

Beer Can Archaeology: The Maine Attraction
Chris Taylor 29470

In October of 2016, I was lucky enough to join fellow Rusty Bunch members Keith Kerschner, Gary Allison and Glenn Pasquinelli on their trip to central Maine for seven full days of can digging. I'm certainly glad I went as it ended up putting several interesting cans on my shelf. Keith Kerschner (BCCA 33511) recounts highlights of a week in rural Maine.

With any great dumping trip there are multiple factors that make the trip unforgettable. In this case we had at least four. Beautiful country, great food (frog legs and plenty more for me), cribbage when not dumping and great fellow Rusty Bunch dumping friends (the latter of which cannot imitated nor replicated) and a ton of 1940's beer cans (or no beer cans) found the entire week; to me the friendship of those fellow Rusty Bunchers (RBERs) will never be forgotten.

Gary Allison and I had been day dreaming for some quality Maine dumping for quite some time. During the winter of 2016, we talked about it on the phone at length and planned for a fall trip to Maine. We firmed it up at Spring Thaw '16. We knew we wanted to get out around the upper northeast corner since we hoped for some virgin territory. We believed there was still plenty of regions there to cover that hadn't been touched by diggers. As the year went on we kept dreaming and focusing on where to go and what to see. Gary asked if another fellow RBER could join us. I was more than welcome to hear that we could add another RBER to the trip. Fellow RBER Glenn Pasquinelli was added by summer and fall still seemed so far away.

As the time grew closer, Gary indicated that another RB dumping legend might possibly join us. Chris Taylor had indicated that he was going to be forced to take a week of vacation and was going to do a solo dumping trip to Pennsylvania. "No way" was my reaction. Gary and I quickly looked and there was a direct flight from Detroit to Bangor, Maine the same evening we were all planning to be there.

We were all lucky enough to get direct flights to Bangor; for me it was direct from St Petersburg Florida, Gary and Glenn flew together from Reagan National in DC and Chris from Detroit.

Gary and Glenn arrived earlier than Chris and I and they quickly got to work getting some digging tools. They took a taxi ride over to the closest hardware store. Gary is always willing to strike up a conversation and chatted with the cab driver about dumping. One of Gary's golden dumping rules "Don't be afraid to talk to the locals." Living by that rule always pays off. Gary and Glenn quickly learned that the cabbie knew of a dump he used to visit in his childhood and that it was likely still there in the middle of town. Gary had the driver to take them there. The cab driver's memory was spot on and directed them to a big hillside dump but sadly it was from a pre-beer can period. There were many bottles and 1920's license plates, but no cans.

Soon after my plane arrived, I picked up an extended cab pickup truck from the rental car desk, picked up Gary and Glenn at the hotel and the 3 of us went shopping to secure all the needed gear and food stuffs. Back at the hotel, we went over the google and state maps. A bit later I received a text from Chris that he had landed and I went to pick him up. Soon after our return, we all went to bed praying to the beer can Gods.

Diamonds in the Bucket:

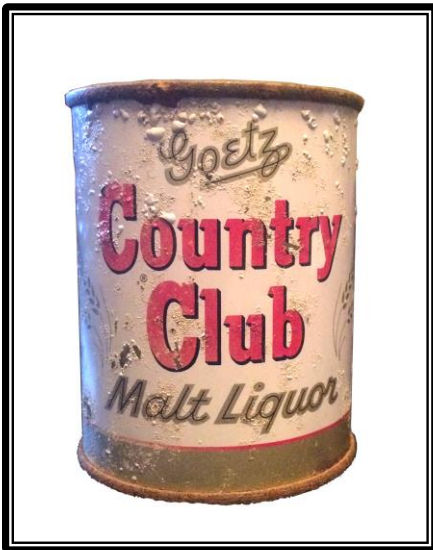
We got up at 5 am the next morning with a full week of friendship and digging ahead of us. We decided to head east and focus on locations that Gary and I had worked out scoped out in advance. We just needed that ice breaker. Deviating from our target plan, we took a little side road and saw that surrounding landscape had plenty of age (in that it had not been developed with recent infrastructure or houses.) We had passed a gentleman out burning leaves and such and decided to stop and talk. Gary got out of the truck with his album of treasured dumping photos and showed respect to the man by asking if he could approach (always a good idea when a pickup full of strangers pulls up early on a Sunday morning). He chatted with him for a minute and then popped open the album to show him what we were looking for. The guy said “sure, I believe there’s a pile back there that might have something you’d like”. Gary motioned us over and we grabbed out diggers and fanned out to cover ground, each focusing on different areas.

I can’t emphasis enough the benefit of having more in a group; we were able to cover more area and use more eyes to cover that terrain. I soon heard the sound of glass clanging and saw Gary, Chris and Glenn pulling out rust. There was a great pile of cans and variety but we quickly focused on the Dawson Diamond Ale 16oz flat tops (USBC 228/07) that were bring pulled out. I didn’t have my USBC book on hand but couldn’t remember the last time I had seen one, however I knew they must be tough to get. (That only proved true after posting one on eBay only to find out that the person that purchased it was in fact Jeff Lebo himself.)



There was a goodly amount of common Bud 16 oz flats, common Gansette ½ quart zips along with some Dawson 12 oz zips. Some 12 ounce late 50s Black Label and early 60s Schaefer and Knickerbocker flats added some variety. We finished that dig and were pleased with what we had pulled out. We thanked the owner who told us that he had recently started renting the house...pure luck that he had been outside that early and didn't care if we rummaged around. We quickly reminisced in the truck (oh yeah that was one big Ford F-250 Super cab) that we had finally broken the dumping ice.

We decided to head back northwest with the focus on reaching a lake shore later that afternoon. We had high expectations for this lake. We were still getting our feet wet and made sure to check plenty of areas as we headed towards the lake. We stopped for a quick lunch at a rural party store that had ample old growth woods out back and on the



left side. Of course Gary found a dump! We asked permission to park and go dig and were told to knock ourselves out! The dump was right where it should be, about 75 yards from the main road, down a gentle slope and covered in decades of leaf cover. Once in the dump we could look back up the hill towards the highway and see the faint outline of an old 2 track that lead down from the highway and intersecting with another 2 track that lead from the party store. There were plenty of beer cans; at first we found the cursed ½ quart Budweiser flats along with matching 12-ounce Bud and 12 ounce white split labels. Conditions were not the best and many of the cans looked like they were burned but it was also packed with 8ozers. There were Country Clubs and Goebels (USBS 241-22) in piles. Many were unreadable but

we could make out a few. There were also some pieces of Haffenreffer Malt Liquor (78/37) but none in salvageable condition.

We were back on the road heading towards the lake. One of the great things about driving around on these long dumping trips is reminiscing about past trips, telling what we'd found and how we found the dumps. One thing's for sure, everyone has their own bag of tricks of how to find dumps; it comes with years of dumping experience and learning to read the terrain. One area might look like a total bust to one RBer but another might see that one clue in the land that perks his instinct to take a look. The other thing on these travels are the stories of what cans you'd found on prior trips. Keith told about how he'd found silver Old Dutch flats (from Eagle Brewing Co) on one trip and Gary and Chris reminisced about their trip to the UP some years back. All the time these stories were being told, we were all scanning the roadsides for potential dumping areas and doing reconnaissance if a pull off looked interesting. Most of these stops were busts with common Budweiser 16 oz flats or 70s tabs.

The later it became in the afternoon/evening, my concern grew that by the time we reached the lake that we were going to be traveling down a back road in total darkness.

We turned off the main road as darkness crept in. From survey maps, we knew that there had been cabins along the lake back in the 30s but believed we were going to have to walk through some thick woods to get to the lakeside. Man were we in for a scare. We parked the truck, got our bearings and headed into the tightly packed pine woods. The trees were literally spaced a foot apart in places with their branches intertwined. Once through the barrier, we found many wide 2 tracks running parallel and at various angles to the main road but with no discernable landmarks; everything began to look the same. As we broke through another barrier of trees to get to where the lake “was supposed to be” it continued to get darker and again we’d be met with another series of wet and wide overgrown 2 tracks.

At that point we all had our own idea of what general direction the lakeshore was in and where the main road was. We were traveling down a truck-wide trail but it was crammed with soaked weeds up to our hips and old fallen trees that made the journey a pain. That was when Gary said “Hey look...that’s a pile of bear sh*t”. Then it dawned on me that there was a bear hunting sign at the start of the road as we turned off the main road. “Oh geez” were we about to find out what a Maine bear looked like? (Editor’s note: At least there aren’t Grizzlies). We tried downloading a compass to the phone but had no service. I had preloaded the offline maps on my tablet with offline GPS capability but that gem was sitting snugly tucked away back in the truck. As our eyes adjusted to the ever-fading light, we had to make a decision. We made the smart choice to try and navigate our way back to the truck as we almost couldn’t see anymore. Of course all the alpha male instincts kicked in and we each had a different idea of what direction to travel back to the truck. We on a 2 track with thick forest on either side when it was suggested I hit the remote car alarm. For all the good it would do, I hit the button on the remote and the truck horn honked! Amazingly, we had done pretty well in our navigating and were literally only 40 yards from the truck! We safely made it out of the woods. We didn’t see a bear and we all surely all prayed that night to have safely made it out. No bear kibble bits tonight.

Smartly, we did our homework and had lodging identified for the whole trip based on regions and made a wise choice for dinner and lodging together. We quickly learned that if you enjoy food and lots of it, Maine is the place to go. Gary got a chicken breast that I swear was the size of a whole ½ of a turkey breast. We also learned not to ask the waitress too many questions like “what is the veggie for the evening”. We all enjoyed our dinner and retreated to the cabin. It wasn’t long to see the little eager beaver Glenn get to scrubbing and cleaning cans. There he was singing to the oldies and working late into the evening. I’ve never dumped with Glenn before but heard plenty of stories. He proved every story to be true. He knocked out the cans we had pulled out earlier that day and brought out the shine.

We rose the next day before the sunrise and headed to breakfast. Again we got more food than we could even imagine. Not sure if it was that morning or the next but Gary decided to order a blueberry pancake as a side. I swear there was almost a whole pint of fresh off the farm blueberries in that one pancake bigger than the plate. The waitress says to Gary *“Hon, you should have ordered off of the kids menu if you can’t eat that pancake”*.

We knew we wanted to head back to that lake. I glanced at google earth some more and noticed the cabins were still there and there was actually a road in the direction of the lakeshore. Oh geez....and to think that we could have gotten eaten by a bear... We parked and walked towards the shore. We saw a vehicle and called out. The owner came out to greet us. The owner was nice enough and indicated that there were dumps on the property but thought it best not to let us check them out. Surprisingly that was one of the very few times we were turned down in Maine. We usually got more of the “Yeah sure come on...” than we ever expected. Thumbs up to the friendly and understanding folks from Maine.

Right Where It Shouldn't Be:



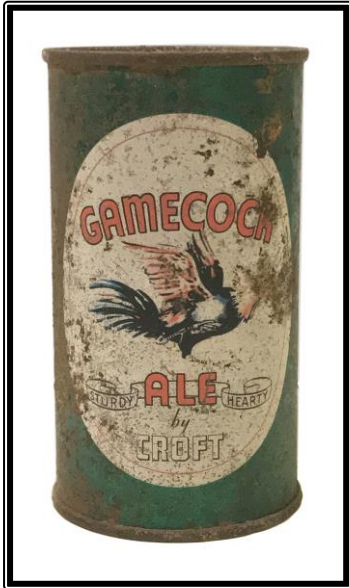
We traveled to another location nearby along a shoreline. We knew there were cabins there from the 30s. There were plenty of 20s and 30s cabins on the lake side and the area looked good but the road had no berm and only driveways. If we found anything down this road we'd have to park on the road or in a driveway. Luckily, it appeared that most of that section of road had

cabins that were used only in the summer. As we were driving the dirt road I heard Chris in the back say about three times, “Stop here and let me out, keep driving”. This place was pretty much in the front yard of 2 lakeside cabins with a small patch of woods near the road. Glenn got out on the opposite side of the road and walked a 2 tracker Gary and I drove on about 100 yards and pulled over at a turnabout point and peeked over a large mound of earth to see rust. We started digging and quickly learned it was likely a 50s dump but it was rust and plenty of it. After about 20 minutes, we figured I better grab Chris and Glenn. Chris goes on to explain what he experienced:

As we drove down the dirt road, I was in the driver's side backseat. That put me on the lakeside of the road where (as Keith explained) summer cabins sat back along the lake, probably 50 feet from the road. Most of these cabins had some sort of lawn but a few of these 40s houses were separated by small groves of trees. It was in one of these patches that I noticed some color. No more than 3 feet off the road I spotted the pink face of the old man on an Old Dutch (USBC 106-05) on top of a mound of cans (the same label that Keith talked about during our drive). It was then that I had Keith stop and move on



while I checked it out. I was surprised this was the very same Old Dutch label that Keith had talked about the previous day. It was in GREAT shape, with lots of color and solid.



After picking up the Old Dutch off the top of the little hill, I started pulling cans out other cans off the surface with my gloved hands; I quickly found several Neuweilers Beer OI (USBC 102/37) and some Krueger Cream Ale OIs (USBC 89/27). I'd been wanting to dump Neuweiler's Beer OIs since I'd went to a dump that Dwight had dug some back in 2001.

Those beers would have made my trip, but then a REAL surprise...a Croft Gamecock Ale! (USBC 52-29). I had tunnel vision as I pulled several more from the leafy pile of rusty cans, some nestled between Neuweiler's Beer OIs. It's been several years since I have experienced a "dumper's rush" like this and it felt great! I picked up about 6 Gamecocks, unfortunately, each subsequent example a little worse than the previous. I always carry several plastic grocery bags in my coat and pants pockets for instances such as this; it makes it much easier to corral the cans and transport them back to the vehicle, plus I've read too many instances of people finding great cans only to not be able to "find them" again when they return from the car with a box. All the while, I was double-bagging the nicest examples of all the cans to keep them from scratching one another. I stacked all the cans I found in another bag for transport.

I noticed that the deeper I dug, the cans underneath were actually in worse shape than those near the top... As I worked my way left to right across the top of the hill, I found a couple Esslinger Party Quiz flats along with an early 60s yellow Blatz, a 60s Schaefer and a black Miller. I went to the bottom of the dump (about 5 feet down the hill) and found condition of the cans worse and nothing much of interest. I quickly had three grocery bags full and felt it was time to get them back to the truck. I got up on the road and saw Keith driving towards me.



Keith: As I drove up I saw Chris in the tree line along the road and up to the truck he came with 3 bags of stacked rusty cans in tow. He was saying..."Gamecocks...Gamecocks". He put the cans in the back and he got in. After telling me that he thought he finished the small dump off, we drove down to the other dump and parked the truck and walked up over the large pile of dirt that had obviously been dumped there at some point by large dump trucks.

Gary and Glenn were knee deep in a dump that was almost entirely comprised of New Jersey cans like Tudor. The most interesting label was Bock Brand from Metropolis (USBC 40/04) and plenty of soda flats like American in many different flavors. We dug there for another 20 minutes and the brand and quality started drying up.

Chris and I went back to see if he had gotten everything from the Gamecock Dump. We pulled out a few more Gamecocks, Neuweiler's, Krueger, Budweiser O/Is and many others. We had our fill and decided to call it.

Having drove all day and dug our fill, we traveled back to the same cabin we had stayed the evening before. Again we were in for a treat for dinner. I was sure to ask the waitress what the veggie was for dinner. And again after dinner, Glenn was back sweating to the can cleaning workout. He was amazing. He brought in a few of the treasures; the Gamecocks and Neuweilers looked awesome.



Bonding with the Locals:

That next morning at breakfast I took on the task to ask some friendly locals to see if they could give us any insight into any local dumps. I quickly realized I was in trouble as the waitress snickered, Gary and Glenn snuck out and the local's friends beat feet. This particular fellow was a well animated character, a good ol boy who was not going to let you off easy; one of those that you know will take you firmly by the hand and lead you down a muddy trail that you weren't ready for. He told me tales of Potato Farms and much insight into the local history, stuff you're never going to read in a history book (and some you probably wouldn't want to know anyway). He went on with the "turn left down this road, travel 3/4 of a mile and then at this big tree, walk 100 paces into the woods." Every time I tried to say goodbye he'd say something like "boy, I'm not through with talking with you". He was also one of the only people I've met who wouldn't shake my hand or accept any gesture of thanks. He only spouted off a string of obscenities and shook his head.

After he let me go, we headed off in search of his "dumps". We found one of his "potato farm" spots that was down an old (but drivable) rail road bed but the site was way too old. A pickup truck with a couple of friendly grouse hunters (loaded shotguns in their laps) stopped by to see what we were doing. (We quickly learned that it is standard that many rural inhabitants of Maine travel with a weapon on their lap. After all, it was hunting season.)

There are endless lakes in Maine and we headed out to another without much luck. We were still all giddy from the previous day's treasures. We hit plenty of places but didn't turn up much. We were getting our tasks down to a science. At any given moment, at least three of our team was out scouting the terrain. By the time I had finished dropping off the last of the three, I was back picking up the first digger. Looking for cans is an art and a science; the collective skills of which were being worked to the fullest. We made it to our next bed down and headed into town for some dinner. Many of us decided to give the 2-3 piece chicken a try.....Holy moly you could have fed a family with just two pieces.

We spent an evening along moose alley and were lucky enough to have none run out on us. We headed out along the lake and hit cabins areas again and again with little luck. We headed off the lake and hit a region off the beaten path. We found some cans in various locations but nothing to write home about. Now when I say off the beaten path...we realized that when we traveled for nearly two hours and say nothing. We'd finally reach some semblance of civilization and headed towards another lake.

We thought we hit a sure thing. Gary found a Krueger (USBC 89-31) and gold Budweiser O/I on the edge of the hillside. As you walked into the area it was obvious that the dump covered the entire hillside and was from a garage. Plenty of oil cans and other trash from the two tracker that ran parallel to the hillside. Sadness set in as we all realized that although there were beer cans everywhere every one of them was a national brand. There was Pabst, Schlitz and every other common national brand known. We hung our heads and made our way back to the truck. Oh well it was rust.

We got back on the road and did our typical digging scouting as we traveled. Gary decided to try his magic with his dumper photo book and again it paid off. The landowner pointed to what looked like a semi-truck pull off along the highway, with a rocky, bolder laden wooded hillside leading up from where the trucks might park. He said there was a dump up amongst the rocks. It was certainly not a large dump and most of the stuff was either small cast iron stove parts and glass, but Chris pulled out a killer Neuweiler's Cream Ale quart out from beneath the leaves that covered gaps in the rocks. That seemed to be the only beer can there.

We picked out a cabin location and headed out for the evening. As we were picking up groceries we talked with some of the locals to see who might be somebody for us to talk to about local dumping grounds. One lady told us about Mr. Meelee (not his real name



and as everybody knows I suck at names). She indicated he normally is up early and at the only breakfast diner in town. We spent another great night in a great cabin and of course Glenn was out all night cleaning cans.

We got up and headed into town for breakfast. It must have been that dinner but my stomach was in a knot as we waited for our order to go. An elderly gentleman walked in and we figured it was Mr. Meelee. Well by then my stomach got the better of me and I let one slip. It was on the loud side and if looks could kill Mr. Meelee wanted nothing to hear of it. Well that source was burned thanks to my fart. We traveled around that area without too much luck. However, I did learn that when a chance to pee presents itself make sure to walk into the woods just enough and make sure you put on your beer can glasses as you let loose. Of course, cans can be found anywhere. Not a big dump but just a road side pull off dump with a few quarts.

We continued our road travel and I continued to drop off the scouts at each location that had potential. We all learned along the trip that Glenn is a persistent scout when it comes to looking for beer cans. He is a master but sometimes can lose focus. At times it is always best not to have a big vehicle idling out in front of a location since it will only be sure to draw unwanted attention. We dropped Glenn off one time and in our usual method of rolling past and seeing if the scout has completed his search we passed circled back around and then cruised past that location again. We got a little impatient and decided to roll up and call out Glenn's name. Still no Glenn. My quote was something like "Glenn better come walking out of those woods with cans dangling off his digger". Well the "digger" word wasn't used but you get the point. Sure enough Glenn strolls out with an arm full of quarts. He asks "are these good?". We all laughed and he added them to the boxes that kept getting full.

More from Chris:

At another potential area, we checked behind an old church that had been converted to a youth center. There was public property out back with a wooded hillside that ran to the left of the church and behind a line of older homes. We trudged along the ridge that had become very thick with scrub brush so we could barely make out the old houses. The ground was also thick with dried leaf cover so we were not in stealth mode. About 50 yards behind the first house we found some soup cans and glass. Suddenly, we heard a little dog barking on the back porch. We heard the owner open the back door and another dog jumped off the porch and began running towards us. The homeowner had a shrill voice, only likened to the teacher on the Cheech and Chong album where she yells "Class, Classsss, SHUT UP!!!!" The woman yelled, "STOP!!!!" Which made the four of us freeze. The dogs stopped running and barking so we decided, public land or not, we needed no part of this so began making our retreat in the rustling leaf cover. Again, the dogs started barking and the lady once again yelled "STOP!!!!" But this time Gary and Glenn took off up the trail causing the dogs to bark with renewed enthusiasm. With that the lady yelled even louder "Stop! I said STOOOOOPPPP!!!!!" At which point Keith put his hands up as if the police were arresting him. Gary and Glenn were far ahead and it was then Keith and I realized that the woman hadn't even seen us and was yelling

“STOP!” at her dogs. The rest of the trip we would put our hands up from time to razz Keith.

We hit a motel that evening and were surprised with the food at the local eatery. They had some amazing food including frog legs. Every item on the menu just called out to be tried. After a heart meal, we relaxed over games of Cribbage before hitting the sack.

Head for the Border:

Early the next morning, we traveled to another town with some closeness to the Canadian border. It was a small town and will pulled over to talk with a local. It was a gentleman in his late 30s. He had just pulled his pickup into the driveway of an older house and as we were talking to him his father came out of the house and handed his son a Miller Lite. His father said “Yeah I know where the town dump is....”. Ears perked up as he pointed out in the back yard and he told us to that we could drive to it on a street a lot down. By the



time we got there we all realized we were standing on a mound that was plowed over and all the beer cans were 4-5 feet below our feet. As we were leaving he said “Hey did you stop by the old mill”.....Again our ears perked up.

He said “you can go there no matter who stops you and whatever damn language they speak”.

We drove 1/4 mile down the road and parked in the entrance to a 2-track that was gated with a steel cable. We then went to work and we each ventured in a different direction. The area was near a lake and a river but not really very dumpy. There was the guts of a 2 story cement Victorian mill but not old cans or dumps near it to speak of. Oh, by the way, when you go out with a team make sure to either stay within eye view or have walkie talkies handy.

After the four of us wasted time down by the mill, I headed back up towards the main road, following the crest of the ridge that had been cut long ago by a river. With the highway about 200 yards through the trees on my left, I found a hillside dump with an upside down car halfway down the side. The hill was very steep with huge, bark-less, fallen trees and waste-deep junk that cascaded down its face. Everything was soaked and footing was at a premium; one wrong step at the top and you would be can-surfing to the bottom. Due to this, we had to navigate around to the left side of the dump where the hill had a more gradual slope and attack the dump properly, from the bottom up. The dump contained everything from cone tops, quart cones, flats and tabs up to mid-60s Aluminum.

More from Chris.

Chris: I love straight sided 2-piece aluminum cans; produced before can manufacturers began putting the crimp at the top lip of the can so they could save money by using a smaller lid. The thing about this time period is that the cans were produced for a short time period and the fact that these 1965-ish transition cans sometimes have odd-ball lids, including zip and flat top variations



By the time I arrived at the party, looking up the hill, Keith and Gary were on the left side of the dump, digging within the branches of the fallen tree and the upside-down car. (Of course, none of us had mind to take a photo of the scene!) Glenn had a good pile of mid-60s sodas and some Canadian all aluminum cans started. I moved up the hill a bit and immediately started finding various painted label food tins with English text on one side and French writing on the other.

The Maple Syrup cans in particular were very graphic with a winter snow scene encircling the can. There were also lots of Canadian 10 ounce Ice Castle Orange and Cherry soda flats in relative abundance.



I found a cache of 2-piece straight aluminum ham-bone and fan tab Canadian cans like Dow Kingsbeer, Black Horse, Molson's and Laurentide. Unfortunately, no aluminum Alpine or red Moosehead zips turned up. Digging on, I rolled out a couple woodgrain Topper gallons, each with a good side and a side with a large gash. Then I turned a gold Schmidt's Bock zip top, then another and a third. At least one was in good shape for the shelf.

Keith: We headed out after a good workout but I believe Chris could have spent all day there. I think he would welcome a chance to still go back. I think it is on his short list. We traveled the road and again used the three different diggers at three different locations method again. Those guys were getting their workout but didn't hit anything major.

The trip seemed like it was a whole month but it was slowly coming to an end: Each night, Glenn would clean cans and then we'd box them up for shipping. Each morning we were up at 5:00am, eating breakfast by 6:30 and at the post office at the opening bell, mailing out boxes full of cans as we went along.



THE RAIN IN MAINE:

Saturday arrived and for the first time the weather did not hold for us. Rain poured down and Gary was the only smart one of the group, high and dry inside his dark-green, full-length rain suit. He looked like a pine tree or a giant lawn gnome with his pointed hood up.

The day wore on and the rain stopped for a bit. As we drove down a rural road, we passed through a low swampy area and then climbed a medium-sized wooded hill. Cresting the hill; to the left was a 1920s house and to the right was a more modern house. Gary wanted to check the woods on the left. One thing to note about rural Maine roads is that there have no shoulders to pull off on, something that is particularly frustrating when you're trying to look for dumps and you have the locals flying up and down the road or suddenly appearing behind your vehicle and you're blocking traffic. With no pull off, we dropped him off and headed on up the road looking for a parking spot.

Gary continues:

When they dropped me off, I walked straight into the woods for about 50 yards or so trying to get a sense for where people may have dumped their trash. The forestation looked old enough and untouched for some time. After walking some distance from the road with no results, decided to turn back towards the main road but this time closer to the of the base of the hill. I noticed that the lot closest to the road had a utility pole on it that lead to a house at the top of the hill. As I continued, I started finding old speckled blue porcelain buckets and tires. I just followed the bread crumbs (trash) towards the source, I could see a dump but couldn't tell in the low light if there were any cans. As I walked up on it, I could see a quart with a stick poking out of it; it appeared the stick fell from a tree and harpooned the quart can. As my eyes adjusted in the low light, I soon went from seeing the dump as a whole to focusing on sections of ground and saw spouts sticking up everywhere. I dug a couple little test spots and realized the dump had depth, age and condition. We had us a 30s dump so I needed to the go back and get the rest of the others before we lost any more daylight. Then the rain started up again!



We went up the road and found nothing of interest so we went back to check on Gary. We drove down the hill and Gary ran out from the drop off point saying he had big punch flats and crowntainers. Glenn got out and they grabbed some boxes and diggers and headed back into the woods. Chris and I decided to go back up the hill to find a place to park. Then we noticed the truck was running on fumes! Neither of us remembered seeing a gas station so in a panic, we saw that a nearby building had cars in the parking lot and it seemed the best place to see if someone could point us in the right direction. The locals were having a pot luck and here we walked in, dirty duds and all. The women in the

kitchen were very friendly and took pity on us and asked several of the menfolk where the closest gas station was. We got directions, thanked them and headed back down the hill to check on Gary and Glenn. (little did we know that as we passed by the drop off



point, Gary was waiting for us but in our focus of going to look for fuel, we totally missed seeing him.) We barely made it to a gas station, filled up and drove back. Again, as we approached the drop off point and looked back into the woods, but neither of us could see Gary or Glenn, so with another backwoods car speeding up behind us, we continued up the hill. (This time, Gary was actually on the passenger side of the road and Chris and I had our backs to him as we strained to look back into the woods for them. According to Gary, he was almost to the back of the truck when we sped off, causing him to throw a crowntainer at the truck in a bid to get our attention.)

We waited awhile longer and traveled by to see what was up. Little did we know that Gary had already filled up boxes and bags and needed us to stop. Gary and Glenn were soaking wet and had a pile of cans. It always seems to be the case that it's the tail end of your trip when you find a great dump. Gary and Glenn were pulling out Esslinger Little Man Ale O/Is, Esslinger Little Man Ale crowntainers, gold small "r" Rheingolds (USBC 123-36, Hanley quarts, along with 40s Budweisers and some 50s – 70s Ballantines.

Grabbing more boxes, Chris joined them in the sizable dump for the last minutes of light and helped get more cans back to the truck.

We traveled to the hotel and Gary and Glenn were soaked to the gills and getting the chills. We let them go inside and get changed while we devised a plan on getting 10 -12 cases of dumpers into the hotel for sorting and cleaning. Most of the cans were sitting in sopping wet case flats so we stacked them one case flat at a time on top of each other into huge black garbage bags. After getting about four of these bags loaded onto the nice hotel baggage cart, we slowly walked it into the hotel, trying not to let the cans clank. One false move and one of the bags would have tipped over, spilling hundreds of rusty, muddy cans all over the lobby. We didn't look much better in our wet, muddy pants and boots. The rolled sheets of visqueen should have tipped the desk worker off that these big guys were rolling dead bodies up to the hotel room for dismemberment, but he was at the counter, head down and obviously didn't want to know what we were up to.



Up in the room, the visqueen was rolled out and Glenn was quick to work through the cans that now had to be shipped on the plane since nothing was open before we had to depart that next day (Sunday). A small production line was set up to pre-clean, evaluate and sort into keeper and trash piles. In dim light of the hotel room, the cans that were possibly identifiable when found earlier were now complete mysteries and relegated to the throw away pile. Sadly, I thought it was best to keep it down to one box and likely a few good mystery cans were tossed out. (We thought the last dump we hit was so great that we would have to stop back again at a later date).

Now to get the now bulging garbage bags “junk” cans out of the hotel without raising suspicion. Now the bags were “fatter” than before and more susceptible to rattling and clanking as we took them through the hotel. Since the elevator was located right in the lobby, rolling it down a side hallway was not an option; the direct route past the front desk was again our best option. We rolled the cart past the front desk and again, the night desk worker never looked up once. Chris and I made it to the dumpster on the side of the hotel and tossed the bags like bodies into the dumpster. One of us jinxed the situation by saying “good thing we didn’t spill these” and the end opened on the next bag we tossed up and cans flew all over the parking lot. Chris chased down a few stragglers and laughed at the stupidity of the situation.

We then cleaned out the truck so we could get it back to the car rental center.

We all departed early that Sunday morning and as I had stated at the onset of this tale that the real winner out of the whole trip was the friendship we gained and it felt like we had known each other for a lifetime. We put 1125 miles on the rental truck so we saw plenty of Maine.

POSTSCRIPT:

Two weekends later, Gary and Glenn drove up from VA/MD and I flew up from Florida to hit that last dump. Initially, I went back to the Gamecock Dump near the lake and pulled out even more; Neuweiler’s and Krueger Cream Ales were just rolling out as I pulled back the top layer. I could have spent all day but had to cut my losses and get down to where Gary and Glenn were.

They were filling up boxes. The real winner was when Gary pulled out a 30/40s cigarette sign was from “Model” tobacco in Richmond, Va. that looked like it was just thrown out last week. We traveled the roadways all weekend but had little additional success.

So over the timeframe of just over one week and then another weekend, I admit that I have completed a much beloved bucket list dumping trip with some of the most incredible fellow Rusty Bunchers; Gary, Glenn and Chris are some of the most caring and sharing fellow RBers and I’d welcome a chance to dump with any of them again. This great hobby is one to share and is best enjoyed with fellow hobbyists. Those are easy to be found within this great Chapter. Can’t wait for the next one.

