

What was hopelessly lost is found and returned

Robert Grattan
Reader Submitted

STORY CHAT: 7 Comments

I have an underwater metal detector and love to search Michigan lakes and rivers for lost valuables. I find silver and gold and plenty of other interesting items. My favorite finds are gold and silver. I find enough to make my hobby very rewarding but not always because of the value of the items.

In the last two years I have been fortunate enough to find numerous class rings. These are pieces of history and I love to track down the owners and return them. This week I have had 4 success stories.

The first one was a PHHS ring I found in Kimball Township park. I called PHHS and it happened to belong to the son of a person that worked at the school. His parents gave it to him for Christmas one year and he lost it in the pond last summer. I gave it back to his mother and they are going to give it back to him on his birthday next week.

The second one is a ring I found in Miller lake in Lapeer. The young lady lost it 4 years ago and it is a class ring from Brown City High School also from 2007. She said that she got it in 9th grade. I contacted the company that made the ring because the name of the school is not on it. They gave me her name and number. The number was disconnected. I then contacted another person with the same last name in Brown City and it was her uncle. She contacted me shortly after and identified the lake in which she lost it.

The third is a class ring from Rochester High school class of 1988. She lost it in Lake St. Clair playing football 8 years ago. Rochester High gave me her name after I gave them the initials in the ring. I called and left a message. A week later I get a call back and she also can tell me where she lost it and what it looked like. This ring has 2 diamonds in it. She said her parents thought it wasn't a good idea to have diamonds put in her ring because she wasn't going to wear it all that long. She never expected to take it off she told me.

The very last one is my biggest success story so far. This is a University of Maryland class ring, class of 1954. This ring was found in a lake outside of Ann Arbor. The very first time I contacted the school and talked to a lot of people, nobody was willing to help me. I was even accused of trying to get money for returning the ring. I gave up because of that but kept the ring. After the success I had with the PHHS ring I decided to try it again. This time I got a very nice lady which emailed me 3 people that graduated that year with the same initials. In doing a Zabasearch I was able to get a number for one of them. After a week I received a call and it was his ring. Not only was he able to tell me exactly which lake I found it in he was able to tell me the story behind it getting lost 54 years ago.

He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1954 and came to the University of Michigan to get his PHD. He met his future wife at the University of Michigan and gave her his college ring as an engagement ring. While they were swimming in the lake she lost it. It was lost in the summer of 1954. She was so upset she went out and bought another one. They both graduated from the University of Michigan and they are still married. They are back living in Maryland now.

 Zoom Photo



Robert Grattan

Some of the gold I have recovered from the depths of Michigan lakes

I have 10 more class rings that I am actively searching for the owners to. My favorite one is a USAF pilot ring from the 1940's. His class is stamped on the ring and I have been able to find his closest friend from the Air Force. Unfortunately they lost touch in 1965 when his friend las saw him in the Azores. I now have his service number and I am waiting for his service records to see if I can locate him. I do know that he flew B-25's and he is from the south. I will be excited to give the ring back to him or his next of kin.

STORYCHAT

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Comments by: **mechan26**

Posted: Fri Apr 11, 2008 6:18 pm

WAY TO GO UNCLE BOB
I LIKED YOUR STORY I STILL HAVE THE RING YOU FOUND AND GAVE ME
WHEN I WAS SICK BECAUSE BLACK ONYX IS SUPPOSED TO BRING LUCK
WELL IT DID TO ME 😊

Comments by: **bellydancingmama**

Posted: Fri Apr 11, 2008 2:56 pm

What a neat story! 😊😄

Comments by: **tatertot**

Posted: Fri Apr 11, 2008 2:13 pm

Hey, I saw them too!

Comments by: **Tietus**

Posted: Fri Apr 11, 2008 2:10 pm

2 summers ago I saw 2 men at lighthouse beach with underwater metal detectors, me and my wife (fiance at the time) swam off to the side and quietly poked fun of the 2. "What the heck did they think they were gonna find, old car keys and sunglasses?" Guess karma is gonna get me for that, I will be leaving my wedding ring at home this summer and I wont laugh at the metal detector guy anymore, great story. 😊

Comments by: **momm2five**

Posted: Thu Apr 10, 2008 8:01 pm

That is such a wonderful thing for you to do! If you ever come across a St. Clair High School Class of 1989 men's ring, it could be my husband's. Looong story involving an ex-girlfriend 17+ years ago! I guess if a ring can survive from the summer of 1954, his could have, too. Keep up your wonderful *service*. 😊