

ACTUALITÉS

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JEAN ALLAIN

Coins part of college's heritage

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For decades, nobody knew what was contained inside a metal safe in the principal's office of CCNB Bathurst, College Hill campus.

Jean Allain, the current principal at the college said the safe was there when he took on the role, but neither he, nor anybody else, knew what the lock combination was.

"I had a safe in my office in a small room beside my office but I never had the combination," he said. "I never thought of opening it and when I moved my office, I asked Jeanne Comeau, who was there before me (as principal), and she did not have the combination. We went back as far as Lorio Roy, who was principal in 1984 or '85, and nobody had opened the safe."

The mystery was solved a year-and-a-half ago when the Bathurst campus became the new head office for the Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick. The principal's office, which was located inside the round building on campus, was turned

into the office for the president of the CCNB network so a number of items were shuffled around, including the safe.

Allain and his colleagues decided this was a good time to have a professional open the safe.

"Somebody said, 'Well, what do you want to do with your safe?' I have to admit, my reaction was, 'I don't know,' because I never had the combination to open it. So we had somebody come and open it."

What they found inside was a little unusual considering that prior to 1972, the community college was run by the Pères Eudistes religious organization.

"I have to admit, it was weird," said Allain, referring to the contents.

"We found a vintage hand gun that was probably from the 1800s ... A gun being a gun, we called the city police, who picked it up because a gun has to be registered. It wasn't the ownership of anybody specifically."

There were a box of bullets with the gun but Allain was not sure if the bullets were for the weapon.

Other contents from the safe have

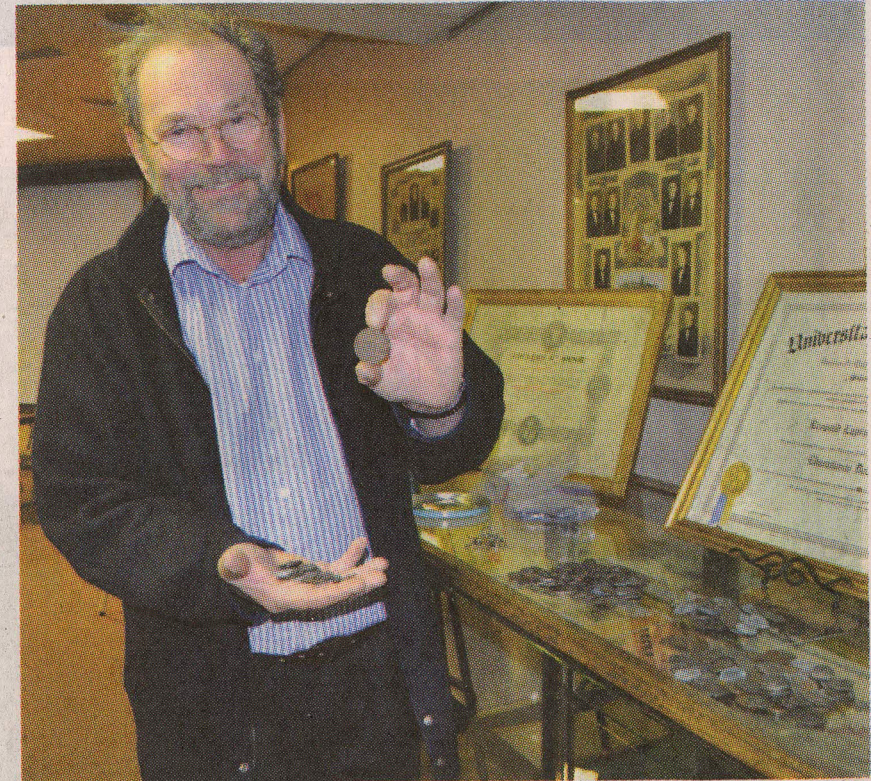
been put on display in the Salle des Pères Eudistes at the Bathurst campus.

"We ... found a small collection of money that was left by the Pères Eudistes a long time ago. It's not worth a heck of a lot ... but it's still a collection of different pieces that the fathers – probably when they went on different trips to different countries around the world – brought back," said Allain.

Euclide Chiasson is the executive director of the Foundation du College de Bathurst. He said his group put the money on display last week after doing research into where the money came from. Chiasson said much of the information came from an antique book collection owned by local antique dealer and collector Rayburn Doucett, who is well known in the region as the president and chief executive officer of the Belledune Port Authority.

Chiasson noted the collection contains money from North America to the Middle East and some coins date back as far as 1286.

Chiasson, who both attended and taught at the Bathurst college, said he has been told the coins likely are not



The Foundation du College de Bathurst has set up a display of an old coin collection at CCNB-Bathurst, College Hill campus. The coins were discovered in a safe that was left untouched for decades. Shown is Euclide Chiasson, executive director of the Foundation du College de Bathurst. PHOTO: JAMES MALLORY/CANADAEAST NEWS SERVICE

particularly valuable because they aren't in mint condition. However, he said that having the coin collection on display at the college is important, since they are part of the college's history.