



# EARTH

Metal Detecting Club of Central NY • Since 1990



## NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

## Earth Club of Central New York President's Message

The February meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> at the Dunham Public Library was a huge success. It was great to see old friends and familiar faces knowing the metal detecting season for 2020 is right around the corner.

Our first order of business was the dues for 2020. They will remain at \$30 for a single membership and \$35 for a family membership. Please be sure to pay your annual dues by March 31, 2020 or they will increase by \$5. We will likely increase the annual dues by \$5.00 next year due primarily to the increased cost of maintaining the website. Another important note is as I am writing this, the cost of silver and other precious metals is increasing by the day due to global issues such as the corona virus and foreign trade deals. Generally speaking precious metal prices increase in times of uncertainty and crisis.

Lori Fealy gave a great talk on her once in a lifetime trip to the island of Curacao and she brought in some amazing displays of the various beach finds she made there. She literally found hundreds of coins from many different countries and interesting pieces of coral sea shells. She made some great jewelry and coin finds but promises to bring them in for the first competition meeting!



On the Website front, we are officially up and running! Our new web address is [earthmetaldetecting.com](http://earthmetaldetecting.com). Please check it out and get back to me with any comments or suggestions. Please also feel free to send me any pictures or interesting articles you would like to see on the website and I will make sure they get there!

We have numerous club hunts in the works for the 2020 season. These include farmland in Stueben from a friend of Mike Parker and former club speaker Ben Simon, Boy Scout camp locations including Henderson, Kingsley, and the Cederlands, and Snow Ridge. We have additional new sites as well. Matt Lenhart has secured permission for the Utica/Rome Speedway and Lori Fealey is working on some railroad related locations. We will go over dates at the March meeting.

Stu Copperwheat submitted a great article for this newsletter on returning a lost ring. Returning lost property is the best community service we can perform and when it comes to jewelry that can be identified, we should make every effort to ensure it finds its rightful owner. I would like to personally congratulate Stu for finally finding "Mr. Wight".

I look forward to seeing you all at the March meeting. Larry Ehlinger will be giving a talk on the gold/jewelry hoard he found several years ago. Thank you again for the volunteers who agreed to bring in the refreshments for the monthly meetings- Dave Brown, you are on deck for the March meeting!

**David Lofgren**  
President

## **MARCH EVENTS:**

Mohawk Valley Coin Club Coin show at the  
Deerfield Fire Station on March 22



# “Rite of passage”

## Returns Home after 45 years

By: Stu Copperwheat

Since I was a boy, I was always fascinated about treasure hunting. The sheer allure of it was all consuming. It didn't matter what it was, coins, relics, or doo dads from yesteryear, if I found it or dug it up, it was always neat to me! Of course, being always fascinated with treasure hunting means I had always known about metal detectors as well. My philosophy was a simple one. All I would have to do was simply purchase one, turn it on and voila within seconds of “sweeping” would become a millionaire.

Now to be perfectly honest, none of those expectations were realistic. For one, back then metal detectors were in their infancy so they were very expensive and were without question, way out of my price range. So number one on the list wasn't even realized until many years later when my beautiful wife Alicia surprised me with a Whites XL Pro in 2001. Awesome! Thanks to her I'd made it over the first hurdle.

As for simply “turning it on”, that was easy because it had a button that said power. Now that I was all set to go, becoming a millionaire was going to be a cinch and out the door I went. However, reality soon set in and by the end of my first outing, I had amassed an entire bucket of nothing but rusted iron, nails, pull tabs, soda cans, shredded soda cans and various other bits of what not, but to be sure nothing even coming close to making me a “millionaire”.

Most people at this point would have gotten completely discouraged by what they found and either put the blasted piece of junk in a dark closet never more to be seen again or sold it for pennies on the dollar but if you were like me, I wasn't one of those to give up so easily. I admit I wasn't a big fan of manuals but I was determined to learn how to use and make the best of this mystery machine. It took some time but eventually my confidence and the finds got better.

In 2002 I found out about our local EARTH metal detecting club. I immediately joined and quickly learned all about metal detecting etiquette, giving back, how to obtain permission to detect, how to properly recover items without damaging the manicured surroundings of someone's home and leaving it just as you “found it”, removing the trash found and so on. Within a year and armed with a lot of new information, I became more serious than ever. Not only did I learn volumes about treasure hunting but it literally changed my life and I made a host of new friends in the process. Two of the things I loved the most about the club were that all the junk metal we found in the process of detecting was scrapped and the proceeds donated to “**Camp Good Days and Special Times**”. Having lost both my parents in my early years gave me a great appreciation for life and it made me feel good that we could help those who were struggling with catastrophic illness. Secondly, EARTH members performed a whole host of community services from finding property markers to helping find lost jewelry, all performed free of charge. It made you feel good when you helped someone just by simply doing what you loved. However, the club also had an unwritten rule that if you found something precious while in the process of metal detecting that could somehow be traced back to the owner then every effort was made to do so. This brings me to my story.

When I attended Oriskany Central high school back in the early seventies, one of the most memorable moments I had there (besides graduating of course) was the day I received the beautiful class ring I had ordered. It was something that my parents allowed me to purchase but insisted I pay for (with my own money) as a sophomore. I had to mow a lot of lawns to get it but I didn't care, to me it was a rite of passage that I desperately wanted to be a part of and wore with pride. I distinctly remember it. It was a bright yellow gold, with the Oriskany Redskins logo and my initials on it surrounding a gorgeous faceted blue sapphire stone. The ring cost \$60 back then which was a considerable amount of money in those days. I absolutely loved it and needless to say, if I had ever lost it, I would have been heartbroken, sometime later though it would suffer a fate equally as devastating. A time came when it became necessary to pawn it to help make ends meet. I wasn't happy about it and it was a sad day for me but that was just reality. Soon it was all but forgotten. However, little did I realize that many years later something truly amazing would happen that rekindled those memories!

My father-in-law Rocco Piccione owns the 200+ year old house that stands next to our home. Needless to say, being a detectorist, I have detected this “Go To” property literally hundreds of times over the years finding many nice things. However, as time passed the finds became fewer and far between but I still occasionally detect it when I have nothing better to do or want to try some new setting I've learned.

This past October Alicia and I decided to be part of the largest metal detecting rally ever held in the United States. As you all know, the rally was held in Chazy NY on a 1200 acre farm. The area there is rich in revolutionary and war of 1812 history. There were well over 1,000 detectorists from all over North America and detecting equipment vendors and celebrity guests from all over the world. Many nice artifacts were found and it was a stellar weekend of metal detecting opportunity and fellowship. Although we had a lot of fun, my disabilities clearly outpaced my abilities in the field so I wasn't able to do as much as I would have liked. However, being ever the opportunist I decided to do something else instead. One of the fields in particular had been yielding many great finds in one spot and it didn't take long for word to get out. Pretty soon this small patch of land was overtaken by scores of detectorists. It resembled more of a pile of ants on a small piece of cheese rather than a farm field but I patiently waited until most everyone thinned out and then decided to test a new setting I wanted to try to see if I could find anything. I had my doubts because the field had been hit so hard but my thought was what did I have to lose? To my surprise, I was able to sniff out two older wheat cents and several buttons from among a ton of nails and other various bits of metal still left there. This was unprecedented in my book and immediately thought "OMG, is this luck or the real deal?" From that moment I decided I was going to give that setting a go at the old house next door to ours just to see what I could find.

The very next day after we got home I tested my theory in the side yard. To my delight I began finding targets as though the property had never been detected before. This was astounding to me but I knew the real test would be to detect the dreaded iron infested field where the old barn once stood. To me, if I found something there then this would be the true test of the machines capabilities.

As soon as I stepped foot on the field my machine went nuts, squeaking and squawking like nobody's business. It was maddening but I was determined and I'm glad I was. It wasn't ten minutes before I got my first "Good" target. I dug down nearly 12 inches before seeing what I thought was a gold colored twist bottle cap. However, when I pulled it out, it had a beautiful faceted blue stone attached. Upon closer inspection I realized that what I had found was a heavy man's ring.

My wife was mowing the lawn on the tractor and I kept waving with excitement. When she finally saw me she thought something had happened and ran over to check on me. After I assured her I was fine I said take a look at this. When I placed it in her hand she looked at it and gasped. "This is a Mount Markham class ring" she said and immediately took it in to clean it. When she came back outside she told me it was from the class of "74" and that there was a name etched inside it but that she couldn't make it out without her glasses. However I could, and the name engraved inside was clearly "Chuck Wight". I now knew I had a job to do.

My wife's family had purchased the home in 1973 but neither of her older brothers knew a "Chuck Wight". They did however know another person with the "Wight" last name but as it turned out they no longer lived here. I spent some time researching the name on the internet and came up with a couple of potential matches in Florida but no contact information. I tried a number of other things too but just wasn't having any luck. Then, a couple of weeks went by and my wife happened to mention that the Mount Markham 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion committee had a Facebook page and that maybe it would be a good idea to put a shout out that I needed some help locating a class mate from 1974 to return something I had found to him. I thought it was a great idea and I quickly fired off a message.

As it turned out, the good folks of West Winfield quickly responded privately with the information I needed. The information given had matched up with what limited information I had found on my own so I was fairly confident I had found the owner of the ring. I tried to contact Chuck on several occasions but to no avail. I was starting to think I had hit a wall but I remained intent on seeing this through. A couple more weeks later, a nice lady named Helen who works at our local bank called and left a message that said she thought she might have some information for me. When I called her back she told me she thought that her nephew had gone to school with Chuck Wight so she gave me his number. As it turned out, he did indeed know Chuck personally and offered to call him in Florida as well. About a week or so went by without hearing anything. Again, I just figured that this was going to be one of those times when you just strike out. Just when I was about to give up, my wife and I were watching television one night when the phone rang, the caller ID said Wight! Somehow I knew this was it!

When I answered, the gentleman said "Hi, this is Chuck Wight, I heard you found my class ring". He then apologized for not getting back to me sooner but told me that a friend of his (my contact) had called him. I suppose that in this day and age you have to be careful responding to calls from someone you don't know saying that they had found something of yours. But now he knew I was legit. Anyway, after a brief conversation, I found out that Chuck had left the area in 1981 but he had lost the ring well before that. He had no idea where it went, or how it ended up where it did

but he sure seemed happy that I had found it. **The thing that I found extraordinary was that his ring was exactly identical to the one I had purchased in high school**. Same company, size, style and color stone as mine was. For a brief moment, the happy memories of this rite of passage from Oriskany had returned to me. However, fate had a different destiny to fulfill and I knew it was time to ensure its safe return to its rightful owner.

The long lost class ring (Pictured below) was sent out and received by Chuck just in time for Christmas (See Pic and Email below).



**From:** charles wight  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 18, 2020 10:42 AM  
**To:** Stu Copperwheat  
**Subject:** My Ring



Stu,  
Thank you so much for this wonderful surprise. It was the best Christmas present ever!!!  
Chuck

# News from England

From Paul Rainford

Portland Weymouth Metal Detecting Club



Check out these treasures from their February 2020 meeting!!

## Best Coins:

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Elizabeth I shilling 1560 -61



2<sup>nd</sup>: Edward I farthing.



3<sup>rd</sup>: Double headed coin of Constantine & radiate bust of Sol.



## Best Artifacts:

1st. Medieval quatrefoil pendant with staff



2nd Anglo Saxon polyhedral pin



3rd Single looped buckle with integral plate



# 2020 Calendar of Events:

Date	Comments	Speaker	Snacks	Club Hunt Site/Date
Jan 2019	Board & Officers Meeting	n/a		n/a
2/24/20			M Ferjet	n/a
3/30/20	Initial Meeting, Admin Matters Etc.	n/a	Dave B	n/a
4/27/20	First Competition Meeting Officer Elections		Mike W	Proctor Park
May 2020	No Meeting in May due to Memorial Day. Meeting June 1	n/a	n/a	
6/1/20			Stu & Alicia	
6/29/20			Laurie S	
7/27/20			John & Diane	
8/31/20			Dave L	
9/13/20	Delta Lake Club Hunt	n/a	All	Delta Lake Club Hunt
9/28/20				
10/10-10/11	Digfest 2020			Chazy, NY
10/26/20	Dress up Meeting 😊			
11/25/20	Last Meeting of 2020			
12/13/20	2020 X-mas Party!	n/a	n/a	n/a

# EARTH Club Classified Section



If you are looking to buy or sell any coins, contact Vincent at Upstate Numismatics. The Club has been acquiring coins from this organization for the past few years. He is very knowledgeable, courteous and also a member of the local coin club.

UPSTATE NUMISMATIC SERVICES  
Dealer in Coins, Currency & Precious Metals  
Vincent J. Tramacera, Jr.  
258 Genesee Street, Suite 505B, Utica, NY 13502  
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## Earth Metal Detecting Club of Central New York

### Contact Information:

#### Lost Items:



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#### Membership Information:

David Lofgren (dlof20@hotmail.com)

#### Newsletter Submissions:

David Lofgren (dlof20@hotmail.com)

**Website:** earthclubmetaldetecting.com

#### Website Submissions:

dlof20@hotmail.com

## Birthday Wishes!!

Hoping the following members had a happy birthday in *March*: Hope Blencowe, Dennis Osborne, Mike Wusik, Brandon Snyder.

Wishing the following members a happy birthday in *April*: Ralph Blencowe, Ed Netzband, David Dylis, Ira Tisch.