

FOSSICKIN' ROUND

THE VICTORIAN SEEKERS CLUB BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 35 issue 4

July/August 2014



Big Nugget Found in Siberia



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15 oz. WA nugget Found



The Victorian Seekers Club Inc. (A0001477T)

Is a family oriented organization, the objectives of which are to promote friendship, cooperation and exchange of ideas among people interested in prospecting and metal detecting. To realize these aims, we have meetings, lectures, discussions and practical demonstrations to help members acquire the skills required to make prospecting and metal detecting an enjoyable and rewarding pastime. We arrange outings to the goldfields and other prospecting sites, beaches, camps, ghost towns etc, to search for gold, coins, relics, gemstones and other natural and man made objects of value and / or of interest. In addition, we also have functions to foster social contacts among members. Our conduct is governed by a strict code of ethics including avoiding trespassing on private property or damaging the natural environment, hence our motto:

"Seek, But Do Not Destroy"

Membership is open to adult persons and their minor children without regard to race, creed or political persuasion, who are interested in these pursuits and prepared to abide by our Constitution and Rules of Conduct. VSC has general meetings on the first Wednesday of each month (except January) at the Mulgrave Senior Citizens and Community Centre, 355 Wellington Road Mulgrave, and at a field trip each month and, in addition, we also have some occasional day outing.

Annual Membership Fees

Family Membership: \$55.00

Single Membership: \$45.00

One-off joining fee: \$10.00 single, \$20.00 family.

Subscriptions are due and payable by the 1st of July each year.

Website: <http://seekers.metapath.org/>

email: eric.grummett@bigpond.com

PO Box 15, Mt Waverley BC, VIC 3149

Committee of Management

PRESIDENT: Eric GRUMMETT

Club management/ representation, Chairperson of meetings.

VICE PRESIDENT: Barry WESTON

President's deputy, arranging speakers.

SECRETARY: John CLOSE

Correspondence, rules, meetings, admin. matters etc.

TREASURER: Warren IBBOTSON

Budget, finance matters

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Ian SEMMENS

Typing & setting out & printing Newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Warren IBBOTSON

Subscriptions, membership records,

RESEARCH OFFICER: Rob SHANNON

Information about outings, field activity and site control.

CATERING SUPERVISOR: Jim LAUNDY

Lis Forster

SOCIAL SECRETARIES: Val LIPPINGWELL

Tina WHELAN

Organizing social functions, raffles, theatre bookings, etc.

ALMONER: Virginia LAKE

Contact on matters of personal nature, weddings, bereavement, etc.

WEBMASTER: Geoff LEE

FIELD OFFICERS: Ted COX, Bob LAKE, Graham SILVER, Lindsay TRICKER,
Geoff LEE.

Events Calendar

July

Wed. 2nd: General Meeting.

Fri. 11th - Mon. 14th: Camp Harvest Home (Dunolly)

August

Wed. 6th: General Meeting.

Fri. 8th - Mon. 11th: Camp Homebush

September

Wed. 3rd: General Meeting.

Fri. 12th - Mon. 15th: Camp Waanyarra

October

Wed. 6th: General Meeting.

Fri. 3rd - Mon. 6th: Camp Tarnagulla

November

Fri. 31st Oct - Tues. 4th Nov: Melbourne Cup Camp Moliagul

Wed. 5th: General Meeting.

Editor's Report

by Ian Semmens

The editor welcomes articles, photos, comments or detecting stories to publish in the newsletter.
It's your newsletter, so have your say!

The Victorian Seekers Club Inc.

Website: <http://seekers.metapath.org/>

General Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month (Except January) at the Mulgrave Senior Citizens & Community Centre, 355 Wellington Road, Mulgrave, MELWAYS (80, C1). Meetings start at 8.00 pm sharp, punctual arrival would be very much appreciated.

General meeting dates for 2014: Feb 5, Mar 5, Apr 2, May 7, Jun 4, Jul 2, Aug 6, Sep 3, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3.

Committee meetings for 2014: Feb 4, Mar 25, Apr 29, May 27, June 24, July 29, Aug 26, Sept 30, Oct 28, Nov 30.

President's Report

by Eric Grummett

There is no President's Report this issue as Eric and Bev are enjoying great holiday in Central Australia. In their absence Vice President Barry Weston has stepped in to report to the members:

Have you sent a letter to your Local Member and Opposition Member regarding VEAC (Victorian Environmental Assessment Commission)? It is not too late. In our last newsletter Eric advised how important it is to let them know. To contact your Local Member follow the links given here:

<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/members>.

Type in your suburb or postcode and do a search for your representative. How can the politicians make decisions without being informed. Our Democracy depends on it. Let them know that we create no permanent impact on the environment.

On an entirely different subject, weather. Over the next few months be careful of camping in low level areas and next to or under dead tree limbs as we are due to get lots of rain and high winds.

Make your own good luck.

Hi all,
Here we are in Alice Springs this week and all is well so far. Having a great time. We are heading north from here and then across to Rockhampton and then back down. The photos are of us at Ayres Rock and Kings Canyon. See you soon, ERIC.



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Safe Detecting

Prospecting is an enjoyable activity however there are some inherent dangers on the goldfields.

- Take care around any open shaft and when walking through the bush.
- Carry a mobile phone and water and the usual emergency provisions such as GPS, compass, first aid kit, torch, matches, UHF radio and snack bar.
- Be aware of hazards such as snakes.
- It is not advisable to prospect alone. Team up with a mate.
- And be SunSmart. Slip on a shirt, Slop on some sun-screen, and Slap on a hat.

Members are responsible for their own safety!



General Meetings

Previous Meetings Guest Speakers

May

Robyn Vella - Tourism Manager for Loddon Shire has the passion, enthusiasm, drive and confidence that the Loddon Shire inspires. What a dynamic presentation she gave. We now know there are plenty of interesting attractions to visit when on a break or for your partners to check out while you are detecting. Historical sites, antique stores, beautiful views and products such as pickled green tomatoes, olives, flavoured salts, eucalyptus oil and jams with detecting tours as well. Visit the Eucalyptus Discovery Centre and while you are there mention you know Robyn Vella and you cannot go wrong.

June

Thanks to Ian Semmens for the wonderful film "Eureka - Riot or Revolution", it provided a clear and concise view of events presented in chronological order enhanced by good actors with fine accents. This film was one of the best to ably portray the complex subject of Eureka which even today fosters debate among our historians and academics. Rebellion or Rioters? Either way they were important in laying the foundation of our nation and there is no doubt, very brave men.

For more information on Eureka I recommend the book by Peter Fitzsimons called Eureka, The Unfinished Revolution..

Upcoming Speakers

July

Ian Dale from Ambulance Victoria will address the club at 8.00p.m. (before the club business). We shall learn the basic first aid that we all should know plus CPR. The method has changed over recent years, so make sure you are up to date for your families sake.

August

A Chiropractor who has a reputation for giving a very informative, helpful and learned presentation shall advise what is needed to improve the health of your body or aid your recovery or reduce your pain and suffering.

September

Elections. Don't ask what the Club can do for you.....



Remember:

to be considerate of others if you feel that you must use a generator.

Don't use it close to other campers, take measures to mitigate the sound such as put it in a ditch or use a sound baffle, don't run it all day, and observe the 9:00 pm cut off time

We encourage you to consider charging batteries with a solar panel. instead of a generator.

May Camp Report

Talbot

By Ken Whittaker

Photos By Eric G.

I seldom talk at length about the weather as there is absolutely nothing I can do about it. But in this case its worthy of comment, as for this camp one could not order a better clime.

This environment was enjoyed by 46 member prospectors and 2 visitors, totalling 32 campsites.

I also noted the new "Sign In" advisory notice and it's accompanying "Sign In" tent decorated by a hand sown Seekers flag. Well done Lindsay T.

It was also worthy of note how well organised the Seekers Camp sites are. Almost always they go off without a hitch.



Over the weekend quite a few of us attended the Talbot Sunday Market, and by the reports from the ladies it was enjoyed by the enthusiastic bargain hunters and novelty shoppers. It was suggested that the same camp next year should be timed accordingly. I'm sure the local traders involved would support us attending along with our tourist dollars.

In the gold finding department quite a few nuggets of various size up to about 5 grams were uncovered, mostly by

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| Jewel | 450gm | 4mm | 450mm |

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the intrepid young “Rob” who continued his good run. I think Lindsay T came in second with nice “specie”. A DSE Ranger turned up just as Rob was unearthing a nice flat one out of some flaky bedrock. The Ranger was quite chuffed as it was the first time he had witnessed such a thing in his precinct. He called by to check poisonous baits that were about, so to those dog owners, always watch for the warning signs which are posted nearby.

Not a lot else to report other than a word of warning for those of us who use those “shower tents”. There can occur, during use, a hazardous situation which causes *Lantern Luminosius Silhouetteus*. This only occurs whilst showering after dark. For further information about this dilemma contact Robyn and/or Warren. LOL.

Hoping to see you again soon.



Warren taking it easy with Milly.



Caravans in the bush.



Michael Schutt coming back from detecting.



Robert S. finds including a 4.1 & 5.8 gram nuggets
For a total of 12 grams.

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Disclaimer:

Opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect that of the VSC Committee.

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June Camp Report

Heathcote

by Rob Shannon

Photos by Francine and Rob S.

Arriving on the Thursday afternoon, a day before the official start of the Heathcote camp, I was greeted by other campers who were already well established. Weather was great for the whole duration of the camp with cooler nights as expected with only a couple drops of rain during the days.

It was an impressive turnout despite having several members away either in Western Australia or elsewhere trying their luck. 24 members and 5 quests were present over the long weekend and thank you to everyone who made them feel welcome.

On two occasions Louise and Jan made us some lovely pancakes for the club to enjoy. (Although I missed out on the first serving, I made up for it the following night along with Herman's help) It was a camp based on food and it didn't stop there with the pancakes! Back from detecting James passed a tray of chocolate biscuits to some eager prospectors, Ron shared around fruit cake with many taking seconds and thirds, Matt shared chips around the camp fire along with chocolate, and the grand finale was the damper. After a quick trip to the local IGA to gather cooking supplies, Ron played the role of Ian Hewitson from 'Huey's Cooking Adventures' by being the head chef, all you needed were the trouser suspenders and you'd be set Ron. He cooked up, with the help of Louise and Jan a delicious, warm damper with a soft golden brown base (Well OK it was a black and crunchie that gave it character) And thank you Francois for making a delicious homemade custard to compliment the apricot and plum jam already provided.

We had some entertaining nights with many sharing jokes around for a good laugh. I was, as always on my best behaviour enjoying a nice drop to warm up the night (Peter M probably spat out his coffee reading this) ok well I think I got carried away just a little. Gold was found by most although small, however exception was made to Claude who unearthed a stunning 5.3 gram nugget, which I believe to be his second largest piece of gold ever found. Well done, Claude! Matt arranged a short day trip to Graytown with a convoy of several cars eager to try some new ground. He took us to a secret spot where it was known, a couple of prospectors not so long ago found a small reef containing gold. 5 kilo's (176 ounces) worth \$237,000 of the valuable yellow metal was taken out just from one small hole! Ron found some specimens close by and Alex also located a nice piece of gold from a location couple gullies away.

A fantastic outing once again and thanks to all for another great time and hope to see a repeat at the next camp to Harvest Home.



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Matt explaining the story of the reef find to us.



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Fire Safety

Editor's Note:

Having had the CFA recently inform us of some of the fire dangers and precautions we need to take when camping in the bush, I thought that it would be good to look at the steps to take if a fire should break out at home.

From the MFB website:

Fire Safety in the Home



Each year more people die and are injured in house fires than bushfires. In 2012 there were 3,800 house fires resulting in the loss of 12 lives and causing property damage in excess of \$97 million.

- 42 per cent of those fires started in the kitchen
- 8.5 per cent in the bedroom
- 8 per cent in the lounge room

There are some very simple rules to follow to help keep you safe in your home. Print them out and discuss them with your partner, family or housemates.

They could save your life one day.

Keep emergency numbers near the phone

- Ensure emergency numbers are keyed into all the phones in your home.
- Dial 000 (triple zero) for fire, police and ambulance.

It's never too early to teach children how to responsibly contact emergency services.

Practise your home fire escape plan regularly

- Identify the quickest, safest way to get out of the house from every room, including upper floors.
- Agree on a place to meet outside (letter box or nature strip) and practise it.
- Ensure your house number is clearly visible so emergency services can find you quickly.

Use the [home fire escape plan template](#) to document your plan.

Stop, drop, cover and roll

- If your clothes catch fire - stop, drop, cover your face with your hands and roll to smother the flames. To help someone else, throw a woollen blanket over them to extinguish the flames.

Get down low and go, go, go!

- If there's smoke in your house, get down low and go, go, go!

In a fire, the safest area for breathing is near the floor where the air is cooler and cleaner, so remember to crawl low in smoke.

Check doors for heat before opening

- Use the back of your hand to check for heat, then get down low and crawl to safety.
- Close doors behind you if possible. If the door is hot, use another exit.

Get everyone out of the house as quickly as possible.

Call the fire brigade

- Call the fire brigade from a neighbour's house, public or mobile phone and wait for them to arrive.
- Tell them where the fire is and if anyone is still inside.

Never go back inside for any reason.

More information

[Home fire safety checklist](#)

[Home fire escape plan template](#)



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Club News

First Aid

In order to be able to give members appropriate first aid assistance should an incident occur on a camp, we are compiling a registry of those who have a current First Aid certificate. Please let the treasurer know if you have a current First Aid certificate. There will be also be an extra box to tick on the sign in form at the camps to let those present know who is qualified. First Aid is not restricted to only those who are qualified. If any member is present at an incident and is able to administer some form of First Aid then they should do so.

Change of Camp Date and Location

Note that September's Camp that was to be Havelock has now been changed to Waanyarra. October's camp will be a week earlier than normal to coincide with the Tarnagulla Detector Key Hunt. The dates will be Friday October 3rd to Monday October 6th. Of course members can arrive earlier and stay later at any camp if they wish to do so.

Miners Rights

Members are reminded to check their Miners Right to make sure that they are still current as several members have discovered that their Miners Right have unknowingly expired. It is a requirement by law that prospectors have a current Miners Right when prospecting for Gold, Gems or other minerals. Renew before 1st of July to beat the annual CPI price rise or buy a 10 year Miners Right and forget about it for a long time.

Vale

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of the well known and respected prospector **Kevin Hillier** on May 15th. Kevin was the finder of the Hand of Faith Nugget of 870 ounces in September of 1980. Kevin was an active member of the PMAV and on two occasions visited the VSC campsite and displayed to members a replica of the nugget and told us of its finding. He will be much missed. Condolences to the family.

Gold Price Report

By Ian Semmens

60 Day Gold Price in AUD/g



Price as at 24/06/2014

New Members

- Phillip Coats & Judy Dennis
- Alistair & Anja Mc Knight
- Anthony Fraietta



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Detecting Finds

A Big One! *By Janet*

I was actually heading for another locality, but the sun was already setting and I was running late as usual. There was still a long way to go and because I hate driving in the dark with all the kangaroos and other animals about, I decided very reluctantly, that I had to stop and make camp for the night. I was annoyed with myself, as now I would have to put up a tent and make a camp only to pull it all down again in the morning.

The next day, being not far from the edge of a somewhat featureless looking salt lake, I decided to get my detector out anyway and have a quick roam around before packing up camp. Now, my 'quick roam' invariably ends up with me walking for miles as I spot what appear to be items of interest on the horizon. These 'outcrops' often turn out to be nothing more than piles of bleached bones from some poor animal that perished while crossing the lake ...most likely from sun-stroke!

After about two hours of wandering, my legs were beginning to ache as I made towards just one more interesting patch of shallow quartz ground. Making a circle around it I decided it was time to start heading back. Then I caught a little signal. It was easy to pinpoint and dig up as it was only shallow and I was amazed to find it was gold – a little half grammer!

"Well" I thought, "Fancy that! Nothing to get excited about yet!". I did a few laps around it but found no more.

Still heading back towards camp I got another little signal a stone's throw away from the last one – yes, another tiny nugget! I am now starting to get a bit excited, after all, this is a virgin area. NO ONE has detected here before. There are no footprints, no quad or bike tracks, no old diggings and no rubbish. In fact, a very uninviting looking place for any prospector! I was still over a kilometre away from my camp and it was a long walk back. I knew what I had to do – pack up camp and move closer to those two little bits I had just found and do some gridding. I was sort of dreading this in a way as it is not unheard of for me to wander on the only two bits in a 10-mile radius!

It didn't take me long to move the camp and start my usual methodical and tedious gridding. But! very out of character for me.....after only half-an-hour without a signal, I couldn't resist breaking away and wandering off again. I was only swinging the 10" mono elliptic coil, my favorite coil for wandering on salt lakes as it is so light to swing. I knew it was not really suitable

for deeper areas, but I kept on going straight out onto the lake and soon could feel my boots sinking into deeper mud. There was nothing of any interest to walk towards but I kept going in the same direction, as if some unknown force was urging me on. With nothing special to see or trigger my imagination, just a vast endless salt lake, I entered into my usual trance like state and started daydreaming. That's what I like about salt lakes, you can walk and swing a detector and daydream without tripping over anything! My bungy cord keeps the coil skimming the surface without having to think about it.

Suddenly I stop dead in my tracks - and wake from my daydreaming! Something had triggered my automatic response mechanism! I back up, and yes, there is a strange signal, but dull and over a large area, nothing like the usual sharp signals I get from small nuggets on the surface.

"Must be mineralisation" I am thinking, but I am compelled to dig it regardless. The lake is wet and the mud sloppy and sticking to my pick, boots and hands, and I am cursing, but I make a rough hole and pass my coil over it. This time the signal is stronger and more definite. I know there is no rubbish in this area because there is simply no sign of the old timers ever having been here or anyone else for that matter!

The thought hits me like a bolt of lightning... this MUST BE GOLD!

My heart starts to beat faster as I throw the wide end of my pick into the mud and start dragging it aside. Soon there is mud all over me and I'm kneeling in it and throwing it out of the hole like someone possessed. I point the elliptic into the hole and it is screaming. Then I come to my senses and realize that I am not sure where the bottom is and if I carry on like this I will damage the nugget. I take off my detector, throw my pick aside, bend over the hole and start pulling the mud out with my bare hands. My fingers are soon raw and cut from the sharp little rocks and gypsum crystals and numb. Then I touch something right at the bottom of the hole...It is hard and cold! I know instinctively what it is! I look down the hole and there it is ...a bit of yellow shining up at me. My heart stops for a moment but my mind is racing because I know, at this depth, it must be a good one!

I start scraping away the dirt from the surface of the nugget with my torn fingernails hoping to find an edge to it, but there is no edge! As I scrape away frantically, the surface of the nugget is getting bigger and bigger and still no edge to it! I can't believe this! I am starting to have visions of a Golden Eagle!

"It's no use - I will have to make the hole wider right

from the top down!" Mud is flying everywhere again! I keep digging and widening the hole and groping down to the bottom of it with my bare hand, scooping out the mud as it keeps on falling back in. Then feeling around the nugget I finally find an edge to it and try to lift it, but it is stuck solid.

"Hell! What does it take to get this thing out!" I'm thinking.

More scraping of mud, more sore fingers, and my back is aching. I am losing patience.

I decide to throw caution to the wind and reaching down into the hole, I hook one finger under it and give it a big yank. This time it moves..... I stop breathing as I maintain a slow steady pull on it! The mud around it also begins to move and I realize it is a lot bigger than I thought! I watch with amazement as its full size emerges from the mud and I slowly drag it out of its ancient resting position.

Immediately I'm aware of the weight. It is heavier than any previous nugget I've ever pulled out!

I went straight back to camp clutching it in my sore muddy hands. Back at camp I hurriedly washed it in a bowl of water and held it up. I couldn't believe it! I was thrilled. I couldn't put it down and when I did I found myself picking it up again! I was totally awe-struck by its beauty! Finally, I remembered to take a photo!

Still covered from head to foot with mud I sat down for a well-deserved cup of tea. I needed to sit down after all the excitement and gather my thoughts together and ponder about what I had just found. Then I started to imagine what else might be lying out there. Yes... lying out there for millions of years just waiting for someone like me to come by this way!

Here is the photo of it below taken only minutes after pulling it out of the ground after the first initial wash. You can see that some holes in it are still full of mud and gypsum crystals. I guessed the weight conservatively to be about 12 ounces but it turned out closer to 15! It was about 10" deep. Only a few small nuggets were later found close to it!



Club News



Christmas in July

For the July Camp at Harvest Home (Dunolly) the theme will be **Christmas in July** so grab you old Christmas decorations and decorate you van, yourself, the dog etc., cook up some gluwiein, break out the cast iron oven for some damper cooking or the pan for some pancakes and there may even be a "Happy Hour" (or two) to enjoy a stiff schnapps or other warming spirit.

AGM in September

The next club's AGM will be at the General Meeting on Wednesday 3rd September. Members are encouraged to take on a position to contribute to the club and to give the existing hardworking committee members a break. If you enjoy the club's activities then it is time to put something back into the club.



VICTORIAN SEEKERS CLUB INC.

NOMINATION FORM FOR OFFICE BEARER For the year 2014-2015

I,

Nominate

For the following position:

Seconded by

Accepted by

To be handed over to the Club's Secretary
no less than 7 days prior to the AGM

Vacant positions:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
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| Secretary, | Catering Supervisor |
| Treasurer, | Almoner, |
| Membership Secretary, | Librarian, |
| Social Secretary | Field officers |
| Research Officer, | |
| Newsletter Editor, | |

Mining on the nose at Bendigo in central goldfields

The World Today
By Claire Slattery



Photo: The City of Greater Bendigo wants to see the mine preserved. (By Claire Slattery)

As Bendigo's gold mining boom ends, the city deals with the clean up. The central Victorian city of Bendigo once had the world's biggest gold mines, but it appears the boom is finally over. With underground mining now finished, the city of 100,000 people is facing the difficult task of cleaning up. One of the headaches is just how to deal with rising groundwater that smells of rotten eggs.

The last company to mine under Bendigo stopped production only two years ago, turning off pumps that kept smelly, dirty groundwater from rising to the surface. Now the well-known tourist attraction, the Central Deborah Goldmine is under threat, as groundwater slowly fills thousands of kilometres of connected shafts that lie beneath the city. The Central Deborah Goldmine secured funding to install its own pumps last year.

John McNamara is a member of the tourist mine's maintenance crew, he says the pumps will save the mines lower levels from flooding. "We're on level 10 of the mine and we're down nearly 260 metres, this is where our pumps start", he said. "It pumps about half way down the smoke box and that's pumped through clear to the surface." But once the water's removed from the tourist attraction, it needs somewhere to go. Currently it is pumped underground, where it will eventually flow to evaporation ponds at Woodvale, a rural community on Bendigo's northern fringe.

Woodvale resident Gary Davis says the ponds are about 1800 metres in length and nearly 800 metres wide. "We estimate that there's approximately 40 to 50 tonnes of raw arsenic here that's been pumped over the years, and possibly up to 50,000 tonnes of dissolved salts, so it's actually a toxic environment," he said. Mr Davis says they were promised years ago the ponds would be closed.

"Mining has stopped, there is a mining licence on this facility and once mining has stopped that mining licence ceases to exist and therefore the facility should cease to exist," he said. "That was the commitment at the beginning of mining and that's the expectation of the community."

Finding a solution is proving to be a challenge for authorities. Without the pumps the mine water, high in salt and containing arsenic, could eventually rise to the surface and flow straight through the centre of the city down the Bendigo Creek. Central Deborah's Tom Seddon says the pumps should be part of a long term solution. "The idea of Bendigo Bank's new headquarters smelling of rotten eggs and Rosalind Park really smelling of rotten eggs, the visitors centre, the Lake Weeroona, you know it's from an amenity point of view, it's an outcome that nobody would want."

Authorities have been in talks about how to deal with the water, but some fear the problem will end up being dumped on Bendigo ratepayers. The City of Greater Bendigo's chief executive Craig Niemann says dealing with the issue is proving to be difficult. "I think the biggest challenge is about the ownership of the problem for a start, you know, someone taking up the responsibility," he said. "Once we know that then I think it really comes down to what's a cost effective, environmentally friendly and community accepted way to deal with the water." The council will ask the Victorian Government to take over responsibility, but has not ruled out keeping the Woodvale Ponds open.

This is an option not likely to please Woodvale residents like Mr Davis. "Well, let's be realistic. We're a small community and I suppose Bendigo would just dump their toxic waste out here as they always have done," he said. "It is a toxic waste dump, there's no other way of looking at it, with the quantity of arsenic that's here and the quantity of salt that's here, and the community want it closed."

Mr Seddon is hoping that whatever solution is found, it is one that continues to honour Bendigo's mining history. "The idea of Bendigo which was the nineteenth century's biggest gold town in the world not having a gold mine that people could go and look at, that's just unthinkable," he said.

Switzerland's Role In The Gold Mark

« *Switzerland is for gold what Bordeaux is to wine* », Gilles Labarthe, Swiss journalist and ethnologist.



When one thinks of Switzerland, banking comes to mind easily but gold doesn't as much. After all, the relationship between Switzerland and gold is more ancient than the one with paper bank deposits. Certain bankers from Geneva, such as Lombard Odier and Pictet, started in 1800 and have more than 200 years of history. Back then, paper money didn't exist yet and deposits consisted mainly of gold and silver. Today, still, a full two-thirds of the world's gold goes through Switzerland and, in an average year, it refines grossly 70% of the world's gold. Six of the gold refiners on the LBMA Good Delivery list make for 90% of global volume, and four of those are in Switzerland. Up until 1992, the Swiss franc's 40% backing by gold was written in the country's Constitution. When Switzerland became a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) it had to abandon this backing by gold. Today, Swiss citizens have asked for a referendum to be called in order to get back to that backing.

Gold is, along with silver, the oldest money in the world, hence its unbreakable relation with the banking system. Gold is also the most liquid and transportable wealth protection in time and space. In case of war or revolution, it is hard to flee with one's property or other valuable assets as can be done with gold. In 1685, when the Nantes Edict was revoked by Louis XIV, Protestants were definitely denied their religious rights. This led most of the Huguenots to flee to the European Protestant countries, such as Switzerland.

We all know about Switzerland's banking secrecy, but a little less about its origins. One might think that it originates in a text of law, like in other banking centres. But banking secrecy is profoundly buried in the Swiss mentality. One can always revoke a law, but it is very hard to change one's state of mind or tradition. When you ask a question of a Swiss, you have to follow up with ten more questions in order to get a complete response. He will answer bit by bit. If you ask the same question of an Italian, he will tell you about his whole life. Having lived in Switzerland, this is how I can best describe Switzerland's

banking secrecy. Swiss people are discreet by nature. They don't need laws... laws only reinforce what is *de facto*.

For a long time Switzerland has been building infrastructures to safeguard financial assets such as gold. Its political stability, its neutrality, its defence system based on a militia army, and the Alps, that serve as a natural fortress, make Switzerland the ideal safe vault for gold. In addition, we can add to that ultra-qualified personnel, more dedicated to excellence than to volume.

During the crisis of the London Gold Pool in the '70s, Zurich has even come close to becoming the main gold trading hub, at the expense of London. The Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the central banks' banker, is still based in Basel. Almost all of central banks' gold trades are effected by the BIS in the utmost discretion. The headquarters of the World Gold Council was in Zurich, before moving to London recently. Geneva, where the most important jewellery auctions take place, has also been the global centre for jewellery and watchmaking for many years

The Swiss have a reputation for excellence in gold refining. That has let Switzerland become the hub of gold refining, with nearly 70% of the world's gold transiting through the country. Mining companies and gold recyclers export to Switzerland, where the gold is purified to the highest levels (.9999 or even .99999). It is then exported to the whole world to jewelers, investors or central banks.

The best precious metals storage and safekeeping companies are also based in Switzerland.

Other countries are trying to compete with Switzerland, but they still have a long way to go, especially since Switzerland is not sleeping on its laurels. Two of those countries are City-States like Dubai and Singapore. Singapore is a stable haven in Asia, as is Dubai in the Middle East, but they haven't reached Switzerland's level yet. Dubai is trying to develop an expertise in refining and trading gold, whereas Singapore, already with an excellent infrastructure for wealth management, is developing its capacity for gold storage and, also, a gold trading market for Asia.

We live in uncertain times, and no one is safe from unforeseen events. In the actual context, it seems to me that Switzerland is the best place to store gold. However good the infrastructures may be, one must never lose sight of the financial health of the country in which one wants to store gold. A fiscal or financial paradise that has gone into debt loses its independence and will not hesitate to use legal means to confiscate assets and, thus, gold, that are on its territory, as we've seen with Cyprus recently. The United States and the European Union have already adjusted their legislation for possible confiscation. Even Switzerland was taking the wrong road with its public finances in the '90s but, thanks to direct democracy, a positive radical change has taken place. This is a positive element for Switzerland, even though I remain vigilant. The only caveat I have is that the large Swiss banks, because of high exposure to derivatives and being very present in the United States, have lost a little of their financial stability and, consequently, a little of their independence.

« *It is said that the Swiss only love money... this is not true. They also love gold.* » Anonymous

Article edited and submitted by Frank Wallis



Forty surprising uses for WD-40

Written by Paul Rees

Before you read to the end, do you know what the main ingredient of WD-40 is?



I had a neighbour who had bought a new van. I got up very early one Sunday morning and saw that some vandal had spray painted red all around the sides of this

white van. I went over and told him the bad news. He was very upset and was trying to work out what to do, probably nothing until Monday morning, since nothing was open. Another neighbour came out and told him to get some WD-40 and clean it off. It removed the unwanted paint beautifully and did not harm the paint that was on the van.

I'm impressed! WD-40 - how did someone work out it would do that?

'Water Displacement No.40' The product began from a search for rust preventative solvent and degreaser to protect missile parts. WD-40 was created in 1953 by three technicians at the San Diego Rocket Chemical Company. Its name comes from the project that was to find a 'water displacement' compound. They were successful with the fortieth formulation, thus WD-40. The Convair Company bought it in bulk to protect their Atlas missile parts.

Ken East (one of the original founders) says there is nothing in WD-40 that would hurt you. It's the first thing that has ever cleaned that spotty shower screen, if yours is plastic. It works just as well as on glass. Then try it on your cooker top?..Kazamm! It's now shinier than it's ever been. It's a miracle; you'll be amazed.

The basic ingredient is FISH OIL.

WD40

1. Protects silver from tarnishing.
2. Removes road tar and grime from cars.
3. Cleans and lubricates guitar strings.
4. Gives floors that 'just-waxed' sheen without making them slippery.
5. Keep flies off cows.
6. Restores and cleans blackboards.
7. Removes lipstick stains.
8. Loosens stubborn zips.
9. Untangles jewellery chains.
10. Removes stains from stainless steel sinks.
11. Removes dirt and grime from the barbecue grill.
12. Keeps ceramic/terra cotta garden pots from oxidising.
13. Removes tomato stains from clothing.
14. Keeps glass shower screens free of water spots.
15. Camouflages scratches in ceramic and marble floors.

16. Keeps scissors working smoothly.
17. Lubricates noisy door hinges on vehicles and doors in homes.
18. It removes black scuff-marks from the kitchen floor!.
19. Dead insects will eat away the finish on your car if not removed quickly! Use WD-40!
20. Gives a children's playground gym slide a shine for a super-fast slide.
21. WD-40 is great for removing crayon from walls. Spray on the mark and wipe with a clean rag.
22. Removing of lipstick from clothes.
23. Lubricates tracks in sticking home windows and makes them easier to open.
24. Spraying an umbrella stem makes it easier to open and close.
25. Restores and cleans padded leather dashboards in vehicles, as well as vinyl bumpers.
26. Restores and cleans roof racks on vehicles.
27. Lubricates and stops squeaks in electric fans.
28. Lubricates wheel sprockets on tricycles, wagons, and bicycles for easy handling.
29. Lubricates fan belts on washers and dryers and keeps them running smoothly.
30. Keeps rust from forming on saws and saw blades, and other tools.
31. Removes splattered grease on stove.
32. Keeps bathroom mirror from fogging.
33. Lubricates prosthetic limbs.
34. Keeps pigeons off the balcony (they hate the smell).
35. Removes all traces of duct tape.
36. Folks even spray it on their arms, hands, and knees to relieve arthritis pain.
37. WD-40 attracts fish. Spray a little on live bait or lures.
38. Use it for gnat bites. It takes the sting away immediately and stops the itch.
39. Removes chewing gum from anything.
40. Spray your garden pots around the sides it stops slugs/snails eating your plants.

For a full list, click on the WD-40 link

http://www.wd40.com/files/pdf/wd-40_2042538679.pdf

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July Outing: Harvest Home

This map is available to Members only.

August Outing: Homebush

This map is available to Members only.

THIS IS A BUSH CAMP. BYO water, power and toilet, strictly observe park and fire regulations. Dogs must be on leash and under constant supervision.
No unattended fires.
FILL IN ALL HOLES, take your rubbish home and carry a valid MINERS RIGHT at all times.

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No unattended fires.
FILL IN ALL HOLES, take your rubbish home and carry a valid MINERS RIGHT at all times.
Under current Government requirements fossickers should be trained in first aid; they should carry water, a mobile phone, a list of contacts in case of emergency and a basic first aid kit; any incident or injury should be reported to a Committee Member ASAP.

WA Trip Photos

Recently Geoff Lee and Herman went on their annual pilgrimage to the gold Mecca, that is, Western Australia.

Gold was more scarce on this trip, and Herman came home early while Geoff stuck it out for a while longer, till the rains set in and called it quits. Geoff ended up with 13 grams of gold. Here are some of Geoff's photos.



Winter is back with force!



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