



# ENTER 'THE SLUGGET'

by John Gladdis, Coiltek

**T**he Monday morning after the find I was over at the shop having a meeting in the office when Graham came in, smiling, accompanied by a friend of mine. Something was up and it brought the meeting to a halt very quickly.

Graham asked me whether I had a minute and I figured it had to be important. The next thing I knew I was handed a faded, towelling package which, from its sheer weight, told me what it was. I looked at my mate who was smiling and shaking. "What do I do with something like this?" he asked.

As I unwrapped the package and its contents were exposed, I also started to shake with excitement. In my many years of detecting, 29 to be exact, it was the prettiest large piece of gold I have ever held or seen.

Still stuck in some of its nooks was a

sandstone quartz material but the overall colour and brightness of the gold was breathtaking, undoubtedly due to its location and the material in which it had sat for millions of years.

We went back into shop to weigh it but the first two sets of scales weren't up to the challenge. We settled on the 6-kilo set and when the nugget was placed on them it clocked up 3,492 grams of which there were probably only 30 grams worth of dirt and quartz. The nugget measured about 10 inches long and six inches wide and was about four inches thick through the middle.

### **MOUThS AGAPE**

By this time several other prospectors had come into the shop and like us, they stood with their mouths agape. Then the questions started to flow. Where was it found? Can you mark the map? What

did you find it with? How deep? What's it worth? It was all a bit overwhelming for the finder.

We then took some photographs and I asked my mate what he wanted to do with it. After some discussion he agreed with me that we should go for a 'good news' story regarding his find as there was enough bad news around to last a lifetime. His only stipulation was that I handle everything. He didn't want himself or his vehicle identified.

I phoned my son Andrew and told him to come up to the shop and bring his wife, Nic, and my wife, Gail. As we saw them driving up the road we walked outside into the sun and made out we were examining 'The Slugget'. I looked over to the car and their mouths were open in wonder as it came to a halt. Meanwhile, a reporter from the local paper had also arrived to get a story and photograph for the next edition.



We then contacted several television stations but the only one that returned our call was Channel Seven. The other stations obviously figured to stick with a doom and gloom programming menu.

The news desk in Melbourne phoned us several times and asked how we would like to handle it. When we explained how we wanted the story to go down, they were quite happy to run it that way.

### IN ALL ITS GLORY

Regarding the local newspaper, the reporter had said the story would run in the Friday edition as Tuesday's edition (the next day) was already finalised. But, lo and behold, the press brakes must have been applied because the front page of Tuesday's newspaper featured The Slugget in all its glory.

The story was also doing the rounds on the internet and the local ABC was the first major to carry it at 5.30am Tuesday.

On Tuesday we were due for a 10.30am start and because the The Slugget's owner was a PMAV member, we thought where better to kick off proceedings than the Eureka Stockade Memorial in Ballarat. We arrived on their doorstep and said we would like to do a TV shoot and unveil a large nugget found in the last few days. The staff at the memorial looked at us strangely but when I handed one of them the nugget, pandemonium broke out. They asked if they could photograph it

so we placed it on a chair in the foyer. I looked over at my mate and I think that's when the importance of the find hit him.

Visitors to the memorial crowded around and we allowed everyone to hold it and be photographed with it. Then the news crew arrived and it was time for me to be the front man and for my mate to melt into the background.

**Q.** Where did he find it?

**A.** *In Maryborough on an area that had been detected before. There were also diggings from the 1856 rush scattered through the gullies nearby in an ancient river bed deposit*

**Q.** How deep was it?

**A.** *Just under a metre*

**Q.** What did it sound like?

**A.** *Just a tone change that wouldn't go away*

**Q.** What detector was being used?

**A.** *The new GPX4000 from Minelab with a Coiltek UFO monolop coil*

**Q.** How much does it weigh

**A.** *3.5kg*

**Q.** How much is it worth?

**A.** *Much more than its weight in gold is the best answer we can give*

**Q.** How long has he been detecting?

**A.** *20 years and it's by far the biggest nugget he's found*

I think the highlight of the interview was when the children and adult visitors to the centre were asked to be part of the show, rather me or my mate. The looks on

the faces of the kids and particularly the overseas visitors was priceless.

### PEOPLE IN THE STREETS

The news crew then asked if we could return to Maryborough to do some more filming. Much to my surprise they followed us back to the Coiltek Gold Centre where the formal side of the interview was conducted and then people in the streets of Maryborough were asked for their views on the nugget find.

The news that night on was full of the story. The phones ran hot from television and radio stations, the newspapers wanted interviews and the nugget featured on air in New Zealand and Singapore as well as cable television around the world.

Several other large pieces have been found around the district with the new GPX4000. A 22-ouncer along with other bits was picked up by one prospector on his first day out with the new detector. He was using a Coiltek UFO and the gold was found about two feet down.

Another nugget weighing 80 ounces was also found at good depth.

I the best advice I can offer anyone with a new GPX4000 is to stop testing it, put a large monolop coil on the end and keep an open mind. Go out and search ground you think has been cleaned out and learn how your machine works best. Ignore any knockers on the internet – the proof is in the pudding.

