

Welcome Tay Estuary Forum 2016 *Seascape*

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Forum



BEST CHRISTMAS PRESENT EVER

Precious ring finds its way home

Treasure hunter reunites family with ring lost 43 years ago

GRAHAM BROWN

A gold ring lost on the sands of St Andrews more than four decades ago is safely back in family hands after its remarkable discovery on the Angus seashore miles across the Tay.

In an astonishing tale of good luck and amateur detective work, Alex Jones has been reunited with her late father's engraved signet engagement ring – 43 years on from the day she vividly remembers hunting for the treasured item after it slipped off her dad's finger on a family day out in Fife.

Carnoustie metal detecting enthusiast George Taylor's chance discovery sparked a search that has now led to what Alex described as a "little miracle" after being reunited with the precious heirloom, still in pristine condition



DISCOVERIES

Courier Country detectors

- Brook Head from Newbigging found a two gramme gold nugget in the hills near his home, a third of the size of the largest Scottish nugget, 6.1g, which was found near Dumfries.

- John Eldridge from North Berwick found a red and gold badge that belonged to Sir John Comyn on a Kinross-shire farm. It is believed to have been dropped as he took back Loch Leven

home when his metal detector signalled something in the sand around eight inches down.

Bearing only the inscription Russell and Kathleen 6/8/51, 55-year-old fire training school technician George set about trying to trace the owners with a Facebook appeal.

He feared the quest might come to nothing, but the mystery was finally cracked when Montrose pal Liz Neish used her genealogy skills to trace wedding couples with the names Russell and Kathleen around that time, leading quickly to Alex in Balmerino who was dumbfounded but delighted to learn of the find.

Alex, 61, explained that the nine-carat gold ring belonged to her father, Russell

Gordon from Pittenweem and was bought to mark his engagement to Irish girl Kathleen Moore in 1951.

Her dad's career as a Merchant Navy chief engineer took him away from home for long periods and Alex remembers well the family outing that turned to sorrow when the ring was lost.

"Mum had given it to my father when they got engaged but we were on the sands at St Andrews when it slipped off his finger and I remember us hunting for it.

"It was a sad time because we were on a happy family day but were so upset about losing the ring," said Alex.

"They went to (Dundee jewellers) Henderson's to get it in 1951 and were married in 1952.

"Dad did because of special to him for it."

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Mission was to

George Taylor, who found the engagement ring, admits his metal detecting hobby will be unlikely to unearth such a priceless family memory again.

"I've been doing it for about five years and when I found the ring I made it my mission to try to reunite it with its owner," he said.

"I thought it was a wedding ring and was always hoping that I might be able to trace the owner, so it was sad to find out that Russell had died.

"But it's a magnificent feeling to have got the ring back to the family."

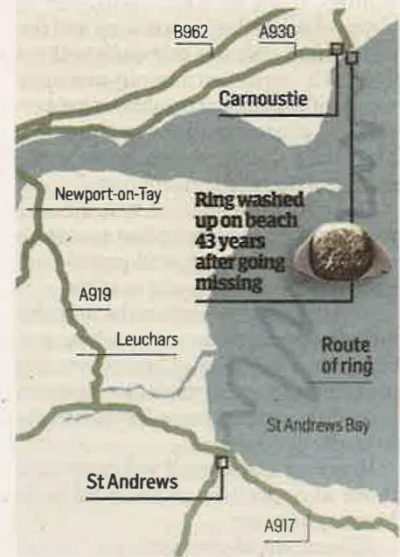
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"It was i friend Liz N family it bel

"It's just a piece into George.





George McGillivray, c. 1840



