

TREASURE TALK

NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH AFRICAN METAL DETECTING ENTHUSIASTS
NUUSBRIEF VIR SUID AFRIKAANSE METAALVERKLIKKER ENTOESIASTE

Second Quarter 2002 Tweede kwartaal



Cape Town treasure hunters welcomes Lukas van der Merwe from Johannesburg to our beautiful city. From left to right: Peter Batchelor, Wolfgang Roux, Pierre Nortje, Quentin Papenfuss, Lukas van der Merwe, Alan Miller, Peter Stoklas, Andy Naude, Pat Cassidy.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear reader

In January this year, Lukas van der Merwe visited Cape Town for a short holiday and I invited him and his wife, as well as a few of our local detectorists (and wives) to enjoy a "snoek-braai" at my home. We had a wonderful day and no guesses what the main topics of conversation were! Lukas also brought along the video of our trip to England, as well as the trip to Colesberg, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. The next evening Lukas and a few friends also accompanied me when I had to give a talk on metal detecting and treasure hunting at the South African Numismatic Society. The video of England was also shown and everyone was astonished by the finds that were made over there. Local finds, a detector or two, and copies of Treasure Talk were also put on display – it was a wonderful evening and we certainly won a few new friends for our great hobby.

Talking of making new friends – please read the article *the ring that never got away* by Kern Page ... You are certainly a great ambassador for our hobby Kern – we all salute you.

The winner of our best quarterly-article is John Mulder. Please read his story on the finding of a certain gold ring ... twice! Congratulations John ... your prize sponsored by Santam is already on its way.

Lukas van der Merwe, who, for the past three years, has sponsored our Find of the Year Competition, has new plans for this year. He is sponsoring a Fisher 1225X machine for the best suggestion for a logo for the soon to be launched South African Metal Detecting Association. At this stage, even the name are just a suggestion, but please put on those designer/creative hats and send in those logos before the end of July. A very big prize is at stake!

But that is not to say that there will be no Find of the Year Competition... This year it will be even bigger and better than previous years. Please see inside for more details.

Keep that coil to the soil.

Pierre Nortje
Editor

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BRIEF VAN DIE REDAKTEUR

Beste leser

Vroeër hierdie jaar het Lukas van der Merwe en sy vrou vir 'n kort vakansie, 'n draai hier in die Kaap kom maak. Ek het 'n paar van my metaalverklikker vriende en hul vrouens oorgenooi en vir ons Transvaalse gaste gewys hoe 'n mens nou eintlik 'n snoek moet braai! Dit was 'n wonderlike dag en dit neem nie baie om te raai waarom ons heel middag gesels het nie. Lukas het die videos oor ons besoek aan Engeland asook Colesberg saamgebring en almal het dit baie geniet om daarna te kyk. Die volgende aand moes ek 'n praatjie gaan lewer by die Suid Afrikaanse Numismatiese Vereniging oor metaalverklikking en skattejag en het vir Lukas en 'n paar vriende saamgenooi. Die video oor ons soekery in Engeland is ook gewys en die mense het hul vergaap aan die vondste wat ons daar gemaak het. Plaaslike vondste, 'n paar verklikkers, en kopiëe van Treasure Talk is ook vir besigtiging uitgestal – dit was 'n wonderlike aand en ek is seker ons het 'n paar nuwe vriende vir ons stokperdjie gemaak.

So van vriende-maak gepraat – lees asseblief die artikel deur Kern Page getiteld “The ring that never got away”. Kern, jy is beslis 'n ambassadeur vir ons stokperdjie - ons is trots op jou!

John Mulder is die wenner van ons artikel-van-die-kwartaal... wie sou nou kon raai dat dieselfde ring twee keer gevind kon word. Veels geluk John; jou prys, geborg deur Santam, is reeds op pad.

Lukas van der Merwe, wat reeds die afgelope drie jaar ons Vonds van die Jaar Kompetisie borg, het ander planne hierdie jaar! Hy borg vanjaar 'n splinternuwe Fisher 1225X metaalverklikker vir die beste voorstel t.o.v. 'n logo (wapen) vir die ter stigte Suid Afrikaanse Metaalverklikker Assosiasie. Op hierdie stadium is selfs die naam slegs 'n voorstel, maar kry solank daardie voorstelle vir 'n logo voor einde Julie by ons. 'n Baie groot prys is op die spel!

Maar dit wil nie sê dat daar nie vanjaar weer 'n Vonds van die Jaar Kompetisie gaan wees nie... Hierdie jaar gaan dit eerder groter en beter as vorige jare wees. Sien asb. binne hierdie nuusbrieff vir meer besonderhede.

Gebruik daardie spoel met 'n doel!

Pierre Nortje
Redakteur

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LETTERS FROM OUR READERS // BRIEWE VAN ONS LESERS

Hello Pierre,

I see by your e-mail address that you are in South Africa. I am in Blantyre, Malawi. I am working on a contract with the Commonwealth Secretariat out of the United Kingdom for the Malawi Electoral Commission. I have been here since October 2001. Malawi is very beautiful. Initially it was a little too hot for my liking but I am getting used to it now. I was in Johannesburg back in October and may be going back some time in April. My first impression of "Joburg" was its size. The place is huge compared to Canadian cities.

How did you find out about our little Canadian metal detecting forum on the Internet? The forum started out as our club (Capital Metal Detecting Club) forum but has grown to international size. The forum even spawned other groups into creating other forums. There were a few personality clashes that sped this process long but it has created a family of forums that give information very freely. Have you checked out Silver Mike's Forum, The East Coast Digger's Forum, The (Upper or Lower) Canada Forum or The UK Forum? They are all very informative and friendly to new comers.

What kind of machine do you use? I have a Garrett GTA 1500. I did not bring it to Malawi and am wondering if it was the right decision. I have seen many very old sites that are probably virgin to the metal detecting technology. There is this old church in Nyambadwe that was built in 1896 by the British. The church is surrounded by lush tropical gardens and manicured lawns that are crisscrossed by cobblestone paths. I can just feel the old silver and gold in the ground. I am told that Rhodesian, British silver, British copper and British gold coins were used in the region until the colony Nyassaland became independent Malawi. What are the detecting prospects like in your region of South Africa? I bet you have a lot of virgin sites to choose from.

Good luck and happy hunting.

Greg in Malawi.

Pierre

Baie dankie vir die geleentheid om jul wêreld te kon betree en dat ek saam met jou, Wolf en Lukas by Robinson meer kon gaan soek het.

Ek het nooit kon dink dat dit soveel genot sou kon verskaf nie, ook, toe ek gister deur die pos werk en die jongste nuusbrief ontvang het. Dankie daarvoor. Kan jy die foto van ons drie vir my mail asb? Ek het planne na die einde van 2002 om moontlik 'n masjien aan te skaf. Ek gaan Plettenbergbaai toe oor Kersfees en wil bietjie gaan soek. Ek sal graag alle nuusbriewe in die toekoms wil ontvang. My bydrae sal ook nog verskyn. Wag maar, jy sal sien.

Groete

Gerhard Genis
Eldopark

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS // BRIEWE VAN ONS LESERS

Pierre

I received a Treasure Talk magazine from Clarence Coetzer. It is very informative and I enjoyed it allot. As soon as I read the mag I got into my car and looked for the nearest old farmhouses - there are no beaches near Pretoria. I was out in the field for about 2 hours and only found 2 "303" cartridges. If anyone knows something about taking a detector to Mozambique please let me know for I am going up to Bara Lodge at the end of the month. Hopefully I will find lots and lots.

Pierre, could you please send Clarence's e-mail address to me, I want to thank him for his input and answers to my questions. Another question, does anyone know how a Crossfire search coil looks inside and is it possible to build one from home? I need some help - do you have Lukas van der Merwe's address?

Please send me the next issue of Treasure Talk.

Werner Uys
Moreletta Park

Hello Pierre

I just got some great news. I remember you telling me that you are going to send my article "*Wishes Do Come True*", which won the Treasure Talk best article competition last year, to your friend David Barwell in England. You told me that David will forward the article to the British treasure hunting magazine "*The Searcher*" for possible publication.

Guess what?...they published it in their December issue!

I'm looking at it at this minute, and can not believe it – fame at last? They also send me a very welcome cheque for the effort... in British pounds! What more can I say but to thank you very much (again).

Andy Naude
Stellenberg

Good for you Andy... congratulations! (Editor)

Hello Pierre

I have not had the pleasure of meeting you yet, but perhaps one day I will. Both Charles and I do our thing on the beaches here {Hermanus mostly} but the sand has been very high this last wee while, so we haven't had very much luck, but we still keep trying. How are you guys doing in the Cape? Good I hope.

All the best for 2002.

Margaret and Charles Hodge
Franskraal

The U.K. and International Detecting Forum

After posting some of our Treasure Talk articles on this web forum, including the one of our trip to England (which was presented at the SA Numismatic Society), the following postings were received:-

Pierre

The names you mention in Norfolk were the area's were I did my Divisional training as a infantryman in the 10th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment in 1943/4 in preparation for the invasion of Normandy. I live in Wales now but often go back to my home town of Boston in Lincolnshire and visit Sandrinham, Cromer and down the coast to Great Yarmouth in Norfolk – Icenic country. Bacton, Happisburg, Winterton too impressed into my 19 year old mind. Little did I know what was ahead at the time. Your essay is well presented and well written and I wish you all the luck in the world on the night of your presentation. Go for it, you are on familiar ground.

*Sir Charles
Wales*

Pierre

You brought back some memories of my trips over there (when they had Jan/Feb trips). I've now put in my application (with my son, I hope) for the August Group 1 of this year and you just made the juices flow that much more to get back with David/Trish/Frank... like you, I've never met Jimmy Sierra Normandi in person but I hope to this time. Good post, and better reading.

All the best

*Jim
Brooklyn USA*

Pierre

My foray to Wiveton! Reading of it made it all come flooding back! This is the kind of narrative we need on the new site, and I hope you will be a regular contributor. Between you and Sir Charles, we ought to have some EXCELLENT reading.

Regards

*Kim Cox
USA*

AN ANIMAL PARK ABOVE A TREASURE TROVE

By Andrew Eriksen

My Company had been contracted to consult on the development of a 36-hectare animal theme park in Tunisia. The clients had selected a hill situated on a plane half way between the towns of Sousse and Hammanet, which are located approximately 100 km apart on the shores of the Gulf of Hammanet on the Mediterranean Sea.

Our contract commenced at the end of 1999, and took a year to complete. Part of our contract was to have a staff member on site during the contract period and I was required to fly to Tunisia twice a month for the contract duration. It was during one of my early visits that my interest in metal detecting was tweaked. Sitting in the bar of the client's hotel one evening, I met an elderly German tourist who visited Tunisia every year. When I asked why he frequented the country so often, he explained that he was a metal detector hobbyist and had in fact found a number of Roman coins on the beach including a gold one ... well, that was that; on returning to South Africa, I contacted Wolfgang Roux and purchased my first detector, a Fisher 1225X with an additional 10.5 coil.

After testing this out on various beaches on the Garden Route, I decided that this was a hobby I would definitely pursue and so contacted Wolfgang to exchange my 1225-X for a beefier model and he kindly advised me and exchanged mine at a minimal loss for a CZ-7a Quicksilver.

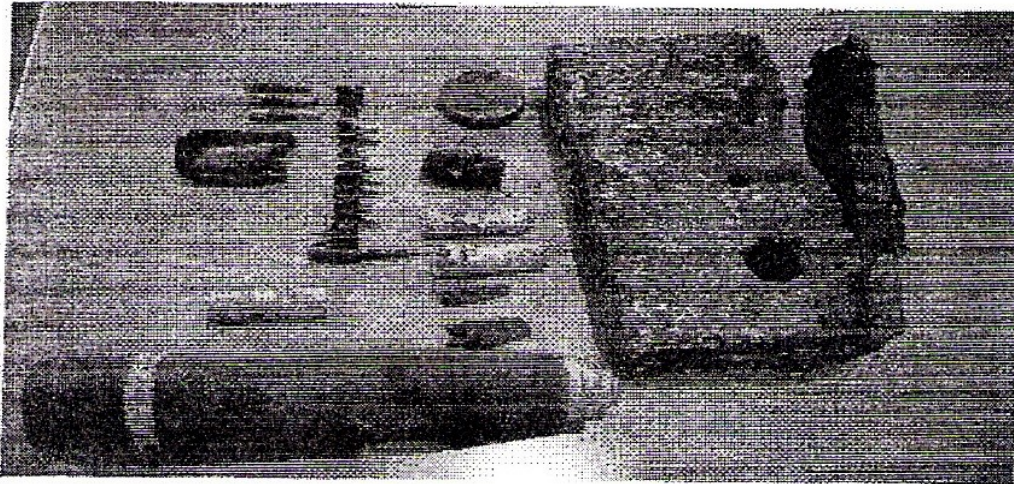
Armed with this fantastic detector packed in my luggage, I flew to Tunisia with huge anticipation, as the site we were working on had started to produce a wealth of Roman artifacts including large sandstone blocks, a grave and numerous pieces of broken pottery (a few pieces submitted to Rhodes university placed some as early Roman and others as possibly Neolithic (10 000 years old!)). The first three days on site proved frustrating to say the least. Being a novice and with all of these Roman artifacts coming out of one area, I expected to unearth a treasure immediately. However, the site was fairly contaminated with wire, nails and iron and steel rods from the builders, and so after much sweat and false alarms, I retired to the construction hut and rethought my strategy.

I had been concentrating on the top of the hill facing east in the direction of the sea, so this time I started to circle away from the main building site and headed around the hilltop. Half an hour later, I was in a clean area with minimal contamination when the detector sounded. Whatever it was, it was big, and appeared approximately 50 cm down. I started to dig every now and then retesting with the detector. Surely here was a cache of coins. The next thing, my spade hit something metal and on closer inspection I was disappointed to find what looked to me like a piece of old discarded metal, but having dug so deep, I needed to satisfy myself that this was indeed rubbish and so excavated around this piece of metal. The next thing I saw was I'd

uncovered a large pile of live ammunition; the piece of metal I'd discovered was an old ammo box.

Stunned, I hurriedly continued with my digging uncovering old battle leather pouches about 300 rounds of ammunition (half a cement bag full), many still in ammo belts and two metal boxes. Excitedly I showed this to the client, who appeared totally unfazed by my discovery, and patiently explained to me that both the Germans and the British had of course occupied Tunisia during the Second World War and that these must have come from them.

The rest of the week, I covered the whole of the ridge and turned up two unexploded shells, loads of shrapnel, part of a grenade and two flare cartridges.



On returning to South Africa, I could find little regarding the site, and what battle had occurred there. However, luck was on my side and during one of the many lengthy stays at Tunisia airport waiting to depart, I picked up an English edition Tunisian paper, which was running weekly articles on Tunisia and the Second World War, and the edition I had in my hands covered the area of our site.

In summary it states our site is the only high ground overlooking the plains in this part of the Gulf and it was here that Montgomery's 8th Army attacked the German divisions, from the South. What will now be a theme park was once the site of a horrific battle where lives were lost, and before that a Roman settlement and before that a Stone Age village. Makes you think what history lies beneath us, doesn't it!

Fisher Metal Detectors

Please contact Lukas van der Merwe on 0829017701

Please see display advert for your local agent

TWO TIMES LUCKY

By John Mulder

On Sunday morning, 9 December, John and Erica Mulder were searching Main Beach, Plettenberg Bay, with their metal detectors.

Sally and Martin arrived from Knysna as part of their involvement in Kayak and Canoe activities along the Garden Route. When Sally noticed John and Erica with their metal detectors she called on them to conduct a search for Martin's wedding ring lost on 8 December at the Old Drift of the Knysna river. They were convinced Martin had lost his ring when canoeing at the Old Drift 5kms upstream from the bridge on the N2 national road.

They arrived at the Old Drift, Sunday 4.30pm after traveling along the last km of road that is really more suited for 4x4 off road driving. After the search area was demarcated by Martin, John searched in the water while Erica conducted a search on the river bank. During the next hour while searching in the rain and the black water at depths above waist high they recovered only a few coins and some sinkers.

During this time when it appeared if the search would be fruitless and may be abandoned, Erica enquired from Sally about the possibility that the gold ring may have been lost elsewhere and so it was decided to move the search another km upstream to a spot where Martin recalled he encountered a fallen tree across the stream and considered it possible that the branches may have pulled the ring from his finger.

The road to this location went across a dairy farm and was in even worse condition to the extent that it was near impassable and Sally possibly thought that it would be a vain exercise, so she opted to stay behind at the milk shed to see where milk actually comes from, leaving Erica, John and Martin to proceed to the river.

Upon arrival at a low level bridge across the fast flowing river, John collected his gear from the car and he and Martin struggled to walk along the river bed over slippery rocks to a fallen tree about 50 meters downstream. After searching in the fast flowing black water for 10 minutes the metal detector sounded a signal along the edge of the stream amongst loose rocks in about half meter deep water.

While removing the loose rocks to get access to the gravel, the thought went through John's mind that it was unlikely that any trash previously found at the Drift, could be lying in the river at this remote spot, and that in fact it maybe the ring which is sounding off the detector. With this inspiration he proceeded to lift the loose gravel from the river, a handful at a time, as long as the detector signaled that the metal object was still down below. And then, BINGO, as the last

handful of gravel was brought up, from the murky depths, there amongst the gravel in his hand was the rich yellow color of gold.

Martin could not believe his eyes that in the final minutes of the 2 hour search, against all odds and with daylight fading, they had actually found the ring he had given up hope of ever seeing again and that he could now put it back on his finger. This was his wedding ring from 6 months ago, which Sally had inherited from her father and was of great sentimental value to both of them.

When Martin gave the good news to Sally back at the milk shed, she became overjoyed and performed an impromptu victory dance in the middle of the dirt road, to the puzzlement of the nearby cows! But little did she know how short-lived this happiness would be.

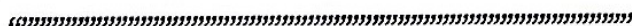
On Wednesday 12 December 2001 at 4.40pm, Martin meets with John at Bowers restaurant in Plettenberg Bay to review the story ... and gives John the unthinkable bad news that he had once more lost the ring, this time at noon that day, in waist deep waves on the beach at Natures Valley. Apparently he was taking the ring from his finger when he was already in the water intending to give it to his sister for safekeeping, when he accidentally dropped it.

When you lose a ring in the surf your best chance of recovering it is to conduct a search as soon as possible, before too many tides can sweep it away, and so it was duly agreed to conduct a search at low tide late the same day.

John and Erica arrived at Natures valley shortly after 6 p.m. and conducted a preliminary search below the high tide water line while waiting for Martin and Sally to arrive to verify the location for the search. By the time Martin and Sally had arrived at about 7p.m. the tide had receded far enough to permit a search in the waves. After another hour, near 8 p.m. as darkness was setting in, the metal detector eventually signaled the first and only target in the entire hour search – in the sand below the water.

In between the splashing waves John recovered the target, but by now the light was too poor for John to see the wedding band which was lying on its side in the scoop. He could only hear the rattle of the object when shaking the scoop, but from experience it sounded like it was a ring, so he duly presented the scoop to Martin, who removed the ring! For the second time within a few days Martin could not believe his luck of recovering his lost wedding ring.

What an incredible story. There cannot be too many people who had their lost wedding ring recovered twice within a week in such extremely difficult circumstances.



PHOTOS FROM OUR TREASURE HUNT AT ROBINSON LAKE

Photos taken by Lukas van der Merwe

The following few photos were taken during our treasure hunt at Robinson lake during November last year. Please see the article by Pierre Nortje in our first issue of this year entitled **Transvaal... Hier Kom Ons!**



From left to right: Wolfgang “Gold Finger” Roux, Pierre “Quicksilver” Nortje, Lukas “Lord of the Rings” van der Merwe and Gerhard “New Kid on the Block” Genis. In the back ground are the pillars of the old diving platform.



Pierre trying to find out if the signal is another dreaded lead sinker or a silver coin with Gerhard looking on in anticipation. A piece of the old collapsed board walk to the diving platform is lying in the foreground.



A view of the lake with the old dive platform pillars on the left hand side.



An opposite view with the old mine buildings on the left hand side and the recreation area on the right.



Pierre busy searching under the trees in front of the recreation buildings. Not much were found here – the goodies were all in the muddy dried up swimming area.



Wolfgang at the exact spot where he found the gold ring. This photo (if I remember correctly) must have been taken earlier the morning – when he returned here, the ring was found – persistence certainly pays off!



Pierre, Wolf and Gerhard proudly display the mornings finds.



A closer look at our finds – look for the four gold rings near the center of the picture. The Anglo Zulu war (circa 1879) medal is visible at the bottom, just right of the center of the display. The rest are an assortment of silver and copper coins, pieces of jewelry, buckles and other odds and ends. Gerhard insisted that his first find ever, a lead sinker, was also put on display – it certainly is a beautiful sinker Gerhard!

Treasure Talk

Find of the Year Competition!! 2002 Vonds van die Jaar Kompetisie!!

This will be the fourth consecutive year in which the competition will be held. The good news is that there will also be more prizes this year – so please send in those entries as soon as possible. The cut off date for entry forms is the 31th of July 2002. // Hierdie is die vierde opeenvolgende jaar waarin die kompetisie gehou sal word. Die goeie nuus is ook dat ons vanjaar meer pryse as vorige jare gaan toeken – so stuur asseblief u inskrywings so gou as moontlik. Die afsluitingsdatum vir inskrywingsvorme is 31 Julie 2002.

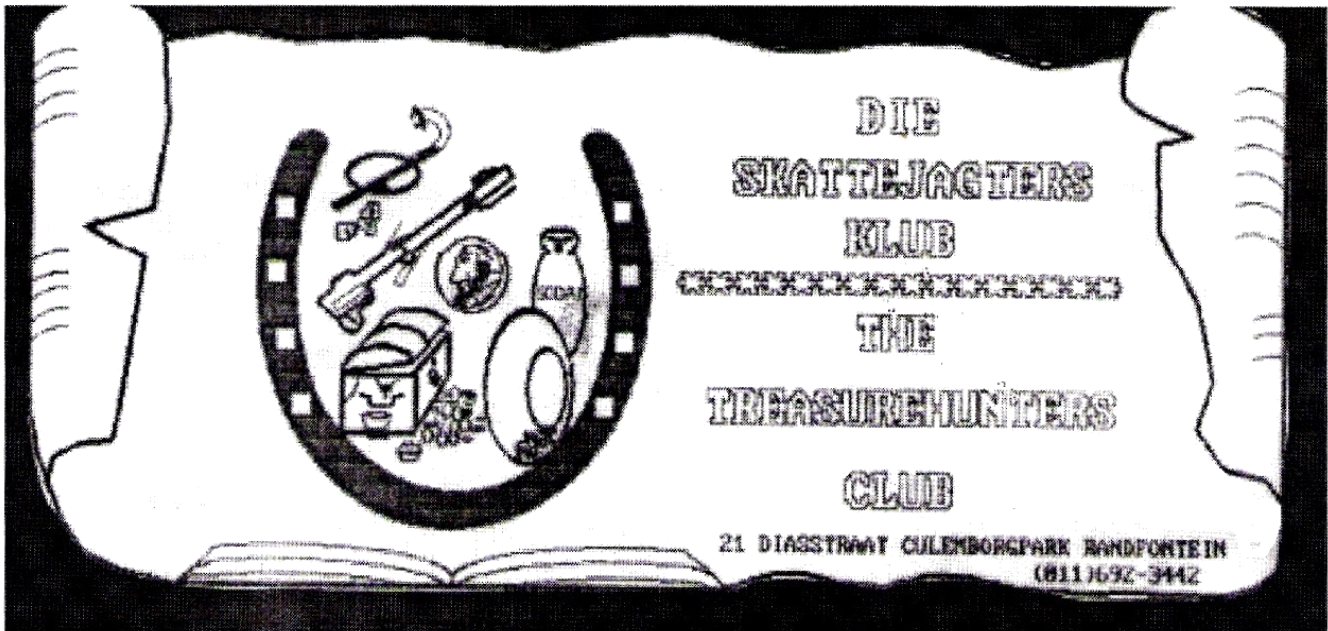
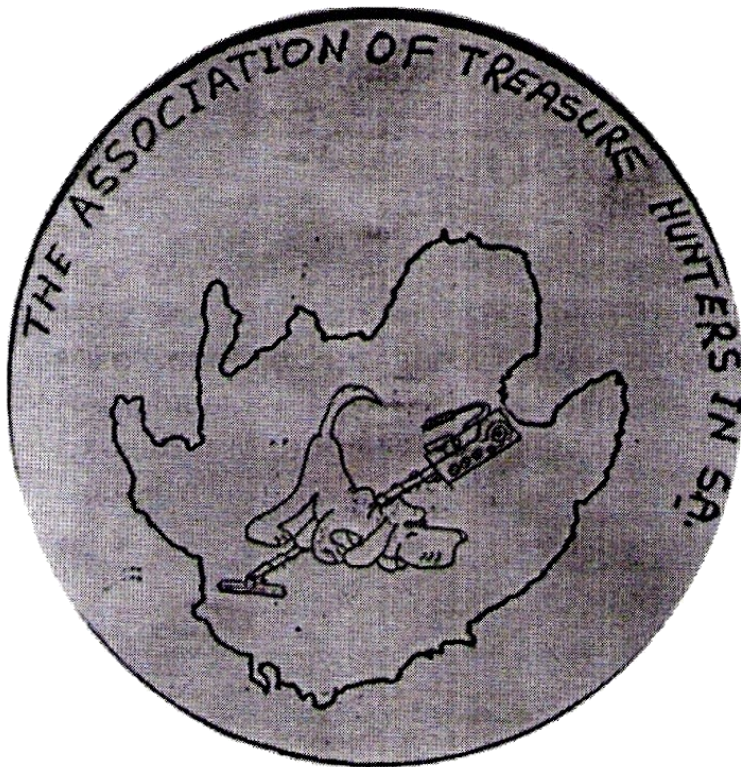
Rules of the competition / Reels van die kompetisie

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>1. The item(s) must have been found within the boundaries of South Africa during the past 12 months with a metal detector</i> | <i>1. Die item(s) moes binne die grense van Suid Afrika gedurende die afgelope 12 maande met 'n metaalverklikker gevind gewees het</i> |
| <i>2. You can send in as many entries as you like, but a separate entry form must accompany each entry – an entry form is included with this newsletter – please make copies</i> | <i>2. U kan soveel inskrywings stuur as wat u wil, maar voltooi asseblief 'n aparte inskrywingsvorm vir elke inskrywing – 'n vorm word by hierdie nuusbrieff ingesluit – maak asseblief kopiëe</i> |
| <i>3. Do not send the item/artifact itself with your entry – a colour photo will do!</i> | <i>3. Moenie die item/artifak self stuur nie – 'n kleur foto sal voldoende wees!</i> |
| <i>4. The winner(s) will be decided by popular vote by the readers of Treasure Talk</i> | <i>4. Die wenner(s) sal aangewys word deur stemkeuses van lesers van hierdie nuusbrieff.</i> |
| <i>5. Entry forms must reach us before the 31th of July 2002</i> | <i>5. Inskrywingsvorme moet ons voor 31 Julie 2002 bereik</i> |
| <i>6. The winner(s) will be announced in our fourth quarter issue.</i> | <i>6. Die wenner(s) sal in ons vierdie kwartaal uitgawe bekend gemaak word.</i> |

**Post your entry forms to / Pos u inskrywingsvorme aan:-
Treasure Talk Posbus 816 Durbanville 7551**

LOGO COMPETITION

Here are three examples of earlier logos, the one at the bottom dates from around 1982, the ZAR logo from 1986, and the "sniffing dog" (date uncertain) was designed by Mike Conradie. How about a brand new logo to keep up with the new millenium? Remember a Fisher 1225X is up for grabs, sponsored by **Lukas van der Merwe from Excalibur Mining**. Please send in those logos before the end of July to PO Box 816 Durbanville 7551



SKATTEJAG IN SUIDELIKE AFRIKA

Deur Pierre Nortje

Sekerlik die meeste mense in Suid Afrika het al van die sogenaamde Kruger-miljoene en die Grosvernor skat gehoor. Maar hoeveel is daar wat weet dat skatte al gejag is hier aan die suidpunt van Afrika sedert die eerste seilskepe in die 15de eeu om ons kuslyn gevaar het, en heel waarskynlik nog vroeër? Suidelike Afrika is moontlik die rykste land ter wêreld wat minerale rykdomme betref, en die soeke daarna, vind daarvan en handeldryf daarin, het oor generasies heen, verhale van skattejag ontlok. Ons lang en onvoorspelbare kuslyn het ook honderde, indien nie duisende nie, rampe veroorsaak met tallose skeepswrakke die stille getuie daarvan. Suidelike Afrika kan sonder meer as 'n skattejagtersparadys beskryf word...

Elke streek in ons land het sy stories rondom skattejag, en vervolgens gee ek slegs 'n paar voorbeelde...

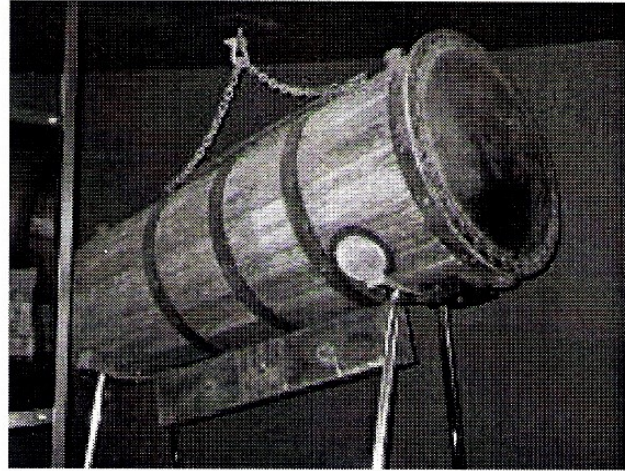
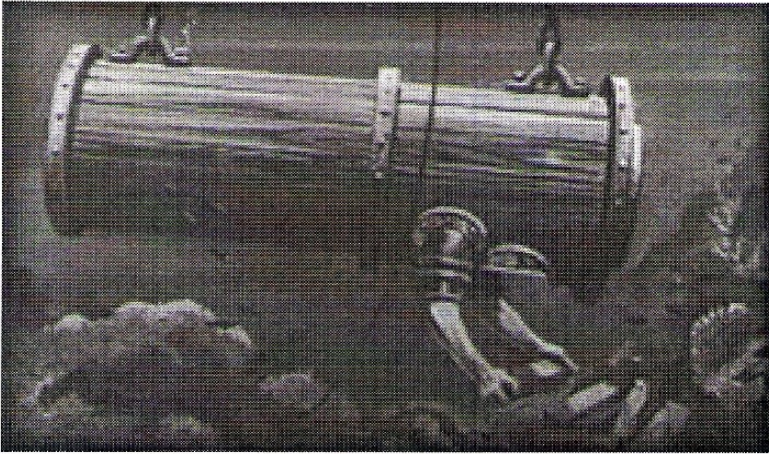
Die Weskaap

Een van die eerste gedokumenteerde bewyse van skattejag in die Weskaap, en waarskynlik ook in Suidelike Afrika, is die verhaal van John Lethbridge en sy bisare duikapparaat.

Gedurende die winter van Junie 1722 tref 'n verwoede storm die Weskaap. Angswekende rukwinde en haelbuie tref Tafelbaai. Seilskepe wat voor die kasteel vasgemeer lê, word bykans hulpeloos rondgeslinger - die ankertoue as enigste hoop op oorlewing. En steeds vererger die storm. Verwarde VOC-amptenare staan hulpeloos en toekyk hoe 'n reuse ramp besig is om reg voor hul oë af te speel. Een vir een begin die ankertoue te breek en die skepe is nou aan hul eie lot oorgelaat. Vir die matrose op die skepe is daar slegs die vae hoop op oorlewing deur in die golwende massas te spring en wal toe te swem. Bitter min oorleef dit. Saam met die sinkende skepe, verdrink talle, en slegs hier en daar word 'n oorlewende deur gretige hande teen die wal uitgehelp. Die volgende oggend lê Tafelbaai se kuslyn besaai met opdrifels van die wrakke, maar erger nog, die lyke en verminkte liggaamsdele van matrose wat in die storm omgekom het. Dit is 'n geweldige terugslag vir die Kompanjie. Met die eerste terugkerende skip, dra Kommandeur de Chavonnes per brief die verskriklike nuus oor aan die Here XV11 in Amsterdam.

Planne word dadelik beraam om dit wat te redde is te red, maar die amptenare is bykans hulpeloos – die meeste van die skeepswrakke met hul waardevolle vragte lê te diep om enigsins duikers af te stuur. 'n Ruk later word die Kommandeur ingelig dat herwinningswerk deur 'n duiker in Engeland gedoen word. Die verskil is dat hierdie man, John Lethbridge sy eie duikapparaat ontwikkel het waarmee hy vir relatiewe lang periodes onder die water kon asemhaal. Sy “duikpak” het bestaan uit 'n houtbalie waarin hy toegemaak is met gate waardeur sy arms in waterdigte leeromhulsels gestek het. Met sy arms wat relatief vrylik kon beweeg, en 'n glasskerm waardeur hy kon sien, kon hy op die bodem rondbeweeg om herwinningswerk te doen. Met die hulp van 'n klein bemanning is Lethbridge dan per tou in die water laat afsak met gewigte wat kompenseer vir die dryfvermoë van die lugge vulde apparaat. Wanneer sy lug opgeraak het binne dié duikapparaat is die bemanning per tousein in kennis gestel om hom op te trek.

‘n Kontrak is tussen die kompanjie en Lethbridge gesluit om teen ‘n betaling van ongeveer 7 pond per maand “en soveel wyn as wat sy bemanning kon drink”, herwinningwerk op die bodem van Tafelbaai te doen. ‘n Klein persentasie van die waarde van die herwonne items sou hom ook toekom.



Twee foto's van Lethbridge se duikapparaat

Gesien in die lig van sy primitiewe toerusting, en een alle realistiese verwagtinge, was Lethbridge en sy span buitengewoon suksesvol. Duisende silwer muntstukke, waardevolle oosterse keramiekware en selfs skeepskanonne is herwin. Alhoewel daar nie met sekerheid bepaal kon word wat Lethbridge uit hierdie suksesvolle skattejag verdien het nie, moes dit ‘n aansienlike bedrag gewees het. Vanselfsprekend was die Kommandeur en die Kompanjie ook baie in hul skik, soveel so dat Lethbridge gevra is om sy herwinningwerk op die Merensteijn, ‘n skip wat 20 jaar tevore in 1702 naby Saldanabaai gesink het, voort te sit. Dit is nie bekend hoeveel sukses hy in hierdie poging behaal het nie, maar dit kon nie te veel gewees het nie... ‘n groot skat het vir baie jare op die bodem van die koue Atlantiese oseaan bly lê.

Sowat 250 jaar later is daar weer op die Merensteijn geduik, en hierdie keer met groot sukses. Alhoewel hierdie skip deur die jare in verskeie boeke vermeld is, is die eerste georganiseerde skattejag eers in die vroeë negentien sewentigs onderneem deur twee broers, Reg en Bill Dodds asook ‘n tweede (opponerende) span duikers onder Bobby Hayward. Duisende silwer muntstukke uit die 1600derds is gevind asook ‘n aantal goue munte.

In my eie muntversameling het ek twee munte van hierdie wrak met ‘n sertifikaat van herwinning, geteken deur ene JA Robertson. ‘n Restaurant in Saldanha met dieselfde naam as die wrak, het tot redelik onlangs muntstukke van die Merensteijn verkoop teen R50 stuk, en ek is vandag bitter spyt dat ek nie die totale versameling opgekoop het nie. Vandag sal daardie munte teen minstens R500 elk oorsee verkoop kan word. Terloops, dit word vertel dat die Dodds broers, as groentjies, die silwer munte teen ongeveer 75 sent elk aan skroothandelaars verkoop het!

Nie alle skatte in die Weskaap lê egter in ‘n watergraf nie. Onlangs het ek en my familie die bekende Kaapse wyn- en vrugteplaas, Vergelegen, naby Somerset Wes besoek. Die plaas het oorspronklik aan die Goewerneur, Willem Adriaan van der Stel behoort. Onder die ou Kamferbome, wat reeds in 1702 voor die ou opstal geplant is, het ek vir my kinders die storie van een van hul voorvaders vertel wie ‘n kortstondige verbintenis met van der Stel gehad het.

Sommige van die Kaapse vryboere het teen Van der Stel in opstand gekom. Dit was weens laasgenoemde se laksheid deur voordelige handelskontrakte aan homself en ander hooggeplaaste Kompanjie amptenare toe te ken. Dit, ten koste van die hardwerkende boere van die omgewing wat reeds gesukkel het om hul ware aan verbygaande skepe te verkoop.

'n Petisie is teen Van der Stel opgetrek en is deur 63 plaaslike burgers onderteken. Van der Stel het onmiddelik opgetree en 44 burgers is oortuig om 'n getuigskrif vir hom te onderteken. Jacob Nourtier (oorspronklike spelling van Nortje), broer van my familie se stamvader in Suid Afrika, was een van dié 44 burgers. Dit word vermeld dat Jacob Nourtier "door schrik bevangen, sonder dat hem wierd voorgeleesen heft, geteekent." My arme voorvader het dus die getuigskrif geteken sonder dat dit vir hom voorgelees is en die inhoud daarvan aan hom bekend gemaak is! Van der Stel was waarskynlik salig onbewus van sy ongeletterde ondersteuner, maar hoe ook al sy, hierdie verhaaltjie slegs terloops.



Die plaasopstal op Vergelegen met die reuse Kamferbome wat in 1702 geplant is

Kort na Van der Stel se vertrek uit die Kaap, is Vergelegen gekoop deur Hendrik Klopper. Dit word vertel dat Klopper en van sy vriende in die omgewing, met 'n plaaslike skeepskaptein saamgesweer het om laasgenoemde se skeepsvrag te steel. Die kaptein, Albertus van der Soest het kort daarna sy skip, die Schoenenburg, doelbewus naby die huidige Struisbaai, op die rotse laat loop. Soos vooraf bespeek, het Klopper en sy vriende met 'n ossewa daar opgedaag en aangebied om die waardevolle vrag, wat vanaf die ooste bestem was vir die Europese mark, na die fort in Kaapstad te vervoer. Die skat het nooit daar opgedaag nie, en is op Kloppers se plaas, Vergelegen, begrawe. Die slawe wat die graafwerk behartig het, is almal glo doodgeskiet, en slegs Kloppers het die spesifieke lokasie van die skat geken.

Kort hierna is Kloppers self in 'n skietongeluk dood, en die res van die samesweerders is in hegtenis geneem. Kaptein van der Soest het 'n aaklike marteldood op die rekbank gesterf, en die res van die samesweerders is in boeie na Batavia verban. Die skat, bestaande uit munte, edelstene, silwer en ornamente, is nooit gevind nie, en lê in alle waarskynlikheid nog in die skadu van die Kamferbome op Vergelegen in die Hottentots-Hollandvallei.

(In die volgende uitgawe van Treasure Talk vertel ek meer van skattejag in die ander provinsies van Suid Afrika.)

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Owen Timmermans

The Magalies mountain range stretching from Rietfontein, east of Pretoria to far out into the West Transvaal could easily be called the Great Boer Wall. It greatly slowed down the advancing columns of Britain's invading forces.

The range experienced a few battles and a multitude of engagements and to those interested in historical relics a search of its lonely kloofs and windswept heights will prove of great interest.

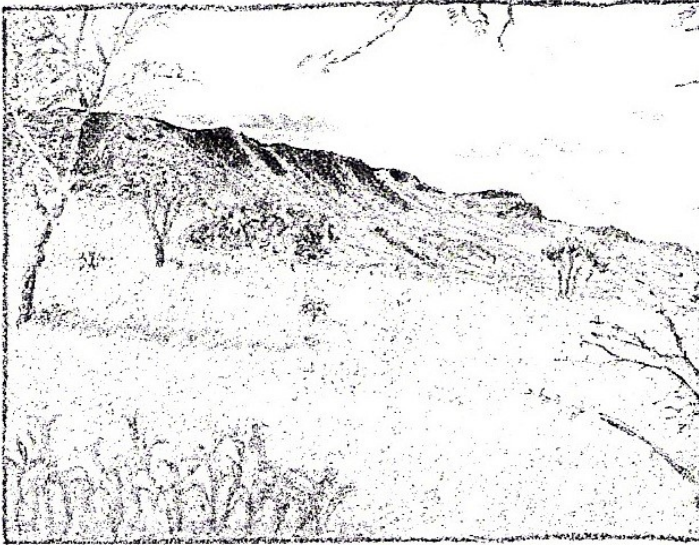


Figure 1 The Magaliesberg range

Cartridges, cases, and bullets will make up a large part of the treasure.

The two Boer Republics had at the commencement of hostilities 60 000 Mausers, 44 000 Martini-Henry and 600 Austrian Guedes rifles — the British were armed with considerably larger numbers of Lee-Enfield firearms.

On examining cartridge cases found, we could clearly identify the spot where the gun's firing pin had struck the percussion cap, on sending the bullet on its deadly errand.

In the Mauser it was always dead centre. The Lee-Enfield was more erratic, hitting the cap all over its surface.

Many bullets discovered by our detectors clearly showed the marks caused by the gun barrel's rifling. In fact, it is the only way to decide whether the marksman used a Lee-Enfield or a Lee-Metford rifle.

The Lee-Metford issued in 1888 as military gun by the British were designed to fire gun powder charged cartridges and their rifling consisted of seven shallow grooves.

In 1895, when cordite charged cartridges were introduced, the rifling had to be changed to the Enfield's five deep rectangular grooves, turning anti-clockwise. In all other respects, the Lee-Metford and Lee-Enfield guns are virtually identical.

Bullets, cases, cartridges were there but what about the guns?

No guns would be left in the veld to rust and rot and the only ones we could hope to find with our metal detectors were those that were buried.

And many were!. Either to prevent them from falling in the hands of the approaching British forces, or many years later to prevent General Jannie Smuts from destroying the firearms. It was in 1947 that Smuts commandeered, for destruction, guns in private hands!

We decided to try our luck and search ruins of old farmhouses for buried arms.

The first ruins investigated lay off the Hekpoort – Scheerpoort road, on the farm Bultfontein. It was indeed a dilapidated old house, so old and ruined that our expectations soared.

All it gave us was a pleasant carefree morning, an old decorative, solid bronze door handle, three old badly corroded copper coins, one silver shilling dating to the turn of last century and seven cartridge cases, five Mauser and two Lee-Metford. No guns!!

If only those cartridges would talk!

While searching, the farmer's wife showed us a newspaper cutting which reported how a

man had found buried guns.

A phone call and off we were to Krugersdorp's Memorial Avenue..

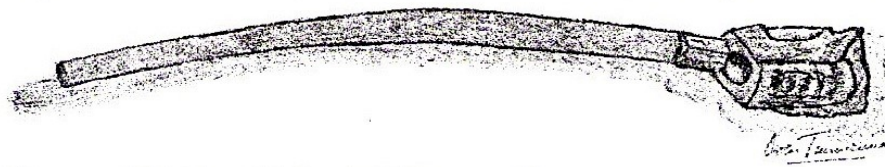


Figure 2 Relic of Martini-Henry rifle

in oil cloth. Notwithstanding, the rifles, all Martini-Henry, were corroded, the wooden stocks had ceased to exist, all devoured by Transvaal's voracious termites.

The lucky finder planned to have the relics cleaned by a special shot blasting technique which would give the rusted relics a pleasing, near polished metallic surface.

It was quite surprising to hear of the interest which his discovery had aroused. The phone rang numerous times throughout the day with people enquiring and offering to buy the old

guns. Some collectors were prepared to pay as much as one thousand Rand for the old relics and that was at the time you could buy one USA dollar with one Rand.

With the guns were also found

several rounds of ammunition for the Boer Mauser (7x57mm). A number of these cartridges were fitted into clips, five at a time, ready for loading.

There was also a quaint bottle half filled with mercury which was used to clean gun barrels with.

Later that day we visited the Krugersdorp Library where in the basement three old Mauser rifles were on display. These were recovered from the Monument dam at the time of scraping.

One day, while searching the Maanhaarand area I was shown where in 1964 ten relic hunters had been digging for old rifles. The men searched for over a year, working in shifts, just with pick and shovel. Metal detectors may not have been available in South Africa at that time.

Searching New Thorndale, a farmer told me how during ploughing operations he had unearthed a gun next to the ruins of a very old farm house. It was a Martini-Henry rifle scandalously mutilated. Its barrel had been wantonly bent and the cartridge chamber's sides were bashed in.

About a month later on visiting a farm in the Hekpoort Moot, the farmer told me an interesting story. Only a week ago, on irrigating his wheat fields, he noticed something yellow shimmering in the golden rays of the afternoon sun. On picking the object out of the furrow, there in his hands he held a coin.

Getting up from his chair he walked to a cupboard and returned holding a wad of cotton wool. In it, he showed me a Kruger pound in an 'as new' condition!

A few days later he phoned me he had started excavations for the building of a basement. Imagine his surprise when his labourers came across the relic of a Lee-Metford rifle. Nothing was bent or broken. The termites had devoured the wood and the elements had attacked the steel parts but the sights were still set for targets far away!

He presented me with the relic on condition that I would help him with my 'Deep seeker' metal detector to pin-point the positions where Boer snipers had once set shooting at General Clements and his men on Vaalkop, a hill close to the gorge where on 13 December, 1900 the Battle of Nooitgedacht was fought.

THE RING THAT NEVER GOT AWAY

By Kern Page

This is a story with a happy ending for all involved. On the 2nd of January 2002 at 22:30 I took my Fisher 1225X down to Melkbaai beach in the Strand. I had spent two hours the previous night scouring another beach and physically my body didn't want to go but I went anyway. I was down at Melkbaai for about 5 minutes when I received a very prominent beep. I had found a couple of coins and a pull tab by then and with the next scoop of sand I lifted out what looked to me like a small silver piece of pipe that was filled with sand.

When I picked it up I noticed that the pipe had sparkling stones on it. At this point I realized that I could have the mother load in my hand and sent a quick thanks upstairs. I placed the ring in my bag and carried on searching the beach for another 20 minutes and then fatigue got the better of me and I packed it in.

After getting home I was very anxious to empty out my bag and look at my find. I actually woke my wife which at the time is life threatening. The ring sparked my interests in diamonds and I started to study the Internet diamond sites. My first estimate was about R30 000 to R60 000 in value.

I went out to Melkbaai again on Monday 14 January 2002 the evening and met Pierre Nortje (editor of Treasure Talk newsletter) on the beach. We got talking and Pierre told me that when he was on the beach in December, a local retired church minister, Dominee Malan, told him about a large engagement ring that was lost that day, and asked him to search for it. Apparently a girl and her fiancé had gone down to the beach shortly after her engagement. They were standing in the shallow water when she took the ring off to put it on another finger and it slipped out of her hand. Their frantic search was to no avail. I am not sure how many people actually searched the area from that day on, but by the sound of it there were quite a few of Pierre's friends that did search this section over the next few days, looking for the ring.

I asked Pierre to contact the possible owners of the ring and to get them to contact me and describe the ring that was lost.

At 07:10 the following morning a very hopeful Mrs. Pienaar phoned me from Ceres and described the ring to me in great detail. There was no doubt that this was indeed the ring that her future daughter in law had lost. I was bowled over by the joy in her voice. If this was not enough at 07:20 Mrs. Pienaar's son phoned from Louis Trichard and also described the ring. He also kept on thanking me. I also received more information on the ring: The ring was valued at R30 000 and consisted of three large diamonds. The center diamond being 0.38 carat and the other two 0.31 carat. The ring was laid in a platinum gold mix giving it a silvery gold color and there were a further 28 small diamonds on the ring. The large

diamonds came from the daughter in laws' grandmother adding to family sentimental value.

Then what really made me happy for returning the ring was receiving the following letter from the daughter in law - the letter seems to bubble the feelings that were felt at that moment of receiving the news:

Dear Kern

Although you do not know me, you are the person who made my day! My fiancé spoke to you this morning about the ring you found on the beach. As today is exactly a month after we got engaged, I do not think that we could get better news than the phone call from you. As the title of this message reads, I do not have words to tell you how thankful I am today to know that my engagement ring has been found. Above the fact that the ring has sentimental value because it is my engagement ring. I also received the family diamonds from my mom when I passed an important exam.

All I can do is to thank you and wish you the same blessing for your honesty! For more I do not have words.

Johan's parents will contact you about the further arrangements to collect the ring. I do hope that we will have the privilege to meet when we are in Cape Town again.

Kind regards

Sare Langenhoven

That evening when I got home Sare's mother phoned me as well to thank me. I received a reward for finding the ring but it did not come near to the realization that returning the ring to its rightful owners was the best thing I could have done.

.....

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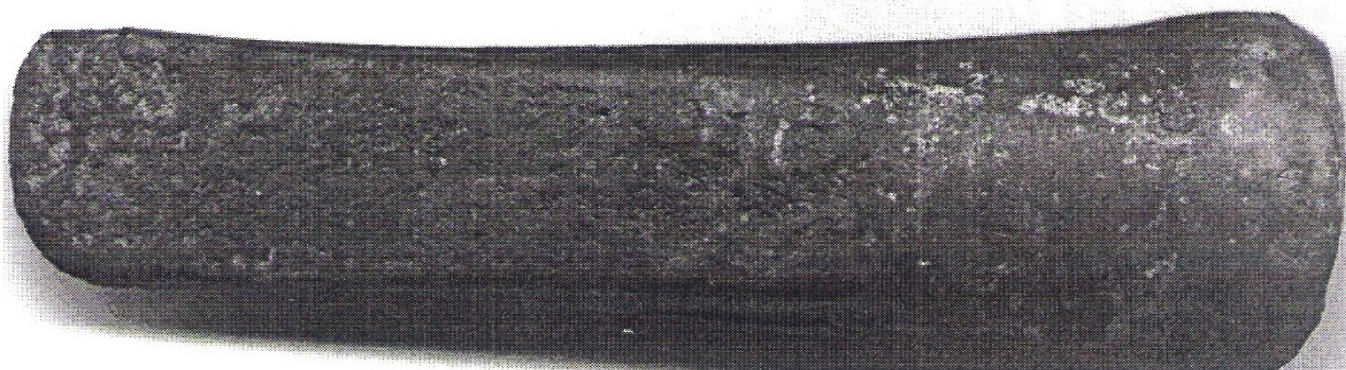
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ANTONIO SE VONSTE UIT NEDERLAND

(Antonio's finds from the Netherlands)

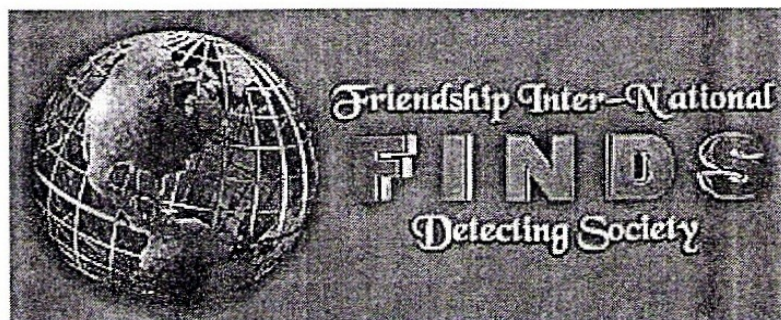
Ik woon in de buurt van Maastricht (250km van strand en zee af) en in de omgeving vind ik Romeinse munten en voorwerpen maar ook zeker middeleeuwse vondsten zoals munten, gespen, knopen, beslagstukken, enz. Vorige week heb ik nog een bijl uit de bronstijd gevonden, ik stuur een bijlage. Ik heb die vondsten allemaal op akkers gevonden met een Minelab Explorer en een Tesoro. De zilveren romeinse denarius is van keizer Elagabalus regeerde 218-222. Aan de kopzijde staat IMP ANTONINUS PIVS AVG. Keerzijde staat de VICTORIA de godin van de overwinning met de omschrift VICTORIA AVG. De andere zilveren munt is van PHILIPS II uit Spanje, jaar 1577. Het is een 1/4 statendaalder met aan de kopzijde Philips II ,omschrift PHS DG HISPZREX DVX BRA``betekent Brabant``Muntzijde staat een Philips monogram met 8 s s omschrift PACE ET IVSTITIA 1577. Deze munt is door de spaanse koning in het veroverde Nederland geslagen te Provincie Brabant.Heel veel vondsten toegewenst en ik vind het erg mooi dat ik via internet met iemand kontakt heb zover weg en met de zelfde hobby. Groeten en zeker tot mails. Antonio



FROM THE PRESS // UIT DIE PERS

Kick reveals golden treasure trove in Israel (IOL Newsletter 11/02/02) Jerusalem - A 1 000-year-old hoard of gold coins that were apparently overlooked in an earlier archaeological dig in Israel was rediscovered accidentally, the Israeli daily Haaretz reported on Monday. The 79 coins dating from the Muslim caliphate era of the 10th and 11th centuries were found last week when a park inspector at the ancient coastal site of Caesarea happened to kick one of them. According to Yosef Porat, head of archaeological digs at Caesarea, the coins weighing a total of 310g were apparently hidden just before the Crusaders seized the town in 1101. Haaretz said they were found in an area used to dump rubble from the Crusader-era dig at the archaeological park, and had apparently been missed in the original excavations. - Sapa-AFP

Die skatte wat op jou solder skuil (Stephan Welz)(Uit *Die Burger* 9/02/02) Elke versamelaar droom van daardie groot vonds die Rembrandt op die solder of die Kaapse silwerteeapot in ouma se spenskas. Nog lekkerder as jy die skat vir 'n appel en 'n ei in 'n pandjieswinkel of op die vlooiemark raakloop waar honderde mense dit misgekyk het. Vir werklike versamelaars gaan dit nie soseer oor die geldelike waarde nie, maar oor die estetiese en die voorreg om die stuk te besit. Tog is alle versamelaars in wese skattejagters vir wie 'n klein geluuskoot, so 'n halwe troosprys, net dien as aansporing om verder na daardie groot vonds om die draai te soek. Met versamel, anders as met die lotery, is jy altyd 'n wenner. Op syn ergste het jy nog 'n stuk om op die kaggel te plaas en 'n storie om daarby te vertel. Daar is egter stories wat die adrenalien behoorlik deur elke versamelaar se are laat bruis. Vroeg in 1980 snuffel 'n pa en sy seun in 'n klein antiekwinkel êrens op die Britse eilande rond toe die pa op 'n rak agterin die winkel 'n Chinese potjie (foto) raaksien wat dadelik tot hom spreek. Hy koop dit vir 100 pond (destyds ongeveer R400). Nadat hy die stuk by die huis had en 'n bietjie gehanteer het, was hy nog meer in sy skik met die kopie. Toe hy onlangs oorlede is, het sy seun onthou dat sy pa oortuig was dat die potjie van die Ming-tydperk dateer en waardevol was. Hoe waardevol, sou hy uitvind toe hy van die porselein in sy pa se boedel na Sotheby's neem vir 'n waardasie. Die kenners daar het nie net bevestig dat dit wel Ming is nie, maar ook dat dit 'n uiters seldsame voorbeeld is. Nadat hy meegedeel is dat die 11,3 cm hoë potjie met 'n beskadigde nek en deksel wat glo verlore was, tussen R1,6 miljoen en R3 miljoen op 'n veiling sou haal, het hy nie gehuiwer om dit by hulle te laat om te verkoop nie. Op 14 November verlede jaar is die pot vir 'n reuse-bedrag van meer as R12 miljoen opgeveil. Kenners weet sedert die 18de eeu dat 'n paar sulke stukke, bekend as doucai-ware, tydens die Ming-dinastie vir keiser Chenghua (1465-'87) gemaak is. Anders as gewone stukke, is hulle met 'n unieke tian-karakter (hemelse karakter) gemerk. Benewens skerwe wat in opgrawings gevind is, was slegs twaalf voorbeelde van die ware Jakob bekend. Die rooi vlieënde olifant-ontwerp waarmee hulle versier is, is net bekend omdat keiser Qianlong (1736-'95) vir hom kopieë laat maak het. Totdat ons held by Sotheby's ingestap het, was die vlieënde olifant iets waarvoor kenners net kon droom. Die koorsagtige belangstelling wat die stuk gaande gemaak het en die prys wat behaal is, is verstaanbaar omdat dit die eerste stuk doucai-ware is wat ooit te koop aangebied is, en omdat al twaalf ander bekende stukke in museums is. Kan so iets in Suid-Afrika gebeur? Dit het! In die William Fehr-versameling in die Kasteel is 'n porseleinkandelaar wat tot die jare sewentig net nog 'n stuk blou en wit porselein in die vertoonkas was. Toe herken 'n Sotheby's-kenner op besoek aan Kaapstad dit as 'n uiters seldsame stuk Chinese porselein uit die Ming-tydperk. Vandag word dit as een van die waardevolste antiekstukke in Suid-Afrika gekoester. Hoewel dit nie aangeteken is waar Fehr die skat gekry het nie, word geglo dat hy dit vir 'n paar sjielings op die Kaapse parade gekoop het. Droom dus maar voort, alle versamelaars daarbuite!

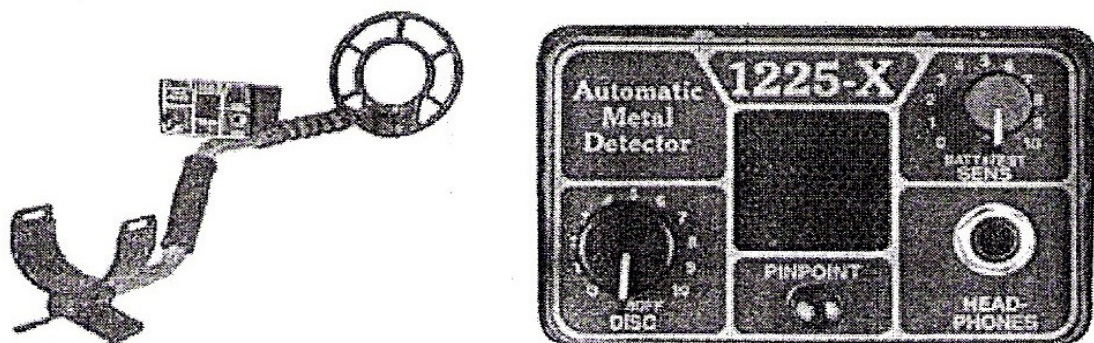


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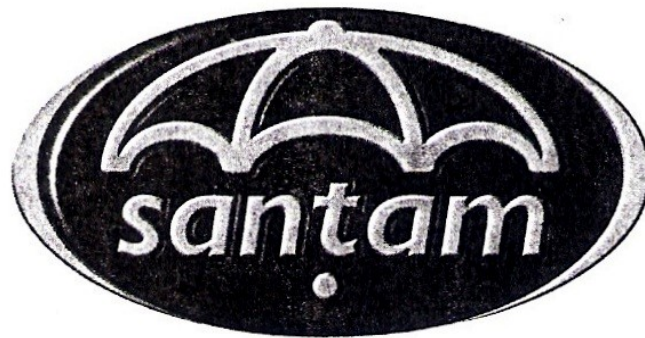
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