



## Cultural Resource Consultants

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### Memorandum

**To:** William Lee, Gowanus Environmental Remediation Trust #2

**From:** Michael Audin, RPA & Wm. Jason Flatt, RPA

**Date:** September 12, 2022

**RE:** Memo # 24 - Results of Level 1 Cultural Resource Review  
Follow up of research for two items  
Gowanus Canal Remediation Project  
Brooklyn, Kings County, NY

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This memorandum is a follow up to present the findings on two items recovered during previous episodes of dredging during RTA-1 dredging activities after additional research was conducted by Archaeology & Historic Resource Services, LLC's (AHRS).

#### INTRODUCTION

On 7/21/2021, Cashman Dredging and Marine Contracting Co. (Cashman) discovered a mechanical component during dredging near the steel cofferdam by the Flushing Tunnel. AHRS archaeologist initially reviewed the item in Memo 15 dated July, 26, 2021.

On 12/10/2021, Cashman discovered a coin during ISS and sampling activities associated with the ISS. Technicians noticed a coin was caught on top of the sieve during the sieving of the sample from E-S-067. The coin was put aside for AHRS archaeologist to review. AHRS archaeologists initially reviewed the item in Memo 17, dated January 18, 2022.

Recovered items are designated as artifact, objects of local interest, or debris according to section 4.3 of the Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan (revised September 2020).

#### Artifacts

Artifacts are defined as meeting all of the following criteria:

- Identifiable by type, function, material and time period;
- Has an identifiable association with a specific building, site, event, or person along the Gowanus Canal during the canal's period of significance (1853 to 1965); and
- Confirms previously unconfirmed archival information along the canal or reveals new information that changes our understanding of the history/development of the area.

#### Objects of Local Interest

Objects of Local Interest are defined as meeting all of the following criteria:

- Identifiable by type, function, material and/or time period;
- Has a general association with the area, but not with a specific site, event, or person along the Gowanus Canal during the canal's period of significance (1853 to 1965); and
- Does not confirm previously unconfirmed archival information along the canal or reveal new facts that changes our understanding of the history of the area.

### Debris

Debris is defined as any other item recovered from excavation/dredging, including unidentifiable objects, objects with no apparent association with the local area, construction debris, objects made after 1965 and natural items (such as trees, brush, rocks, etc.).

As per section 4.10.4 of the CRMP, objects of local interest may include small, non-porous objects of local interest that can potentially be turned over to interested parties for display or for their collection, subject to cleaning/decontamination procedures to be established. A determination regarding the appropriateness of such an action must be made by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA); an agreement among all interested parties (including, at a minimum, the GCERT and the interested party) will likely be required.

## **RESULTS**

On August 19, 2022, Chris Shudick from deMaximus provided AHRS with photographs of the mechanical component and peso. AHRS Archaeologist Michael Audin, and naval architect and marine engineer Wm. Jason Flatt, reviewed the photographs. The material under review consists of a Chilean Peso coin (Photographs 1 and 2) and an unidentified mechanism (Photographs 3, 4, and 5).

### **Items Recommended for Retention**

#### **Object of Local Interest 1 – Chilean Peso coin.**

This item is a Chilean Peso minted in 1933. Per the Numismatic Guaranty Company, nearly 30-million were produced in 1933. The coin is composed of copper-nickel, the obverse design features a defiant condor perched on a rock, facing to the left. The reverse design notes the denomination above a wreath. The coin had a diameter of 29 mm and a weight of 10 grams. This coin has no known association with a specific site, event, or person along the canal and therefore cannot be classified as an artifact. Reference NGCcoin.com (<https://www.ngccoin.com/price-guide/world/chile-peso-km-176.1-1933-cuid-1040070-duid-1278944>)

Measurements:     Diameter 29 mm     Weight 10 grams



**Photograph 1** – Chilean Peso dated 1933, reverse.



**Photograph 2** – Chilean Peso dated 1933, obverse.

**Debris item 1 – Unidentified Mechanism.**

AHRS has been unable to conclusively identify the nature of the mechanism found. This mechanism may (likely) have been part of a larger apparatus. AHRS notes that this mechanism resembles a modern ship-to-shore power connection port (where a large electrical cable is plugged into a larger electrical station), but also bears a lesser resemblance to components found in oil purifiers, pumps, and other systems. Photograph 6, provided for reference, shows different modern ship-to-shore power connectors that resemble the unidentified mechanism. AHRS further notes that the solid nature of the mechanism suggests that it is not a type of valve despite the presence of the pedals. To date, AHRS has been unable to find historic images that match this mechanism. With no other context besides having been found in the canal, the historical information gleaned from such items is minimal at best.

Measurements: Length 12”                      Height 15”                      Width 10”



**Photograph 3 – unidentified mechanism, top & side**



**Photograph 4 – unidentified mechanism, bottom**



**Photograph 5 – unidentified mechanism, side**



**Photograph 6** – modern ship-to-shore power connectors (source: ESL Power Systems, <https://eslpwr.com/shore-power/>)

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering that sections of the canal were dredged in the 1970s, it is possible that the items observed, regardless of their age, are fairly recent additions to the canal deposit. With no other context besides being in the canal, the historical information gleaned from such items is minimal; however, some of the items may represent aspects of the canal's past and are potentially items of interest to area residents or canal enthusiasts.

AHRS concludes that after research and review, the Chilean Peso coin may be considered an object of local interest and may be retained. However, the unidentified mechanism is best classified as debris as it appears to have no historic/archaeological significance, and is therefore recommended for disposal.