

# *FOSSICKIN' ROUND*

THE VICTORIAN SEEKERS CLUB BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 34 issue 2

March/April 2013



**Big Nugget Found!**

**177 oz !**

**Inside This Issue**

Picture: Cordell Kent from  
The Mining Exchange Gold Shop, Ballarat, Victoria

**Goldsborough Camp Report**  
**Chute Camp Report**  
**CSIRO uses Termites to find Gold**



### The Victorian Seekers Club Inc.

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

<b>Family Membership:</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>
<b>Single Membership:</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>
<b>One off joining fee:</b>	<b>\$ 5.00</b>

**Subscriptions are due and payable by the 1<sup>st</sup> of July each year.**

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

email: [xxx@xxx](mailto:xxx@xxx)

PO Box 15, Mt Waverley, VIC 3149

#### Committee of Management

**PRESIDENT:** Eric GRUMMETT

email: [xxx@xxx](mailto:xxx@xxx)

Club management/ representation, Chairperson of meetings.

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Graeme SILVER

President's deputy, arranging speakers.

**SECRETARY:** Lindsay TRICKER

Correspondence, rules, meetings, admin. matters etc.

**TREASURER:** Warren IBBOTTSON

Budget, finance matters ( other than subscriptions)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Ian SEMMENS

email: [xxx@xxx](mailto:xxx@xxx)

Typing & setting out Newsletter.

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY..** Mieke SMITS (Mrs)

Subscriptions, membership records, changes of addresses, etc.

**RESEARCH OFFICER:** Ted Cox

Information about outings, field activity and site control.

**ASSISTANT RESEARCH OFFICER:** Rob Shannon

## Events Calendar

### March

**Wed 6th:** General Meeting.

**Fri 8th - Tues 12th:** Camp **Wedderburn**

**Sat 9th-Sun 10th:** Wedderburn Detector Jamboree  
Wedderburn

**Sunday 24th:** 19th Annual Australian Gold Panning  
Championships **Blackwood**

**Fri 29th - Tues 2nd April:** Easter Camp **Fryerstown**

### April

**Wed 3rd:** General Meeting.

**Note: No camp in April as the Easter Camp runs into April**

### May

**Wed 1st:** General Meeting.

**Fri 10th - Tues 14th:** Camp **Creswick**

### June

**Wed 5th:** General Meeting.

**Fri 7th - Tues 11th:** Camp **Ararat**

## Almoner's Report *by Virginia Lake*

Get well wishes to Tina W and Chris S who have both had knee replacements. Tina is currently in rehabilitation, coming out this week. All seems to have gone well except she picked up a gastric bug but she remains in good spirits. Chris, on the other hand has had a different experience she spent 5 weeks in hospital due to staph and coli infections. She is slowly recovering and returning to work next week..

Condolences to Noela P who is heartbroken, greatly missing her trusted four legged companion "Minnie" who passed away in November 2012 aged 17 years.

### 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 2013:** Feb 6, Mar 6, Apr 3, May 1, Jun 5, Jul 3, Aug 7, Sep 4, Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4.

**Committee meetings for 2013:** Feb 26, Mar 26, Apr 30, May 28, June 25, July 30, Aug 27, Sept 24, Oct 29, Nov 24.

# President's Report

by Eric Grummett

This last month has sure been a busy time for some of us. Apart from the two outings to Chute and Goldsbrough, we have been giving a lot to support to the PMAV during a very busy period. On Australia Day, 8 of us joined the PMAV in the parade down Swanston St to the Domain Gardens where we set up a PMAV information booth, gold panning tanks with real gold and a large detecting area planted with 6kg of old coins. We were literally swamped with kids all day who wanted to strike it rich. We had 400 reward certificates for their finds which ran out by 3 o'clock. By 5pm we were stuffed. Maybe next year some extra help by other prospectors would be appreciated. A similar number were also involved in the packaging of the PMAV Echo for distribution.

On 20<sup>th</sup> Feb some of us were fortunate in being invited to Parliament House for a special presentation of a replica Welcome Stanger nugget to the Victorian Government from the PMAV in recognition of gold being made the States mineral emblem last year, which will be displayed in the hallway. Many MPs were there, including the Premier Ted Baillieu, and Peter Ryan who praised the good work of the PMAV and promised support for our cause. After speeches from President Rita Bentley, Andrew Bales (Vice President) and Dean Smith (the nugget maker -who described to those present the history of its discovery in 1869), Ted Baillieu recognised the occasion with some encouraging words. After the presentations, we enjoyed a banquet morning tea while mingling with MP's and other special guests Kevin Hiller (finder of the Hand of Faith), Doug Stone, Ian Aitken, Mark Hyde, Geoff Strang and PMAV branch executives.

Another great effort this month was the writing of submissions in support of the PMAV's request for access into many of the States National Parks. Our club members responded well with many letters being sent in to VEAC (Victorian Environment Assessment Council) for their consideration. I sent one on behalf of the Seekers Club. Thanks to those who made the effort.

While at our Goldsbrough camp we learned of the sudden death of the Vice President of the VMDPA (Dandenong Prospecting Cub), Geoff Varcoe while they were at camp at Creswick. The VSC pass on our condolences to his wife Marion and family, and to his club on this sudden sadness. Many in our club knew him. Tina Whelan has finally had her knee replacement done and is recovering well, but it means we won't see her smile around for a few weeks. Noela is devastated about the loss of her old dog companion Minnie, who after 17 years finally let go of her lead. She is buried at Noela's back door where she laid, among several others who passed away in years gone by.

I have to go now to pack for a panning trip up to Woods Point for the weekend, life can be a drudgery at times.



# General Meetings

by Graeme Silver

## February

John Morris who sells Fisher Metal Detectors gave a very good presentation about prospecting in general and the history of the founding of the PMAV by approximately 8 prospectors. I'm certain everyone enjoyed his presentation and those who won the raffle will be enjoying the spoils of the evening.

These items were kindly donated by John to be raffled off --- Thanks go to John Morris.

## March

Ken James is our guest speaker for this month's General Meeting. His presentation will be around the Chinese Miners and Market Gardeners at Myall and Myrtle Creek, in Central Victoria. He is a published author with over 20 publications to his credit.

## April

John Chahinian from Hye Trading who repacks Lithium Batteries will be talking about Rechargeable Batteries & Solar Panels will be our Guest Speaker for this Night.

## May

A DVD will be shown on this Night about the Morris Reef which is a story of an incredible find in the Goldfields of Victoria. This is a 2 part DVD and will be shown over 2 General Meetings because each DVD goes for approximately 1 hour.

## June

Part 2 of this DVD about the Morris Reef DVD will be shown on this night.



John Morris talking about the early days of detecting



# General Meetings

## Feb. Find of the Month

Dave N.  
33g nugget



## From the Photo Album



A lovely 3 oz. nugget found by Alex E. several years ago.

# News



Welcome Stranger presentation at Parliament House with (left to right) Eric Grummett, Peter Ryan (Deputy Premier), Francine Gilbert and Peter Maffey



The Welcome Stranger nugget and plaque that was presented to the Victorian Parliament.

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## Australia Day March



The march down Swanston Street by the prospectors.



Eric, François and Lindsay suitably kitted out.

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## Chute

by Geoff Lee

We had a few hot days in Melbourne before the Chute weekend and I was hopeful the hot spell would be out of the way for Chute; and I was not disappointed. I got to camp on the Wednesday and only Thursday could be described as 'warm' - only 32°C. The rest of the week was under 30°C with cool evenings. Overall it was nice detecting weather. There were a few March Flies that put me off but they weren't too bad.

We had about 15 campers and quite a few day-trippers. About half-dozen members camped out of their cars. HermanS turned up with his new truck - a work in progress that was the focus of great interest and free advice. One day-tripping couple went home with a 4.8gm nugget - nice!

New prospector, guest John R, was being shown how to detect the 'right' way by Les P: Low and slow, check all round the mullock heaps, and under hard to get places, etc; and "Oh yeah, this is what it should sound like". Well you can guess the rest - it was a nice little nugget! Pays to follow that advice.

Overall, gold was a bit patchy. Some did well and others not. A number of members scored around the 10 gram mark, including some 'leaf gold'. A few nuggets around 5gram were found. Unfortunately, both Rob S and Peter S scored side-wall punctures. Overall it was a good Australia Day Camp.



Sitting around during Happy Hour.



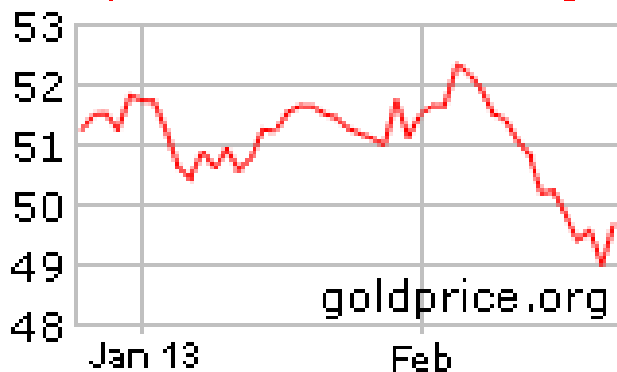
**Remember:**  
 to be considerate of others  
 when using a generator.

Consider charging  
 batteries with a solar panel  
 Instead of a generator.

# Gold Price Report

By Ian Semmens

## 60 Day Gold Price in AUD/g



Price as at 26/02/2013



### 19th Annual Australian Gold Panning Championships

Sunday March 24th 2013  
Blackwood Cricket Ground  
Blackwood - Victoria

For more information contact :  
Victorian Goldpanning  
Association Inc.

C/O Marcus Binks on  
Mobile 0418 474 427  
Email: [marcus.binks@bigpond.com](mailto:marcus.binks@bigpond.com)

# Feburary Camp Report

## Goldsborough

by Virginia Lake

Photos by Eric G. & Geoff L.

Bob and I arrived at the Goldsborough camp Thursday morning to find Eric and Geoff already set up, having both arrived the previous day, and already out prospecting. However, we did not feel lonely as there were some independent prospectors in the area who were only too pleased to have a chat, perhaps we may see Aaron at a club meeting as he showed interest in coming along to see what our club is all about.

By mid-morning the sun was quite piercing so once we set up camp, on Snobs Hill, we relaxed for the rest of the day. You can imagine our surprise when we emerged from the van in the afternoon to find quite a few camps set up. In all we had 30 members and 10 visitors attend the camp. Rob S's parents were amongst the visitors, staying Saturday night returning home Sunday morning. Rob had a hard time convincing us Christine was his mother, not his sister. We can see where he gets his good looks from. Thanks, Lindsay, for taking a group of new members under your wing and showing them "how it is done". I am sure it made their day.

Although the days were hot the nights were cool which enabled sleep, refreshing you for the next day. On Thursday and Friday nights we were treated to a lightning show accompanied by rain. Fortunately we were nowhere near any of the fires currently raging throughout the state.

A reasonable amount of gold was found, with one member finding a nugget weighing approximately 19g, another member a nice specimen also approximately 19g. Lindsay tried out his new Nugget Finder "Sadie" 8x6 elliptical coil which proved successful. He found 14 nuggets, the size of mustard seeds weighing 1.3g. Hoorah for Peter G who found his first nugget!



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Another great nugget found by Marius.  
This time it is a 19.4 grammer.



The old school



Testing coils at the camp.



The old Explosives Magazine



A desirable area of the camp??



It actually did rain, something that they had not seen in the area for a while.



## Another Big Nugget Found in the Golden Triangle

From the Ballarat Courier Jan. 17, 2013.  
By Pat Nolan



*Gold Mining Exchange owner Cordell Kent with the nugget found. PICTURE: KATE HEALY*

A MASSIVE gold nugget that could be worth upwards of half a million dollars has been unearthed in Ballarat. The nugget, weighing in at **5.5 kilograms (177 ounces)**, was discovered by a local prospector yesterday, who rushed it to the Ballarat Mining Exchange Gold Shop.

The exact location and the identity of the lucky prospector remain secret, but gold shop owner Cordell Kent said the nugget was found within 30 kilometres of the Ballarat CBD. It was found about 60 centimetres below the surface of the earth, with the prospector using a state-of-the-art detector worth upwards of \$6000 - a Minelab GPX-5000.

If sold at market value it would be worth just shy of \$300,000, but its extreme rarity would mean it be worth far more, according to Mr Kent. "If you are silly enough to melt it down, it would be worth just under \$300,000 on market value but as a nugget at this size and shape, it's worth significantly more than that," he said. "I can't remember a nugget this big ever being found locally."

Mr Kent said the prospector had found small pieces of gold before, none of which had been worth more than \$1000. "Up until yesterday the smallest nugget he had found was a small one, about a quarter of an ounce," he said.

"A finding like this gives people hope. It's my dream to find something like that, and I've been prospecting for more than two decades. "We're so far into a gold rush and we have years and years and years of hope ahead of us. It's unbelievable."

It is expected the nugget will be sold to a collector or possibly a museum. Mr Kent said he hoped to sell it within Australia and given its size, there would need to be special permission granted for it to be exported overseas. He also predicted there would be a fresh gold rush hit the Ballarat region.

"I've got no doubt there will be a lot of people who will be very enthusiastic about the goldfields again, it gives people hope," said Mr Kent. "There's nothing like digging up money, it's good fun."

The last reported gold nugget found in the Ballarat region was in July last year. The nugget, named Destiny, weighed 3.66kg and was discovered in the Golden Triangle region of Ballarat, Bendigo and Stawell.





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## CSIRO using ants and termites to uncover gold

10 December, 2012 [Cole Latimer](#)

From <http://www.miningaustralia.com.au>



New research from the CSIRO has uncovered the role ants and termites will play in discovering new gold deposits.

Research in science journals *PLoS ONE* and *Geochemistry: Exploration, Environment, Analysis* has found at test sites in the WA Goldfields that termite mounds contained high concentrations of gold, indicating larger deposits underneath.

"We're using insects to help find new gold and other mineral deposits. These resources are becoming increasingly hard to find because much of the Australian landscape is covered by a layer of eroded material that masks what's going on deeper underground," Aaron Stewart, a CSIRO entomologist, said.

He explained that "the insects bring up small particles that contain gold from the deposit's fingerprint, or halo, and effectively stockpile it in their mounds.

"Our recent research has shown that small ant and termite mounds that may not look like much on the surface, are just as valuable in finding gold as the large African mounds are that stand several metres tall."

The CSIRO added that insects can provide a new, cost effective way to explore for undiscovered mineral deposits.

Insects have also long been used for prospecting, particularly for gold and nickel.

In Africa, ancient African civilisations used termites and their enormous mounds as a starting place for prospecting and uncovering deposits.

As termites continually search for water they can often dig down to depths of more than 70 metres and distances of hundreds of metres.

"Termites are nature's little drillers," researcher and University of Adelaide geoscientist Anna Petts explained at the Geological Society of Australia's Earth Science Showcase.

"Termites conveniently bring subterranean soil samples to ground level to construct or fix their mounds.

"So by simply taking a sample of a termite mound, geologists can gain a good idea as to what minerals and metals can be found in the ground beneath it - making it a much cheaper way to undertake preliminary soil testing for minerals exploration," she said.

"More intensive testing can then be undertaken if a site looks promising."

This method was used to find the Vila Manica copper deposit in Mozambique in 1973, while the massive Jwaneng diamond mine was also reportedly found by termite mound sampling.

A DeBeers geologist is believed to have found a piece of ilmenite - a classic diamond indicator - in a termite mound, which led to further exploration and the discovery of Jwaneng.

The CSIRO's Dr. Ravinder Anand explained that "we can often dissect [the mound's] material and we can send it to the lab for processing and it can provide the clues for mineral deposits that are hidden under sediment".

It has already worked with entomologists to study how this process can be used, Anand adding that it has also studied the termites themselves, to see the concentration of metals in the insects.

Stewart stated that "We've found that metals accumulate in excretory systems of termites," he said.

"Although the insects don't concentrate metals in their bodies, they actively rid their bodies of excess metals. This process shows up as little stones, much like kidney stones in people. This finding is important because these excretions are a driving force in the redistribution of metals in the surface layer of earth."

Tanami Gold also looked to termite mounds to provide geological information for their projects.

"It really has been a case of assessing whether termites in Australia work in the same way [as in Africa] - that is where our research has come into play and it has proved to be the case."

Geozoology and geobotany - testing metal concentrations in plants, have been used in mining for centuries.



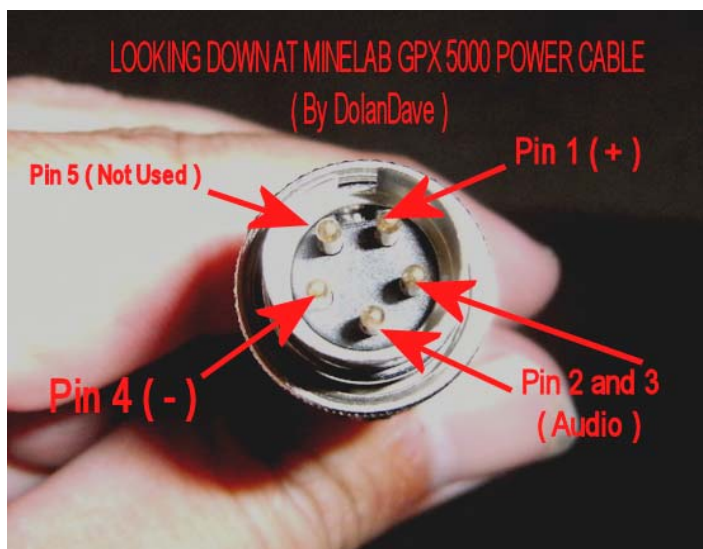
## Recent Finds



A 76 gram Nugget found by Geoff S. at Rushworth recently.

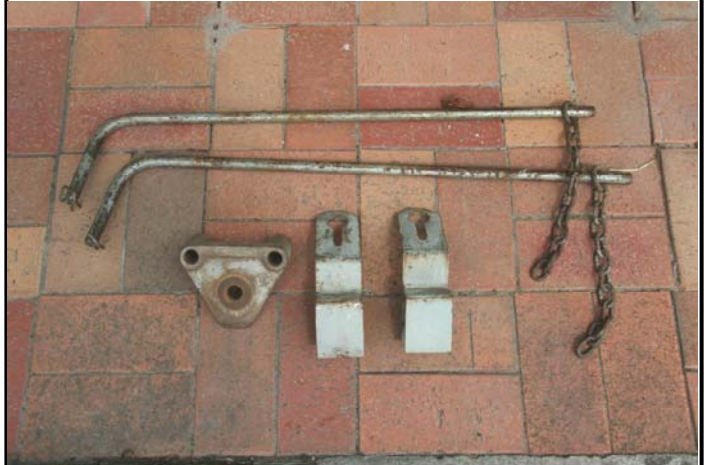
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## March Outing: Wedderburn

Friday 8th to Tues. 12th March

## March Outing: Fryerstown

Friday 29th March -Tuesday 2nd April

Fryerstown

Wedderburn

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**No unattended fires.**

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