

# SEARCHERS ALONG THE MOHAWK

## Official Publication of E.A.R.T.H.

Electronic Archaeological Recovery Treasure Hunters

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Central New York's Metal Detecting Club

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## 2007 E.A.R.T.H. Club Christmas Party

In contrast to last year's beautiful weather, Santa gave us an early Christmas gift loaded with snow, sleet and freezing rain for our December 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas party. However, in good fashion, none of the gloomy weather could stop the 46 members and guests that arrived for the annual festivities at Grimaldi's Restaurant in Utica.

As all of you know, my recent surgeries have made this year's planning and executing of our festivities a bit of a challenge but I was very grateful to all those who showed up at 5:30 to help setup up props, lights and displays and sell tickets. Of course, I couldn't have done any of it, if it weren't for my beautiful wife Alicia, who continually encourages me and brings me strength when I need it most.

Of course social hour began as soon as we walked in the door (Whoever coined that term obviously had few friends!). Although we were prodded by the waitresses to begin serving dinner promptly at 7:00pm, we weren't quite ready and did manage to go a little over but it wasn't too bad. At 7:10 the burly cook came running out of the kitchen and began clanging wildly at a triangle yelling "Come and get it" (Ok, so it was two nice young ladies who calmly asked if we were ready now. So what, I needed some affect!). Anyway,

everyone lined up for the scrumptious buffet that awaited us consisting of Ziti, Meatballs & Sauce, Sausage & Peppers, Potatoes, Grimaldi's own Tomato Pie (Awesome), Baked Chicken, Salami and Salad.

After dinner, we were served coffee and tea along with a delicious cake made by Holland farms. Following dessert while everyone continued to chat, Mike Parker, Dave Lofgren and Ralph Blencowe graciously, tallied up the votes for the year's best winners. (See 2007 Winners List on page 3) Prizes including silver rounds, silver dollars were awarded to all the lucky winners.

One thing that will never cease to amaze me is the continued generosity of the members of our club. In addition to all the wonderful door prizes that were donated and in some cases meticulously "hand made" by our members, one of them who asked to remain anonymous, donated a White's Prizm Detector for the event which was raffled off and won by John Bradlinski. The special raffle raised an astounding \$200 for our club.



John Bradlinski was the lucky winner of the White's Prizm Detector raffled off at the Christmas Party.

For our awards ceremony, a new award was added this year to up and coming members who demonstrate the true spirit of the Metal Detectorist. The winners of this year's "Most Improved" were Ellie Bruce and Gail Bielby. Congratulations, ladies. I have a feeling that 2008 will be a good year for you both. Next, the John Seamon award was given to a member who demonstrated extraordinary dedication and commitment to the community and the betterment of the metal detecting pastime. This year's  
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winner was Steve Martin. Congratulations Steve! Last but not least, the highly anticipated and coveted Treasure Hunter Of The Year Award is presented to the member who throughout the year consistently demonstrates his or her skills in metal detecting and displays the best finds in our monthly competitions. This year's winner was Ed Netzband, with Chris Altmann and Larry Ehlinger taking 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place respectively. Congratulations guys! A side note: Until this year, Tom Baustert had been our THOTY chairman but because of circumstances was unable to continue and asked Larry Ehlinger to take on the challenging task of keeping track of all the points that are awarded in each of the competitions that determine the Treasure Hunter Of The Year winner. Larry graciously accepted the job as he always does and did a splendid job of it. Larry, your assistance, support and dedication to our club is always appreciated with the utmost sincerity. I can't thank you enough!

In closing, I hope that everyone had a blessed and joyous Christmas and that the New Year finds everyone healthy, happy and safe. I look forward to seeing each and

every one of you at the January meeting.

Stu



Ed Netzband is presented the Treasure Hunter of the Year Award by Tom Baustert. Ed won it with a record breaking score of 122 points.

## 2007 Finds competition (year in review)

In 2003 **Tom Baustert** had a wonderful idea that would spice up the monthly finds competition and give members a seasonal goal to strive for. Monthly points were awarded for placing in the 3 categories, they were then totaled for the season and the member with the most points was given the title of "treasure hunter of the year." Sadly, out of the 60 + EARTH club members only about 6 to 8 bothered to enter finds regularly...until this year. Maybe it was the continual harping of our president to please enter something not with the expectation of winning,

but simply for the betterment of the club. Entries edged up to about 8 – 12 each month. Even though this doesn't seem like much, but after 4 years of stagnant numbers this was significant! We're all hoping that this wasn't just a fluke, we'll wait and see what 2008 will bring.

Out of the 27 members that participated in the competition this year there were 12 different winners. In chronological order followed by the number of wins they were: **Ben Gelfuso** (2), **Ed Netzband** (5), **John Kennedy** (1), **Kim Altmann** (3), **Chris Altmann** (4), **Larry Ehlinger**

(4), **Dave Zohne** (1), **Mike Eychner** (1), **Dave Lofgren** (1), **John Gelfuso** (1), **Ralph Blencowe** (3) and **Pat Nellenback** (1).

Hard working **Ed Netzband** deservedly won this years competition with 122 points. The next 9 places are as follows: **Chris Altmann** (89 points); **Larry Ehlinger** (82 points); **Dave Lofgren** (75 points); **Kim Altmann** (60 points); **Mike Eychner** (58 points); **Ralph Blencowe** (52 points); **John Bradlinski Jr.** (45 points); **Stu Copperwheat** (41 points); **Don Wertz** (39 points.)

## 2007 Winners List

### Category

- 1) Best Display
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- 2) Best Buckle
- 3) Best Button
- 4) Best Token
- 5) Best Relic
- 6) Best Toy
- 7) Best Jewelry
- 8) Best Ring
- 9) Best Overall Coin
- 10) Best Military Item
- 11) Most Unusual Find
- 12) Oldest Coin
- 13) Oldest Silver Coin
- 14) Treasure Hunter of the Year
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- 15) 50/50 Raffle Winner

### Name

Chris & Kim Altmann  
 Ellie Bruce  
 Ed Netzband  
 Stu Copperwheat  
 Larry Ehlinger  
 Ed Netzband  
 Mike Eychner  
 Dave Lofgren  
 Ed Netzband  
 Ralph Blencowe  
 Ed Netzband  
 Larry Ehlinger  
 Larry Ehlinger  
 Chris Altmann  
 Stu Copperwheat  
 Ed Netzband  
 Chris Altmann  
 Larry Ehlinger  
 Chris Altmann

See pictures of winning displays on page 7.

## Members finds for November

**Kim Altmann** ~ “Lovely” old earring / 1933-’36 Cracker Jack token / Small utility buckle / Tiny dress button and another common one

**Chris Altmann** ~ 1804 Draped Bust half cent (cool) / 1883, 1885 Indian head cents / 1959 Roosevelt dime / 1788 machin’s mills copper / One small and one large musket balls / Common metal button with clear back mark / Utility buckle

**Ernie Weissmuller** ~ 1900 Barber half dollar / 1902o, 1908 Barber quarters / 1892o, 1893, 1902 Barber dimes / 1901 Canadian dime / 1918 Mercury head dime / 1943 War nickel / III cent piece (no date) / 1890, 1894, 1904 Indian head cents / 3 military eagle buttons / 3 small dress buttons / 1 lg. coat button / 3 common metal buttons / Gold plated

crucifix metal / Silver plated religious metal / Very old looking man’s brass “knot” ring (super nice!) / Small plated spoon / Suspender clasp / Nice old brass lock / 1940s toy truck

**Larry Ehlinger** ~ 1874 Canadian dime / 1887 Seated Liberty dime / 1910, 1912 Barber dimes / 1917, 1920 Mercury head dimes / 1890, 1911 “V” nickels / 1904 German 2 Pfennig (super shape!) / Gold plate pocket watch back with decorative scroll work / Silver plate pocket watch back inscribed: “*Lionel Walker 2-4-41*” (Where is he today?) / Silver plate pin which reads: “*Bare ye one another’s burdens*” / Small Victorian pin with yellow stone / 3 plated spoons / Stirrup / Dog collar / 2 foul leg bands.

**John Bradlinski Jr.** ~ 1964 Washington quarter / “Texas Jr.” cap gun / Sterling silver “Letter ring” / Small pile of clad / Single key / Museum specimen quality square nail / 3 common metal buttons one 1776 – 1976 Liberty Bicentennial kind / Red and black dragster toy car / Harmonica reed.

**Mike Eychner** ~ Reindeer / Large “Cupid” charm / Old time milk “Pasteurized” truck / Victorian pin showing dove with olive branch in it’s beak / Ornate pill box top / Small pocket knife / Woman’s ring / 2 American tourister keys / 2000 Lincoln cent with cross cut out.

**Dave Lofgren** ~ 1852 Large cent another with unreadable date / 1919 Mercury dime / 1903 Indian head  
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cent / 1940 6 pence / 8 wheat cents / Silver ring / Sterling silver baby spoon with monogram "M.O.D." (SWEET!) / Baby ring / Tiny lock / 1932 NYS dog tag / Cast toy bull completely missing one front leg, part of both hind legs and one horn. And you think you have problems! / 2 single keys / 1 common metal button / Musket ball

**Ed Netzband** ~ 1893, 1902 Barber dimes / 1945 Mercury head dime /

1861 Indian head cent (EXCELLENT!) / 1910 Syracuse fair token / Small compact / Orphaned silver earring / Toy rocket ship / Aluminum and copper thimbles / 2 fishing weights / W.W. I cast soldier, some green paint still showing / Cast Indian chief with no arms / Silver plate spoon / Silver plate butter knife / Early 1900s charm bracelet with 7 charms, Policeman, typewriter, horse & buggy etc /

**Ralph Blencowe** ~ 1945s Mercury dime / 1903 Indian head cent / Cone ink bottle, found while digging a bullet / Horse rigging buckle / Utility buckle / Clip on sun glasses / "The General Lee" toy Dukes of Hazard car. (1981 Plymouth Dodge Charger) Worth a bundle! / Gold plate man's wedding band / Ax head / Plumb bob (must be related to one of the Walton's)

## Altmann, Netzband, Blencowe final finds winners for 2007

**Category: "Coin"**

**Winner: Chris Altmann**

**Entry: 1804 Draped Bust Half Cent**



Chris has had some luck in finding old coins this past year - his luck is the result of plenty of searching and hard work.

**Chris Altmann** has had some pretty good luck locating old coins this year. It's these old coins he seeks and the older the better. One of Chris' last outings this year was in the yard of a very old house just outside Oneonta. With the season nearly over he hunted this yard harder than usual, digging every good signal and most all the "iffy" ones. For being such an old site he was surprised at how clean it was. He was using his Whites M6

with his "Bigfoot" coil attached trying to get as much depth as possible. After a while he finally locked onto a sweet, fairly deep repeatable sound. He dug a neat plug and removed a copper disc that was considerable smaller than a large cent. A quick field cleaning revealed that he had an 1804 Draped Bust half cent, a denomination that he hadn't found before. The only other find of interest that day was a 1788 Machin's Mills copper and the fact that this was a counterfeit made it even more desirable and perhaps valuable.

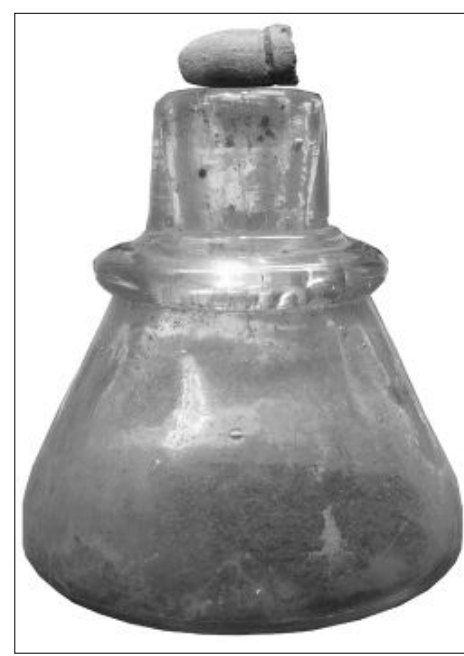
Setting alone in second place only 2 votes back was **Ed Netzband** and his 1908 Barber half dollar while **Ernie Weissmuller** and **Larry Ehlinger** tied for the third spot garnishing 3 votes each. Ernie entered a very pretty, lightly worn 1908 Barber quarter while Larry gave it a shot with his 1887 Seated liberty dime. There were 8 coins entered.

Altmann also won the coin competition last month with his entry of a 1787 Connecticut State copper.

**Category: "Other"**

**Winner: Ralph Blencowe**

**Entry: Cone ink bottle**



The lead bullet sitting on top of the ink bottle is what led Ralph to the bottle - you never know what you can find when retrieving a target. It can lead to a winning item you never expected.

A "cone" ink bottle in itself isn't that uncommon. Millions of them were manufactured beginning around 1800 with similar styles still around nearly 100 years later. These "cones" were functional, people liked them, and so manufacturers stuck to the style and continued producing them.

The day before the November meeting Ralph was out with his X- (continued on next page)

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Terra 50 practicing with a newly purchased 9" X 10" coil. He was at the Durhamville elementary schoolyard searching a ball field at the far end of the property. The soil was a rich loam and pretty much free of stones, he figures this was trucked in dirt used to make the baseball diamond. He wasn't expecting to find anything worth while and was happily contented to just practice and dig newer coins.

After a while he locked onto a target a couple inches down that turned out to be a lead bullet. Off to one side of the hole he noticed the rim of a small glass bottle. He widened the hole a bit and pulled out an intact ink bottle. He said it was just luck that he didn't break it.

There was a tie for second place between **Chris Altmann** and his *1788 Machin's Mills counterfeit copper* and **Darcy Puleo's** *December 31, 1867 "Warranted Superior"* something or other. There was also a 4-way tie for third between **Maureen Netzband** and her silver spoon, Maureen's husband Ed displaying an early brass spigot; **Mike Eychner** with his Coin-a-day club bank; and lastly **Dave Lofgren** entry of a *NYSHA Indian pin*. There were 10 entries.

Ralph is a regular winner in the "jewelry" category but he hadn't won in the "other" category since way back in October 2003 when he took the top spot with his gold-plated pocket watch.

**Category: Jewelry**  
**Winner: Ed Netzband**  
**Entry: Man's gold plated ring**



Ed has done it again with his man's gold plated ring - good show Ed!

Way back in the early summer Ed tried his luck along the banks of the Oriskany creek as it wound its way south through New Hartford. Fisherman, hikers, picnickers and explorers followed the paths first blazed by the Indians and were continually used for the next 200 years. The path, like any other adjacent to a river or stream was worn from traffic and was inviting in its treasure possibilities. During that first outing Ed dug a 1942 Walking liberty half and with that first nice find told

him that there was a good possibility that no one had ever hunted this particular spot with a detector before.

Ed had planned on going back in the summer but he had other more productive sites to work, and it was only recently that he finally got caught up and made a return visit. This second outing turned out to be more productive than his first. Using his Whites M.X.T. with a 12" super coil he dug a 1945 Mercury dime, a pocketknife and a super nice 1910 Syracuse fair token. He also dug what was to be that month's winning entry in the Jewelry category, a man's gold plated ring that was unfortunately in 3 pieces. Because the ring was shallow and had a thin band Ed guessed it was the heavy foot traffic that did the damage.

Ed's closest competitor was **John Bradlinski Jr.** displaying his "*Sterling silver letter ring*." There was a 3-way tie for third between **Kim Altmann's** "*Lovely old earring*"; Mike Eychner's "*Ladies ring*"; and **Ralph Blencowe's** "....." he left the entry line blank.

The last "Jewelry" win for Ed was back in June when he won with a *Sterling / gold plated coin bezel locket*.

## Roman Holiday: Our UK Adventure, Part 2

By **Chris Altmann**

Following our 3 days in Weymouth, Kim & I met Dave Lofgren quaffing down a few in the cozy pub of the Gatwick Belmont B&B, where we'd be lodging overnight. This establishment appeared to be a beautiful Tudor mansion from the front, but around back, where the rooms actually were, it resembled a "no-tell motel." Lofgren had spent the previous night in Portugal, in a castle-

turned-majestic hotel, complete with an authentic medieval stone arch adorning his spacious room. Conversely, in the B&B, he could get from the door to the bed to the bathroom and back without ever actually touching the floor. Dave spent a lot of time in the pub that night.

We watched the England-South Africa rugby finals in the restaurant until the wee hour of 10pm. Dave

raised his fists in victory each time England scored, though it was obvious he hadn't a clue about what was going on during the game, which for the most part featured piles of men, a lot of blood, and fans going absolutely berserk.

We were picked up the next morning by a young, disheveled man who had just split with his girlfriend, and we all suspected he was still a  
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bit inebriated from a party the night before. It made for an interesting ride.

We met our tour guide, Roy, who resembled a retired rock star—perhaps Billy Idol at age 64. Roy was topped with bright grey hair and sported a creased face. Cryptic letters were tattooed on each of his 10 fingers. Roy was cool, though. We ran up to him like a happy dog with a stick, and he quickly named the Royalty adorning each coin, or the function of the mysterious objects we were pulling.

We joined 6 other detectorists from around the US, each with their own interesting stories. Jim and Sharon were world-travelers who somehow managed to take 10,000 digital pictures while in Africa. John, with long wavy blond hair, was a free spirit from Vancouver who ate fish & chips for dinner every night during the tour. He collected Hot Wheels and used Super Glue on a loose filling, much to our amusement.

Each day we awoke at 7am, had a group breakfast (not my favorite English meal), then purchased a delicious sandwich and crisps (potato chips) at Tesco's Market for lunchtime. Then off to an assortment of farmfields, tilled and rolled to perfection. Around 5pm we'd head back, clean our new treasures, and have a group dinner, with everyone chatting and displaying their day's finds.

During one memorable moment I was sitting in a beautiful 100-acre field, looking out at the North Sea, with hundreds of geese flying overhead. There were also pheasants everywhere, and our blue van nearly ran over a few of the dumber ones. One afternoon, I noticed Lofgren

sitting in the middle of a field for an extended period of time. He was talking via cell phone to his kids back home before they headed off to school!

UK detecting is a profoundly different experience than US detecting. England has been occupied by so many cultures during the last 2000 years or so—Anglo-Saxons, Romans, Celts and Vikings have all called the island home at some point in time. Many of their coins and artifacts are easily detectable and diggable—usually at no more than 4 inches below the surface. And when you start pulling pieces of lead, that's a good indication of a high traffic area. At that point, "gridding" is the best bet.

Dave, Kim & I collectively found 10 Roman Coins (300-500AD), 8 hammered silver and copper coins (1200AD-1500AD), 8 Georgian coins (1700-1820AD) and 16 Victorian coins (1830-1900AD). Kim also dug a superb 1669 copper Kings Lyn Farthing. On one particular field, I pulled a 1920 British 1 pence, walked about 14 steps and pulled a Roman coin. I also dug an 1852 Napoleon III Centime and an 1850 Italian Soldo—quite a range of treasures scattered about. We ultimately found 2 Signet rings, 120 buttons, a Roman stirrup, a Medieval scabbard cover, a shamrock brooch, 2 clock winders, 2 huge WWII airplane machine gun bullets, 5 musket balls, 3 thimbles and numerous other artifacts. The top find by a tour member during the trip was a flawless gold Celtic coin worth about \$2000!

In my opinion, finding a hammered silver coin is comparable to finding a Barber dime. Our tour group

collected more than 50 hammered silver coins in the span of a week, although we probably only covered about 10% of each field. King George coppers (called "greenies," due to the ever-present patina) were also found on a regular basis. Find a Colonial copper in the US and you've got a chance at getting the EARTH Club "Best Coin" award at the Christmas party. In Britain, it's akin to finding an Indian Head Cent.

Our treasures are still in England, undergoing the extensive exportation process. Each find from each tour member must be reviewed by "treasure officials" to check and see if there is anything historically relevant, at which point the finder is paid for the item. The majority of items found, although quite stellar in our opinion, are very common, and not pursued by the museums. Even the gold Celtic coin will most likely be returned to the tour member.

The seven days of hunting were a metal detectorist's dream, although it required a lot of stamina being out in the fields swinging for 8 hours on each of the 7 days. I'd like to try it again someday when my back has finally recovered!

## Jan. Meeting

January 28  
7 PM

Dunham Library  
Whitesboro

Visit the Weymouth & Portland Metal Detecting Club website at: [www.wpdetectingclub.org.uk](http://www.wpdetectingclub.org.uk)



Dave Lofgren was fortunate to be able to go on the metal detecting tour with Chris Altmann. They were able to hunt some great sites and find the type of coins we only dream of. Here is a picture of Dave holding up one of the coins he found and below his picture are pictures of a couple of very old coins that he found - makes one salivate does it not. Perhaps this year a few more of the club members can go to the UK and visit our friends there.

## Display Winners at Christmas Party

**1st Place: Junk Bird House**  
Chris & Kim Altmann



**2nd Place: The Gift of Giving**  
Ellie Bruce



**3rd Place: Jewel Box**  
Ed Netzbund



Let's make this year one of the best ever for the E.A.R.T.H. Club. We can do this by taking part in all of the activities and having a great time doing it. Stu and all of the officers have done and continue to do their best planning and coordinating various activities for the pleasure and interest of all the members. Please get behind them and help in setting up the monthly club hunts and attending them. If you have a talent for writing stories or taking photographs, your talents will be greatly appreciated in helping to make the club newsletter a vital and interesting part of the club.

### Searchers

#### Along The

#### Mohawk

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E.A.R.T.H., Electronic  
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### Guest Speaker

We have a guest speaker coming to the meeting this month. His name is Dave Jones; he was the fellow who came and spoke to us before about the use of metal detectors to find land mines in third world countries.

Dave has just returned from Cambodia and would like to update us on his trip.

He will collect contributions from those in attendance wishing to do so to support "Friends of the Mohawk Valley" in the construction of a school in a rural area in Cambodia. Checks can be made payable to: American Assistance for Cambodia. One can Google this site for more information on the great work they are doing for this struggling country

Certainly there is no obligation for anyone to contribute.

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*"Get involved, make a difference!"*

*John Seamon*

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