

that's gold!

Reunited by the LORD OF THE RINGS!

that's life!
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stories

Have you been reunited with a lost treasured item? Let us know at that'slife@pacificmags.com.au

I find valuable objects that may have otherwise been lost forever

It started out as a hobby, but now Justin's love of treasure hunting is changing lives **Justin Millman, 35, Jamboree Heights, Qld**

Water lapped at my feet as I strode across the sand. After an hour of searching with no luck, I wasn't about to give up. Though some might say it was an impossible mission, I knew any minute I might strike gold. Suddenly, the metal detector in my hands sprang to life. *Beep, beep.* Could this be it? As I started burrowing through the sand, I spotted something shimmering in the sun. A ring! I'd found what I was looking for.

precious began when I was eight and started going metal detecting with my dad Geoff as a hobby. Studying science and biology at university, my interest grew as I loved being outside surrounded by nature. You name it, I've found it. Rare coins, matchbox cars, keys and even hearing aids! Over the years I've become an expert at reading the different signals given off by my trusty metal detector. It's no good digging up rusty nails and old soft drink cans!

down her face. I had to help. So, with my faithful detector in hand, I started scouring the area. *Nothing.* As they headed back to their tourist bus with sinking hearts, I felt so disappointed. Was their ring lost forever? I wasn't about to give up yet. Just as the sun began to set, I did one more sweep, and the familiar beep came through my headphones. I'd found it! Racing after the devastated couple, I held the ring out proudly. 'Thank you so much,' the lady beamed, hugging me. Reuniting someone with their lost treasure felt so rewarding, it got me thinking... *Could I make a business out of it?*



Me (top) with my metal detector and some of the loot I've found over the years – it includes rare coins, antique keys, children's toys, artefacts and, of course, lots of rings!

As the sun began to set, I did one more sweep...

Nothing beats the excitement of discovering buried treasure. Over the last six years I've reluctantly earned myself the nickname Lord of the Rings because I've enjoyed one of these 'eureka' moments more than 200 times! I've unearthed gold, silver and platinum rings, as well as pendants, earrings and family heirlooms, from beaches and parks across Australia. My passion for all things

I even have a waterproof detector so I can expand my searches in up to two metres of sea. But gold-digging was never more than a hobby – until one afternoon when I was treasure hunting at Stradbroke Island. Suddenly, a distraught lady came running up to me. 'My husband's lost his ring,' she cried. 'One minute we were swimming, the next it was gone.' I felt so sorry for her as I watched the tears streaming

Two years ago I decided to try – starting my own company, Lost Treasures, with the aim of finding people's missing items. I travel anywhere within two hours of my Brisbane home to scan beaches, homes and parks for special pieces. Last year, I got a distressed call from a lady called Angela. Her son lost her grandfather's family pendant while he was playing school sport. Poor

Angela and her family had spent eight hours combing the area without success. 'Sometimes things can be farther away than you think,' I told her, explaining I'd help by widening the search area. Sure enough, after 45 minutes, I found the glistening pendant under some tree bark. But not all my searches are so easy. Once, a client believed her dog might have swallowed



Reunited!

How could I have been so silly? I'd been on a long car trip with my husband William when I'd taken off my rings and put them in my lap to apply hand cream. After an hour I remembered what I'd done, but when I reached down they were gone. I found my wedding band on the seat – but where was my engagement ring?



Getting out of the car at a friend's house, panic rose in my chest as we searched with no success. Even taking the car to the local dealership for a complete strip didn't yield any results. I kept searching, refusing to believe it was gone. I even went online for tips – and that's when I came across Justin's website. He raced straight over. But by then 12 days had passed. Could he find it? He scanned the area where we'd parked the car but there was another vehicle in the same spot,

giving his metal detector a false reading. Undeterred, he got down on his hands and knees. After 45 minutes, I'd given up hope and gone inside. But soon after I heard a knock at the door. The smile on Justin's face made my heart leap. 'Here you go,' he said, proudly holding my platinum ring. As I screamed and cried, I couldn't thank him enough for what he'd done. It was one of the happiest moments of my life! **Adlyn Adnan, 29, Albany Creek, Qld**

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