



NAPFA NEWS

NSW & ACT Prospectors and Fossickers

Association Inc.

Incorporation No: INC 1200398

PO Box 2664

Carlingford Court

NSW 2118

www.napfa.net

December 2013 (Volume 1; Issue 5)

Highlight: New Minelab GPX Promotion, page 2
Happy first birthday NAPFA, page 14

"Fights for fairer access to land in NSW and represents the interests of prospectors and fossickers"

Meeting with NSW Minister for Resources and Energy sets the scene for improvements for fossickers

NAPFA had an historic meeting with the NSW Minister for Resources and Energy, [Chris Hartcher](#), MP, on 16th October to talk about how fossicking rules can be improved for the benefit of recreational prospectors. Yours truly as President of NAPFA met with the Minister and his key staff.

As there is some follow-up to the meeting occurring, I don't want to go into much detail about what was discussed, beyond the comment that the Minister was generally supportive of our goals in terms of improving access to public land in NSW. Topics discussed included fossicking access to State Conservation Areas; Indemnity for private landowners who give fossickers permission; Exploration Lease permission requirements; State Forest Permits and support for the publication of a *NSW Gold and Gem Atlas* by Doug Stone.

NAPFA acknowledges the sponsorship of Mr. Robert Brown, MLC, of the Shooters and Fishers Party who was instrumental in helping to set-up the meeting which we have been seeking since earlier this year. I am very hopeful tangible improvements will flow from our representations, but as is usually the case, it takes time to sort things through. Stay tuned!



[Minister Chris Hartcher, MP](#)

Other Stories inside:

New Minelab Australia GPX 5000 promotion.....NAPFA flies flag at NSW Parliamentary tourism inquiry.....Crown Roads update.....What's happening at Hill End?.....Crookwell Reserves Update.....Memberships and Voluntary contributions.....Do you live near Copeland Tops and Gloucester area?..... Winners of pick and pan membership promo.....Laanacoorie Bash shows we have Victorian support.....Our Code of Conduct...Happy First Birthday NAPFA.

Join NAPFA now for chances to WIN GPX 5000

Minelab Australia has generously come to the NAPFA cause for 2013/14/15 with the donation of a new GPX 5000 as a membership promotional prize and fundraiser.

This special raffle will be drawn on the NSW Go Minelabbing Day 1st November 2014. Location to be advised. The winner will be notified by phone or email and the result also published on the website www.napfa.net and in *The Australian*.

The Recommended Retail Price of the GPX 5000 is \$6,595 (including GST)



Standard inclusions are:

- 11" Commander Monoloop coil
- 11" Commander Double-D coil
- Li-Ion battery pack
- Harness & Bungy cord
- 12v and Mains plug packs
- Heavy Duty power lead
- Koss UR-30 Headphones
- Straight shaft assembly
- Instruction Manual
- FREE training day in selected goldfield locations

Minelab's lead has been supported by "Nugget Finder" High Performance Metal Detector Coils who have also donated:

- 2nd Prize 18" Round Advantage (RRP \$530.00 Inc GST)
- 3rd Prize 12"x7" Advantage Monoloop Coil (RRP \$320.00 Inc GST) and
- 4th Prize 8"x6" Sadie Monoloop Coil (RRP \$295 Inc GST)

ALSO the winner of each coil will receive a voucher for a heavy duty Nugget Finder skid plate – their choice of size! This makes a prize pool of over \$7,700 (or approx five and a half ounces of gold).

What we need you to do now

1. Join-up your family and friends so they can support our cause and be in the raffle
2. Tell your prospecting friends about this excellent promotion
3. Support us with Ticket purchases.

Remember: NAPFA is a lobby group and the more members we have the more chance we have of convincing Government that there is an active and concerned fossicking community.

Be active please – this is not a time to sit on the fence! We need your help.

HOW TO GET YOUR TICKETS

Join NAPFA now and receive TWO FREE tickets (value \$20).

You can join online at www.napfa.net or print out a PDF membership form and send it in with a cheque.

Please Note: Only new members and those who have joined since 18th of May 2013 will be eligible for free tickets. Existing NAPFA members (who were in the draw last time) will NOT receive free tickets.

Extra tickets can be purchased for the flat rate of \$10 each. There is no limit on the number of tickets you can buy.

To help the NAPFA Treasurer process both membership applications and ticket purchases in an orderly way, please follow the instructions below exactly:

Joining members: Join online at www.napfa.net and follow the instructions.

Existing members – Direct Deposit your ticket money to
NSW & ACT Prospectors and Fossickers Association Inc
Bank: Westpac - BSB: 032 282 Account Number: 272392

VERY IMPORTANT:

If using Direct Deposit you MUST PUT YOUR SURNAME AND INITIAL ON THE BANK REFERENCE AND INCLUDE THE WORD 'TICKETS'.

Like this: 'Jason M Smith 10 tickets' Any money that cannot be identified will be considered a donation.

Non-members wishing to join – Complete the online application form at www.napfa.net and make the \$20 payment for the membership. Memberships remain financial until 30th June 2015.

Or if you prefer, send a cheque and you will be sent the corresponding number of tickets.

Make the cheque payable to NSW & ACT Prospectors and Fossickers Association Inc and send it to:

The Treasurer
PO Box 2664
Carlingford Court
NSW 2118

Tickets will be sent out progressively from 31 July, 2014 and will be sent to the address on the membership registration.

Any questions, please email: Treasurer@napfa.net

As a last resort you can call John Standfort Treasurer on 0409 674 507 (Including weekends during business hours)

NAPFA flies the flag at Parliamentary Inquiry on Tourism

On 26th August NAPFA appeared before the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Tourism in Regional areas and outlined our recommendations for improving the situation for recreational fossickers in NSW.

Appearing for NAPFA was myself (Stephen Dangaard) as President, and also Doug Stone as a member and nationally recognized expert in the development and promotion of fossicking areas in Australia.

For your amusement here is a photo of Doug and I literally 'waving' the NAPFA flag!



Seriously though, the key points we made were that fossicking is a genuine tourism activity that has the potential to bring significant benefits to regional areas in NSW. In Western Australia it is estimated to be worth \$280 million per year. We talked about obstacles that current laws place on fossicking, and about the need to change these laws.

In my opening statement I said that NAPFA wanted NSW to become a better place in which to fossick, both for residents of the state and for visitors.

Fast-forward three years; and our vision would be as follows:

1. That recreational fossicking and prospecting would be permitted by default in all State Conservation Areas of NSW;
2. That it be permitted in most areas of most National Parks, with sensible exclusions on critical habitat or heritage areas only;
3. That the requirement to seek permission from Exploration Lease Holders in declared Fossicking Districts for the purposes of recreational fossicking is removed;
4. That there be accurate and easy to use online registers of fossickable Crown land to assist the forward planning of visits by fossickers;

5. That the Mining Act carry explicit liability waiver for private land-owners who allow fossickers and recreational prospectors to access their land;
6. That NSW as the cradle of gold discovery in Australia aspire to be an exciting and welcoming destination for fossickers and that the relevant authorities are engaged in making that happen.

For those of you with an appetite for this sort of stuff, the NAPFA submission and transcript of our presentation at the Inquiry are available.

Click [here for submission](#) and [here for transcript](#) of the hearing itself (you need to go to Page 54 of the transcript). Also check out answers to supplementary questions by Doug and I.

If you have trouble with the links, just google 'NSW Tourism Inquiry' and work it out from there.

The Committee will table the final report and recommendations from the inquiry by approximately March next year. The Government then has period of six months to consider and respond to any recommendations. It is a slow and tortuous process -- so don't hold your breath!

From NAPFA's point of view the inquiry was an excellent opportunity to state our concerns directly to Government and to suggest improvements.

It was a lot of work to put the submission together and to appear at the Inquiry but if it can result in some positive change and improved dialogue, then it will have been worth it. Many thanks to Doug Stone for flying up from Victoria for it.

Crown Roads update

Further to the report in the last NAPFA News about notifications of Crown Roads closures and the chance for members to be better informed about proposals for closures, the updated website promised in the Deputy Premier's [media release](#) of 9 August **has yet to be released**.

We understand the website will list all the closure proposals, along with a description of the area of the proposal, a simple user friendly map to allow members of the public to easily identify the road in question. NAPFA also sought the description to include information about mineral deposits; mining leases and links to Min View database mining leases so that you can make your own assessment about the utility of a road for prospecting purposes.

NAPFA and Members of the Recreational Fishing Alliance met with the Deputy Premier, Andrew Stoner, MP, who is also the Minister for Trade and Investment and Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services – which covers Crown Land.

At our meeting on 11 July, Mr. Stoner gave us a good hearing and an undertaking to improve the situation. We had expected the website to be up and running by now, **but so far it has not yet happened**. We will keep you up to date on this matter.

So what does this Crown Roads stuff mean for you?

From your individual perspective, this means it will be easier for you to assess local road closure submissions and then to lodge your own individual objections.

NAPFA does not have the resources to comb through these individual applications and to lodge objections as there are simply too many of them to deal with.

Our role has been to ensure that there will be better information available and that it will be easier for people to track where these road closures are being sought.

However if you as prospectors in various areas look at the applications, there may be some that catch your eye. In this case, you should lodge a short objection highlighting the following key points:

- The road provides access to an area with known fossicking potential;
- Closure of the road would adversely impact on your ability to fossick there;
- Such a closure removes land from the public access which is presently available, and is therefore undesirable;
- Be sure to include any known gold or gem history of the area as well and information about your own individual activity there. If you have any maps etc, include those to help your case. Don't get bogged down with this though, just do what you can!

Gemstone and mineral fossickers also take note! It is not just about gold.

It would be helpful if you kept NAPFA informed by letting us know you have made an objection. It will be useful over time to understand the number of objections on the basis of impact on fossicking.

These closures are currently being notified in local press advertisements – an unsatisfactory situation which we have sought to correct.

What's happening at Hill End?

At a recent visit to Hill End I dropped in to see Lew Bezzina, the National Parks Manager there to get an update on the progress of the new Master Plan for Hill End.

Lack of recognition in the previous plan of the potential and needs of the fossicking community was a sore point early last year when a group of fossickers attended a public meeting that was organized by National Parks as part of their public consultation on the new Master Plan. At the time, which was before NAPFA existed, I coordinated and drafted a wish list and provided it to the consultants on behalf of members of the Gold Detecting and Prospecting Forum.

Lew was kind enough to give me a CD copy of the new plan and having had a look through it I am satisfied that adequate attention has been given to the needs and potential of fossickers in the new document, which was lacking in the previous plan. In particular there is now a stated recognition of the importance of fossicking travellers to Hill End and the need to work to make it more attractive for fossickers.

Lew explained that the Master Plan is more a guiding document for future directions of the historical precinct (not the whole of the Hill End area), and that any significant actions would require additional consultation with affected groups at the time, including fossickers. It should not be seen as a list of things that will happen. The new plan is not yet on the National Parks website, but it should be there soon.

From NAPFA's perspective, the key thing is that any changes should not reduce or limit current access for fossicking purposes. Lew is certainly aware of our interest in the matter and I have the sense that he values the contribution that fossickers make to the area and would like that to continue.

I also checked with Lew about a report I had heard that so-called 'rangers' were collecting camping fees from people down on the Turon River. Lew assured me that no-one had authority to do that and whoever was doing it was scamming people. National Parks staff are not collecting fees in that area. So if you are asked, get some details and report it to the police!

Also at Hill End on the weekend of the November 2/3 there was a public meeting at the Goanna Muster to discuss the possibility of some kind of future Gold Festival at Hill End. NAPFA would be supportive of such a move and encourage members to get along if and when it happens. However there is nothing firm yet. A group of keen locals is setting up a steering committee to have a look at the idea. So stay tuned for updates on that.

Crookwell Reserves Update

Some NAPFA members who joined earlier this year would be aware that then Secretary Ernie Mollenhauer put together a quality submission in response to a call last November for contributions to a National Parks Plan of Management for the Crookwell reserves. These cover about 2800 ha of prospecting ground around Tuena.

On 26 November I was invited by the new NPWS Ranger for the reserves, Jules Bros from the Oberon Office to have a meeting about our submission and generally those of other individual prospectors.

It was a very constructive meeting during which I was able to add detail and some colour to the NAPFA submission and to underline the expectations of fossickers in relation to continued access to areas that were accessible in the past.

I was also able to explain in some detail the process of fossicking and how modern day operations are different to those of the 'old timers'. I felt that we were given a fair and professional hearing.

It would be unwise to predict the outcome to the whole process at this stage, so I won't try! It has to go through several other steps before it gets signed off by the Minister for the Environment. That is unlikely to occur until approximately March next year. As a prospector I am by nature an optimistic person, so I am hopeful there will be a win in this for us.

What this shows is that:

- It is very important to be active both as NAPFA and as individual fossickers when we have an opportunity to have input to such plans. Thank you to all those who made individual submissions.
- NPWS has made unilateral decisions that extinguished fossicking rights and will continue to stack the deck against fossickers because they believe what we do is incompatible with environmental protection activity even though our impact is tiny and temporary;
- There is a huge amount of effort by NPWS to understand and document the natural environment and 'management' but very little to understand the past use of the land by miners and fossickers or to value the heritage of that activity in a meaningful way.
- Plans of Management are a slow and unpredictable way of restoring those rights and even then they are not final, such is the exclusion bias against fossickers! Indeed the Draft Plan of Management states:
 - "The NPW Act requires a review of the classification of state conservation areas every 5 years in consultation with the Minister administering the Mining Act 1992. **In the long term it is intended for Nuggetty Gully and Thalaba State Conservation Areas to become nature reserves.** Accordingly the management principles applying to nature reserves will be applied as far as possible to the state conservation areas in the interim."
- If you also have a chance to talk to Members of the NSW Parliament about your hobby and these issues, then please do so. The only way that such bias can ultimately be overcome is through political action.

Background

The area used to be available for fossicking, as it is Crown Land, but this right was extinguished unilaterally by NPWS in 2010 in order to expand the protected areas under the Goulburn Comprehensive Regional Assessment.

Since that time it has been illegal to fossick in those reserve areas even though fossicking has traditionally occurred there.

Fossickers lodged almost 20 individual submissions as well, and the matter was discussed via internet forums. Since the submissions closed in February this year, NPWS has been evaluating them and considering them as they develop a draft Plan of Management. The long delay has occurred due to change of responsibility in NPWS and more recently the NSW bushfires which naturally had staff off doing other things.

Memberships now until 30 June 2015

The NAPFA Committee has determined to roll over all current and new memberships until 30th June 2015. You will not be asked to renew your membership until that time.

Voluntary Contributions

While we are not requiring membership renewal this year, I urge you to support generously any fundraising activity – such as raffles when they occur – and to promote membership to others.

Additionally the Committee asks that you consider making a voluntary membership payment for 2013-2014 if you are in the position to do so. We are an honorary and voluntary organization – not for profit.

You can do that by making a bank transfer to:

NSW&ACT Prospectors and Fossickers Association Inc
Bank; Westpac
BSB 032 282
Account Number: 272392

Remember to put your name and a reference to Voluntary contribution.

Or send an email to Treasurer@napfa.net telling John what you have done.

Do you vist Copeland Tops and Gloucester ?

The revised draft Plan of Management of the Copeland Tops State Conservation Area will be available soon. Your input and interest is encouraged.

NAPFA is keen that this area be available for fossicking, for the benefit of the community as a whole. We are looking for your input to representations to National Parks who are in charge of the process of reviewing the Plan of Management.

The area used to be a major gold producer area but has been locked-up to fossickers even though it remains available to mining. Ironically NPWS runs its own commercial panning tours in the area! A fine tourism initiative that leads the way for fossickers!

NAPFA's Vice President, Paul Barker, is keen to hear from NAPFA members interested in getting access to this area. Some have already contacted him, and if you have done that he has your details. Please contact Paul ASAP by email: paulwb@internode.on.net

Lucky new members win a Martin Marks Pan and a Mallee Boy Pick

In the last issue we announced a quick-run promotion for new members. Well the winners are – Ray Adams from Coonamble for the pan and Peter Groves from Mannering Park for the pick.

Photo shows NAPFA Treasurer, John Standfort, doing the draw with the assistance of a NAPFA member at Hill End during the Goanna Gold Muster in early November.



NAPFA thanks Martin for the Pan and Michael for the hand-made pick. We recorded just over 50 new members in the first quarter, taking us to more than 600 members. We expect that to jump with the new Minelab GPX 5000 membership promotion. We anticipate we will have substantially more than 1000 members by the end of June 2014.



Here they are: Pick and Pan



Laanecoorie Gold Bash 2013 shows we have Victorian supporters

In October I had the pleasure to go to Laanecoorie in Victoria for the Gold Bash 2013.

The brainchild of Victorian NAPFA member, Peter Hancock, the bash brings together members of the Gold Detecting & Prospecting Forum for a weekend event that is open to anyone with Gold Fever. This year there were more than 150 people there from all over Victoria, NSW and South Australia.

The objective of the weekend is to be an informal opportunity to meet other prospectors, make friends and raise some money for charity.

Both NAPFA and the Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria (PMAV) made presentations to attendees about the shared goals and aspirations of the two associations and had a membership drive as well. I am happy to say that more than 30 people joined NAPFA over the weekend!

The weekend raised just over \$11,000.00 for the Peter McCullan Cancer Institute. The money was raised by raffles and an auction of goods and services that were donated by supporters in the prospecting industry and other businesses. There is a detailed report on the Gold Detecting and Prospecting Forum and preparations are underway to do it again next year.

Sponsors were:

Laanecoories Lakeside Park
Nugget Finder Coils
Kambah Car Care
Gold Gem & Treasure Magazine
Minelab Australia
Gold & Relics
Bendigo Gold
Environmental Creations
Doug Stone
Tony Mills

Coiltek Manufacturing
Gold Prospecting Australia
Coiltek Maryborough
Gold Search Australia
Nugget from down under
Aussie Detecting & Prospecting
Parks Victoria
John Tully
John Gladdis
Donolly Royal Hotel

Primo Salads

CC Picks

Day & Sons Ballarat

Discount Fishing Gear Maryborough

Coles Maryborough

Mount Avoca Winery

Mack Boots Maryborough

Gidleigh Pastoral Bungendore

The Poster Shop Ballarat

Photos from the Bash....

The Out Back Prospector

Detech Australia

The Gold Exchange Ballarat

CoCo Red Hair

Eurabbie Estate

Tipperary Hill Winery

Lake George Hotel Bungendore

Woolworths Maryborough



NAPFA and PMAV were part of the show. ABOVE: From the left, Stephen Dangaard, President NAPFA; Julie Stone with 'Toff'; Peter Hancock; Elsie Hancock; Dianne Bardi and Wayne Towers – all NAPFA members.



NAPFA Member from Canberra, Sean Johnson: *"Wish I had found the real Hand of Faith."*

‘Code of Conduct’

This Code is an essential step for us to establish our credentials with authorities and others and may open the way to special arrangements down the track.

It is simple enough for all of us to understand at a glance. It is on the website, and repeated here for your benefit:

Members of the NSW & ACT Prospectors and Fossickers Association Inc (NAPFA) should:

- 1. Know and respect the regulations relating to prospecting and fossicking in NSW.**
- 2. Protect the natural environment by disposing of rubbish properly and refilling our prospecting holes.**
- 3. Ensure our own health and safety while in the field.**
- 4. Respect the property and rights of others.**
- 5. Be advocates for responsible prospecting and fossicking.**

Happy First Birthday to NAPFA

NAPFA is now One Year Old. Our Official Birthday is the Anniversary of Eureka – 3 December. (Special note: Next year is 150th anniversary of Eureka).

Anyway I think NAPFA has done very well in just one year of existence.

1. We incorporated as an association
2. Our membership is 600 and growing steadily
3. We have been effectively lobbying for change (three major submissions; two Ministerial level meetings and appearance at a Parliamentary Inquiry)
4. We are financially stable, with strong sponsorship support, especially from Minelab and Nugget Finder
5. We have a useful online presence – 12,000 visitors and 21,000 page views since 20 December 2012

Please email me at President@napfa.net with any feedback and suggestions. NAPFA is your organization so be sure to have your say! Thank you for your continuing support.

Visit the website and refer your friends to it please.

Also feel free to write in our Guest Book on the website. In fact it would be good if you did!

Merry Christmas from the NAPFA Committee – may you have a Golden New Year!

Yours sincerely under the Southern Cross.

Stephen Dangaard

President

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