

The Victorian
Seekers Club

JULY/AUG
2023

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Talbot

Tarnagulla

FOSSICKIN' ROUND

VOL. 44 ISSUE 4

The Victorian Seekers Club bi-monthly newsletter



Talbot market



Great find by one of our members



Panning at tarnagulla



Tarnagulla camp

Your Committee of Management 2022-2023

POSITION	DUTIES	NAME	CONTACT vicseekersclub@gmail.com
President:	Club management and representation, Chairperson	Steve Hillman	
Vice President:	President's deputy, arrange speakers.	Paul Hart	
Research Officer:	Information about outings, field activity.	Eric Grummett	
Secretary:	Correspondence, meetings, camp permits and other administration	Michael Davies	
Treasurer:	Financial reporting, paying and receiving money, banking	Kevin Hubbard	
Membership Secretary:	Membership enquiries, subscriptions, membership records	Pam Griffin	
Newsletter Editor:	Newsletter compilation and distribution	Gary Harvey	
IT & Social Media Officers:	Website administration & Facebook	Anja M Rob Shannon	
Catering Supervisor:	Supper at General Meetings, special occasion camp catering	Steve Iorlano	
Social Secretary:	Organising social functions, raffles, theatre bookings etc	Tina Whelan	
Almoner:	Contact on matters of personal nature: weddings, bereavement etc	Susan Moore	
Library Officer:	Managing library at General Meetings	Sam Shvemer	
Clothing Officer:	Managing club clothing display at General Meetings and at camp outings	Susan Moore	
Field Officers:	Assist new members at outings, manage campfires, camp signage and any other campsite set-up/clean up duties	Bob Lake Tony Pappas Ivan Albrecht Alistair M	



**The Victorian
Seekers Club
Inc. (Reg. No.
A0001477T)**

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<https://www.facebook.com/Victorian-Seekers-Prospecting-Club-1985818041670592/>

The purposes of the Club are to:

- Promote the skill of prospecting using metal detectors and other suitable equipment in the search for gold, other precious metals, minerals, gemstones, coins, artifacts and relics.
- Encourage and foster friendship and co-operation amongst people interested in the above pursuits.
- Collaborate with other similar clubs and organizations.
- Hold meetings, lectures, demonstrations, field outings and competitions for the furtherance of members' prospecting skills and experience.
- Engage in fund raising activities for the bona fide purposes of the Club.
- Encourage all members to act in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, and in accordance with the Law.

Our prospecting activities are governed by a code of conduct as laid out in the Club Rules including respecting owners of private property and respecting the natural environment, hence our motto: "SEEK BUT DON'T DESTROY"

CLUB CALENDAR

VSC General Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month (except January) at 7.30pm for 8pm start.

***Mulgrave Community Centre, 355 Wellington Road, Mulgrave. All welcome. (SUBJECT TO CURRENT COVID19)**



Gold price as at 23/6/2023



Support the group that is protecting your rights to enjoy the bush - The BUGU - and buy a car sticker from Eric for only \$2. Also attend the protest rallies that show other that we care about access to the bush.

Get them from Eric Grummett.



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

JULY 2023

- General meeting- 5th July
- Moliagul 6th -11th July

AUGUST 2023

- General meeting- 2nd August
- Ararat 10th -15th Aug

SEPTEMBER 2023

- General meeting 6th September
- Heathcote 6th-12th September

OCTOBER 2023

- General meeting 4th October
- Tarnagulla 4th-10th October

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President's Report

By Steve Hillman



Hello fellow Seekers!

Well another two months have passed already since our last newsletter. Time flies.

The Talbot camp was a success. Rob Shannon leading the charge with his nice gold finds. The damper theme has continued with Louise McGough making a fine specimen which I believe was enjoyed immensely.

As you read this the Mountain Hut camp had been cancelled and venue changed to one of my favourite spots - Tarnagulla. The site of "Marj's Patch". I trust that in spite of the wet ground a good time was had by all who attended and that some nice gold was found.

Some of you will have headed up to Ti-booburra to try your luck at chasing the small gold up there and I hope you did well.

We also have some recent new members in our club. Welcome to you all and I look forward to meeting you all in the coming months.

One issue I would like to raise is about security of members. On three occasions now, my personal contact information has been given out to "strangers". This included a member just handing out my phone number to a stranger and on other occasions, contact details from the front inside cover of our "in house" copy of the club newsletter which shows all

committee members, their email addresses and contact phone numbers. You will note that our club website has this information removed from the newsletter as well as details/maps of the club campsites. So in future, please can I ask that if someone wants to contact a committee member (or any member for that matter), it is best if you get that person's details and pass them on to the person they wish to contact. Then they can decide if/how they make contact. Many thanks.

Some members have travelled to WA to steal some of their gold. At this stage from all reports, the gold has been a bit scarce but I trust things will improve for all. If nothing else, enjoy the warmer and sunnier weather. It's gotta be better than being in Melbourne right now!

We have quite a few of our members travelling interstate over the next few months. To everyone travelling at the moment I wish you safe and happy travels and look forward to seeing everyone again upon their return.

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A friendly reminder that membership fees will be due in July. I believe the club will be sending out an invoice this year as a reminder. Most likely to your nominated email address. Payment of fees is due promptly so please pay ASAP to avoid Pam and Kevin having to chase everyone up.

September will be our club AGM. Paul will be standing down as VP so we will need to fill that position. Please consider putting your name forward for that or any other committee position. As the saying goes, "you get out what you put in" and it is actually quite rewarding to be a part of it.

There is a lot that goes on behind the scenes to keep the club running and without our committee this won't happen. On that note I would like to thank all of our committee members for the work they have all put in during the last year. I know I speak for all members when I say a big thank you to you.

Until next time,

Regards,

Your President, Steve Hillman

Dear members,

As the 2022-23 financial year draws to a close the new 2023-24 year begins.

With this come the need to renew your membership of the Victorian Seekers Club.

Memberships are due and payable from the 1st of July each year.

Annual Membership Fees

Family Membership \$65.00

Single Membership \$40.00

One off joining fee \$10.00 single
\$20.00 family

Newsletter paper copy \$20.00

Members will receive advice of membership renewal being due, to their email or postal address.

Direct deposits can be made to A/c
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The Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria is a voluntary body established to protect and enhance the rights and opportunities of those who wish to prospect, fossick or mine in the State of Victoria,

Vice Presidents Report

By Paul H



Hi All,

Lots of the committee are travelling through the Winter and this will be my last report before heading to Tibooburra and into Queensland for a month. As a celebration of Tracey's 60 th and our 40 th wedding anniversary we are then off to Europe for about 6 weeks.

Our son will be home and we also have good neighbours to keep an eye on the place.

Eric, Michael and Kevin will be holding the fort until Steve and other committee members start coming back. It is worth mentioning that we do have quite a few new and prospective members so we ask that our experienced members do keep an eye on them and help them stay safe on camps.

Getting guest speakers for our General Meetings is quite a challenge however we do have quite a few talented members who are willing to help out. In coming months Anna will do a presentation on Jewellery making and Eric just did a talk about his extensive Artifact collection. We also hope to get a trip report or two from those that went to WA and elsewhere looking for the yellow stuff. Gary from the Waverly Lapidary club and the guys from Miners Den are also expected to make a presentation in coming months.

If you put 100 black ants and 100 red ants in a jar, nothing will happen, but if you shake the jar hard, the ants will start killing each other.

The red ants will consider the black ants their enemies, and the black ants will consider the red ants their enemy.

The real enemy is the one who shakes the jar.

The same thing happens in real human society.

So before we attack each other, we should think about who is shaking the jar.

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Talbot Camp report

By Paul H

The Talbot camp was held in the middle of May and some keen members arrived a little early and all up we had about 30 attendees. This included half a dozen visiting prospective members - Rob and Kathryn (who were at the Easter camp), Graham M (ex member), Colin L and a day visitor Grant (both ex Dandenong club), Henry Q and Tye S & son Corey.

The camp site was typical of most of our sites with quite a few trees and some tight parking spots. Unfortunately, one of our members when setting up had a little reversing incident with their stone guard coming into contact with the tail lights on the 4WD. A number of us have had this experience or worse, but for all members, don't hesitate to call on a fellow member to help out with parking in tight spots.

Despite the forecast of inclement weather, conditions were cool but manageable with a little bit of rain. Cloudy conditions meant that some generators were being used to keep batteries topped up. I have never had an issue keeping my two batteries topped up with solar and foolishly did not bring my spare solar blanket or generator. This meant I went home a day early to avoid damaging my batteries which had a very low charge.

Due to the cool conditions, we had an excuse for a reasonable sized fire and thanks to Karen for clearing the fire space and Eric, Kevin, Mal, Colin and others for keeping the firewood coming. Due to a little prompting from Rob, Louise produced a couple of dampers which went down quite

well with a good dose of their honey and butter.



Unfortunately, later in the weekend Louise, who was clearly worn out from all the extra cooking managed to lose the keys to the car and caravan. Eric and others reportedly spent hours on hands and knees looking for the lost keys and gave up a lot of valuable detecting time. Eric being the gentleman he is followed up with Louise and Brian after the camp to see if they found the lost keys. "Oh yes" said Louise, "they were in my handbag". One can only imagine the size and contents of that handbag....

As usual we had a raffle on the Friday night and before we started the draw, I began proceeding with an update for the members who don't get to our general meetings. Myself and other members covered the following—visitor welcome

Anna - WA travelling member update

Jim - Peter M update

Safety - Paul & Bob both have defibrillators. Club one with Eric.

Tibooburra - about 10 going from 18 June

Eric - next few camps

Find of the month - Peter G and May potential FOM Lachie's 21 g

Talbot Camp report cont....

By Paul H

Francine and Francois were staying at a motel in Avoca and wanted to return before the raffle was drawn. Before she left Francine let us know her preference for the wine should she win (like we needed to be told). As luck would have it, she was one of the first tickets out and Eric grabbed the wine for her. Due the generosity of members the prizes were spread around the other members.

As usual there is talk around the fire and a member advised that he had a contact who said that Minelab are re-releasing a GPZ 8000. Apparently, it is lighter, has discrimination ??, cost



around \$12500 ?? and to be re-released very soon ????. Post camp I had a look on Google and could not find much to verify this but still interesting to think about.

Finally, to the topic of gold. We had a visitor drop into camp and he told me that he and a couple of VSC members had found in excess of 5 oz in and around our camp site just after the covid restrictions ended. To back this up Rob found 15 pieces for 15 g about 400 m from camp. Peter G, Graham M, myself and a couple of others found a few more nuggets.

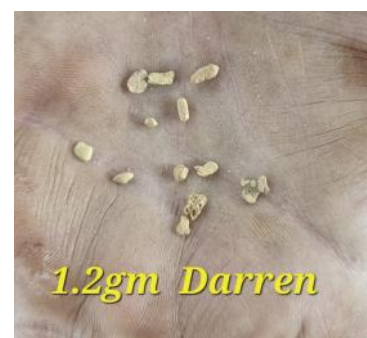
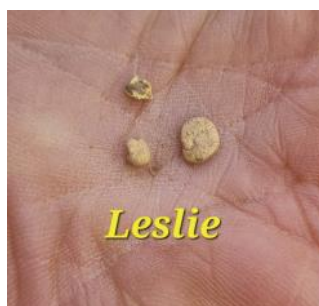
Unusually for Eric he did not find any nuggets but was very happy to pick up a book by well-known Australian explorer Len Beadell. Eric paid \$3.50 at the Talbot market and later found

it was signed by the author so it is likely to be worth much more than my two tiny bits of gold.

The author advises that for your entertainment I may have stretched the truth occasionally.

regards

Paul



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An amateur Prospector unearthed a rock containing \$240,000 worth of gold. (Image credit: Lucky Strike Gold via Facebook)

Absolutely gobsmacking' gold nugget worth \$240,000 unearthed! An amateur Prospector unearthed a rock containing \$240,000 worth of gold. (Image credit: Lucky Strike Gold via Facebook) An amateur gold digger made the discovery of a lifetime when he unearthed a giant gold nugget buried in a field in Victoria, Australia. The man, who asked to remain anonymous, was using a Equinox 800 metal detector when he hit pay dirt while exploring an area of the state known as the "Golden Triangle," which, during the 1800s, was the epicentre of Australia's gold rush. He brought his find to be appraised at Lucky Strike Gold a gold prospecting shop in the nearby town of Geelong. "Our jaws hit the floor when we first saw it," Darren Camp, the owner of Lucky Strike Gold, wrote on the business's Facebook page on March 27. He described the piece as an "absolutely gobsmacking nugget." "He brought the gold nugget specimen into me to ask if I thought there was \$10,000 worth of gold in it," Camp told Live Science in an email. "I said, 'Try \$100,000' as it was so heavy; I knew

immediately that it would be worth around that. And then the guy said, 'That's only half of it. I have the other half at home.' I said, 'what do you mean,' and he replied that he had broken the rock open expecting there to be a solid gold nugget inside." The rock was very dirty so the spotter, who does not want to be named, could not see the gold on the outside of it, and he cracked it into two because he thought there would be a gold nugget inside. Once it was cleaned up, "you could see the gold just come oozing out of the rock everywhere," he said. Weighing more than 4.6 kilograms, the rock contained a whopping 2.6 kg of gold valued at \$240,000 AUD. While it's not uncommon to come across gold in this part of Australia, Camp said that in his 40 years of prospecting, "this is the largest ... that I've ever seen.

Tarnagulla Camp report

By Brent & Debbie

After a change of venue due to accessibility and weather we ended up at the Tarnagulla recreation reserve. Seven caravan attended. New members Catherine and Robert found their first piece of gold on the Saturday. Eric and Sue had a great time in a puddle on the track panning and with some success!! A family who were camping near us had their gold pans ready when they came across Sue and Eric. Eric was happy to show the children how panning is done to the children's delight they also found some coloured stuff.

Louise and Debbie kept the home fires burning and supplied the camp with camp oven damper and scones for two night's happy hour. All was eaten and well received. The weather was perfect for detecting and only a little rain during the nights. Cloudy days so the solar panels struggled but with everyone except Eric with generators it wasn't a problem. Eric felt a little left out as he wasn't making any noise!!

Even though not much of the gold stuff was found it was a great camp with laughs and stories to hear.

Until next camp happy reading



By Sue & Les K

After an intensive apprenticeship by Eric, Sue is now a gold panner, and so are the bunch of kids who arrived during the lessons, and are now excited to take up prospecting after getting the hang of panning.





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Thanks to Nenad from Phase Technical for this informative Article on the GPX 6000



Minelab GPX6000 Gold Detector Q&A with Nenad

The GPX6000 has been out for some time now and has been finding lots of gold out there for many users. I was very privileged to be one of the field testers for Minelab during the development phase, which is part of the reason why I waited so long to finalise this article – I just needed to clear out the memory bank and focus on my findings and experience with the production model. Also, when I started to write this review, I was getting asked a lot of questions from users and also prospective customers, so I thought that would be a good platform to present, as many others may have the same questions. So, let's get stuck in with a good old fashion Q&A session.

Q: Does a higher sensitivity number on the 6000 mean it will pick up pieces deeper and smaller, or does the lower the number like say 2 or 3 go deeper and on smaller pieces of gold?

A: In the manual adjustment range, higher numbers mean more sensitivity, but also more noise generated from both ground and EMI. Personally, I have always liked my threshold to be on the smoother side, so I usually run it on 2 or 3. There isn't a huge performance difference between minimum and maximum sensitivity, I just prefer a more stable threshold, because if I'm con-

tinually listening to an erratic threshold, my concentration starts to suffer, and I probably begin to ignore certain signals, which isn't good. When the threshold is more stable, I investigate every faint repeatable murmur, which leads to deeper finds. But in saying that, if the detector is running nice and stable, then I will increase my sensitivity.

Q: How well does the "no threshold" mode work? Have you checked faint targets in this mode?

A: I have never been a fan of no threshold anything, except on a coin detector. But I know some people hate the hum, so Minelab were wise to put in that option. It works just fine, but you lose out on the deeper signals. Where you are getting that barely audible but repeatable "something" in the threshold; switch to no threshold mode, and 95% of the time you'd keep walking. If you want maximum performance, then my recommendations are manual sensitivity, or Auto+ with threshold on.

Q: How good is the GPX 6000 as a patch hunting detector?

A: On very small gold, the 6000 produces a very clear signal. You can also sweep the 6000 a little faster than both the GPZ and SDC before it loses sensitivity. Those two facts alone make it a very good patch hunter in my book. If you wanted to cover a lot of ground per sweep, you could use an earlier GPX with a 17" elliptical coil or larger, and then use the 6000 as the patch cleaner. The 6000's own 17x13" accessory coil is excellent for more coverage and still retains excellent sensitivity, just being a bigger coil is does generate more ground response, particularly over mineralised clays and high salt content soils.

Q: Does the GPX 6000 have a software update facility? I can't see any ports.

A: Yes, the gpx6000 does have a software update capability should the need arise. There is a single screw holding the speaker grill in place; it is clipped in at the top. Remove the screw, and the speaker panel can be removed, where you will see a small rubber grommet. Under this is the USB port.

Q: Nenad, have you compared the 6000 to the GPZ?

A: Yes, not extensive tests on hundreds of different nuggets (I'd much rather just go prospecting), but have done enough to know where each unit's strengths are. There's no doubt in my mind, on sub gram gold, the 6000 is very very good. If you add a little texture and unusual shape to the gold, then the advantage of the 6000 is more noticeable. But when it comes to larger targets the comparison between the two gets a little more complicated and depends not only on target size, but also target orientation and depth, mineralisation, and settings (mainly on the GPZ).



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I found a rough textured 5.4g nugget with the GPZ and 12" Z-search coil, and later did a quick test with the 6000 and there was hardly any difference between the two machines, the 6000 maybe giving a slightly more defined signal response, quite likely due to the monoloop coil. However, when testing on a more solid 5 grammer, the 7000 showed its true colours, particularly in General. One thing that clearly does stand out though is the GPZ in Normal Ground Type setting gives a greater boost in depth compared to the 6000 in Normal. And Zed starts to win more as target sizes increase. So, the bigger the gold, and the milder the soils, the greater the advantage of the GPZ. But bear in mind this is all in comparison to the GPX 11" coil.

In simple terms, on most targets under a gram the 6000 will do as good if not slightly better than the GPZ, particularly when the GPZ needs to be used in Difficult Ground Mode.

Q: Can you use the SteelPhase sP01 Audio Enhancer on the 6000?

A: You sure can. You'll just need to change the sP01 audio cable to a 3.5mm socket on one end and that will plug straight into the 6000's headphone socket. Or the more reliable option is to remain with the 1/4" (6.35mm) plugs as supplied with the sP01, and you can purchase the Equinox Audio Adaptor cable, which is also compatible with the 6000. That'll convert to a 1/4" female socket.

The SteelPhase enhancer gives the 6000's audio a little more clarity, and provides greater control over the volume/threshold level, as the threshold level is tied into the volume control on the 6000.

Q: Why would I choose the 6000 over the 5000 when the 5000 has many more features?

A: As good as the 5000 is, it has been around for a long time, and the gold that it could find has mostly been mopped up. Yes, with a good prospector and a good selection of aftermarket coils it can still find gold, but if it's mainly for working known areas, then you must consider the hundreds of detectors that have swept the ground previously. The 6000 is using new technology, which means finding gold that other machines will struggle on. The 6000 is also very light and well balanced and comes with wireless headphones, and collapses down to a very small size.

Q: How does the performance of the 6000 Compare to other top end Minelab machines?

The GPX6000 is kind of the missing link between the SDC2300 and GPZ7000 but lighter than both of them. Its depth can exceed the SDC and GPX5000 and can also give the GPZ a run for its money on targets under a gram. On prickly/reefy type gold the 6000 is far superior to the 5000. One time during field testing I found 5 nuggets in a small patch. When testing those pieces, the 5000 wouldn't even respond. I could only just get a response when virtually rubbing them on the surface of a 12x8" Evolution coil, but these were pieces that I found at several inches with the 6000.

Both the 5000 and 4500 can go deeper than the 6000 on larger chunky gold (using bigger coils and suitable timings), but how much of that type of gold is still left behind? In any given year I can probably count on one hand how many solid nuggety bits I find, the rest is all

weird, odd ball shapes, flat thin pieces, or often iron encrusted specimens – all of which the 6000 detects very well!

Q: Does activating the threshold in Auto1 impact the sensitivity or any other setting as the wife and I are threshold detectorists from way back?

That's a good question. No, having the threshold On or Off in Auto doesn't impact the actual internal Sensitivity, Auto does its thing regardless. But, having the threshold ON gets your ears closer to the action, so in a sense it does make it a little more sensitive to targets.

Q: Okay, no machine is perfect. Are there any negatives to the 6000?

The 6000 is deadly with its 11" mono coil, but being so sensitive and powerful does have a couple of drawbacks. 1. It doesn't quite handle very mineralised soils as good as the SDC2300 does, and it will ping the odd hot rock that both the 2300 and GPZ will ignore. 2. Using a much broader frequency band, it is more prone to EMI, so frequent Noise Cancels may be required on certain days. Luckily the auto noise cancel only takes about 4 seconds.

That said, if you want to quieten things down, this is where the supplied 14" DD comes in. It will handle mineralised soils very well, including high salt content soils, and it also cancels out bad EMI extremely well whilst remaining very sensitive to small targets. Another potential negative is that the Audio tone is pre-set. It is a pleasant mid-tone, which should suit most users, but people with high frequency hearing loss could find the tone a little high. I would recommend listening to the machine in action before purchasing.

Q: Nenad, if you could only have one gold detector in your arsenal, would it be a 6000?

If I could only have one gold detector, it would be the GPZ7000. The range of options on the GPZ, as well as its ability to find tiny gold and bigger deeper pieces at the same time is truly impressive. However, if I was allowed to have two units, then it would be a GPX4500/5000 and a GPX6000. I think that would give me the ultimate versatility.

Q: What basic add-ons do you recommend for the 6000?

Definitely a good plastic scoop – it makes target recovery so much easier, especially on the tiny pieces the 6000 can detect. A quality padded control box cover is self-explanatory, and a second battery pack is good insurance. For the 11" coil, I also like the optional Nugget Finder skid plate. It has less flex and features a chamfered bottom edge, which glides along the ground nicely.

Okay, that's all for now, but stay tuned for a future article where I'll delve a little deeper into performance notes and tips.

In the event that a Code Red Day is declared for any camp days, the camp will be cancelled.



During Code Red days, no one is permitted to enter State Parks and Forests.

Camp may also be cancelled during other periods of severe weather.



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Public Dump Points

Members are reminded that human waste is not to be dumped in the bush but is to be disposed of at home or a Public Dump Point. Here are some that are in our areas of the camps:

- Ararat Dump Point: 4 Alexander Ave. Ararat , Grid Ref. 37:16:49.7S, 142:56:0.8E
- Bendigo Showground Public Dump Point: 42A Holmes Rd., North Bendigo, Grid Ref. 36:44:18.3S, 144:16:17.5E
- Clunes Public Dump Point : 70 Bailey St., Clunes, Grid Ref. 37:17:38.1S, 143:46:51.2E
- Harcourt Public Dump Point 6 Bridge St., Harcourt, Grid Ref. 36:59:40.3S, 144:15:45.3E
- Kyneton Mineral Springs Stopover: 219 Burton Ave., Kyneton, Grid Ref. 37:14:7.1 S, 144:25:9.1 E
- Seymour Public Dump Point: Cnr. Wallis & High St., Seymour, Grid Ref. 37:1:14.6S, 145:8:6.0E

Refer: toiletmap.gov.au; highwaytraveller.com.au

