

George Brown, Isle of Wight Council cabinet member responsible for regulatory services said; *"For at least the last ten years, the council has, in common with other local authorities and major landowners such as the National Trust, not encouraged metal detecting on its land, including beaches, without prior permission."*

"This approach has been adopted for good reason, not least because in the past there have been instances where people with metal detectors have caused damage to land, including areas of special scientific interest and popular recreational areas such as parks and football pitches. Such an issue has been raised only this week by Freshwater Bay Residents Association."

"It would seem to me however that responsible metal detection on our beaches carries less risks than doing so on dry land. Given this and mindful that our resources to regulate metal detecting are limited, I do not think it necessary to seek to restrict or discourage this activity on our beaches."

"I would however ask those who chose to metal detect on our beaches to do so responsibly, mindful of other beach users and in accordance with the requirements of legislation such as the Treasures Act 1996. We continue to ask people who wish to use metal detectors on our dry land to first seek prior permission."

Issued by:

Simon Butler, Media Relations Officer
Isle of Wight Council

Summary of the Treasure Act

Trevor Austin

In many publications and on websites such as our own NCMD website or the PAS website you will find a summary of the definition of treasure. However, there has been some confusion over the summarised definition, particularly relating to the definition on coins, which has appeared in several different guises on different websites and publications.

It was with this in mind that both the NCMD and the PAS agreed a form of words that would hopefully summarise the Act in a more understandable fashion. While there may be publications which include the old form of wording, any future publication and hopefully all websites, should include the wording as it appears below.

1. Any metallic object, other than a coin, provided that at least 10 per cent by weight of metal is precious metal (that is, gold or silver) and that it is at least 300

years old when found. If the object is of prehistoric date it will be Treasure provided any part of it is precious metal.

2. Any group of two or more metallic objects of any composition of prehistoric date* that come from the same find (*see note 3 below)
3. Two or more coins from the same find provided they are at least 300 years old when found and contain 10% gold or silver (if the coins contain less than 10 per cent of gold or silver there must be at least ten of them).

Only the following groups of coins will normally be regarded as coming from the same find:

- hoards that have been deliberately hidden
- smaller groups of coins, such as the contents of purses, that may have dropped or lost
- votive or ritual deposits.

4. Any object, whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, another object that is Treasure.
5. Any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. Only objects that are less than 300 years old, that are made substantially of gold or silver, that have been deliberately hidden with the intention of recovery and whose owners or heirs are unknown will come into this category.

● Note:

1. An object or coin is part of the 'same find' as another object or coin if it is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, the other object. Finds may have become scattered since they were originally deposited in the ground.

2. Single coins will not be treasure, unless they are found in association with objects that are treasure, or unless there is exceptionally strong evidence that they were buried with the intention of recovery.

Section 3 (2) of the Act defines the term 'coin' as including any metal token that was, or can reasonably be assumed to have been, used or intended for use as or instead of money. This definition only includes coins and tokens made after the introduction of the first coinage into this country during the Iron Age period and excludes objects made earlier such as iron currency bars. Jettons or reckoning counters are also excluded from this definition.

3. "of prehistoric date" means dating from the Iron Age or any earlier period.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR METAL DETECTING



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Your membership of the National Council for Metal Detecting expires on the 31 March 2013. We hope that you have received prompt attention throughout the past year and thank you for your continued support of the hobby.

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Trevor Austin
General Secretary



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Stewardship 2013 without tears

An easy guide to the 2013 ELS and HLS Handbooks

Joe Muggins (NCMD Member) I gather that Natural England has issued new ELS and HLS Handbooks.

NCMD Yes, they are the 2013 Handbooks relevant to ELS and HLS agreements entered into after 1 January 2013.

JM Are there any additional restrictions on metal detecting in these new handbooks?

NCMD No, the restrictions are exactly the same as those in the 2010 Handbooks which we discussed in *'Digging Deep'* Issue 11.

JM Let me see if I can remember the relevant sections of the 2010 Handbooks. On farms in ELS one can not detect on known archaeological sites under grassland, and all finds from the rest of the farm have to be shown to the FLO and reported to the PAS. And details of rallies have to be sent to Natural England at least 12 weeks before the event.

NCMD You've hit the nail on the head. And what about farms in HLS or, more likely, ELS/HLS?

JM The same restrictions apply, with one exception. All archaeological sites on the holding, whether under grass or not, are off limits. And in addition one needs to be careful with HLS land: there could be a few Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Sites of Special Scientific Interest on the farm, where detecting is banned in any case.

NCMD That's right.

JM So is there anything else I need to know?

NCMD Only a few details.

JM Such as?

NCMD The layout of both Handbooks has been substantially altered. In the ELS 2010 Handbook, Section 1 dealt with most of what we call the "must do's and must do not's" The restrictions on detecting were set out in Section 1.6.5 on page 27. In the 2013 ELS Handbook the 'Must do's and must do not's' are in Section 5. The restrictions on detecting are set out in Section 5.5.5 on page 154.

JM Thanks for pointing that out. Farmer Giles, who I told you about in Issue 11, will be entering into an ELS agreement later this year. So he will be governed by the 2013 Handbook and all we need to do is refer him to page 154.

NCMD That's it. And if Giles then decides to upgrade his ELS agreement to an ELS/HLS agreement, the detecting restrictions are in Section 5.5.6 of the HLS Handbook on page 99. Whereas in the 2010 HLS handbook the restrictions on detecting were set out in three different places.

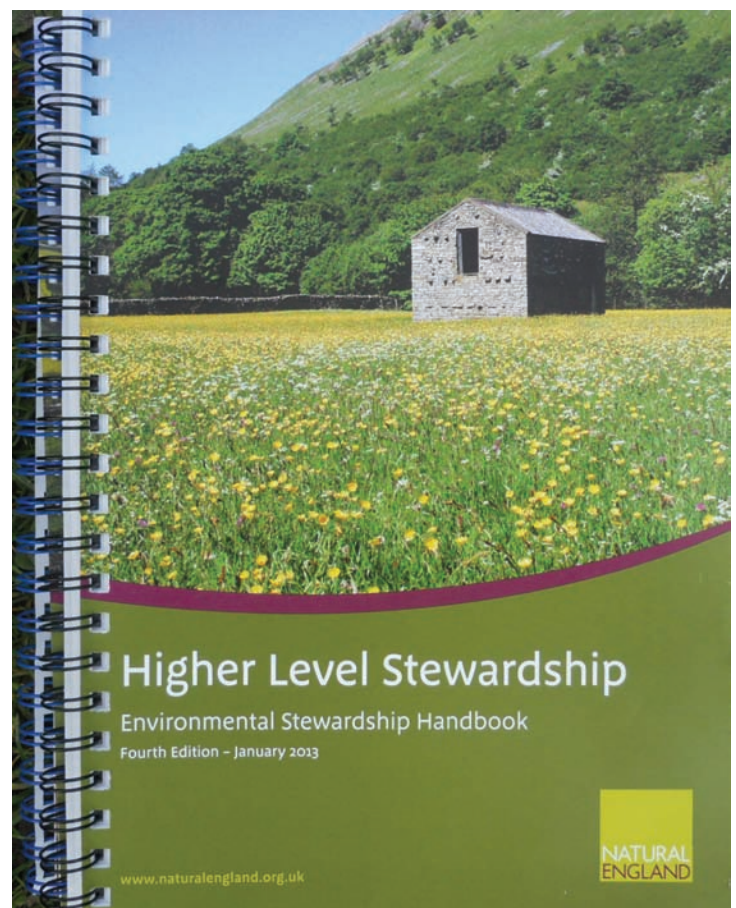
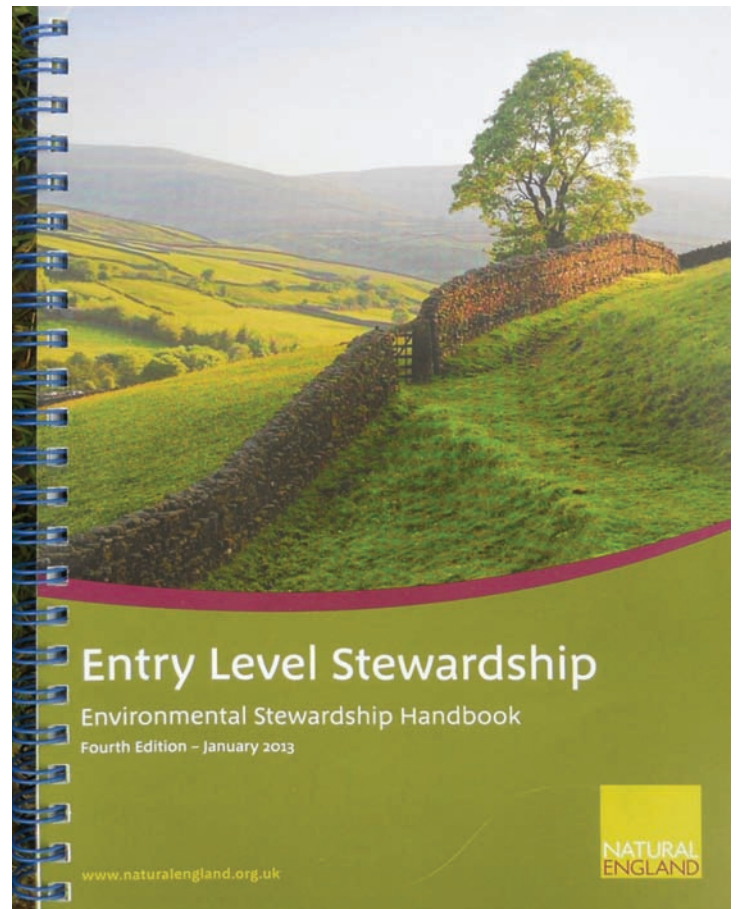
JM So that's it. We can get on with our detecting.

NCMD Yes. And we at NCMD will be going through the new handbooks and writing a 10 page précis of each one which will be made available to the membership in due course. We have already picked up some interesting points, none of which affect detecting. But while we're here, it's worth making one last point.

JM What's that?

NCMD The anti-detecting lobby will no doubt try to persuade landowners that the new books contain some new anti-detecting clauses. Which, as you know, they don't.

Roger Mintey



Brief Review and Update

Bulgarian National Federation for metal detecting in 2012



In 2012, the priority of the Bulgarian National Federation for Metal detecting (BNFM) was organising and holding meetings with members and hobby enthusiasts across the country. I believe that these meetings and discussions were the most important mechanism to explain the responsibilities of the searchers and their rights. In direct dialogue people were asked specific questions, discussed cases, given practical examples and answers to the most favourable resolution of certain issues.

The success of these meetings is the fact that more and more fans of the hobby become members of the BNFM. The change is apparent because more and more people realise that to work a significant legislative change, we need to be united and a strong organisation. We have seen how nowadays, when people looked up and shook the certitude of the rulers, that changes become inevitable and problems are solved quickly. The BNFM is a real factor with its stated open citizenship.

In 2012 we signed a cooperation agreement with the National Council for Metal Detecting and its Secretary, Mr. Trevor Austin. This act is the first and very important step for the development of the international contacts of the Federation. I realise that the cooperation with related

organisations will promote the development of our hobby in the right direction. I hope we will implement also common projects of international importance.

Other significant events during the past year were the national and regional meetings in Ribaritsa, Bourgas, Novi Pazar, Sofia and Lovech. The funny and attractive

part of detecting, debating issues, sharing of good practices, brought together people from all over the country. Fortunately more and more hobby fans show willingness and enthusiasm to organise similar events in their area.

The BNFM will also support those and realisation of such meetings. One of the unforgettable meetings

was that of the Regional Club in Bourgas, which culminated in an international one. It was attended by the Russian company for metal detectors AKA. Especially attended by a Czech family, enthusiastic about the hobby.

The meeting in Ribaritsa was marked by numerous competitions, presentations, funny





competitions and friendly dinners. Many thanks to all donors and sponsors who made great and unforgettable experiences with their gifts for the participants in the meetings. A special guest was the deputy mayor of Teteven Municipality, Mr. Desislav Tsvetanov, who welcomed the participants. Thanks to the friend

and journalist Tsvetan Todorov for the wonderful reporting of the event in the regional newspaper 'Naroden glas'. An example of responsible and unbiased journalism are the printed matters of Radoslav Hristov in the newspaper 'Posrednik' from Pleven. Amid the mass medium in Bulgaria, they are proof of the

existence of objective journalism, with an attitude of tolerance for the problems of the society and people. In 2013 one of the main activities will remain the involving of new and existing members. Other priorities will be the protection of the detector users through legislative initiatives, seeking contacts with the government

authorities – Ministries, National Assembly and others, looking for partnerships with Bulgarian and foreign NGOs, publication of printed matter including the protected culture monuments in Bulgaria.

Iliya Iliev

Chairman of the Management Board of the BNFM



NCMD – School Outreach

Trevor Austin

The sharing of ones experiences and acquired knowledge about small finds and history is something that many of us delight in doing. The importance of enabling young people to engage with historical themes through the handling of coins and artefacts is something that never happened in my day, and while most of us do not possess a qualification in teaching, the ability to communicate the enthusiasm most of us have, not only for the hobby, but also for the items we find is an attribute we can share.

Key Stage 2 (KS2) is a legal term used for children in years three to six of Primary schools (aged between eight and eleven) and is an ideal time for introducing young inquisitive children to periods in British history. The Romans, Vikings, Saxons and Tudors are all subjects that appear regularly as topics in the curriculum and it gives the children an introduction of England's history and an opportunity for us to explore these periods through small finds discovered by metal detecting.

Most schools will welcome visits to show pupils small finds, however you have to be prepared to make the visit interesting and interactive if possible. I recently attended a school in which I had not set foot through the door in 50 years, and the guided tour given by the secretary after the lesson proved just as exciting for me, as the lesson had for the children.

It is important to allow the kids to



handle the finds, so some precautionary words beforehand about not trying to bend items is well worth including. I remember once receiving back a pair of Roman tweezers, in two parts. But I think it is worth it, the enthusiasm shown by pupils as they realise they are actually holding items from the Roman period and the excitement on their faces is well worth the risk. Printed matter for their work folders is also worth preparing (a quick Google search for KS2 learning aids will help here), along

with a few magnifying lenses for the pupils to view the finds up close.

Schools now not only have interactive touch sensitive white boards but also overhead projectors, so it is quite easy to prepare a PowerPoint presentation, with pictures illustrating how the finds were used and how they fit in to the wider historical context. I personally also include a quiz at the end of the lesson based primarily on the things we have discussed, with a prize for the one

with the most correct answers, one for the boys and one for the girls, this always goes down well.

Usually during the quiz the inevitable question will arise, "How do you find these items?" and that's when to bring out your detector and explain the 'do's and don'ts' of the hobby.

So the next time your son, daughter or grandchild tells you they are learning about the Romans at school why not volunteer your services and share some of the finds and experiences with them.





MEETING DATES

The Next NCMD Executive meeting will be on the 16 June 2013

The Next Treasure Valuation Meeting will be on the 27 March 2013

The Next Portable Antiquities Advisory Board meeting 19 June 2013

GET IN TOUCH

For membership enquiries contact the Membership Secretary: **John Rigby**
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A Norfolk Wolf

John Godley

Friday morning dawned and to me this meant just another boring day at the garden centre where I worked. Being the weekend, I was wondering if I would be able to get out with the detector and I started my routine of watering the plants, clearing up rubbish, and carrying fence posts and rolls of turf to customers cars whilst my mind was on the open fields and detecting. I struggled through the day somehow and as 4.30pm arrived I hoped I'd get away promptly at 5pm.

My daydreaming was abruptly shattered when a huge lorry came snorting and hissing into the car park. I looked around to see if I could dodge off somewhere, but it was too late. The boss had spotted the wagon load of turf and called for me to help with the unloading and then to serve a customer who was already waiting for some.

I kept out of the way whilst the driver unloaded the pallets and as I moved to one side something on the cabs side caught my eye. It read J. PATTERSON, Turf supplies, Snettisham, Norfolk. Now, I had heard all about the beautiful Snettisham gold torcs, which were to me the sort of things dreams were made of and my mind was off once more on its travels, soon to be interrupted by a voice nearby. It was the customer, who by now was getting a little impatient for his half-dozen rolls of that lush green Norfolk turf and I cut the baling twine on the nearest pallet and lifted the first roll and carried it over to the Peugeot with the boot lid up.

As I carefully placed the roll onto the plastic sheeting spread inside the boot a glint of something in the black soil covered roll caught my eye. I eased it out and it dropped free and saw it was a gold stater! I had in the past picked up a few worked flints from this part of the yard which must have come in the turf deliveries, but nothing before like this. I stared in disbelief at the object noting an animal like design on the side facing up in my, by now sweating palm. It was a Norfolk wolf stater and a 'beaut' at that.

A crunching of gravel nearby snapped my spinning mind back to normality. It was the customer



staggering with another roll and saying, *"Taking five, are we mate, but let's wait until I've got my order done, as I want to lay this tonight before I get off for a pint"*.

I flushed, and said *"Sorry mate, soon have you away"* and half in a dream walked back towards the pallet for another roll still clutching my fist tight around the stater and wondering if there were more in the load.

On lifting the next roll I put it on the ground and rolled it out, turned it over and ran my fingers along the back, brushing the peaty soil looking for yet more of those golden discs.

"Just checking the quality mate" I said, as the customer came up to me. *"Sometimes they have holes where they've been cut too thin"*.

But the call of the amber nectar was stronger than his need for perfection and he said, *"Never mind that, it will be okay, just get the rest in and I'll be off"*.

I was hoping to be able to check the roll he'd carried but I could see there was no chance of that, and all I could do was carry on with the loading and merely inspect the ones I carried.

We'd soon loaded the remaining rolls and I'd not spotted any more coins but realised there could be more in the pile left on the pallet, so as the Peugeot went through the gateway I returned to the pallets and very carefully rolled out the remainder of the load,

finding nothing bar a couple of grubs. It was then that the thought struck me that there may be more on the field where the turf had come from. So I turned towards the truck where the driver was by this time, ready for his return journey.

I asked if he had actually loaded the turf himself, to which he replied, *"Yes mate, I did, and only about three hours ago this turf was part of Norfolk"*. That was the answer I wanted, and went on to tell him of my hobby and to show him the stater I'd found, and wondered if I might be able to check out the field to see if I could find any more of them.

Having retrieved my machine and back the yard I followed the truck driver in hot pursuit. Three hours later and with not much daylight left we pulled off the main road and into a dusty layby. *"See that hedge; well it's the line of the pathway which goes into the fields for a good half mile. When you get to the end you will see a gateway on the left next to a large ash tree, and that is the field we've been working. You'll see the turf-cutting machines and pallets, so you can't go wrong"* I thanked him and waved as he drove off in a cloud of dust.

Within minutes I was where the turf-cutter and pallets were and immediately got out my detector as the daylight was fading fast. I switched on and moved forward but was stopped almost

immediately with a good signal. Crouching down, I prodded the dark soil in the area of the signal and couldn't believe my eyes, when breaking open the clod I found a gold stater, and yes, it was a Norfolk wolf once more. I stared at it in disbelief, could it be this easy, I asked myself, and then as I stood up I noticed that there were more of them scattered around the hole I'd made. My mind was now in a whirl as I collected them up and placed them into my finds apron in ones and twos.

I looked round in panic in case someone had observed my frenetic activities, but there was nobody but me out in those rapidly darkening fields with gold staters all over the place.

Urging myself 'get a grip' I placed the detector onto the ground and took off my headphones and within five minutes, the pouch was bulging with staters and I realised it wouldn't be big enough so I hurried over to my car and got sports bag I use for my detecting gear.

I had just opened the boot and was tipping the coins into the bag when I thought I heard a voice ... spinning round in panic, I peered into the gloom thinking that it could be the gamekeeper or the landowner. Seeing nothing I put down the boot lid to hide my precious cargo and then I heard the voice again, but this time much nearer and clearer *"Come on it's time to get up!"*.

SARA Workshop

'Working with Government'

SARA, the Sport and Recreation Alliance (formerly the Central Council for Physical Recreation) held another 'Working with Government' workshop on Tuesday 29 January. The NCMD had asked me to attend the event and soon after 9am I was drinking coffee with the 13 other delegates, mainly officers of the governing bodies of amateur boxing, swimming, athletics, bowls, tennis, archery and netball.

At 9.30 our teachers, Alison Goldsworthy and Ruth Polling, introduced themselves. Alison is Deputy Chair of the Lib Dem Party's Federal Executive, has stood for Parliament and worked both at Westminster and for the Welsh Assembly. Ruth had been an Executive member of Islington Council and had worked in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. These ladies clearly had considerable knowledge and experience of national and local politics.

We delegates all had considerable knowledge of the specific political problems our sport or recreation had experienced in the past and would no doubt experience in the future. The workshop would enable us all to add the teachers' knowledge of politics to our knowledge of the problems faced by our sport or recreation. We would then be thinking in terms of solutions rather than problems

Alison and Ruth were thinking along the same lines and thus our first exercise was for each delegate to give a brief outline of the political problems their activity's governing body faced. The other delegates were, broadly speaking, in a fairly one dimensional world where they both constantly sought funding and attempted to have specific events held in specific areas. The England Netball delegate was, for example, currently lobbying for the next Netball World Cup to be held in London.

Metal Detecting has, of course, no governing body. Our landowners are our governors and over the last 35 years the heritage lobby has been attempting to wrest a degree of control from the landowners by

means of the 1979 Ancient Monuments Act, the 1996 Treasure Act and the introduction of the agri-environment schemes, ELS and HLS. Our specific political problems were, are, and will be very different from those of mainstream sports.

Our next exercise followed on from the first one. We had to explain, in broad terms, how our 'sport' was affected by both National and Local Government. In most sports National Government is responsible for general funding while Local Government is responsible for local funding and will thus decide on such issues as to whether to open or close swimming pools or tennis courts. In the specific area of metal detecting National Government is responsible for introducing and amending laws concerning Scheduling and Treasure, for regulations on the dumping of Contaminated Green Waste and for funding organisations such as the PAS. County Councils, on the other hand, employ the County Archaeologist, the HER Officer, and in some counties the FLO, and will be responsible for signing up to the Data Transfer Agreement allowing PAS data to be transferred to the County HERs. They also employ the Coroners who deal with Treasure. Many County Councils have, like the NCMD, already signed up to ARCH, the Alliance to Reduce Crimes against Heritage.

Alison and Ruth then took us on a 'whistle stop' tour of the structure and workings of Government. Cabinet meetings, Select Committees, Standing Committees, Private Members' Bills, Early Day Motions, Parliamentary Questions, All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs), Public Petitions Committees and Parliamentary Receptions were all covered with the aid of Flip Charts, which would be summarised and e-mailed to the delegates afterwards. Various parliamentary-monitoring web sites were also discussed. The structure of the Civil Service and the means of determining 'who is who' and 'who does what' in each



department were also covered. We were reminded that Civil Servants are impartial and that no one should risk or question their impartiality. In theory they do not actually make political decisions, but they can advise on matters of fact.

Simon Butler, SARA's own Parliamentary Liaison Officer, then spoke briefly on the support that SARA can offer its members for any political campaign they are pursuing.

The next topic dealt with methods of approaching politicians, the use of already existing events and the exploitation of VIPs at these events (politicians love photo opportunities with celebs). MPs and Councilors love the idea that something really important has or had happened in their constituency or ward. Basically it was all about toadying and sucking up to politicians without making it look too obvious. After that we broke for coffee.

The Hon. Tim Lamb, an ex-professional cricketer and

administrator, now SARA's Chief Executive, joined us because we had apparently been provided with coffee which was somewhat better than the standard SARA staff issue. It was interesting to see the majority of the delegates displaying a sudden interest in cricket. They had obviously learned something from the previous session!

The morning session concluded with a more in-depth look at how one could get politicians involved in one's campaigns. Use of schools and school governors, involvement of the media, especially local radio stations and newspapers, were among the topics covered. Metal detectorists can make use of the country shows at which many clubs exhibit their finds, by buttonholing some of the MPs and Councilors who often attend these events using the old chat-up line "Can I show you some of the items discovered in your constituency/ward."

SARA provided us with a buffet



lunch which gave us the opportunity to discuss other delegate's hobbies. One delegate's husband had just bought a metal detector. She wanted to know what to expect from his new hobby. I advised her to set aside one room for the inevitable trays and boxes of George V pennies, harness buckles and .303 bullets, not to mention bucketfuls of scrap lead and copper that her nearest and dearest would recover from the surrounding farms.

After lunch we engaged in a role playing exercise, to put into practice what we had learned in the morning. We were split into two groups and told to choose an activity with a specific political problem which two of the group would present to Alison and Ruth in their roles as national or local politicians. Emma Griffin, the Amateur Swimming Association's Head of Marketing and Media, persuaded my group, without much difficulty, to choose swimming as the activity and her as chief representative. For one reason or another I was elected as her deputy. Emma decided we would argue against the closure of a local swimming pool by a County Council. She would talk about elite swimming and coaching and 'appeal to the councilors' heads' while I (who

knows nothing about swimming) would argue about the benefits of swimming to the average recreational swimmer or non-swimmer and 'appeal to their heads'. Our exercise went quite well.

Ruth and Alison then reviewed the exercise and the points arising. First of all groups of two can work together smoothly; one thinks and plans ahead while the other speaks. The second speaker can pick up on the points the first one omitted or respond to their opponents' comments. Threesomes can often get themselves in a muddle: while one person speaks the other two listen but often think in different directions, subsequently trying to speak at once. Secondly it is important not to criticise other activities while promoting your own. Do not argue that 'Idiots on horseback do far more damage to grass land than metal detecting does'; the politician you are canvassing might be an avid equestrian. Thirdly, one should try to appeal to the politician as a person rather than a faceless bureaucrat. If you are dealing with a woman, emphasise the benefit of your activity to women. But do not do this in a patronising manner.

We broke for tea and another chat



with Tim Lamb and then moved on to our final exercise, 'Planning a Campaign'. This involved filling in a 15 box form setting out the title of the campaign, its aims, the reason for its aims, the management, timetable, budget and the politicians that would be contacted. I used the NCMD's ongoing campaign against Contaminated Green Waste for this exercise, filling in the boxes by setting out the actions that John Wells, NCMD President and Byron Tosh, Vice Chairman had taken or were planning to take. Alison and Ruth cast an eye over what I had done and gave me a few pieces of advice on the campaign, details of

which have been passed to the NCMD.

The day concluded with a summary of what we had gone through and any lessons we had learned. Alison and Ruth pointed out that now it was up to us delegates to put whatever we had learned into a context relevant to our sport or recreation and present it to our fellow officers.

Events like this beg the obvious question. "Was it the day worthwhile?" The answer is that the delegates themselves can, and should, make it worthwhile.

Roger Mintey

SCOTTISH REGION

Find of a Lifetime: A 'Prefect's Badge Turns Out to be a Famous Knight's Pendant

A historic pendant thought to have belonged to one of Scotland's most famous noblemen has been discovered by John Eldridge, a member of the Scottish Detector Club.

The pendant is believed to have fallen from the bridle of the horse of Sir John Comyn, Lord of Badenoch, also known as 'Red Comyn'.

Sir John was a contender for the throne of Scotland following the death of Alexander III and that of his grand-daughter Margaret, the 'Maid of Norway' in 1290. He became a prominent figure in the defence of Scotland against the army of Edward I, and he and Robert the Bruce became

Guardians of Scotland during the second interregnum 1296-1306.

This was an uneasy relationship however, and in 1306, Comyn was stabbed to death by Robert the Bruce before the altar of the church of the Greyfriars in Dumfries, and Bruce was crowned Robert I just six weeks later.

John's discovery was made on 3 February during a detecting group outing near Loch Leven, famous for its association with Mary, Queen of Scots. The item was in such good condition that John thought it was probably a school prefect's badge, but detailed examination showed that the crest on the pendant matched that of



the Comyn coat of arms depicting three sheaves of wheat.

A detectorist for over three decades, John considers this to be his find of a lifetime.

The pendant is currently being

examined by experts and is awaiting authentication. Thereafter, it will be processed through Scotland's Treasure Trove system.

Alastair Hackett

The Grantham Search Club Assists 'Time Team' at Belton Park – Grantham

Time Team from the popular Channel 4 programme set up camp on the 14 May last year in Belton Park.

The following three days were allotted to locate any remaining archaeology relating to the WW1 Army Camp, in particular the machine gun Corps.

The Machine Gun Corps was formed on Oct 14 1915 by Royal Warrant, King George V being their Colonel in Chief. It comprised of Infantry, Cavalry, Motor and Heavy Branches. Belton Park Camp was the main infantry training centre of the Corps where men were intensively trained in the use of firstly the Maxim and later the Vickers Machine Gun.

Days 2 & 3 saw more trenches opened but with little success the most numerous items recovered were iron nails showing some evidence of buildings. Robin found an iron spanner (used to tighten the fuse plug on Mills bombs after priming) this was correctly identified by Military historians Martin Brown and Andrew Robertshaw.

In 1920 the Headquarters in Belton Park were closed, in 1922 the Machine Gun Corps were disbanded. The Grand Finale of the three days was the firing of a Vickers Machine Gun by the archaeologist Phil Harding. This is probably the first time Belton Park has echoed with the sound of machine gun fire for 90 years.

After working with and watching the Time Team at work, which includes a large production team it's amazing how they manage to condense three full days into an hours programme.

Time Team 'The Missing Gunners' was screened recently on Remembrance Sunday.

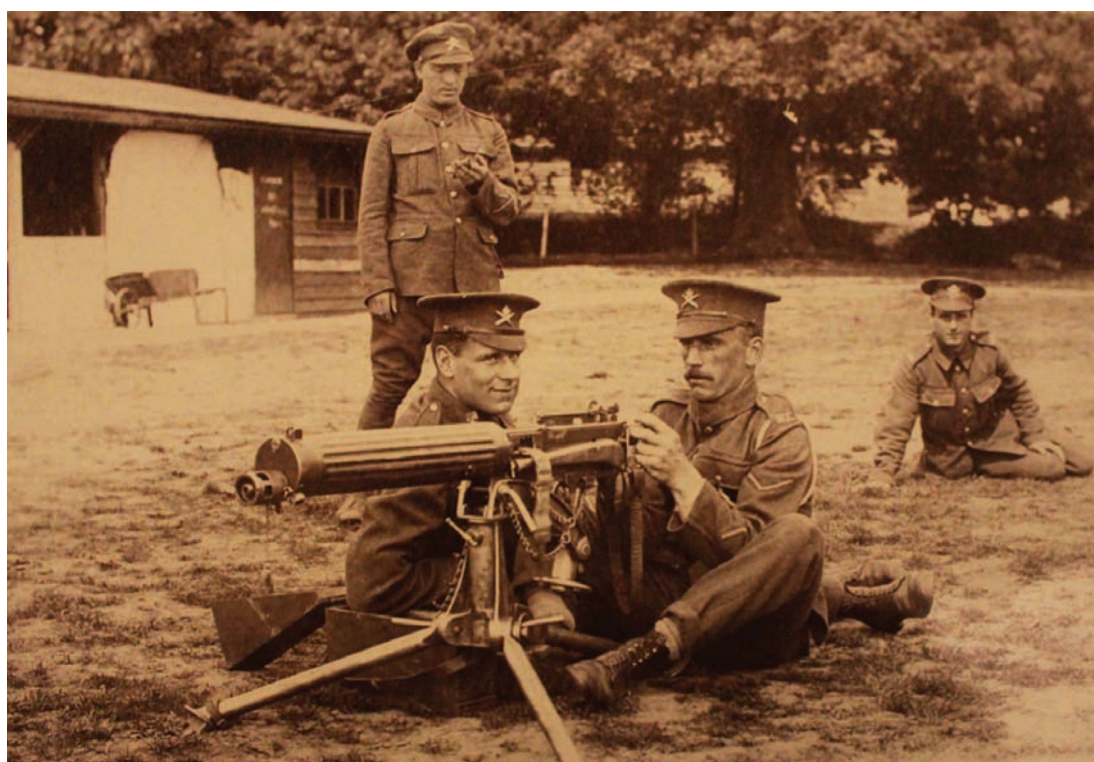
Grantham Search Club



Each team consisted of six men who were trained to strip and repair guns in the field and to clear stoppages where speed was a necessity. The cap badge adopted by the Corps was a crossed pair of Vickers Machine Guns below a Crown, in brass.

One of our member's Robin was tasked to search the spoil heaps for any items the archaeologists had missed.

Day 1 was spent researching the camps layout and opening trenches 1 and 2. The aim was to locate any building remains from a YMCA hut and a cookhouse. Although no building remains were found, evidence of a rubbish pit uncovered broken pottery and bottles dating to the period.



Metal Detecting: All you need to know to get started

By Dave Crisp

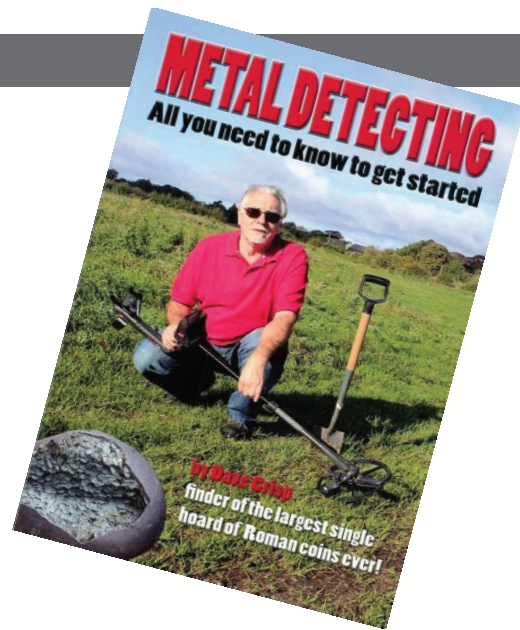
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In 2010 Dave Crisp received international recognition when he found the Frome Hoard, the largest single hoard of Roman coins ever - 52,503 in total! He has been a passionate metal detectorist for over 30 years. Here he has written a full guide in his own unique style, to help newcomers to the hobby.

The book covers all you need to know to get started. Topics covered include a history of the hobby, testing basic detectors and information about the organisations involved in detecting, as well as where to search and how to get permission. There are useful tips on how to detect and a chapter showing the coins and artefacts that can be found. It also details the procedure to follow to record your finds with the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS).

There is also a complete chapter covering the discovery of the Frome Hoard. From the very first day finding just a few Roman silver coins, to unearthing the hoard itself and the events that followed over the next eighteen months. The book has over 40 humorous sketches and illustrations and over 200 full colour photographs.

Recommending a suitable book for beginners is quite a common request for me, and given the number that have been written over the years it can sometimes be difficult choosing the right one. However, here is a book I can thoroughly recommend without fear or favour. Dave has not only assembled all the relevant information which beginners crave, he has also put together an interesting read. From the humorous tones of the cartoons to the follow-up tips the book covers all the aspects of detecting the newbie can ever wish for.

I suppose the most often asked questions I receive relate to how to find places to detect

and here the book deals not only with gaining permission from the farmer/landowner, but also farming practices, the dangers to be aware of on the farm and the types of land and when it will normally come available. Probably the least asked question is how to use a detector; to many detector users new to the hobby this must be a sensitive or uncomfortable question to ask, Dave explains all in an extremely useful chapter 'How to Detect' which takes you from purchase to pinpointing and digging, and all the steps in between, and for much of the book Dave uses the first-person narrative, excellently portraying the perception that you are speaking one-to-one.

Dave has also included a chapter on the discovery of the 'Frome Hoard', which gives Dave's own insight into the finding and subsequent media coverage which comes with the finding of such an important hoard.

It is difficult to pick out a chapter that I really liked as the entire book is such a compelling read. All I can say is if you are thinking of taking up or are new to the hobby of metal detecting, this is one book you should invest in. For those like me; who have been in the hobby longer than they care to remember, treat yourself to an excellent publication.

Trevor Austin

