

Man hunts coins in historic park

By CHRIS SHANAHAN
Staff Reporter

The baseball field at Claremont's community park is home to hidden treasures that, in some cases, have been resting undisturbed for more than a century.

And it has taken the initiative of 39-year-old Oshawa resident Randy Reddick to unearth the buried loot — namely vintage coins dating back as far as 1854.

Armed with an \$1,100 metal detector, Mr. Reddick regularly scours the grassy north Pickering surface in a meticulous fashion that often raises the curiosity of the native populace.

The device transmits a ringing sound through a set of earphones when it detects metal, alerting the operator to another potential discovery. He then digs an average of four to five inches into the ground before reaching paydirt.

So far, the part-time coin collector's booty includes an 1854 Bank of Upper Canada halfpenny, a Queen Victoria quarter dated 1882, plus a mint condition 1929 King George IV quarter now valued at \$100.

Mr. Reddick has gathered 80 or 90 old silver coins from the Claremont turf as well as more than 200 pennies from the 1940s alone. Then there's a selection of large pennies from the late 1800s and early 1900s and even two Indian Head coins, the majority of which will find their way into Mr. Reddick's personal collection.

The hobbyist admitted it's not easy to dig up one of these remnants from another era without feeling a bit sentimental.

"Every bit of money that was lost there must have had a sad

story to it," he said. "A quarter in 1882 must have been a lot of money."

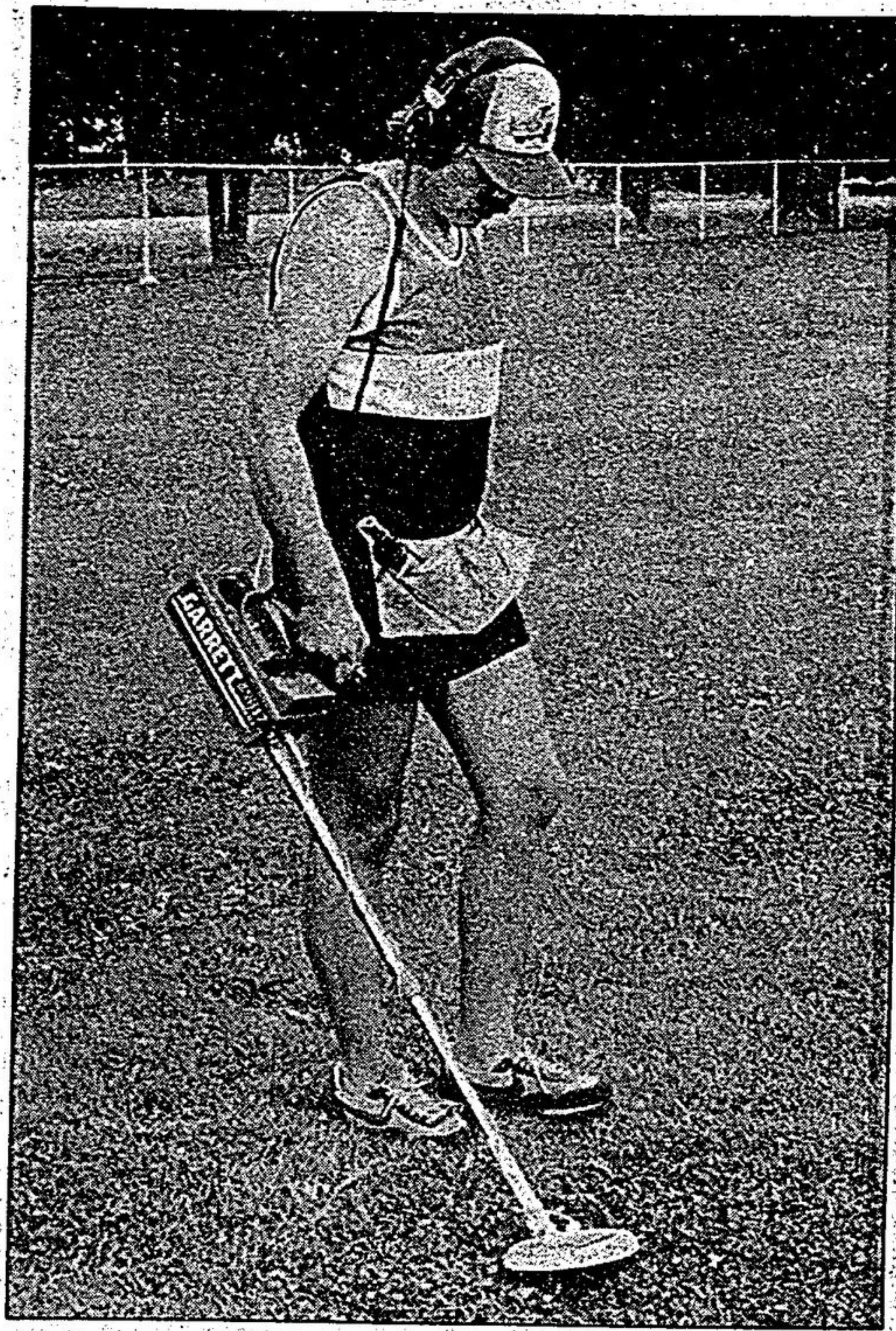
Mr. Reddick claimed his high-tech equipment has turned out to be a wise investment.

"I've pretty well paid for it and I've only had it for 2½ months," he said, adding that he's located more than \$500 worth of coins — and still counting — since beginning his Claremont search about a month ago. Other valuable discoveries include a brooch, several sterling silver rings and a gold wedding band.

"I've found quite a lot of new money in between," added the collector, who already has a pickle jar full of these modern coins at home. "You have to clear away the new money to get to the old."

Explained Mr. Reddick, who learned of the hamlet's illustrious past while doing some research at the library: "I came here (Claremont) because it was old... There's a lot of history here."

He's also willing to track down more recent history for anyone requiring his services.



Treasure hunter

The playing field at Claremont Park is a coin collector's paradise according to Oshawa's Randy Reddick, seen here using his metal detector to locate money dating as far back as the 19th century. He has also tried his luck at Stouffville's main park but has found more new money there than old.

— Chris Shanahan

Markham Stouffville Hospital 1st tenders called

The first tenders are being called for the Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Contractors have until Aug. 14 to submit their bids on the servicing phase of the \$45 million facility.

Contracts for roadways, including curbs and gutters, parking lots, storm and sanitary sewers, natural gas lines, water service and underground electrical servicing are up for bids.

As well, grading of the site will be done to prepare for construction of the hospital building.

Hospital President Michael Butcher said the board will receive a recommendation on Aug. 21. Awarding of the tender, which will amount to more than \$1 million, will have to

be approved by the Ministry of Health.

Mr. Butcher also said working drawings of the building are about 40 per cent completed.

He expects site servicing work will be finished in about three months; beginning in late August or early September. It is hoped that tenders for construction of the building will be called before the end of this year.

The hospital will be built on the 9th Line at Hwy 7. It will serve the residents of Markham, Stouffville and surrounding areas. The expected completion date is late 1988.

The facility will specialize in community health care rather than any particular medical condition.

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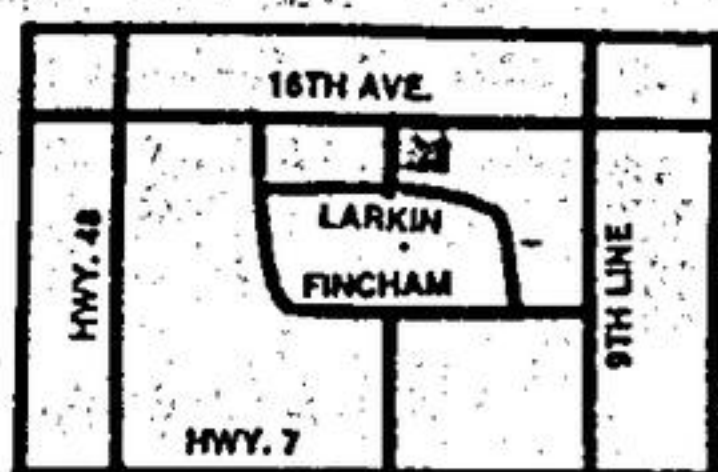
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