

THE MAGAZINE
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WORLD
GOLD PANNING
ASSOCIATION

Golden Times

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The 2007 World Gold Championships

From the Editor ...



I'm delighted as I hope you are to see this edition of *Golden Times* in your hands or on your screen. It not only takes a lot of effort and time from the production team to produce this, it takes effort from you, our readers to provide articles for us to work with. Following decisions made in Dawson this year, we now have a great team who will work with each individual nation to collect articles.

Golden Times should not be a list of events or results, but something you can sit by a winter fire or summer sun depending on where you live and read, smile, chuckle, wish you had been there or remember your last gold trip or adventure. I thank our contributors for their great stories and information and look forward to seeing yours in our next edition. If you have something for us, please let us know and we can help you see it in print. We hope to make *Golden Times* a bi-annual magazine but that my dear friends depends on you....

To contact our editor staff please send to wga_comms@yahoo.com



Message from the President

Well, so much is happening, what an important and interesting time this is for the WGA! And it's great to be back on track with a bumper issue of *Golden Times*. I know there are many excellent items in this issue – interesting because you are interesting. Goldpanners are a most unusual and individual group of people and good communication is always going to need work. Paul, Chairman of the Communications Committee, has doubled his team so it will now be easier to keep in touch and liaise with the many nations which form the WGA. Our website is improving too, so help by keeping it up-to-date and using it as our first point of information and contact.



Over the last few years there has been a growing concern that the championships have fewer people attending – it's been said that the championships are not as much fun anymore and we can't have that. Most of you will know that the Competition Committee and the Board have been looking closely at how to improve the fairness, the involvement and the fun! We noted that people were worried by the total dominance of the 'Ferrari' style of pan in competition, traditional pans were dying out. And the catch phrase, 'no tourists until Friday' took hold – people who have travelled across the world do not want to be out in their first heat; as most used to be.

Please talk to your national representatives – put forward ideas and opinion, be involved. The WGA Council of Representatives meeting in Spain in 2008 will be so important to the World Championships. We will agree on a new competitor selection system which is fairer and tries to keep all competitors in the competition for longer. We will also identify which traditional style 'Classic' pan (or pans) is to become an official category. The pan must represent most of the world's working river pans, as used now and in the major gold rushes. Of course we can keep the rarer traditional pans alive too, as an unofficial category each year if organisers wish.

If we think in terms of motor racing we will soon have a Formula

One where very fast 'Ferrari' type racing pans are used, our improved Open Category. Then we will have the new Classic Category which in many ways is like a Rally Class. This will use more traditional tough pans that can work out in mountain rivers and streams! Exciting eh!?

And in all of this please remember that no one is trying to make perfection. There is much room to improve our current championships and we must improve them. But we are a democracy and the way forward will be a compromise of our ideas.

So we have some very good years to look forward to, more involvement and more competitions. But we can also look back on two great championships in Finland and Canada as we read this issue. I have had a great year so far in 2007, good personal stuff, a nugget of note and Britain's first team medal. I'm off prospecting in Wales tomorrow – I truly hope you too have had a great year. See you in Spain, so much is happening, great to be a panner isn't it!?

**Vincent Thurkettle
President**



Golden Friends,

Here I am writing few notes about my role in the W.G.A. Board as Vice President. Nowadays my duty, according to Vincent's desire, is to develop and prepare for voting the WGA Statutes.

As you probably know it was our former President Kauko Launonen who started working on them as an international association as we are needs precise rules to live fairly. Like you told me by the e-mails, questionnaires and informal chat we had, the general feeling is that we are basically a group of friends with a common interest in goldpanning and in meeting other friends to chat with about the metal that gave the fever, but, let me say, on the other hands and looking at what happened several times in the past in different Countries, we need strict rules to allow people to understand if they are right or wrong in their common living. I know if someone is stepping on my toe he's not in the right way, but I must know maybe was my foot to be in the wrong place!



What I want to say here is that writing the WGA Statutes it is not so easy as one can think and I wasn't starting from a blank sheet, as Kauko did a very good basement to build on a strong and nice house. Several Member Countries submitted few lines and I am glad, and this means having more ideas and points of view about our big family and what its components think about it. I hope to be able to finish myself the job (or the jigsaw) before Spain 2008 AGM, so, we could approve and adopt definitely the Statutes.

Looking forward having your words in my mail box as usual, I wish you all the best for your panning or rest in winter time (depending on the hemisphere you're reading this!), and thank you for supporting the Board and especially myself in doing my job. See you in Spain (ha, my service will end there: any candidate as next Vice President?)

Golden greetings, yours **Arturo**

Arturo Ramella, W.G.A. Vice Presidente mail me at arturo.ramella@libero.it or phone +39 347 835 2331



Spring Board Meeting 2007

The Board and Committee Chairman met for their first Spring Meeting in April this year, except Ana who sadly was not able to make it. As the planned meeting got close the biggest concern in my mind, as President chairing the meeting, was 'I hope it is worth all the effort!'

Huge effort was made to keep costs down as members flew in from the USA, Italy, Sweden and Finland. Huge effort was made by panners Charlie and Lorna who very generously let us all stay and work in their house. But the biggest effort was for these busy people to give up four days of precious time to come and work for the good of the WGA.

I need not have worried! I guess it should have been obvious that when you put a group of panners with this level of commitment into a room, they will work and talk non-stop about building and bettering the WGA! And so it was that our formal meeting stretched to 11 hours over three days with the other time mostly talking gold as well. Charlie did manage to slip in a brief cultural tour of his English village for the visitors.

The meeting was designed to give the board the time to fully think through difficult questions and discuss the five WGA cornerstones of Finance, Communication, Competition, Statutes and our future needs. It really, really worked out well and allowed the full Council of National Representatives meeting in Dawson City to consider a very wide range of prepared issues.

So, I would formally thank all those representatives who sanctioned this meeting, and particularly thank our hosts and your board members and committee chairmen – they did you proud.

Vincent Thurkettle
President





Rules Committee

Kopparberg 07-10-15

Hallo my friends.



I have been asked to share with you some of my thoughts about the last years, and maybe something about the future, in my role as chairman of the Competition Committee.

First of all, you should all know that, when I was asked, 2 years ago in Pilgrims Rest if I was interested in the position as chairman of CC. Although, of course I was very honoured I was not sure if I was interested, knowing how much hard and difficult work that would come with the task. I was not sure, I was the right person.

Also, coming in after Mike Gossage, which in my opinion had made a really great job, was not easy. But it was Mike who convinced me to go for it, you are allowed to pick the members you like to have, in the Committee he said to me. And that's what I needed to know. I need people in the Committee that are willing to work during, not only the Championships, but also the rest of the year. And I must say, I think I have the best of the best in my Committee today!!!

During these first 2 years, a lot of things have happened in the world of rules.

We have started a process, looking at a lot of changes in the way of competing, both new rules, new categories and way of selection. A lot of work have been done, and a lot, still waits for us. And that work is not only involved the CC, but also the Board of WGA and the country reps. Remember one thing, we have to be very sure of changes, before we made them, and sometimes we have to test our ideas, before we decide anything.

I just want to remind you, that we have had almost the same rules for 30 years, we can't expect changes without protests, and discussions. But also remember, we try to make the competitions better and more fair for everybody.

Looking at the future, well I hope that we in 3-5 years from now, have been successful in our intentions to create a new and better way of competing in goldpanning. But also that we have been successful in our Association, finding the way to get new and younger people to start pan for gold. That's maybe the most important issue for the future. Because knowing of all that friendship and good relations, that goldpanning create, I would like a lot more people to share our "World of Gold".

Best regards, to you my "family", from Ken Karlsson.

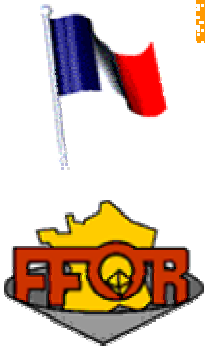


Ken briefs the competitors



Eugene keeps watch during a ladies heat

French Championships



French goldpanning championship 2006, Baudreix, French Pyrenees

This year, the French Goldpanning Open Championships were organised in the southwest of France, in a small town near Pau: Baudreix. It was quite like a flashback as the organizing association "Aquitaine Orpillage" was one of the first members of

the French Goldpanning Federation nineteen years ago and one of the first to organize goldpanning trophies in France. On a very sunny weather, really hot, but shaded by the trees, more than one hundred competitors tried to win the medals. We were very happy to welcome our Spanish friends coming from Galicia and Andalusia. Galician bagpipes were also here to encourage the competitors.



Oldtimers : 1 Jacques Brest, 2 Michel Charpy, 3 Jean Janusz.

Juniors: 1 Salvador Dominguez Durante (SP), 2 Hugo Sanfiz Granados (SP), 3 Romain Billard.

Beginners: 1 Maria Del Rio (SP), 2 Mercedes Alonso (SP), 3 Christophe Coutan.

Beginners junior: 1 José Rodriguez (SP), 2 Gema Fernandez (SP), 3 David Gomez Fernandez (SP).

Notice that it was the first time that a FFOR President

At the end of the first day, all the competitors were



wins the French championships. He did it with a traditional shaped wooden pan. All other results are available on the French website: "ffor.fr".

For the French Goldpanning Federation, the representatives: A. SERRE and S. NENERT.

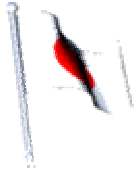
gathered for a cool nugget race in the river, very nice after a warm day. After this aperitif, a typical lunch had been prepared by the organizers, "foie gras", and duck confit with potatoes, country music and dance. After a short night, the competition started again, always in the sunshine. And at the end of the day, the winners were:

Skilled men: 1 Stéphane Rabusseau, 2 Kevin Mandrick, 3 Yvan Pujol.

Skilled women: 1 Cécile Thibaud, 2 Lucienne Laman, 3 Sylvie Séchaud.



Traditional style goldpanning in Hokkaido



Hokkaido is northern island of Japan and known to produce gold dust in a lot of the rivers. I'll introduce Taiki town this time.



In 1635 Edo era in Japan, gold dust was found from Rekifune river in Taiki town. The production of the gold dust was 37.5 kg a year at that time. It was dug during about 50 years and discontinued by changes in the social situation.

The late 19 century the gold dust in Rekifune river was focused again and many prospectors gathered to the river. The last full-time goldpanner in Japan the late Mr. Tsuji lived at Reki-fune river retired in 1971. In 1994 the 2nd

All Japan Goldpanning Championships was held.

We can find gold sample from Rekifune river still now. And we can have precious experience to pan gold in Japanese traditional style there, using the Katcha and the Yuri-ita. The Katcha is a tool to dig and the Yuri-ita is a panning board.

For the first time, you may have no idea how to do with these tools though, you never need to worry. Skilled goldpanners who live nearby the river will appear and teach you everything. In summer, there are many tourists dropping in and yell for joy when find gold from the river.

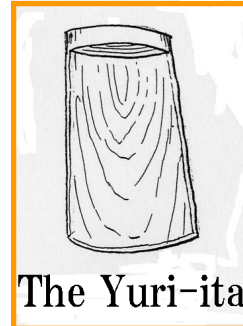
Gold dust from Rekifune river is 22 karat.

Panning area is around the Aikawa bridge and it is 10km from central Taiki town.

Rental of these tools is at "Cosmall Taiki" (roadside station) from Jun to September 30th. Rental fee is each 300 Yen (as of 2007.)

Yasuyuki Ogura

Secretariat of Hokkaido Historical Goldpanning Society



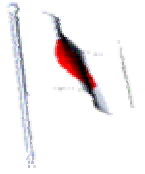
The Yuri-ita



The Katcha



Recreational gold prospecting in Japan



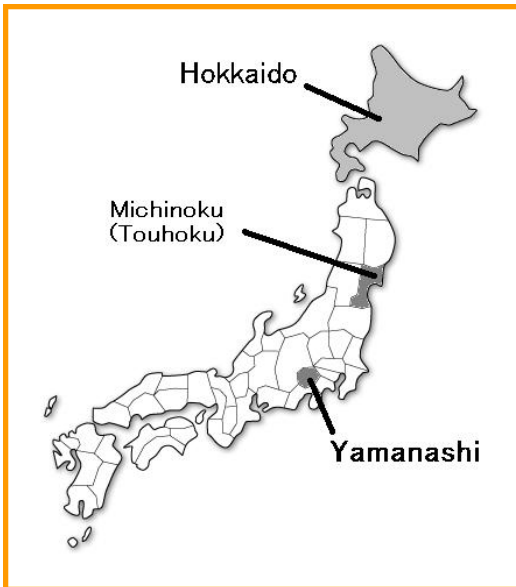
There are a few gold mining claims in Japan at present. So we can gold panning and sluicing modestly, wherever. (But I do not recommend using dredge or heavy equipments. Because there is a possibility that prohibiting to use those equipments for recreational gold prospecting by law except for mining claim.)

I introduce some districts we can enjoy gold prospecting in Japan.

1. Hokkaido district

We can watch Japanese traditional tools and techniques there.

Many prospectors visit in summer season from inside and outside of Hokkaido, enjoy looking for gold and platinum group metals (mainly Iridium and osmium.) Additionally, there are many localities of beach gold, but these get less attention now.



2. Yamanashi district

A lot of prospectors visit and they are getting many gold in late years. Gold from this district is larger than others, so "Nugget sniping" is popular technique. There is a museum (The Yunooku Museum of Gold Mine History <http://www.town.minobu.lg.jp/kinzan/>) in Minobu-town. Many prospectors based here for prospecting.

3. Michinoku(Touhoku) district

The earliest gold mining locality in Japan.

We can't get much gold today. But yielded gold from here is popular as brand.

There are much more prospectable districts in Japan. Access BBS(<http://www2.realint.com/cgi-bin/tbbs.cgi?1025>) if you need more information. (Probably you need to install Japanese Font in your

computer.)

Yoshiaki HIROSE

Member of All Japan Goldpanning Association



I picked up a gold nugget(1.7g) on the bedrock after passing thorough a typhoon.(September 2007)

Visit to the Pahtavaara Gold mine



Visit at the Pahtavaara Gold Mine
The Pahtavaara Gold Mine is located in Central Lapland, Finland not far away of the town of Sodankyla. It's quite an original ore (especially for a hercynian ore geologist as the author of this paper) as gold is free and sulphides are rare. We'd the opportunity to visit it in an excursion

organised for the 2006 World Goldpanning Championships. So it was interesting to write this few words as an account of this experience for "Golden Times"

Geological settings:

Pahtavaara gold deposit is hosted by komatiitic lavas and pyroclastic rocks of the Sattasvaara Formation, a lithostratigraphic unit of the Palaeoproterozoic Central Lapland Greenstone Belt. More closely, the deposit is in a contact zone between pyroclastites and lavas. Komatiites are Mg-rich magmatic rocks related to an important melting of the earth mantle. These are very high temperature lavas (1600 °C). Most komatiites are of archean and proterozoic age, located in the so-called greenstone belts. Gold deposits are often linked with these rocks, which are supposed to be Au-concentrated.

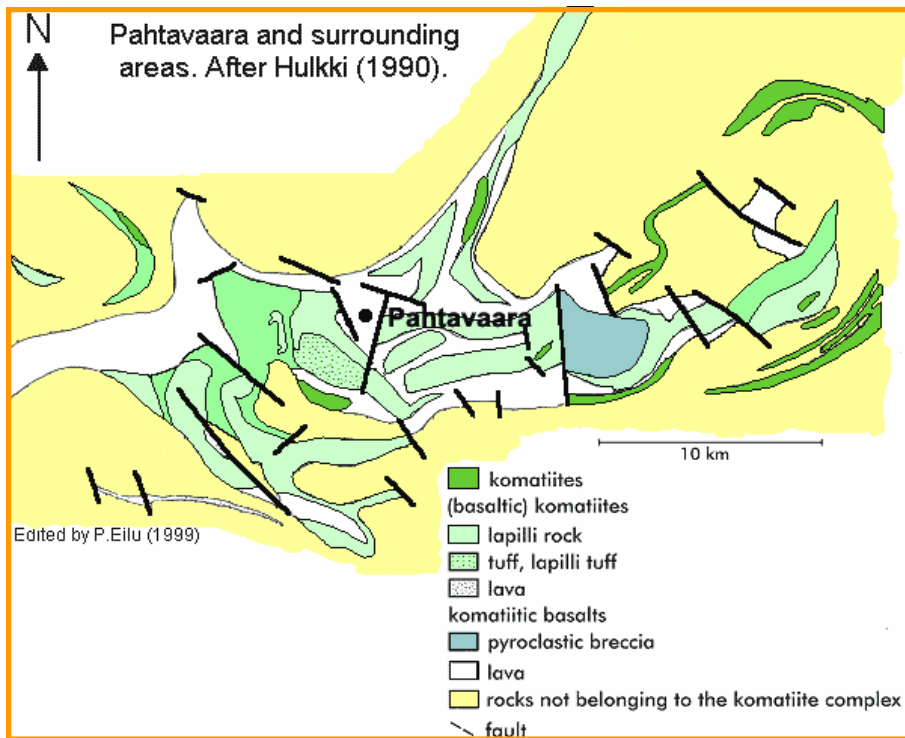
Settings of the ore:

The ore is hosted by a swarm of sub parallel lodes. They are 5-10 m wide, E-W trending within the alteration halo of the ore. Two vein types have been distinguished: Distal and intermediate talc-carbonate ± pyrite veins and proximal quartz-baryte ± carbonate, gold veins. A continuum exists between these two vein types which both may contain variable volumes of actinolite.



One open pit

Ore genesis:
Pahtavaara is best interpreted as a metamorphosed sea-floor alteration system with ore lenses as either carbonate- and barite-bearing cherts or quartz-carbonate-barite veins. The gold may have been introduced later, but its grain size, textural position (nearly all is free, native, and occur with silicates, not sulphides) and high fineness point to a pre-peak metamorphic timing which is highly anomalous for orogenic gold. Nevertheless, the main mineralising stage is supposed to have been a biotitisation-dominated, reducing alteration in a komatiitic sequence during peak- to slightly post-peak deformation. This was followed by amphibole overgrowth with partial decarbonation of rocks altered during the first stage under oxidising conditions; this was another mineralising stage, possibly just remobilising gold. The coarse, visible gold was formed during the latter stage. Albitisation and part of carbonation may have preceded gold mineralization, "preparing ground", i.e. making the komatiitic host rock locally more competent than the surrounding talc-chlorite schist and, hence, a structurally favourable site for the mineralising fluids to precipitate gold. The fluids responsible of the mineralization were late-orogenic metamorphic fluids dated of 1840-1870 Ma.



Geological map of Pahtavaara and the surrounding area.

History of the mine:

The deposit had been discovered in 1985 by the Geological Survey of Finland after regional exploration (gold anomaly in till and detection of a skarn zone). Further exploration showed high gold grade and free gold in outcrops. Detailed studies with drillings lead to the beginning of exploitation by Terra Mining Oy, which opened four pits between 1996 and 2000. Scan Mining Oy reopened the mine in 2003. Since this time, the mine is operated by underground works. The gold production is of 5680 kg with a total in-situ gold estimation of 15 201 kg. Most of the time the grades exploited are between 2,5 and 3 g/t.

The ore dressing plant:

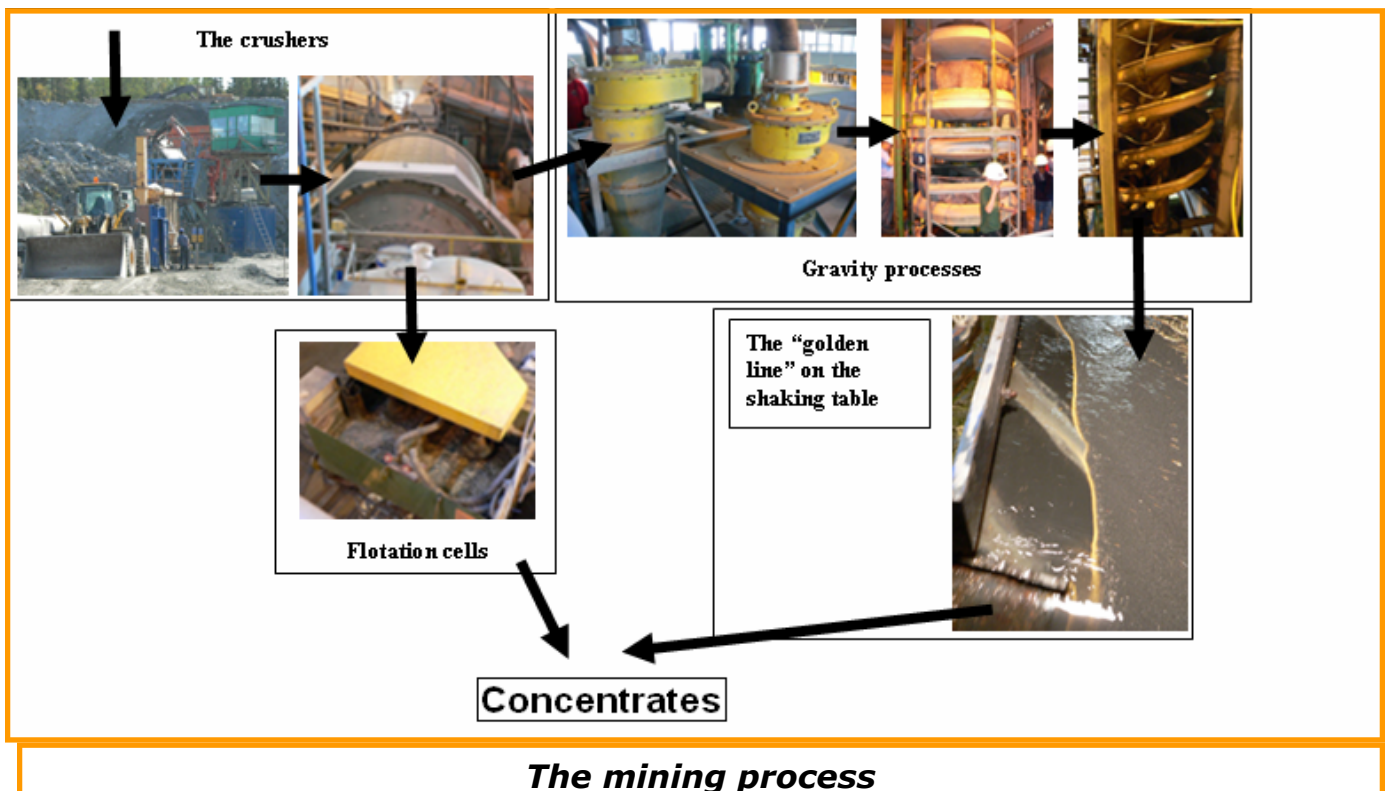
As most gold is free, it's not necessary to use cyanide. After crushed two times, the ore is worked by three gravity processes. At the end the concentrate is treated on gravity tables. By this time, fines from the crushing are treated by flotation. The result is 3 different types of concentrates which will be refined in Germany.

For the French Goldpanning Federation,
S.NENERT, representative

Many thanks to Per Jannert of ScanMining Oy who accept to read back this paper.



Free gold on quartz vein from Pahtavaara mine, Tankavaara Gold Museum



Lapin Kulta - A visit with Pirjo and Youko



Getting there

I have known Pirjo for many years now. We have met several times at world championships so I was too happy to jump on the occasion she offered us to go for a guided tour of the

Lemmenjoki goldfields with plenty of time scheduled to pan on the claim.

Since the number of participants was limited, I registered Philippe and I months in advance hoping I'd been quick

enough to seize this unique opportunity. To my great surprise, Pirjo had to cancel the excursion because by mid June not a single mail had been sent by other panners wanting to join in. Since Pirjo knew I was very keen, she invited us on the claim anyway for a customized stay. She took care of everything, from the detailed maps to the booking of the boats from Njurgalahti to Kultahamina.

"I absolutely wanted to try panning under the midnight sun"

To arrive at the meeting point wasn't really a little journey. First we left Belgium by car and drove via Sweden to arrive in Tankavaara after some 2800 kilometres. There we quickly registered for the World Goldpanning Championship and drove away for another 150 kilometres to the North to reach Njurgalahti. At Njurgalahti, we met Ron and Margaret Calendar who were also invited by Pirjo and



The hidden treasure

We started the trip to the claim with a steep climb to which the locals give the well deserved name "out of breath". On our way we stopped at a group of log cabins where Pirjo prepared in no time a delicious lunch. Again, I was amazed. We drank the water



At the campsite

straight from the river. In my country you'd lie in bed for three days if you did that. While we ate she told us the stories of the former owners of the cabins and how they were amongst the initiators of the Lemmenjoki gold rush in the 50's. I especially remember the story of that old man who worked in a neighbouring creek for 30 years never selling any of his gold. Everybody knew he was hiding it somewhere in or near the house but the old man died with his secret. Since then many treasure hunters have looked for the lost treasure even cleaning the toilets to the very last layerSo far, nobody has found it.



"A good Day"

and Youko. The boat, a long canoe with a powerful engine, took us for 1.5 hour to Kultahamina. It was a little disappointing. I was looking forward to the mirror waters reflecting a clear blue sky and all I saw was a wavy grey water with a grey sky on a dark forest caught in between. At Kultahamina, Pirjo and Youko were waiting for us and the greetings cheered me up. We had to walk another 9 kilometres to the claim and, as it had been arranged, Youko picked our gear up with the ATV and Pirjo guided. I was very tired, because we had celebrated our first night above the Arctic Circle and I had stayed up to watch how much light there was left at 3 in the morning. It's amazing to think that it's possible to take pictures without a flash.

After the meal, we sluiced a few buckets and small grains started to colour the carpet. Plinkers as Youko calls them. Plonkers being the ones that make that sound when you drop them in the pan. This spot definitely looked promising for the next day and John and I went for a sauna that had been prepared for us. It was a very hot experience but "hot" in the first meaning of this word. After the sauna, I declined an invitation for a drink (yes, it's true!) to do a few more pans. I absolutely wanted to try panning under the midnight sun. I did a

After a few more kilometres, we finally arrived at the claim where, again, we were offered coffee, tea and cabin-made cakes. I was torn between the pleasure of enjoying it and the urge to jump in the water. Especially since, John, John and Mareck, three Czech goldpanners who had arrived unexpectedly the day before, were starting to find good gold. Eventually Pirjo's welcoming smile and my stomach won. After the meal, we sluiced a few buckets and small grains started to colour the carpet. Plinkers as Youko calls them. Plonkers being the ones that make that sound when you drop them in the pan. This spot definitely looked promising for the next day and John and I went for a sauna that had been prepared for us. It was a very hot experience but "hot" in the first meaning of this word.

After the sauna, I declined an invitation for a drink (yes, it's true!) to do a few more pans. I absolutely wanted to try panning under the midnight sun. I did a

couple of buckets but I had little luck and it was not really pleasing because the temperature was only 5°C. The fun thing was when Youko and Yuri, his brother-in-law arrived a few minutes before midnight, bottle in hand, to celebrate my first midnight gold. Every time I found a gold grain, it was carefully put in the bottle after a series of joyful sips. The trick was to drink but keep the gold inside the bottle. It was absolute fun.

Nuggets in the cracks

The next day, John, John and Mirek joined us for a walk to other claims of the area so we could see different techniques used and the types of deposits. We also visited the smallest and probably furthest North Library of Finland.



Good Cooking

Quite an experience to enter this minuscule building in the middle of nowhere.

We met friendly miners who were happy to demonstrate how they worked. Some with cranes and preparing to install a trommel and another one with pick and shovel who could process the incredible quantity of 80 to 100 cubic meters per season. Again, Pirjo had prepared a lunch packet and we marvelled the landscape sitting or lying by the river. It was an extremely instructive walk and everybody came back to the camp with a large smile. There was a huge meal that Youri's wife had prepared waiting for us. We could choose between thick elk soup or salmon soup. What a hospitality!

After dinner we sluiced a few buckets again from a hole that Youko had prepared for us. He had chosen the best spot on his claim and had exposed the bed rock with the crane. We got very good results from deep cracks in the bed rock. They were filled with gravel and clay and the gold was sometimes more than a meter deep in the cracks. You wondered how it could get that deep. It was unusually rich by Finnish standards but even so, we had to process hundreds of kilo's or clay to find plinkers. Every now and then though, little nuggets made this moment perfect.

Eventually Philippe and I got a little over 5 grams for 2 day of sluicing. The biggest bit was 0.3 gr. Mirek was

luckier considering the fact that he only used a pan. He got a 1.2 gr on one day and a 0.8 gr nugget in his last



Happy John and Mirek with their finds

pan. I felt very respectful towards my Czech friends because they had walked all the way from Kultahamina around 25 km with all their equipment and food. They really deserved their gold.

Since Philippe and I stayed a little longer, I had another go in the cracked bedrock before departure and managed to collect another 2 grams of rattling bits. On the last day I found an interesting 0.3 gr nugget which a lady I won't name thought had a very suggestive elongated shape. I leave it up to your imagination.



Marvellous landscapes

In the early afternoon we all left the claim under a bright sun. The weather was perfect and the landscape was breathtaking (because of the walk too...). The pines during the winters suffer a lot and they have very twisted trunks and when the trees die they turn grey and show sinuous branches that magnificently decorate the green and purple undergrowth. Every now and then a reindeer looked calmly at us before softly strolling

Thank you

away. We walked past blackberry bushes weighed down by juicy fruits that were delicious. When we arrived at the hut where the boat had to pick us up, a very tame squirrel was waiting for us. It was a marvellous walk but not to compare with the beauty of the landscape reflecting itself in the Lemmenjoki. The scenery was fantastic and everybody looked silently at it for a moment. At last I had the mirror waters I had dreamed of. I shot countless pictures while we waited.



The ride back to Njurgalahti

The trip back in the boat was even better. The weather and the river were so good that there wasn't the slightest ripple on the water and the blue sky and the variations of greens in the trees were perfectly reflected. So well that the pictures shot then can be turned upside down without anybody noticing it. It was a real pleasure to speed past the little islands in the main channel and watch the trees dip their mossy branches in crystalline waters.

I will never forget those moments. And here finds the title of this article all its meaning. Lapin kulta means Finnish gold but the gold during these few days was more than just the metal.

Thank you Pirjo and Youko

Bruno

It's Monday the 14th of August, I'm sitting in the car on the way back to Belgium and I have this sudden thought I so much want to share with you that I immediately grab a piece of paper to throw these lines on.

I'm smiling. In fact, I can't remember any moment for the last two weeks when I haven't been happy. And this delightful feeling is not only thanks to the beauty of the breathtaking landscapes I have been marvelling, the gold I had the chance to find, the grand championship that was organised for us, the delicious roasted reindeer or of course a certain golden sparkling beverage, but it is most of all thanks to you who once again I had the fortune to meet or who I have met. You made these moments very special because you are the soul of these precious memories.

So I say

Thank you unknown sleeper snoring like hell in a neighbouring tent

Thank you drinking partners
Thank you crazy dancers

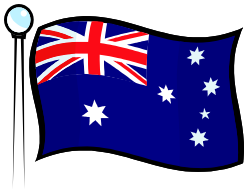
Thank you fellow bad singers

Thank you to all of those I could share a moment with
Thank you my friends.

See you soon.

Bruno





Above the Arctic Circle

Our flight to Tankavaara was a long one. From Australia, the Land Down Under to Finland, the Land of the

Midnight Sun - on top of the world, took 34 flying hours.

We boarded our flight to Singapore and settled down to some serious reading – Henry found a book titled “Tom Kruse “Mailman of the Birdsville Track” and mine was “The Last Templar”. We flew over Dehli and Tehran and the Bay of Bengal. After leaving Melbourne, we’d flown over 8500 kms and headed for Russia on our way to London’s Heathrow Airport. London airport had the usually tight security but seemed to concentrate more on explosives than anything else.

Next stop was Helsinki airport and found our connecting flight to Ivalo airport. This is where we bumped into Sam and Esther who were on their way to the Swedish Goldpanning Championship, as we collected our hire car. Armed with a road map we set forth to find Saariselka where our accommodation had been booked. Next stop was finding Tankavaara where the World Championships were to be held. We were so impressed with the pristine environment, no rubbish, no graffiti, no advertising boarding's, no odors and definitely – no McDonalds or Kentucky Fried Chicken.

After several days of settling down Henry and I drove out to Ivalo and participated in their National Championships, the weather was cold, but the panners were friendly and we had a great day, especially the Parade of Nations, we certainly stopped the traffic in Ivalo as we paraded through their town.

Tankavaara, what a gem of a place. The big Parade was quite spectacular and good to catch up with panners from the world. There were some new records set and some of the times were just unbelievable. Everyone was so friendly, including the insects. These tiny sand flies came out at night and I certainly got my share. We always enjoy the social atmosphere, and this year was no exception.



Italian Panners at Tankavaara

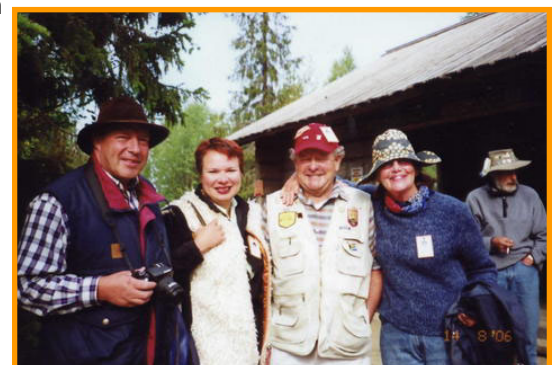
As we had to drive to Tankavaara every day, I got a great photo of a family of deer crossing the road, we visited the ski lift and a mining camp and found out what ‘OTTO’ was, the place where I got some money from the ATM.



Kauko and Egyptian Ambassador

One day, after the competitions were over, we walked into the Gold Museum and were invited to the 25th Birthday of the Gold Museum and unveiling of an ancient sluice, originally used by the early Egyptians. Her Excellency Ambassador of Egypt - Mrs. Soad Shalaby and Kauko - Chairman of the Museum demonstrated how the Egyptians used a very tall earthenware urn filled with water. Pouring the water over the sand on the stone cobbled sluice which produced some fine samples of gold.

The Gold Museum was an outstanding display of early mining tools and gold discoveries from all over the world including our big boy , the “Welcome Stranger” gold nugget, which was discovered in Moliagul – Victoria, about 9 miles from where we live back home. We also invaded the super market, and found ourselves in the souvenir section of Finnish/Saami handcrafts. Even though they were pretty expensive, I bought a “Kuksa”, the hand carved wooden cup it seems, every good Finn carries on their belt, and my “special memento” from Finland, a beautiful woolen jacket with arctic design, of which my Australian friends are “just green with envy”.



Tuija Tunturi Hubby Henry Doran Kielo

On our way home, Heathrow was total chaos, but as our destination was Australia, we got to our plane relatively fast. Another 30 flying hours to get back to Australia. As we stepped off the plane in Tullamarine, Spring had arrived during our absence and it was good to be back home, in our sun burnt country.

Thank you Finland, you really put on a fantastic World Gold Panning Championship.

Henry and Anne Doran – Australia.



WGA Annual General Meeting 2006

Golden Times normally provides a synopsis of the WGA meetings, however this time we thought it would be interesting for our readers to see the full minutes published.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, Tankavaara, Finland August 10th, 2006, 18:30

Nations present: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, U.S.A. and Hungary as observer.

Members of the board present:

Mr Vincent Thurkettle President
Mr Esko Orava Treasurer
Ms Ana Santiago Secretary
Mr Ken Karlsson Rules Committee Chairman

Absent with apologies:

Mr Arturo Ramella Vice president
Mr Paul Thurkettle Communications Committee

1. Opening, welcome and verification of legality

Vincent Thurkettle opened the meeting by formally welcoming all delegates. All nations present unanimously recognised the legality of the meeting.

2. WGA membership (Poland)

Poland had raised a question about who should be on the WGA website. The website is supposed to cover the world, but the issue is whether it should be allowed that non linked associations announce events on it. Vince proposed two paths:

- a. Raise a wall and not allow non members to announce on the site;
- b. Allow non members to advertise but with a clear distinction; all official WGA will have special recognition, while non members will be noted as non official.

Vince invited all delegates to discuss both options and allowed 30 seconds for the discussion.

Some delegates asked for a clarification regarding the labelling; Great Britain asked whether it will be absolutely clear when it is not under WGA auspices or whether it will be just a logo on the bottom of the page.

- Vincent suggested a complete separate page on the website.
- France pointed out that if some events sponsored by merchandising are chosen and others are not, it could create problems.
- USA expressed concern that the site could be overwhelmed with information, so maybe it would be easier to limit the site to WGA members.
- It was pointed out that some associations are non commercial but do hold competitions.
- Belgium suggested charging for merchandising.
- Vincent clarified that limiting access to WGA members would make us small.
- Great Britain suggested that it was difficult to choose an option if no format has been seen.
- South Africa proposed sending applications; if they are commercial they should be charged, otherwise they could be allowed.

It was pointed out that the issue needed to be discussed with Paul Thurkettle, website master, who would be present in the following year's AGM.

It was then suggested to limit the access to the site to only WGA members for the time being, and take the issue to next year's meeting. A show of hands indicated the majority were in favour. The decision was carried.

3. Funds, fees (Treasurer's report)

WGA treasurer, Esko Orava, presented his report, which showed the following balance:

Total income to date	(01.07.05 to 30.06.06)	2578, 21 €	
Total expenditure to date	(01.07.05 to 30.06.06)		606, 75 €
			<hr/>
Cash at hand	New cash at hand		1971, 46 €
	(Reserves)		4585.93 €
Cash at hand, New	(01.07.05 to 30.06.06)		1971,46 €
			<hr/>
	Balance		6557,39 €

4. Communications, Website, Golden Times (Communications Committee Report), WGA working links and contacts



WGA Annual General Meeting 2006

Paul sent an official written report and also his apologies for his absence. Cécile Thibaud, from France, read his report.

Golden Times (GT) spring version was released on the website by email and as requested, multiple versions were provided to facilitate downloading. There is concern, however, that some members still cannot download Golden Times.

Good communication is of the utmost importance. The AGM together with the website and Golden Times are the three main means to communicate. Vince reminds delegates that in his first year as president he asked all countries to send articles, in the second year it was agreed that it was all countries' duty to send articles, and in the third year, it was absolutely their duty to send at least one article per year to publish. There should be two issues of Golden Times per year; this year there was only one and it was released late because Paul had no information to publish. Vince said that this is not good enough, each country must send at least one article per year – you all do many interesting things, so please share at least one with us! GT needs to be interesting and exciting and needs lively articles; these should include adventures and news. There is concern that lately articles are mostly covering championships. An idea was suggested that each member country should nominate somebody as their point of contact. Paul will then contact these representatives.

Downloading was discussed. Some members could not download golden times; neither did they get a printed version. Vince expressed his concern that the system is not working and asked for opinions.

South Africa (SA) said that paper copies are important because it is difficult to read from the website. As a starting point, SA suggested that members wanting extra copies could buy them from their national association or from the WGA.

France suggested that CDs would be more cost effective and would also allow the possibility to make copies within each country to distribute. The idea of CDs was welcomed. Canada suggested each nation could decide how they want to receive GT. SA added that the electronic copy, the website and the CD would be ideal. If nations want to buy more, they should also have the facility to do it.

Vince suggested asking Paul to do the website as priority, and also to produce a CD for every nation. Representatives will then be asked if they want printed copies and if so, they need to contact Paul.

It was communicated that some members tried to produce an event calendar. Vince invited delegates to provide the committee (Paul) with any ideas that could help communications. Vince reminded the delegates that we have a WGA website to use and it is not helpful to start new sites – work to make our website better is very welcome, work that devalues it is not welcome. Delegates were also asked to communicate more with their members.

In the letter provided by Paul, he informed the committee that the Dutch team will work to improve the underlying software of the WGA website. In the previous meeting it was agreed to move the WGA website from a free provider to a commercial one because of the extra storage space available. The Dutch are also improving their own national website.

It was acknowledged that Paul does a very good job which takes many hours, our thanks to Paul for the work he does.

5. Competitions (Rules Committee Report)

Ken Karlsson, chairman of the rules committee (RC), introduced the present members of the RC. Ordinary members are (in alphabetical order): Ken Karlsson, Ulla Karlsson, Ana Santiago, Eugene Swanipole and Cecile Thibaud. Temporary members are Pirjo from Finland and David Miller from Canada.

Ken explained that temporary members were invited in order to help organising committees get updated on rules, and it was decided to extend temporary membership up to four years lead time of future organisers. Temporary membership will be offered, never forced.

Ken commented that the role of the RC had undergone many changes and their roles could range from consultation and supervision to collection of buckets. Ken clarified that the RC's role is to ensure that the competitions run smoothly, fairly and follow the rules; always in the spirit of honesty and friendship.

To carry out their duty, the RC members always need full access to the competition area. Problems at competitions are common, and they happen before, during and after. An inspection is carried out prior to the competition, and together with the Chief Justice, RC presence is always needed to overlook all that happens and stop the competition if something goes wrong. If organisers need RC help, they will always have it.

Ken reminded delegates that in the previous AGM, Mick Gossage (former chairman of the rules committee) had invited all delegates to contribute with ideas about whether to increase the days of heats, shorten the competition time, increase number of trophies or number of competitors going through. Ken said that no email had been received 12 months later. Ken insisted on the need to talk more. The RC can propose ideas but need input and feedback.

It had been pointed out by Mike in previous years, participants travel long distances to be knocked out of the competition the first day they pan. Mike's proposal was that people compete a number of times during the week, and these times would go into the computer on the Friday. Therefore, nobody would get eliminated until that moment, hence the slogan "No tourists 'til Friday".



WGA Annual General Meeting 2006

It was agreed that Mike's idea was good, but it will involve big changes. Vince invited members to discuss the issue at national level and feed opinions to Ken.

It was also pointed out that the number of participants was decreasing and their age increasing. Ken pointed out the need to make competitions more fun and attract new young people.

Vincent added that in 1988 the size of the WGA was approximately the same as it is at present. When the Russian Empire collapsed, more countries joined the WGA. Australia and USA joined the association at that time too. But recently no new countries were joining. Vincent suggested the possibility for future research on who comes to the WGA World Championships. He said that it would help the management of the WGA if we have an understanding of the changes in competitor numbers and ages over, say, the last 20 years.

Attention was then given to the fact that "Ferrari pans" are now the bosses and that nobody wins with traditional pans any more. In order to preserve tradition, SA and Finland were asked to run a traditional competition, to which they agreed and were very successful.

Great Britain pointed out that the very word traditional was problematic given that different countries understand traditional in a different way. Ken communicated that in Finland traditional had been defined as a "historical, traditional, working pan". Ideas about types were exchanged.

Vince asked the meeting to give Ken and the RC the mandate to begin to write rules for a traditional competition in preparation for it becoming an official category. It was unanimously agreed.

6. Bids (World Gold panning Championships in 2010, European Gold panning championships in 2007)

- a. Two countries expressed an interest to host the 2011 World Gold panning championship; Poland, who will celebrate their 800 years of existence in 2011, and Fred and Gloria, from Australia, who will be celebrating their 15 years of gold panning experience in 2011.
- b. Two countries presented a bid to host the World Gold Panning Championship in 2010. Czech Republic showed a video presentation by Veronika Stedra and Austria did a 10 minute speech. Vote was taken. Results were, Zlate Hory, Czech Republic, will be hosting the 2010 World Gold Panning Championship.
 - c. One country, Austria, expressed an interest to host the European Gold Panning Championship for 2007. It was unanimously decided to accept the bid. Austria will be hosting the 2007 European Gold Panning Championship.

7. Any Other Business.

The order of the two last points in the agenda was reversed due to the fact that the president's position needed to be re-elected at the meeting. Therefore, there could be no president to chair this point.

After inviting all delegates to suggest any other business (AOB), Vincent communicated his AOB.

- a. At the European Championship last year it was discussed whether to allow overseas countries to participate. Vince said that the Board's proposal was to make the European competition open. A show of hands indicated a clear majority in favour, only one vote against. The motion was carried and therefore European championships are Open.
- b. As the WGA develops, the Board thinks they will like the possibility to meet once a year in order to discuss and carry out things. Vincent asked the meeting for the mandate to allow the Board to meet for two days once a year. It was suggested that the first meeting could happen in Great Britain to allow for low costs. Nobody was against the proposal; the motion was carried.

The question on dates for championships was addressed. It was asked whether a two month period within which to organise championships should be imposed. Also, whether there should be a fixed date for national competitions so that they do not clash. It was pointed out that world competitions should take place as late in the year as was reasonable, to allow nationals to happen beforehand.

Japan suggested having a new badge for the WGA. They will go back and discuss the issue further at national level.

8. Elections: President and Treasurer (three years mandates expire)

Positions in the board have a time limit of three years, with the possibility of extension for more terms.

As the president and treasurer's three years mandate expires, elections need to be carried out. At this point, Vincent hands over the chairing of the meeting to Ana, the secretary of the WGA.

Ana pointed out to delegates that in the invitation to the AGM sent to all representatives prior to the meeting, they were invited to express their interest to occupy any of the positions. Ana had not yet received any reply at the time of the meeting. For this rea-



WGA Annual General Meeting 2006

son, and if there were no oppositions, Ana asked Vincent and Esko if they were ready to stand for another term as president and treasurer of the WGA respectively. Both Vincent and Esko accepted the nomination and left the room to allow for secrecy in the vote.

A show of hands indicated that the meeting unanimously agreed on extending Vincent's mandate as president of the WGA for another term. Likewise, it was unanimously agreed to extend Esko's mandate as treasurer of the WGA for another term.

Vincent and Esko were invited back into the meeting; the results were communicated to them and they were congratulated.

Vincent resumed chairmanship of the meeting and after thanking all delegates for their attendance, formally declared the meeting closed.

WGA Annual General Meeting 2007 - Synopsis

Member Nations present (18):

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and U.S.A.

Observer: Norway.

Finance:

Total income 2177,85 Euros (membership fees, biddings, sales, misc.)
Total expenditure 2149,44 Euros (WGA objects, Board meeting, honorariums, misc.)
Exercise result + 28, 41 Euros

Previous balance 6557,39 Euros New balance at 30/06/06 6585,80 Euros

Communications:

The Chairman of the WGA Communications Committee, Paul Thurkettle, presented a project for both the website and the Golden Times. The website will be expanded with pictures, video files and results of past WGA events. WGA official paperwork will be added, including 'How to bid for a World event', rules, minutes, etc. The Committee is being extended and member nations divided between its members to gather information.

Golden Times will be published on the WGA website and 2 CDRoms sent to national representatives.

Competitions:

The Chairman of the Competitions Committee, Ken Karlsson, listed the people in his team and informed that Italy had already nominated a temporary member. Spain already has an ordinary member in the Committee, Czech Republic and Poland were warmly invited to designate a person

Ken reminded all representatives that it is very important that the nations use the WGA rules in their national championships because it teaches the competitors the international rules

Proposals accepted and applicable as of 2008

- a- minimum size of gold chips is 1 mm
- b- penalty time is reduced to 3 minutes
- c- maximum panning time for individual heats is reduced to 15 minutes (the time to organize and run the heat is up to the organizers)
- d- beginners category will cease at international (world/European) level it can be run at national level as a fun event – international level can offer a panning school)

New selection process

After long and heated discussions, it was decided that no vote would take place this year on this specific topic. The WGA mandated the Competitions Committee to prepare another proposal for the next AGM. A call was made to member nations to submit a proposal (by 1/3/08). Representatives were kindly reminded that the project needed to be complete and not just a vague idea.

Classic pan category

No consensus could be reached on this topic and the WGA mandated the Competitions Committee to collect proposals for the next AGM. A call was made to member nations to submit their ideas.

Send selection proposals and classic pan ideas to: ken.karlsson@telia.com

Other Business:

Gold Song Project: Goldpanner's music is an important part of our cultural history. Gerry and Vince called for songs from every country to make a compilation CD. Cesar's company (Spain) offered to help produce the CD.

Send proposals to gerardtobin50@hotmail.com,

The full minutes can be obtained from the WGA secretary or from the WGA website.

2007 World Goldpanning Championships



The following pages look back at the 2007 World Goldpanning Championships in Dawson City. With reports and pictures from our members as well as newspapers from the area. Additional pictures can be seen on the WGA Web Site <http://www.w-g-a.org> Our thanks to Dan Davidson for permission to publish his news article.



Fourteen Nations Arrive for World Gold Panning Event

Story & Photos by Dan Davidson

August 29, 2007 - The Klondike Sun online edition

The viewer might be forgiven for thinking that all goldpanners look a bit alike. There was certainly a preponderance of jeans, vests, battered headgear and wind breakers as the assembled competitors from fourteen nations lined up and raised their flags outside the Dawson City Museum on Monday.

With no great flourish as all they were off down the street led by a couple of Mounties in Red Serge: west on Church Street; north on Front Street, past the business section and the S.S. Keno to the Visitor Information Centre; east on King Street, past Dawson's most historically preserved corner; and south to the Fourth Avenue venue of the 2007 World Goldpanning Competition.

Along the way it became clear that each of the nations - Australia, Austria, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Japan, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain - has a little something different going for their group. The Aussies periodically belted out verses of "Waltzing Matilda" while the Slovaks had a bristling chant that probably meant something like "we're the greatest".



Stewart began to buzz as Sawyer described the 12 point type red headline reading "Bernie House on shaky ground". The article, followed soon by a CBC report, indicated that the Council was no longer providing a blank funding grant to the project. That individual writers would have to apply for funding, show their expertise to the Senate House Committee, and that Sawyer himself had been turned down for funding for his residency, which then had to be made up out of committee funds.

Sawyer had not known the last two pieces of information and was tentatively eager to have found out in this way. He was in the mood to vent a bit to be opened his audience on Tuesday night.

"Normally," he said, "I would praise my remarks I would make this evening with thanks to all of the sponsors who are responsible for bringing me to an event and often many a time I have said in a survey and my thanks go to the Canada Council for the Arts, which is the national foundation in Canada, for sponsoring the event that I am about to participate in."

The Canada Council for the Arts has elected to no longer provide a blank funding grant to Bernie House and in fact declined to fund my residency here, so private donors mostly through a fund raising dinner held back last November and the endurable efforts of Elia Franklin, the Senate House administrator in Toronto, to raise funds from companies and other sponsors, have made possible my being here tonight.

"So you do NOT have Mr. Harper's government to thank for it, and I draw that to your attention, because normally you would have the federal government to thank for it and you can bear this in mind, and give it whatever weight you

Street, north on Front Street, past the business section and the S.S. Keno to the Visitor Information Centre, east on King Street, past Dawson's most historically preserved corner, and south to the Fourth Avenue venue of the 2007 World Goldpanning Competition.

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for their group. The Aussies periodically belted out verses of "Waltzing Matilda" while the Slovaks had a bristling chant that probably meant something like "we're the greatest".

There were variations in clothing as well, with some national costumes showing their colours. The Polish contingent were dressed as burgomeisters in long black robes

There were variations in clothing as well, with some national costumes showing their colours. The Polish contingent was dressed as burgomeisters in long black robes, and looked for all the world as if they were students heading off to Hogwarts.

The Spaniards were in costume as well, and marched to the music of the Spanish pipes, which have a different sound than their Celtic brethren.

At the venue it was all-stop, and then the flag bearers lined up along the north side of the venue, while the hundreds of others (closing in on 300 with two days of registration left to go) crowded into the bleachers next to the Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre.

The event could not be launched without protocol being observed. Diamond Tooth Gertie sang "O Canada"; the official World Goldpanning flag was raised; the Hän Singers, led by Georgette McLeod welcomed everyone with "The Flag Song".

An international event merits speeches. Member of Parliament Larry Bagnell spoke of the heart of the Klondike, which he held to be the gold in the hearts and veins of its people, and gave a brief account of the history of Dawson.

"I can guarantee," Bagnell said, "that all of you who have come for this competition will go home with gold, whether it's in medals or memories." Minister of Tourism and Culture, Elaine Taylor, noted that Dawson is hosting this event for its fourth time and is the only Canadian town to have done so.

"That speaks volumes about the commitment of the people who reside in this community and the prevalence it plays in our economy and in the social fabric of our territory." Jim Kenyon, Minister of Economic Development, welcomed the guests and greeted the Governor of Lapland, Hannle Pokka, who was part of the Finnish delegation. Kenyon's department controls the Community Development Fund which assisted in the purchase of material to create the venue for the competition.



Mayor John Steins, resplendent in the gold studded chain of office, welcomed everyone, pointed out the town's role in making this event happen, and invited the delegates to investigate Dawson to the full during the week.

"On behalf of the citizens of Dawson City I extend to you the warmest greetings and enthusiastically welcome you to the 2007 World Goldpanning Championships." Klondike MLA Steve Nordick (Yukon Party) thanked the territorial government for its \$100,000 contribution to the event and warned the delegates that some of them might, as he did twenty years ago, find that they were unable to leave the place.

Ken Karlson, of the World Goldpanning Association, took the microphone to declare the event officially open. "It's good to see you all again. I think of you as my family, so once a year I go somewhere in the world to meet my big, big family."

Brenda Caley, chair of the Klondike Goldpanning Championship Association, thanked all the members of the organizing committee and welcomed the guests. "We are very proud of our gold mining history," Caley said. "which extends from 1896 to our present day 21st century miners. They are still looking for gold on some of the claims that were staked 111 years ago."

Caley explained that one of the themes of the 2007 event was to highlight the gold pan itself, the tool so essential to the discovery of gold.

The Governor of Lapland, Hannle Pokka, gushed over the reception she has had since arriving. "I have got already so many welcoming words that I really have to say some words also by myself." Tankavaara, in Lapland, was last year's host for this competition and has now hosted it twice. "You here in Dawson City have this honour four times so you are the veterans in organizing these games." She noted that the climate, trees, landscape and even the mosquitoes were very similar to her native Finland and said she felt very much at home.

Finally, Svend Bergstrom presented Mayor Steins with a photograph of a Klondike nugget found on Claim 34 on Eldorado Creek in 1899. The weight of the original is 2.24 kilograms. The nugget currently resides in the natural historical museum in Stockholm Sweden.

With that, the ceremonies ended and the delegates headed to the arena for refreshments. There were two more days of registration to go, with a number of special events (gold field tours and a fashion show) to entertain the visitors, and opportunities to pan for gold on real gold bearing creeks.

Another newspaper article from the Moccasin Telegraph can be read at [Http://www.mocstel.org/2007/GoldpanningChampionship2007.html](http://www.mocstel.org/2007/GoldpanningChampionship2007.html)

The 2006 World Goldpanning Championships

Tankavaara - Finland



The 2007 World Goldpanning Championships

Dawson City - Canada





Goldpanning in: Chicken, Alaska



Goudzoeken in: Chicken, Alaska

De naam an sich is al een exportproduct. De enige gift-shop in het plaatsje Chicken barst uit

zijn voegen van de merchandise die te maken heeft met de naam van het plaatsje. De vreemde naam, die is verzonnen als compromis omdat men onenigheid had over de spelling van de lokaal veel voorkomende vogel "Ptarmigan", was ook voor ons een reden om eens een kijkje te nemen. Dat en natuurlijk de aanwezigheid van het door ons begeerde goud.

In betere tijden, dat wil zeggen tijdens de goldrush, leefden er in Chicken, Alaska in totaal meer dan 1000 mensen. Nu is dat afgenomen tot beneden de 20. Het plaatsje bestaat uit een gift-shop, een kroeg, een restaurantje en een tweetal RV-parks/campings. En natuurlijk een Dredge.

Wij (André, Gonneke en Ruurd) waren van plan een nachtje te blijven, maar op het moment dat we aankwamen op de camping, was men net bezig met het uitwassen van het residu van de dag. En de hoeveelheid goud die daar tevoorschijn kwam, heeft ervoor gezorgd dat we in totaal drie nachten zijn gebleven. Wij willen ook veel goud!

Gewapend met een gehuurde sluice gingen we onder begeleiding van Bob (wel bekend voor degenen die hier geweest zijn) naar de claim waarop we gingen pannen. Er waren die dag ook een tweetal Zweden, een tweetal Duitsers en een tweetal Amerikanen bezig. We zochten een mooi zonnig plekje uit (het was bijna 30 graden celsius) en gingen eerst een paar pannen prospecten. In de tweede pan zat al meteen een >0,2g nugget, plus nog een boel klein spul, dus we besloten hier de rest van de dag te scheppen en te sluicen.

Aan het einde van de dag hadden we 1,7g goud, wat voor ons een flinke hoeveelheid was en we besloten nog een dag te gaan pannen. De tweede dag gingen we gewapend met drie biertjes (op te drinken, wanneer we een nugget zouden vinden) weer aan de slag. In de eerste emmer zat al gelijk een nugget, dus de biertjes waren snel verdwenen. Halverwege de dag stortte het gat dat we gegraven hadden in, en de goudhoudende laag was bedolven. Hierdoor hadden we deze dag 1,1g goud gevonden.

De anderen die ook hadden gepand hadden allemaal een veelvoud aan goud gevonden, maar wij waren er erg tevreden mee, en de buisjes met goud pronken nu in onze verzamelingen. Mochten we ooit nog een keer in de buurt zijn, dan gaan we zeker nog een dagje goudzoeken in Chicken, Alaska!

Goldpanning in: Chicken, Alaska

The name itself makes a great export product. The only gift shop in the village Chicken is overfull with merchandise related to the town's name. The strange name originates from an argument about the correct spelling of a local common bird, called "Ptarmigan" and was the main reason for our visit. This, and of course the occurrence of precious gold.

Editors Note: As a new feature in Golden Times, we will publish some articles in the authors native language just as we received it. It is a way of saying thank you for taking the effort to write something for us.



In good old days, meaning during the gold rush, Chicken counted over 1000 inhabitants, while the present year-round population decreased below 20. The town consists of a gift-shop, a pub, a restaurant, two RV-parks and of course a Dredge. We (André, Gonneke and Ruurd) planned to stay overnight. However, when we arrived on the campsite people were cleaning up a day's residu and the amount of gold we saw, kept us in town for a total of three nights. We want a lot of gold as well!

Armed with a rented sluice, we visited the claim under Bob's supervision (very familiar for those who visited Chicken). That day, a Swedish couple, a German couple and an American couple also worked this claim. We looked for a sunny spot (it was almost 30 °C) and prospected a few pans. The second pan already contained a > 0.2 g nugget, plus some smaller gold and we decided to stay in this exact spot.

At the end of the day we collected 1.7 g of gold, which is a major amount for us and we agreed to stay longer. The second day we brought three beers for celebration, in case we would find another nugget. The first bucket contained a nugget, so the beers were emptied early. During the day the hole we dug collapsed, covering the gold bearing layer and we found only 1.1 g of gold.

Although the other goldpanners working this claim found much more gold, we were content with our findings and the tubes with gold now glitter in our collections.

If we ever are in the neighbourhood, we will definitely go on another day-trip prospecting in Chicken, Alaska!

André Niemeijer
Gonneke Cornelisse
Ruurd van Wijhe

Goldpanning Championships - a Family Affair.



Over the last 18 years I have attended gold panning championships, always as a family event. Travelling with my brother Vincent, sometimes his children Daisy, Jack and Ralph and girlfriend Mary, other times my Mum and Dad. But this year was very special. My children, Liam and Aliza would be attending their first championships. I was very excited and a little concerned, would they like it?



British National competition in 1991 with the family and then in Willisau, Switzerland in 2003



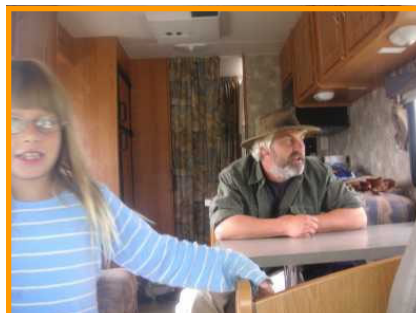
Vince, Mary and Daisy were joining us and we had an adventure planned.

In Fairbanks we all met up and were driven to our RV. At 28 foot long it seemed a real challenge to drive but was very spacious inside and looked great.



Vince and I in Limoges. France in 1995

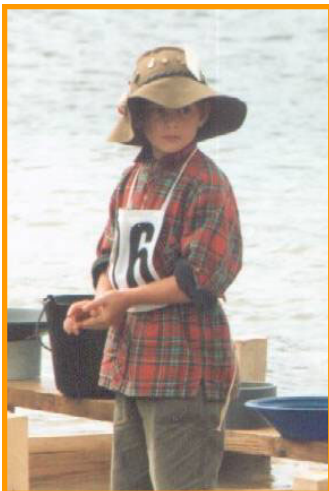
We stocked up with food and were off! I had made the mistake of relying on my memory, and as ever was a little out!



Vince worries about our time as we rush to Dawson

My plan of a journey of about 6 hours turned into 14. The roads were amazing and we were all surprised at the lack of traffic and straightness of the roads. We were reminded that the essence

of our journey was to meet friends with a chance meeting with Esko at a fuel station in Tok. "See you in Dawson", we cheerfully said.



Jack in France in 1995

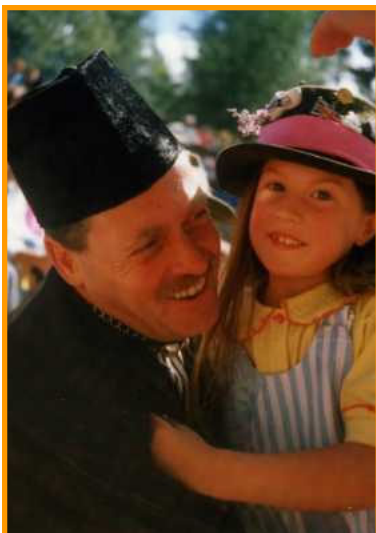
After what seemed an age, we turned off onto the mountain roads to Canada and Dawson. 200 miles still to go! Due to the time change it was going to be tight to make the opening, but the vast improvement to the roads over the years enabled us to drive as fast as possible. The RV made for a comfortable journey and the children played games and adults slept and made tea. It is quite odd to be able to wander around and sleep on beds while this huge box lumbers up hills and flies down them.



A Dawson miners "bucket"

Mary described while taking a nap in the top section as feeling like we were wildly out of control. Being the driver, that is not something I would not comment on!

bribes to get into the cold water with no boots on!



Koos and Daisy during a parade

We finally wound down the hill to find the ferry queue long and slow. Vincent paced up and down but unfortunately we still missed the parade. This was something I was particularly looking forward to my children being involved in. Still, we were here, greeting many friends and meeting new ones.

"I hope in Spain we will have 4 generations of Thurkettle's panning and maybe 5 in future competitions if Daisy, Jack and Ralph get a move on!"

My children came to enjoy what Daisy, Jack and Ralph had learned long ago; standing in cold water early in the morning, eating when and where you can, how scary and tense competing is as well as how exciting and rewarding the whole experience is. They have made new friends they shall meet again and

again in many different countries and I hope will always remember their first time.

The week passed quickly and so soon we were saying goodbye and heading back to Fairbanks. The northern lights appeared on the last night for us.

I cannot fully express the emotional pride a father has seeing his children out there with their bibs on, shouting as they raise their pan to signal their finish. The tension as he waits for the gold count and then the gossip of who got what, then the posting of the results. I now know how Vince felt when he promised Ralph a hot chocolate, as he stood, five years old up to his knees on a stormy day in Scotland 17 years ago.

I hope in Spain we will have four generations of Thurkettles panning and maybe five in future competitions if Daisy, Jack and Ralph get a move on!

Paul

We settled into the pattern of a championships; practicing in the pools, talking and discussing gold and panning, visiting claims, competing in the heats and then nervously waiting for the results and of course, enjoying the evenings. This year was highlighted by being able to visit some mining operations which really accentuates the difference between the panner with his shovel, bucket and pan to a commercial gold miner.



Liam and Daisy in Dawson



Aliza signals "all done"

Liam and Aliza played with local children, adapted to life in the RV quickly and loved the freedom of movement Dawson allowed. They took to competing and only required some minor threats or



Victoria Gold History

150 YEARS SINCE GOLD DISCOVERY. VICTORIA - AUSTRALIA

The historic gold mining town of Dunolly, on the central Victorian goldfields and the heart of the "Golden Triangle", celebrated its heritage from June to November 2006.

Gold was first discovered in July 1856 on the Old Lead which formed part of Broadway, the main street in Dunolly. Thousands of diggers poured into Dunolly by August 1856 and traced the lead down towards Burnt Creek, retrieving thousands of pounds worth of gold.

September 1856 reached the pinnacle of the Dunolly Rush with some 50,000 diggers covering the area. In October that year, there were still many diggers flocking to Dunolly. A reporter wrote in 1856 - "I saw a digger wash one ounce of gold from three cradles of the stuff (washdirt)". The list of gold nuggets found, some weighing up to 26 pounds continued in the newspapers at that time - "The Rush to this field now assuming proportions such, as to baffle all idea of calculations. Thousands are arriving daily, so that one can imagine the whole mining population of the state of Victoria now in Dunolly". "The "Broadway", the finest on the goldfields - is every hour added to by a class of business places better than any seen at any earlier period of the diggings".

Dunolly folks celebrated the "Dunolly Rush" in 2006. 150 days of commemorating this historic event. The small township conducted 36 community events during the 6 months of celebrations. Some of the highlights were in June when the 1st Welcome Stranger Goldpanning Championships with the Golden Triangle Challenge - using the traditional steel goldpan, were held. 50 panners braved the sub zero conditions but enjoyed being part of our celebrations.

In July, a two day re-enactment of the Welcome Stranger gold nugget which was discovered in 1869 weighing 72 kilos, and is still the biggest in the world was certainly a big drawcard which brought many visitors and old identities back to Dunolly.

In October, a 2 day Gold Expo and Annual meeting of the Prospectors and Miners of Victoria was held with the launch of the new Minelab Gold Detector GPX-4000.

These celebrations were a great success which the community and thousands of visitors embraced wholeheartedly. Gold continues to be found, and several reports of big nuggets being discovered in our area recently.

Information supplied by Anne Doran.



SLUGGER GOLD NUGGET

Nugget weighed 110 ounces (3490 grams) found in the Maryborough district of Victoria - Australia. In December 2006

The nugget was named "Sluggger" by its discoverer and located at a depth of three feet. Estimated value for the nugget is between \$90,000 and \$100,000 (Photo - Maryborough and District Advertiser)

GOLDASAURUS GOLD NUGGET

Nugget believed to have been found near Talbot - Victoria - Australia In February 2006.

Nugget was bought by Sovereign Hill - Ballarat for \$250,000

(Photo - Private collection)





The making of the bar

From this to this



Making a Gold Bar

Having a heap of gold dust is a wonderful thing: a very wonderful thing. But the idea had grown on me that I wanted a bar, a bar of solid gold, my gold! I once, many years ago, made a small bar of Welsh gold in a car workshop with an oxyacetylene torch. But it was very clumsy, the gold boiled and stuck to the angle-iron mould I had made.

"I wanted a bar, a bar of solid gold, my gold!"

run out of gas, had several small burns, a burn hole in my trousers and the roaring blow-torch noise had brought the neighbours to watch. But the gold was still mostly dust – certainly it never melted enough to pour into a mould.

This time I wanted to do it properly. I first hunted for in-



Jack makes the ingot shape in pink wax



Preparing the mould for the Kiln

formation on how to cast gold on the web, but not much was helpful. Then I met with some other panners who had done some gold casting and, kindly, Chris Deighton lent me two crucibles and advised a propane blow-torch. Well one torch was not hot enough, so I bought another and heaped charcoal over the crucible and then blasted two hot-blue flames at the gold dust. At the end of about an hour I had

I was wondering what to do next when my son Jack came home from work, he works in a laboratory as a dental technologist. Just being polite I asked if he had had a good day at work – 'yes' he said 'I've been casting gold teeth all day.' Well, in all my hunting for information I had missed the obvious – my son knows how to do it!

So we fixed a date and with the permission of Derek the laboratory owner, we set to work. Jack made an ingot shape in pink wax and then set it in a plaster, 'investment' mould. We put this in a kiln set to 1100

degrees and waited. The idea is that the wax melts away and then you can melt the gold into the mould. A few minutes later, while we relaxed drinking coffee, the lights suddenly went out! We



250 grams of hard won gold melting

fumbled about in the dark and finally got the lights back on and went to the kiln. There was a problem with too much wax and the kiln had blown up, tripping the electricity supply. The laboratory also has an Induction kiln, so we thought we would try that, plan B!

Putting 250g of very hard won gold dust in a flask and watching it become bright yellow hot through the little Induction kiln window is a very scary thing and my nerves were in tatters when Jack finally opened the lid and lifted out the glowing ceramic flask. I watched as he poured the glowing liquid into the mould – wow!! As it cooled I could see



Pouring the bar

that I had at last got a bar, a beautiful bar of solid gold, my gold. Now I guess I must bury it some-



The finished product, now back to into the ground!

where for safe keeping. Strange how we work so hard to find the gold, ... and then hide it again!

Vince Thurkettle

Golden Times and the WGA web site now have a new team to ensure the quality and quantity of information to the WGA gold-panners.

The Communications committee are:

Paul Thurkettle—Chairman, Editor

Esther van Diggelen—WGA Webmaster

Reporters:

Bruno van Eerdenbrugh
Belgium, Slovakia, Japan & Poland

Anne Doran—
Australia, Italy, Hungary & USA

Esther van Diggelen-
France, UK, Germany & Netherlands

Lorelei Falco-
Czech Republic, Spain, Sweden & Canada

Christine Rowe-
Switzerland, Austria, Finland & South Africa

Please contact them individually (see back page) or email us at

wga_comms@yahoo.com

The 2008 World Goldpanning Championships



Navelgas, Spain

Navelgas is a village situated in the Municipality of Tineo which is placed in the north west of the region of Asturias, in the North of Spain.

How to get to Navelgas?

By plane:

Asturias has an airport (OVD code) which is 75 km from Navelgas. Travel to Navelgas takes an hour and a half. Visitors will arrive in Madrid, Barcelona or Seville, one of the most important Spanish cities, which have daily connections to Asturias. Furthermore, Asturias has connections with some European cities: Easyjet flies to Stansted Airport (London) in United Kingdom and Iberia has flights to Orly Airport (Paris) in France and Brussels.

From Asturias airport take the bus to Oviedo, Avilés or Gijón (connections every hour during the day). More information: www.alsa.es

By car:

Navelgas is about 100 km from Oviedo, the capital city of Asturias. It takes approximately two hours. People can rent a car in some of our local car rental firms placed in Avilés, Gijón, Oviedo, as well as in the airport. For more information please visit the following sites:

Avis: www.avis.es

Europcar: www.europcar.com

Hertz: www.hertz.com

ATESA: www.atesa.es

In Asturias there are also firms that offer the possibility of renting motor caravans. Please contact:

Caravanas Costa Verde: www.caravanascostaverde.com

Caravanas Covadonga: www.caravanas-santander.com

By bus:

The company ALSA has daily connections from Madrid, Valladolid, León, Zamora, Salamanca, Barcelona, Seville, Pontevedra, Irún, Santander and Bilbao. From Oviedo, capital city of Asturias, there are connections to some European cities in France, Suisse and Belgium.

ALSA has a route from Oviedo to Tineo, and from Avilés and Gijón to Luarca. From Tineo and Luarca connections to Navelgas are made by GARRIDO coaches. More information: www.garrido.net

By train:

FEVE (Railways of narrow lines) has two basic routes: one from Ferrol to Bilbao (through the north of Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria and Vizcaya) and another one from Bilbao to León (through Vizcaya, Burgos, Cantabria, Palencia and León). More information: www.feve.es

RENFE has daily connections from Gijón and Oviedo to Madrid, Barcelona and Alicante. More information: www.renfe.es



The Host Committee of World Gold Panning Championship (Spain 2008) has reached an agreement with Viajes El Corte Inglés (www.viajeselcorteingles.es) for being the official travel agency of the Championship. It will cooperate with the Host Committee in the organization of participants and their family journeys.

They have a special department dealing with the sportive events that has design a full program of exciting excursions and activities in addition to the panning, to make participants enjoy the whole experience of the Championship.

In their office participants will be able to:

Book their flights to Navelgas

Book their accommodation in Navelgas during the Championship

Choose and book excursions to discover the best of Spanish culture.

All their services are carried out by highly qualified staff and participants can choose the more convenient terms of payment (credit card, cash, hire purchase...)

Where to stay?

Visitors can find modern and comfortable hotels in the cities and excellent accommodation in the country, all of them includes global aquality in infrastructure, installations and services. Hotels, country houses, apartments, camp sites, hostels, guesthouses and youth hostels form part of the accommodation possibilities for any type of preference.

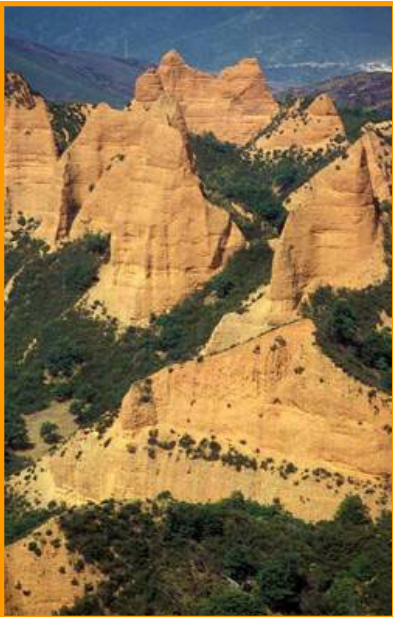
The organisation will install a free camping near from championship area.

If you have any problems or you need more information you can phone / mail to the Oficial Agency (Viajes el Corte Ingles) or The Host Committee.

Why come to Navelgas?

Participating in the World Gold Panning Championship represents a marvellous opportunity to visit Spain, and Asturias, one of the most beautiful regions, which has been classified by none other than Woody Allen as , "the best kept treasure in Spain". It is one of those remote and authentic spots that do not normally come up on tourist circuits.

For those of you who have already been here, the Championship will enable you to visit one of the main tourist attractions in Spain, a country with one of the most important natural, cultural and historical heritages in the world. And specially to visit the region of Asturias, which is known as the "Natural Paradise" and the "Cultural Treasure".

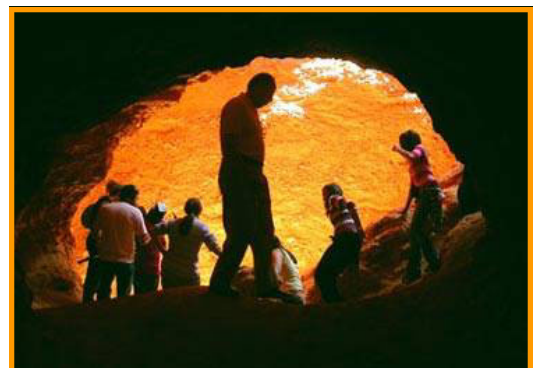


Navelgas has always known by its gold tradition. However, we must not forget that its wealth not only lies there. Its stately heritage is enormous, given the amount of large country houses, mansions and small palaces that remind us of a noble past. Navelgas is also home to many traditional country houses, as well as hórreos and paneras (trans. "raised granaries" of different sizes, the former having four, while the latter has six pillars), traditional constructions made of wood and stone that stand on pillars, known as pegollos, which served to store farming produce and chattels. Indeed, in Navelgas de Arriba there is a collection of extremely peculiar hórreos, given that their pillars do not rest directly on the ground, but rather on walls, stables or houses.

Other local constructions worthy of note are the water mills that are to be found along the courses of the Navelgas, Yerbo, Bárcena and Naraval rivers. The majority of these have been perfectly preserved. Each one is inevitably associated with a particular tale or legend.

Moreover, in the craftsman area, we have the living remains of a culture and economy that was founded on self-sufficiency. The tremendous isolation to which the area was subject down the centuries was even more acute in the

Vaqueiro settlements, where, in addition to the geographical barriers, one must of necessity add the racial ones. This meant that the inhabitants of these areas were obliged to make the tools, instruments and implements needed to carry out their daily tasks (household utensils, farming tools, instruments for spinning and weaving, as well as other implements to enable work animals to carry out their labours), which serve to further bear witness to the craft tradition area. Materials that abounded in the natural surroundings were used as raw material, such as wood, wool, flax and iron, for the trans-



The 2008 World Goldpanning Championships

formation of which joiners' workshops, fulling stocks and foundries were built, but which are no longer in use. Overcoming the isolation, and the introduction of farming machinery, saw an end to the use of many of these objects, though there are still some craftsmen in the area that work on the construction of these, albeit more as a hobby than as a way of making a living.

In 2003 Navelgas received the distinction of being an Asturian Pueblo Ejemplar (trans. an organisation and competition on the lines of a "Tidy Towns" competition, but with greater cultural and civic content). This distinction was created upon the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Prince of Asturias Awards, and aims at awarding an annual prize to any hamlet, village or town in Asturias that has been outstanding "in the defence of its most noble values, its natural surroundings and environment, or its historical, cultural and artistic heritage, or in the carrying-out of community works, or other displays of extraordinary solidarity".

According to the members of the jury who awarded the prize to Navelgas, it was successful "on account of its continued and shared effort in recovering and maintaining its traditions and natural resources".

Another deciding factor was its wise move "in having revived an activity as ancient and unique to the area as is gold panning – which in recent years has seen the town create an international profile for itself – in addition to its role in revitalising the district as a whole".

NAVELGAS AND ITS GOLDEN TRADITION

Navelgas has always been known as The Valley of Gold. This district has been an essential enclave since time immemorial as far as obtaining gold is concerned, given that it belongs to the gold – bearing strip located between the western Cantabrian region and the north of Portugal. The numerous Celtic settlements located in the area combined farming and hunting pursuits with the search for gold. Some time later, the Romans were responsible for discovering, mining and commercialising, laboriously, though with exemplary organisation, the rich gold-bearing veins of Navelgas, leaving numerous samples of their mining activities, which produced a complete change to the landscape as it had been known up to that time.



At the beginning of the 1950's, the company known as " Sociedad Aurífera Asturiana" (Asturian Gold Society) re-kindled the gold mining activity in the area, after confirming the existence of gold in one of the underground mines that had been opened in Roman times. It

was at that time that the practice of panning for gold was recovered, initially being used as a prospecting technique.



Enrique Sanfiz was the leading light of the time, an oureiro (trans. "gold panner" in the Asturian language) par excellence, who was convinced that the Paredes, Bárcena and Navelgas rivers were the most gold-bearing locations in western Asturias. He was assiduous in panning their banks, in spite of the fact that the nuggets found did not make him rich. Some years later, a group of people from Navelgas recovered the practice of panning for gold and formed an association.



BARCIAECUS GOLD PANNERS' ASSOCIATION

Ten years ago a group of neighbours got together to form the "Barciaecus" Gold Panning Association, with the aim in mind of becoming involved in a more playful and tourist spirit in this sport. The association was founded on the basis of cultural and sports objectives. At present it has over 70 members. Its activities are aimed at promoting the area, making it known to numerous people all over the world who are dedicated to searching for this precious metal and all that this attractive sport brings with it. One of the remarkable peculiarities of the association is that these members



undertake to “respect and defend nature and all of its plant and animal resources, given that these are the basis of life on our planet”.

Since its foundation, the restlessness of the members have led them to represent Spain, as the national gold panning selection, in the different World and European Championships that have been held since 1997.

Furthermore, every year in July they organise the Regional and National

Championships, in which hundreds of people take part from the four corners of the Iberian Peninsula, as well as from different places around the world.

In 2005, Navelgas was the venue chosen to host the European Gold Panning Championship, an extremely important event for the region as a whole. And it is with the same enthusiasm we hope that the 2008 World Gold Panning Championship in Navelgas, the first of its kind in Spain, will be equally successful.

The Association’s work does not end with the support and organising of these sports events, given that it also deals in the teaching of this ancestral technique throughout the year, by way of holding gold panning day courses and workshops. The aim of these Navelgas locals, and especially those members of “Barciaecus”, of keeping this tradition alive and of availing of suitable facilities where it would be possible to explain in due detail the history of gold in the area and its relation to the inhabitants, recently led to



the opening of the Asturian Museum of Gold (MOA).

The MOA stands in La Casona Capalleja, in the neighbourhood of San Nicolás, beside the only bridge in Navelgas. It is a large, three-storeyed ancestral home that has been refurbished with modern facilities in order to house the exhibits. At the back of the house there is a centuries’ old, granary that serves as the ideal place to give gold panning workshops.

The museum is dedicated to gold, its value and to the history of the men and women, who over the centuries struggled against the elements and natural surroundings to obtain this precious metal. Old and religious stories, medical and technological advances, as well as masterful engineering, all come together in Navelgas so that they may become known to the general public. Asturs, Romans and legends dating from the last century tell us tales of struggles, power, rites and symbols.



WORLD GOLDPANNING CHAMPIONSHIP 2008
21 st to 27 th JULY

PROVISIONAL PROGRAM

FRIDAY 18 TH

10 am – 1.30 pm / 4 pm – 7 pm Registration. Free goldpanning in the river (by the law)

SATURDAY 19 TH

10 am – 1.30 pm / 4 pm – 7 pm Registration. Free goldpanning in the river (by the law)

SUNDAY 20 TH

9 am – 7 pm Touristy visit Coaña's Celtic hill-fort, Luarca and Cudillero, typical seaside villages.

10 am – 1.30 pm / 4 pm – 7pm Registration. Free goldpanning in the river (by the law)

MONDAY 21 ST

9,15 am – 8 pm Touristy visit to Cultural Landscape of "Las Médulas" in León. (World Heritage)

10 am – 1,30 pm / 4 pm – 7 pm Registration. Free goldpanning in the river (by the law)).

TUESDAY 22 ND

9,15 am – 5,30 pm Touristy visit to Tineo's region.

10 am – 1,30 pm / 4 pm – 7 pm Official Registration ends. Free goldpanning in the river. (by the law).

7,30 pm

Official Parade and Opening Ceremony . Dinner with typical dishes and Spanish party.

WEDNESDAY 23 RD

Elimination heats.

6,30 pm Annual Meeting of WGA.

10 pm Spanish party.

Other activities along the day.

THURSDAY 24 TH

Elimination heats.

9 pm Presentation by 2009 Host Committee (Italy).

10 pm Italian – Spanish party.

Others activities along the day.

FRIDAY 25 TH

Elimination heats.

10 pm Spanish party.

Others activities to the competition along the day.

SATURDAY 26 TH

Elimination heats.

9 pm Official dinner by Host Committee.

10 pm Spanish party.

Other activities along the day.

SUNDAY 27 TH

Championship finals.

6.30 pm Awards Giving and Closing Ceremony. Spanish Party.

Other activities along the day.

The 2008 World Goldpanning Championships

CATEGORIES

OFFICIAL CATEGORIES

JUNIORS (10 €)

Boys and girls between 12 and 16 years old.

PROFICIENT (25 €)

Men and ladies.

VETERANS (25 €)

Men and ladies over 60 years old.

NATIONAL TEAM (75 €)

Five people (minimum two women and maximum three) all of the same nationality.

UNOFFICIAL CATEGORIES

CHILDREN (Free)

Children under 12 years old. (both sexes)

COUPLE (20 €)

A man and a woman.

TRIO (30 €)

Three member team (minimum a woman and maximum two).

TRADITIONAL PAN (25 €)

TEAM (50 €)

Five member team (minimum two women and maximum three) independently of their nationality.

Registration may be done in the official site of the Championship: www.navelgasoro.com

The Host Committee would want to do a rough estimate about the number of competitors. So, please if it's possible, the organization orders all people who have the intention to participate, book on-line the inscription, that will be paid at the Championship Office.

EVERY DAY

ASTURIAM GOLD MUSEUM
HANDMADE 'S MARKET
ASTURIAM VAQUEIRO MUSEUM IN NARAVAL
FOREST MUSEUM IN NARAVAL
VISIT THE GOLD MINES
MINERALS EXHIBITION AND SALE
FREE INTERNET ACCESS
RESTAURANTS
FREE CAMPING GROUND
TYPICAL PRODUCTS SALE
ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

SPECIAL EVENTS AND OTHERS ACTIVITIES

SPANISH PARTIES
FOOTBALL MATCH BETWEEN DELEGATIONS
CELTIC BOWLING MATCH BETWEEN DELEGATIONS
"ESFOYÓN" AND "AMAGOSTO" FESTIVAL
MINE PROPPING SHOW
TEMPORARY EXPOSITIONS

IMPORTANT

The Host Committee could change the program if it's necessary.

The 2008 World Goldpanning Championships

The Host Committee to be able free goldpanning area in the river. It's not allowed doing this in other places. People who are interested must to ask to organization for permission.

GENERAL INFORMATION

HOST COMMITTEE

Barciaecus GoldPanners Association

Barrio de San Nicolás, s/n
33873 NAVELGAS (Tineo) – ASTURIAS (Spain)

Telephone number / Fax (+ 34) 985 80 60 18 SCHEDULE: 11 am -2 pm / 4 pm -7 pm

(Sunday 11 am – 2 pm / Monday close)
www.navelgasoro.com / info@navelgasoro.com

Contact: Alba Iglesias

ASTURIAN GOLD MUSEUM

Barrio de San Nicolás s/n
33873 NAVELGAS (Tineo) – ASTURIAS (Spain)
www.museodeloro.es / info@museodeloro.es
Telephone number / Fax (+ 34) 985 80 60 18
(Same schedule)

Contact: Alba Iglesias

OFFICIAL TRAVEL AGENCY

Viajes el Corte Inglés

Plaza de la Gesta, 3 - 1º izda.
33007 OVIEDO (Asturias) - Spain

Telephone number: (+34) 985 96 32 53
Fax: (+34) 985 24 16 57
www.viajeselcorteingles.es / oviedogesta@viajeseci.es

Contact: Alejandra Vela

Principal links:

www.navelgasoro.com
www.museodeloro.es
www.tineo.es
www.comarcavaqueira.com
www.infoasturias.com
www.spain.info
www.w-g-a-org

Editor's Note

There is further information and pictures on the Golden Times CD which has been sent to all WGA National Representatives.



The 2007 South African Championships

The 2007 South African Gold Panning Championships has once again proved that, although gold panning may have its roots firmly in the past, it is a legacy that has survived to be an inspiration, embraced by all. At this tenth anniversary of gold panning, participants and spectators soon surrendered to gold fever and became captivated by the heated quest to pan out the elusive nuggets as the minutes and seconds rapidly slipped away.

On the evening of 20 September the championships began with a colourful Street Parade and Official Opening ceremony at the championship site in Pilgrim's Rest. The MEC for Culture, Sport and Recreation of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, Hon. Mr. Jabu Mahlangu delivered the keynote address in which he gave an inspirational and uplifting message to all. The opening ceremony, as per custom with gold panning, included colourful and entertaining performances by among others, the Ntwanano Culture Group, Pilgrim's Rest Can Can Girls, the accomplished Pilgrim's Rest Public Works Choir and kwaito group Zero-to-Hero. The traditional "Wheelbarrow" race and Pub Crawl on the Friday of the event programme gave everyone a last opportunity to relax before the serious business of the competition started the next day.

The elimination heats commenced on Saturday 22 September to be followed that evening by a well supported Digger's shindig. Throughout the championships the competition between individual panners and competing teams was furious and some excellent times were recorded. A surprising number of new faces drew attention as their achievements were noted and it became clear that there was no room for complacency by any one.

On Sunday 23 the pressure escalated as the semi-finals and final of the five-man team competition took place. The heat of the competition was only exceeded by the unseasonable scorching weather that saw the sun mercilessly beat down on the championship site. A surprise visit by the MEC for Culture, Sport and Recreation, Hon. Mr. Jabu Mahlangu, introduced a surge of humour and interest as he, after delivering a few encouraging words to the spectators and competitors, tried his hand at panning in the semi final of the Proficient Men's category.

As the day of the finals approached the weather had cooled to a kinder temperature but the atmosphere at the championship site was as heated as ever. The finals were fast and furious and provided some remarkable achievements accompanied by high spirits and a general atmosphere of camaraderie that is so typical of gold panning. As the winners in the various categories emerged it became clear that the younger gold panners are becoming a force to be reckoned with which has enormously positive implications for the future of South African gold panning.

CATEGORY	FIRST		SECOND		THIRD	
	NAME	TIME	NAME	TIME	NAME	TIME
PROFICIENT MEN	<i>Danny Brink (Barberton, Mpu)</i>	2.26	Bright Malatjie (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	2.40	Joseph Mashaka (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	2.44
PROFICIENT LADIES	<i>Carmen Goodwin (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)</i>	1.56	Sonja Vermaak (Sabie, Mpu)	2.39	Essie Mogane (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	2.49
BEGINNERS MEN	<i>Tobie Oosthuizen (Lydenburg, Mpu)</i>	2.51	Stefan Grové (Nelspruit, Mpu)	3.42	Tim Price (JHB. Gauteng)	4.08
BEGINNERS LADIES	<i>Dudu Mokoena (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)</i>	3.59	Shan Paton (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	5.15	Chantell Meyer (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	7.18
JUNIORS	<i>Jonathan Viera (Graskop, Mpu)</i>	1.46	Surprise Thulelo (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	2.47	Nomathemba Sambo (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	2.51
VETERANS	Eugene Swanepoel (Skukuza, Mpu)	2.26	Danny Brink (Barberton, Mpu)	2.33	Joseph Mashego (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	3.26
TRADITIONAL PAN	Andrew Mason (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	2.51	Joseph Mashego (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	7.50	Sendra Mthuke (Pilgrim's Rest, Mpu)	8.25

Ten years of the partnership between the South African Gold Panning Association (SAGPA) and Mpumalanga's Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation has once again proved to be a winning combination in presenting an exciting and successful championship event. The championships have exceeded expectations with an even greater number of competitors than in 2006. Apart from the participants from KZN, Limpopo, Gauteng and the Free State there were also competitors from Portugal, New Zealand and Great Britain.

As 2007 sees gold panning championships in South Africa celebrate its 10th anniversary, all indications are that the legacy of the old gold prospectors is alive and thriving today.

A record number of 726 competitors registered (707 in 2006) for the 2007 SA National Gold Panning Championships. There were competitors from Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Free State, KZN and Limpopo as well as from Portugal, Great Britain and New Zealand.

Winners indicated in blue have won sponsorship to represent South Africa at the World Gold Panning Championships to be held at Navalgas, Spain in July 2008.

Cheryl Van Dyk



Mongolia Gold By Hamid Sardar,

extracts from an article published in GEO Magazine n° 334, December 2006 (translation by FALCO)

MONGOLIA

THE INITIATION TRAVEL OF THE TSAATAN CHILDREN



Hamid Sardar, d'origine iranienne, a étudié le sanscrit à Harvard. Il travaille comme anthropologue à la Fondation Axis-Mundi, à Genève, et a organisé plusieurs expéditions en Mongolie.

It's a sunny morning of mid-october, but the temperature fell to -10C°. We travel between the snowy hills of the Sayan Mountains. I have joined a group of Tsaatan reindeer herders coming from the Taiga, West of Mongolia, to search for gold. We are heading towards the Bos river, which marks the border between Mongolia and the little Russian republic of Touva. A wild region without law, where armed conflicts opposing Mongolian border guards and Touva bandits are frequent. Last year, a hunter found a 400 grams nugget. A real fortune in this region... A gold rush started then and hundreds of paths are now desecrating this wild and previously untouched country.

"To enter adulthood, the young boys of the Tsaatan people must travel to a faraway valley, in the North of Mongolia. They go there to pay their respects to the spirit of their ancestors, hunt the zibeline and, recently, to also search for gold. A fever which could change everything."

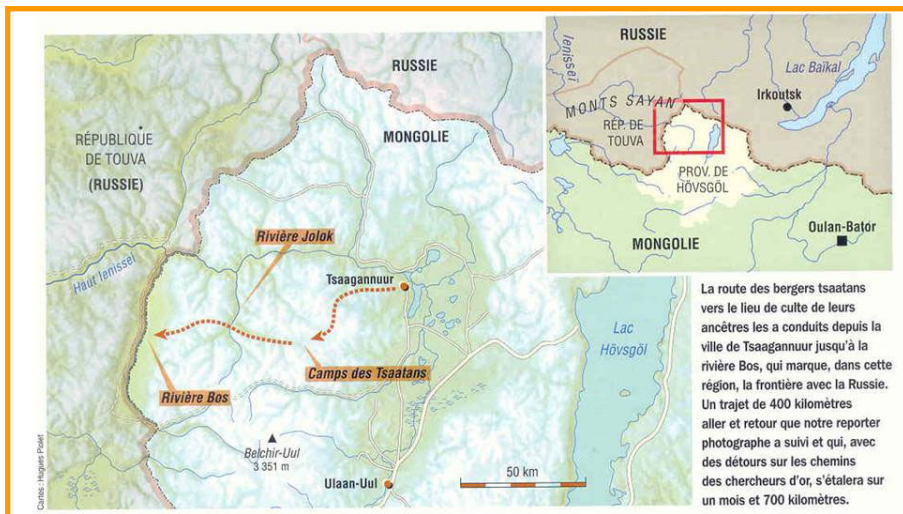
peditions have known a tragic end in the past. Our eyes are riveted to Sanjim, the elder guiding our troupe. Sanjim swears that we'll find gold. "My grandfather, he says, brought back a big nugget from the Bos area, but before he could show me where, he was shot dead by Tumur, an infamous bandit."



We will trek through the Koskolgonduk pass, the name meaning "the place where the little girl disappeared," from a local legend. By the time we reach

the pass, the blizzard is blowing and we can't see any path. Sanjim sends the young men of the group to look for a way down while the reindeers just lay down in the snow to wait. Only one of them, Tarthuk, comes back with a possible path. He's very determined and we don't have much of a choice as it's too late to turn back. The visibility is bad, I can't see at 3 meters. Only Tarthuk's voice is heard. "Isn't it wonderful?" he says. Bit by bit, the fog is lifting. At one point, I turn around and realize how dangerous our path was. From the pass, we have gone down a 60 degrees slope flanked by avalanche corridors... At nightfall, we finally reach the forest and set up camp.

The next day, we visit a 'spirit tree', where it is said that the spirit of Horik's great-grand-uncle, an important shaman, is resting. Tarthuk prepares a fire and warms some tea, placing the first cup at the foot of the tree, atop a stone enveloped by a blue cloth. Sanjim takes some reindeer hairs and ties them to a branch with a white cloth. I raise my eyes, expecting to find a skeleton and he laughs. "When a shaman dies, the body is taken away and left to the birds and animals." The clothes and the drum are attached in a tree and serve as a material support for the shaman's spirit. Horik listens carefully and learns the rituals. His heritage.



La route des bergers tsaatans vers le lieu de culte de leurs ancêtres les a conduits depuis la ville de Tsaaganuur jusqu'à la rivière Bos, qui marque, dans cette région, la frontière avec la Russie. Un trajet de 400 kilomètres aller et retour que notre reporter photographe a suivi et qui, avec des détours sur les chemins des chercheurs d'or, s'étalera sur un mois et 700 kilomètres.

Behind me is riding Horik, a 14-years old boy, whose duty is to watch over the reindeers. For the Tsaatan boys of his age, the travel to the Bos river is a fundamental initiation. The Bos valley is not only a gold mine, but also the land where the shamans of the tribe are buried. Along the way, Horik will learn to present offerings to the spirits of the ancestors and to ask for their help in hunting the zibeline, a very precious animal in his culture. To reach the valley, we must first cross some high mountains through dangerous passes and paths. Numerous ex-

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Five more days of travel... We prospect the valley, in small water streams, looking for the elusive

come, attracted by the gold fever. They buy reindeers and over-hunt the limited animal resources. For many, the mountains and rivers that surround the Tsaatans seem to represent an easy money source rather than a natural space to protect. I hope this nomadic people will find a solution to preserve their ancestral land while facing the requirements of world economy. By protecting their land, the Tsaatans would save a culture unique in the world. And the next generation of young boys would, like Horik, make the travel to the Bos river, pay respect to the ancestors living in the trees. And hunt the precious zibeline.



Digging up the mud, then slowly sifting. And finding 5 to 10 grams of gold in a day. This is the classical hard work for gold panners.

Hamid Sardar

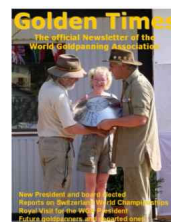
gold. Nothing. The hunters have more luck. They know which type of animal is around by the way the dogs are barking. A deer is shot, our first fresh meat in weeks. The weather is still horrible. This is our fifth day of snow in a row. And all our food is almost gone. We decide to go back through Salek Dawa, an easier pass than the previous one. When we reach the river Hutuk, we see big holes along the river banks. Landmarks of gold diggings. Blue silk scarves are tied in the trees to indicate the places where gold has been found. The men of our group get to work with long-handle shovels and wash the mud in the icy water with large plastic bowls. They are interrupted by a gunshot and Tarthuk calls to the hidden person to come and share a cigarette. Two men show up, herders from the neighboring town of Ulaan-Uul that were just watching over their part of the river. Gathering their strength, our men altogether lift a huge rock using tree trunks. They collect the sand with poles whose extremities are carved like spoons. Suddenly, a piece of gold appears in the mud...

The Tsaatans will stay awhile on the river to try and find more gold. For myself, it's time to head back. Horik has reached adulthood and will now take care of the reindeers for 3 grams of gold per month, the equivalent of 10 dollars. But what will be the future of this boy, of this courageous people, of this wild land? More and more strangers

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Land of Gold — Poland



Land of gold

The rich history and picturesque location in the Kaczawskie Plateau. From the Middle Ages, the most interesting towns in Poland.



From the Middle Ages, the site has seen extensive exploitation of gold dust from the waters of Kaczawa river, which flows through Złotoryja. Although it has been hundreds of years since the days of

gold rush the shimmer of years of gold particles which its magnetic appeal. In 1992 the Polish Association of gold Prospectors was established, which is headed by a Grand Master, and which in its structural organisation customs, and gala uniforms echo the Middle Ages.

The beginnings of gold mining in the surroundings of Złotoryja remain obscure. The very first prospecting



was probably carried out by Cretans. Later, in the 3rd and 4th century, the search was continued by the Celts. However, the true gold rush in Złotoryja started at turn of the 12th century. From those medieval times some place names have been inherited, for instance the one of Kopacz, the very first mining settlement adjacent to Złotoryja. The consecutive names of town itself since 1211 Aureus Mons, Aurum, Aurimontium, Goldberg, Złota Góra and last Złotoryja have also constantly reflected

its connection with gold occurrence and extraction.

It is recognised that 24 to 48 kilograms of gold were recovered from gold mines in Złotoryja per year. Among the mines, Golden Schlag, Golden Rad, Fuchs Winkiel, zum Reischt, Sieben Butten and Auf der Hube were the most famous. Dukes, burghers from Wrocław and Legnica, and monastic orders participated in the profits. In 1241 gold miners from Złotoryja were fighting against the Tartars under the command of the Duke Henryk Pobożny. Defeated and captured, they were sent down to gold mines belonging to the Khans, along the

Caspian Sea shore and in Siberia.

In the second half of the 13th century the most accessible gold-bearing deposits were running low. Deeper galleries were flooded by underground water. Following the development of new methods of gold extraction, more and more attempts to re-establish gold mining were undertaken, including ones in 1661, 1775-77, 1781-84, 1842-43 and 1853-68. In 1923 concessions were granted to the Gold, Silber and Kupfer Mutung I and II miners guilds. Shortly after, in



1925, works at the St. Hedwig shaft started, but were abandoned only three years later.

After the long break gold prospectors returned to the banks of the Kaczawa river in the 1990s. In 1996 33 gold

mining fields, about 96 sq km each, were delimited in the Sudetes and their Foreland and mining companies from Ireland, Australia and the United States immediately expressed their interest.

The Polish Guild of Gold Prospectors, although, established only in 1992, has its roots in the far distant medieval times. Its primary objective to uphold and disseminate the great traditions of gold prospecting in Poland is achieved through organisation of gold panning events and competitions such as the Championship of the Sudetes, the Championships of the Holy Cross Mountains, the Championship of the Łódź Country, the International Championship of Poland and the World Championship.

There is a wide range of activities within the Polish Guild of Gold Prospectors. Owing to its efforts, and with support of the Communal Museum of Złotoryja Land, the Museum of Gold was established, the only one of this kind in Poland. The old gold mine Aurelia has been adapted to the needs of mass tourism. The Guild also issues honorary and share certificates of gold mines in Złotoryja. After the centuries the Guild, as the first in Poland, initiated manufacturing of gold pans. A few postcards with special stamps have been issued in co-operation with the Polish Mail. Good contacts with the Telekomunikacja Polska S.A. have resulted in launching the collection of phonecards. The Guild has its own magazine "Polskie Złoto" ("Polish Gold"). Associated with the Guild is the Sudetic School of Gold Panning, successfully completed by a few thousand people.

Acquiring the effective membership of the Polish Guild of Gold Prospectors is the act of great nobility, not only in the circle of gold prospectors. Only

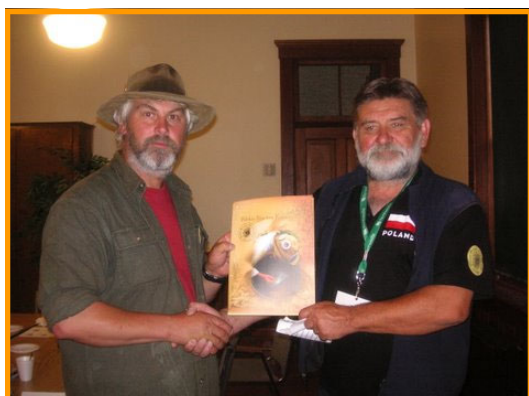
respectable people are allowed to the Guild and the respectability has to be confirmed by at least two members of the Board of Seniors. Among the members of Guild are Tomasz Mazowiecki (the first Prime Minister of Poland after the fall of communism), Ewa Wachowicz (Miss Polonia), Renata Mauer (Olympic Champion in Atlanta 1996) and Professor Jan Waszkiewicz (President of Lower Silesia Voivodship Council). Honorary memberships have been granted to Professor



Andrzej Grodziecki from the Institute of Geological Sciences, University of Wrocław, and Kauko Launonen from Finland, the past President of the World Goldpanning Association.

You can see a video of the Polish National Championships at <http://youtube.com/watch?v=hwghQN9DHwY&mode=related&search=>

Congratulations to Poland on their successful bid to host the World Championships in 2011 in Złotoryja



The WGA President Vince Thurkettle congratulates Józef Kozakowski at the 2007 WGA meeting where Poland unanimously won the rights to host the 2011 World Championships



Gold history of Biella region (abstract)

There is no reliable proof indicating a prehistoric exploitation of the gold mine of "La Bessa", however the locally produced objects made of gold, coming from the lake dwellings near Lake Viverone, suggest that in the Middle Bronze Age there was already a rather lively activity of extraction.

Strabo (64 B.C. -21 A.D.) refers that in 143/140 B.C., taking as an excuse an argument between the Salassi that exploited the gold mine and the people settled in the plains, where the former were accused of depriving the cultivated fields of the water coming from River Dora which was used for washing sands, the roman consul Appio Claudio, intervened militarily. Despite a disastrous initial defeat, he took possession of the contested land. The identification with Bessa is not certain but quite possible as it probably was a big mine, for the amount of water used seemed to create problems of provisioning.

The year 140 is then the date after which the roman publicans could contract the aurifodinae.

From Plino the Elder (23-79 A.D.) we have the proof of the size of the yard as, regarding Bessa, he quotes a *lex censoria* that, probably for public order problems, forbade the use of more than 5000 workers. This means that there were periods where the number was even higher. Even if the exact duration of the exploitation is not known, we know that when Strabo was writing the mines had already been abandoned (or more likely worked out) and gold in Rome came mainly from *Iberia* (Spain).

In the beginning the gold mine depended from Vercelli as for the administrative part but when *Eporedia* (Ivrea) was founded in 100 B.C., it probably passed to this town. This is proved indirectly by a few tombstones and inscriptions of *Eporedia* citizens, found on the edge of Bessa (Riviera hamlet in Zubiena) and of the site of old *Victimulae* (today's San Secondo di Salussola).

The identification of *Victimulae* quoted by the roman historians with the business area of the roman mine has not been confirmed yet, as the dating of the evidences and of the investigated structures do not go beyond the Imperial Age and no necropolis has ever been found.

The prospecting for gold continued also in the following centuries and continues still today (The Biella Goldprospectors' Association of Italy was founded in 1987 and it is an apolitical, non-party Association whose purpose is to promote and spread the hobby of panning for gold in Italy. Although its headquarters is in the Biella area, its more than 200 members include enthusiasts from a good many regions of Italy), as a hobby, in the sands eroded by River Elvo, our true homeland, from the old dumps: we can still find gold-chips that shine bright in our gold pans (batèas) and they give warm to our hearts!

More information at www.bessa.it and/or www.cercatoridoro.it



Golden Times

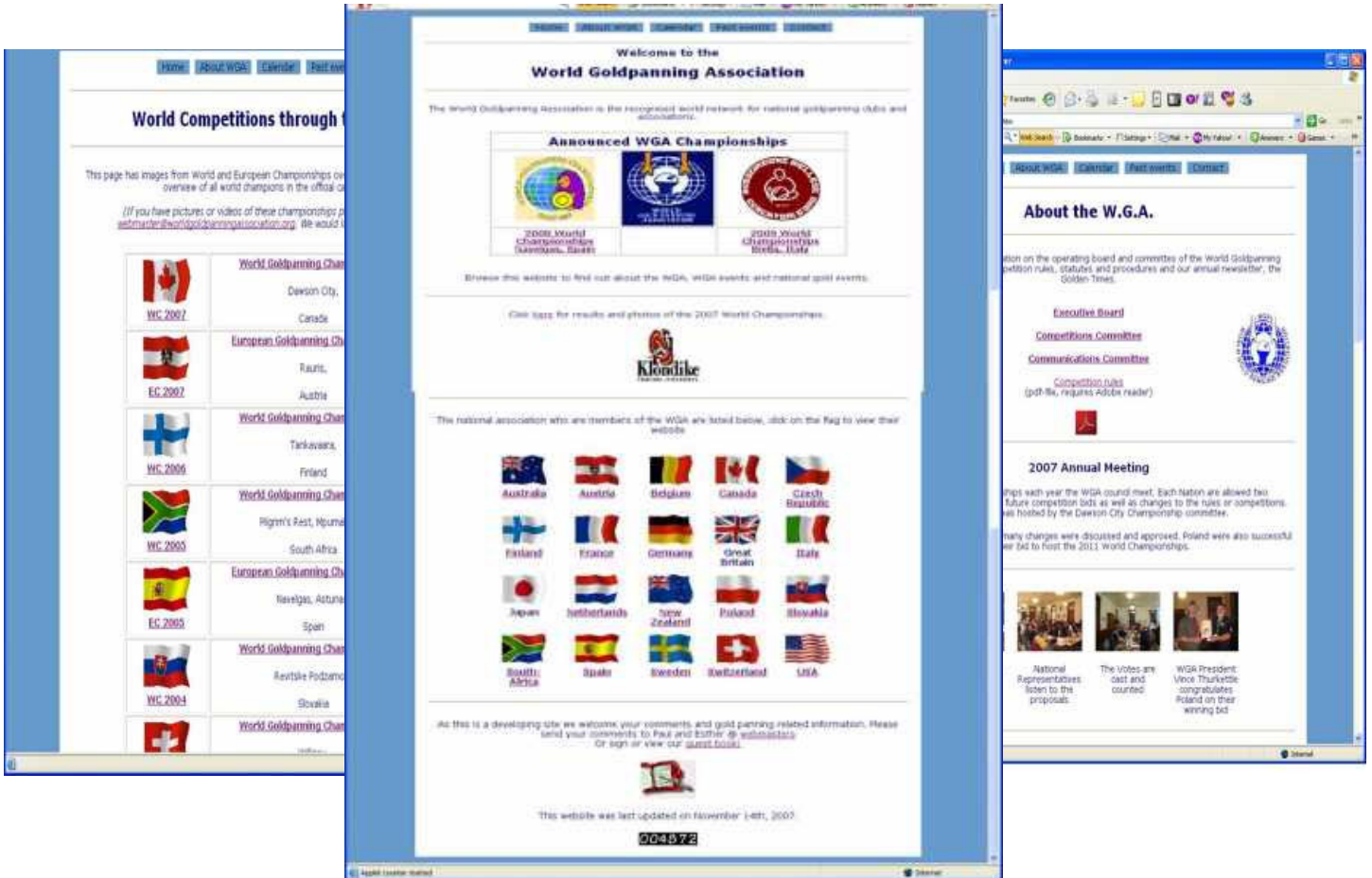
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