


# GOLDEN TIMES

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The official newsletter of the World  
Goldpanning Association ISSN 1238-0083

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**1999 World Gold  
Panning Championships**



**WORLD  
GOLD PANNING  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
KOCÁBA '99  
CZECH REPUBLIC**

**August 23  
to August 29**

## Message from The President

Dear Goldpanners,  
Again a year has changed and a new millennium is at the door. Somebody said the new millennium does not start until the year 2001 but, in any case, when the year 2000 begins it will be the first time in a thousand years that all the numbers of the year will change. And that is something to celebrate!

But it will take almost a year to reach the festive occasion so let's look at the present. The start of the year sees change to the communications of our association since our English-language editor Ron Callender, who has done much of the preparation work for Golden Times, will cease to carry out this function. We fully understand. Even if our newsletter is modest in size it takes time and effort to handle all the material received from the different parts of the world and prepare the articles. Ron has done most valuable work for our association and I would like to express

my deepest thanks to him. I am sure that all the members of our world-wide association agree with these thanks. His work has been worth its weight in gold!

However, this does not mean that the publishing of Golden Times will cease. We have already started taking measures so that the editorial work will proceed in the best possible way and also there will be two publications a year in future.

Finally, I would like to express my regret that one of our member countries did not exhibit the normal level of co-operation that we have among our members. My greatest hope for the coming year is that the local conflicts will have been forgotten and honest and confidential co-operation practised everywhere in following the targets of the association.

I wish everyone a Golden Year in 1999

Kauko Launonen

## Treasury Report

The annual meeting of the WGA Council at Coloma in October was really good.

Many things were discussed, one of which was funding. I am pleased to report that, at the meeting, I was able to circulate a questionnaire which listed the different options for funding. Before the meeting, I had asked for help from all of you, through Golden Times, because I wanted ideas on how we could best move forward from an under-funded situation.

All the ideas which had been given to me were listed on a voting paper. The paper became the questionnaire. I am waiting for the last four countries to send

me their opinions on the paper and I will then report in the next issue. I will explain what people think is the best way forward. Golden Times has been skillfully developed over many years into the best communication we have; it is vital that we keep it interesting... and in credit.

So speaks a Treasurer.  
Happy New Year.

Vincent Thurkettle

*Editors' Note: Many friends and colleagues of Vincent will know of his accident whilst giving a demonstration of firelighting in California. We are pleased to announce the good news that he has recovered and suffered no ill effects and he is pleased to acknowledge all the good wishes he received at Coloma.*



## Editorial: Farewell

For five years we have served the World Goldpanning Association as the joint editors of 'Golden Times'. That is a total of ten years - if you count both our efforts... or just two and a half years because there are two of us, and if you think the job is easy. It is not easy... but it is enjoyable.

We start about eight weeks before publication and look in an empty basket of ideas. Ron says he will never publish a cooking recipe to make up space; but he has one for pancakes - just in case. Then we make up a list and realise that there is not even material for two pages; we will never be able to publish the planned 20 pages. This is when we approach our regular contributors and hope for a good response.

Slowly we have a little material. We are able to include some illustrations and photographs. Sometimes we ask for extra information. We enjoy planning the profile. Then we receive one or two good stories. The Treasurer's Report arrives. The President agrees to prepare a Message. We contribute an Editorial. It is important to include information about the next world

championships. We find a volunteer who will write a review of the last world championships.

When we have one week left, we often have one blank page... and a problem. Do we remove three pages of text and save it for the next time? Or do we sit down and write an article to fill one page? We think of the contributors who prepared the material which will have to disappear... and write 400 more words. By now it is very late and there is always one piece missing. The postal service is no longer used... we transmit by Fax and communicate by telephone. Now we know we have too much material and remove a few texts for use the next time.

Silence.

And then the first copy of the new Golden Times arrives from the printers. It looks good. It does not show any of our problems. The editors relax.

This issue is our last edition as joint-editors. Perhaps, we can relax full-time? Or are we to receive an urgent e-mail from the new editor which asks for a recipe for pancakes?

Good luck to all the friends we made, and a big thank you to all contributors and readers. You made it worth the effort.

Ron Callender in Cheshire

Pirjo Muotkajärvi in  
Tankavaara



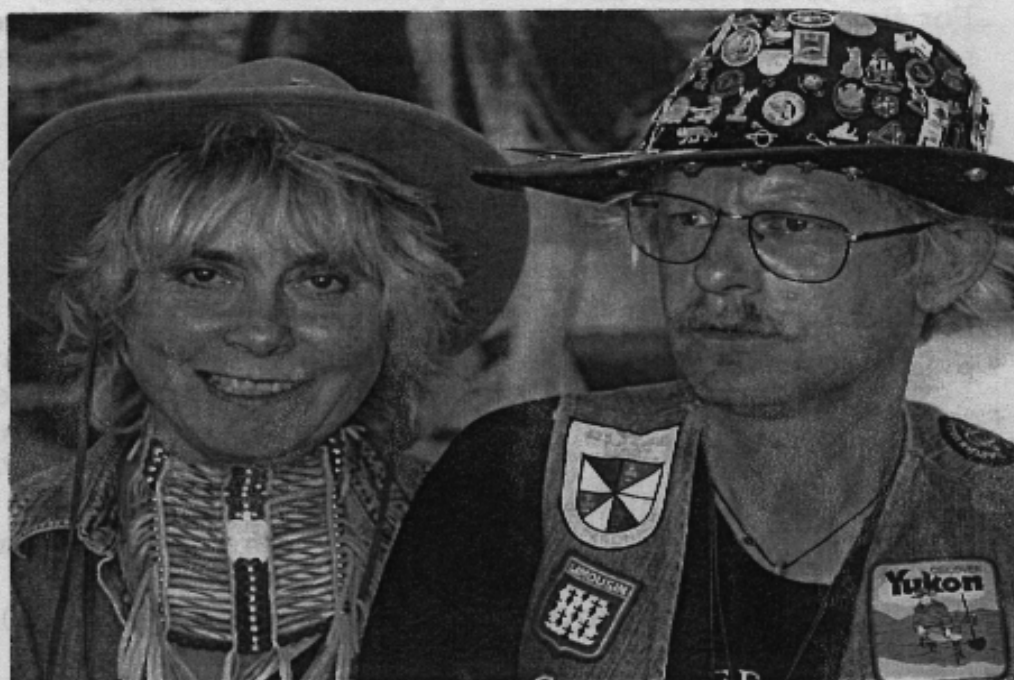
*The last Editors' Meeting: Ron Callender and Pirjo Muotkajärvi*

## Profile : Anneli and Sten Bergström, Sweden

For the past decade, Anneli and Sten Bergström have been a familiar sight at most of the World Goldpanning Championships as well as many national championships throughout Europe.

They live in the Lidingö - a town situated on a small island to the north of Stockholm. Anneli and Sten met there in 1977 during a festival and soon they married in the small, beautiful and peaceful island of 'Gotska Sandön' in the middle of the Baltic Sea. Since then, they have visited the island many times. The Bergströms have made their home in a flat but also have garden, where they spend a lot of time in growing potatoes, vegetables, flowers and other plants.

Anneli was born in South Finland but moved to Sweden when she was a young girl. She works as a kindergarten teacher, specialising in natural sciences. She thinks it is important to teach urban children to appreciate nature and to show how enjoyable it is to spend time and play in the woods. In addition to gold panning, her hobby is, of course, nature. She enjoys picking



mushrooms - which she knows very well. So far she has found over 60 different types.. and she has eaten all of them. People collect things and Anneli is no exception. She has a collection of over 400 ladybirds. It is said that ladybirds bring luck and Anneli agrees with this; she is a happy person.

Sten was born in Kalix, the most remote corner of Sweden, Gulf of Bothnia. He works for the Post Office and has taken an interest in jogging by participating in long distance runs and marathon races. Sten is also a mechanic and he likes to repair bicycles and motorcycles. The

Bergströms have their own motorcycle and every summer they use it to explore travel the coast of the Arctic Ocean.

Goldpanning started in 198 while on a motorcycle holiday to Finnish Lapland. They passed a sign which announced "Goldpanning, Tankavaara" and decided to try this new experience. Along the creek they met two old timers using strange, flat dishes which the Bergströms had never seen before. Niilo Raumala and Viktor Koivula were legendary gold prospectors in Lapland and not only did they show Anneli and Sten how to pan for gold, they found something as well! With just one lesson



they caught gold fever and have since found out that there is no remedy for it. Since then, they have visited Lapland every summer searching for gold as well as other places in Sweden and Norway.

When they realised that there were other people in Sweden who were also interested in goldpanning and the Swedish Goldpanning Association "Svenska Guldvaskeföreningen" was founded in 1986. Sten became Secretary (and still is), and Anneli acted as Treasurer until she had to

give up because of the lack of time. The Bergströms first competed in 1982 and since then have collected a good number of medals. California was their eleventh world event and although they are not able to do as much as they would like nowadays, they will not give up the championships. They enjoy meeting old friends, gold panners and local people and, as a result, have a lot of correspondence during the winter.

They have gathered many happy memories during the championships and

remember the medal parade with veteran cars in Foix, the beautiful hills and the bagpipes in Scotland, the historical parades in Rauris, and cordial family dinners in Coloma and many, many other things. In their opinion, it is the best way to travel and to meet people.

As result of their gold journeys around the world, Anneli and Sten Bergström say they have found out that the biggest nuggets come from human relationships and from friendship.

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## World Championships hit the web!

*Ron Callender describes a race to publish photographs electronically!*

Before departing from Coloma, I made arrangements with the one-time editor on "Gold & Treasure Hunter Magazine" that we would try to publish an illustrated report of the World Goldpanning Championships on the world-wide web. When my photographs were processed I made a short selection of pictures and asked how they could be transmitted to my colleague... now living in Alaska. I had a scanner and knew it was possible to transmit files of information.

Just as I was about to begin the first experimental transmission, an e-mail arrived from John F Hutchinson. John is a staff-member at the Park in Coloma and drew my attention to a site which "has photos of the 1998 championships". I found it at:

<http://albums.photoprint.com/j/AlbumIndex?u=11544&a=23052>

I was impressed and printed out two pages of John's work - from Fred Olsson to ladies heats, from conference speakers to pioneer days, from gold specimens to opening parade. Later, John provided the technical details.

During the championships he took less than one hour of digital video tape on a Canon Optura camera which he had purchased two weeks earlier. He then used a set-top device called Webtv to convert his images to an e-mail message which was sent to the (free) Photopoint Guest Mode Album.

John was doing it from home as an extension of his new hobby and this was his first experiment... but he won the race to publish.

Congratulations!

Ron Callender

## Roland's Adventures in the Far East

*Editor's Note: In 1997 I received a handmade Christmas card which made me say, "Wow!" It featured a gold panning scene; there was a handwritten title: "In the Mekong River, Laos, 18° N/103° E". It was from Roland Brunner who is a skilled prospector and a lecturer in the Institute of Geography at the University of Berne. When he has the chance, he competes in the goldpanning championships. I asked him for a story for Golden Times and he promised, "In my next letter, I will tell you about Burma."*

Ron Callender



*Roland's Christmas card from Vietnam.*

### Gold in Burma

By Roland Brunner

The military government restricts travel in Burma but this was to be a year of the tourist. I departed from Zurich with warnings about malaria, snakes, lack of medical facilities, but carrying a Keene super-folding sluice box and a huge collection of documents. In Burma, it is the custom to place plates of gold on the statues of Buddha and the Maha Muni temple in Mandalay displays several tons of river gold. During the civil war, it was not possible to pan but the end of the war promised a new eldorado. I

had a contact in Burma and a knowledge of these rich alluvial deposits.

Just before I reached my destination of the gold rivers around Putao, the journey ended abruptly at Myitkyina... a few months earlier a gold prospector had found gold in a river and filled his pockets with nuggets. As the news spread, the government closed the area to travellers and charged a daily fee of \$90 for a guide and a military escort along the official roads. Very politely I was told I could fly to



*Gold washing with a bamboo sluice in Burma.*



Putao but only if I agreed not to leave the airport on arrival. I was stumped.

We made our way to the Irrawadi River where we found many panners. Most were women and worked long days for a very fine powder worth about 50 cents... about the same as the wages of a labourer on road construction. My sluice box attracted much attention because the local prospectors made a kind of rocker from bamboo. Four poles hold a tray lined with banana leaves which have a honeycomb structure and just right for trapping the fine dust. Mercury is used for the final clean-up and although the people knew it was dangerous, they did not know why. No one had been harmed and they said there was no other way to recover the gold.

It was here I heard of people prospecting in an old guerilla area about 80 km away. I rented a Toyota Pick-up and drove north on roads which damaged the shockabsorbers and then my backside! Three times we had to stop for repairs and at the end of the track, we continued by boat. Over fifty men and women were hard at work on the black sand of the river bank which held gold flakes about 2 mm in size. Three persons could recover up to 8 grams per day. At last, I had the chance to strike it rich but without food, mosquito net, tent or

*Washing the gravel for gold recovery in Burma.*



sleepingbag, I found it difficult to continue. With a few hours I had to return to civilisation, with a broken heart. I know you can strike it rich in Myanmar but you need the correct documentation, and a way of travelling without the government escort.



*Demonstration of mercury in a wooden batea.*

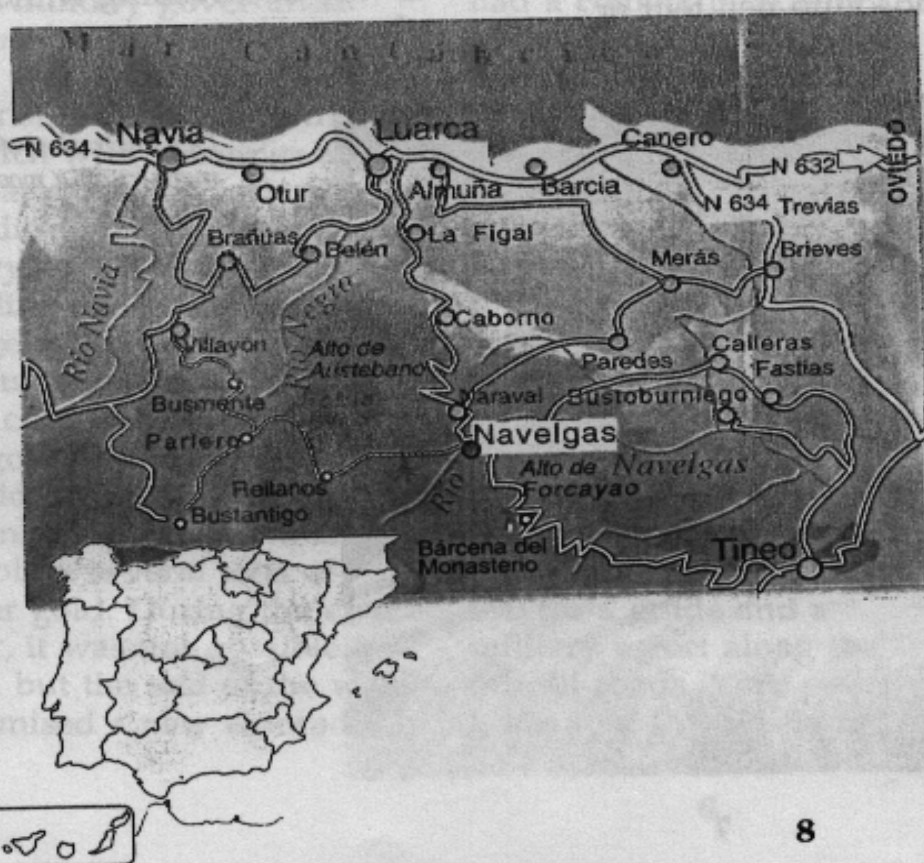
## Welcome to the Bateadores!

September had two surprises. The first was the publication of a special edition of "La Batea" the attractive information bulletin of the Association of the Goldpanners of Navelgas in Spain. The second was the arrival of the Spanish team who travelled to Coloma to take part in the 1998 World Championships and which had been reported in La Batea.

Publication of the bulletin had been fast as it described a regional event held on 20th August when the Navelgas panners had hosted a successful competition in association with Gerard Bardel of France, which attracted 150 goldpanners. In the precious month, on 4th July, Navasfrias 98 was celebrated at Salamanca when the Madrid group of mineralogists joined forces with the Club Espanol de Bateadores to hold the First National gold panning contest.

The goldpanning area of Navelgas is located in the Asturias region of the northwest corner of Spain. Gold has been recovered in the rivers of the Cuarto de los Valles since the days of the celtic people who used the precious metal for jewellery and as gifts for the gods. With the arrival of the Romans, who wanted the gold for the wives of the emperors in Rome, production methods improved by using local slaves who were fed on the fruit of hazel trees.

Nowadays it is possible to retrace the steps of the Roman expeditions and combine panning with fishing, hunting, natural history and exploration. At Luarcas, just 26 km away, you will find traditional Spanish beaches but stay in Navelgas to experience the regional food of meat and sausage specialities: nabiza polienta, cazinas, calabazon, the chosco and the rice with milk.



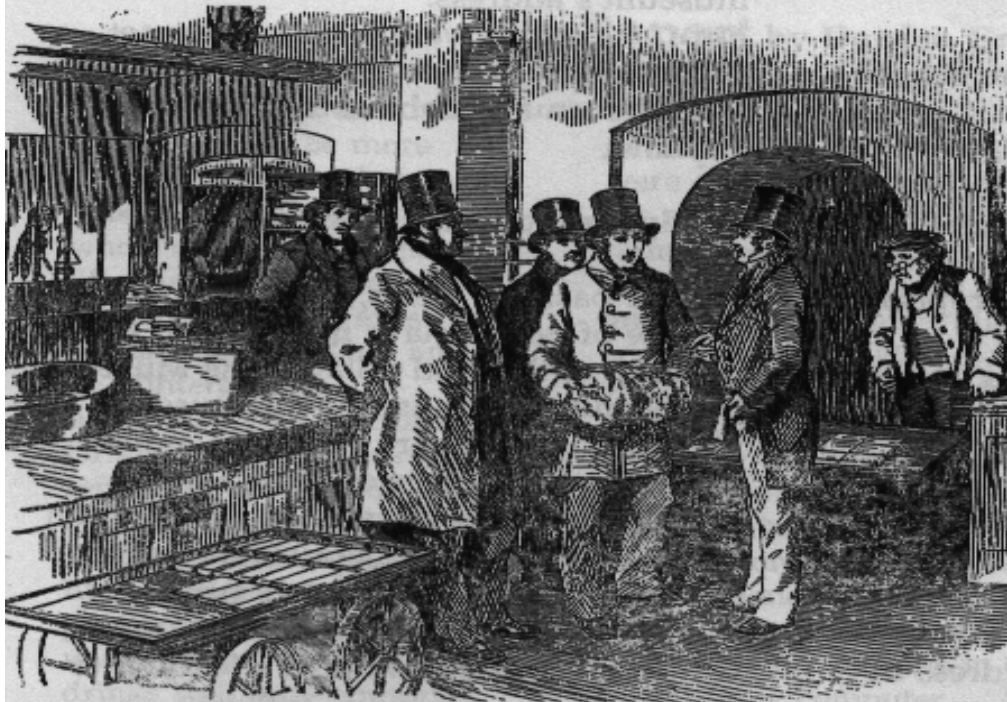
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## News from the Tankavaara Gold Museum



LARGE NUGGET OF GOLD JUST BROUGHT FROM PORT PHILLIP.

*Picture from the Australian display in Golden World*

### Golden World

Golden World Exhibition is still growing and developing little by little. With regularity, new material and information comes from the world and recently the museum received a great contribution from Ballarat Gold Museum for the Australian display which consisted of wonderful pictures, tools, and a video about the famous battle at Eureka Stockade. All the material touches on important aspects of the rich history of gold in Australia.

The museum is now looking forward to receiving a new display about Ireland for the section allocated to the British Isles. Ron Callender, with his enthusiastic working party, have completed years of research to plan and create a most interesting display on the history of gold on the Green Island.

In addition, in its outdoor museum, the museum is planning to build a replica of an Egyptian gold mine which dates back 4000 years.

### Other exhibitions

Gold Museum has co-operated with the biggest mining company in Finland, "Outokumpu Ltd", as well as The Geological Survey of Finland and both organisations have set up permanent exhibitions at the museum. Outokumpu shows how gold is melted and turned into a gold bar. The Geological Survey has arranged a display "Treasure from the Archives" which shows old gold maps from Lapland dating from the 1870s. Some of them have

not been published before and are useful for researchers but are also interesting for the amateurs and visitors generally.

For the coming year several exhibitions will be prepared at the museum. From June to September there will be a display about diamonds which has been put together by Oulu University and The Geological Survey of Finland. The Gold Museum already has replicas of the world-famous Gullinan diamonds.

Last summer the museum made excavations in the Ivalojoiki goldfields and a special display will be developed from the material which was found. There will also be a photography display about the Ivalojoiki River valley which will be shown in August. During Gold Week of Lapland and the Finnish Goldpanning Open in the first weekend

of August, many smaller displays will be shown around the municipality of Sodankylä and Inari

### **Gold Museum is developing the school programmes**

In partnership with Sami Museum "Siida", the Gold Museum has started a project called "Lappish Camp Schools". The project is financed by the European Union with the municipalities of Sodankylä and Inari participating in the costs along with the museums.

The aim of the project is to develop a new kind of education programme for school children where learning will take place by role play. When pupils are to learn the history and traditions of a certain period or age, they will dress in the style of those days and take on a character for themselves. During the course, pupils will go "inside" the subject and enter a different era and in this way will assimilate the teaching easier, and it will be more meaningful.

The objective of the project for 1999 is to produce new education programmes about gold history, natural sciences and the culture of Lapland, and an important model for the project has come from Sovereign Hill and the Ballarat Gold Museum in Australia, where the programmes have been very successful.

### **Old gold photographs to the database**

The Gold Museum has thousands of photographs regarding gold during the past one hundred years which feature gold mines, gold panners, gold panning tools and equipment, aspects of the gold trade and everyday life on the goldfields. The Museum has started to put the photographs to the database with all the information which is available from the pictures. So far, over two hundred photographs about the Lemmenjoki

goldfields have been saved and a few can be seen on the Internet using the museum's address:

<http://www.urova.fi/~kulta>. Internet address <http://www.uta.fi/~tisasi/> gives information about the explorer Lapland.

### **Goldpanning in the middle winter**

For the past few years, the snow, cold and ice of winter have not stopped gold panning at the gold village. The Museum has panning pools inside the museum where visitors can try panning - no matter how cold it is outside. Sand is taken from the gold creek in the Auho and it is easy to pan because the big stones and clay have already been washed out. Not only that, the temperature of the water is friendly to the hands





## Tourists for Gold

By Arturo Ramella, Biella Goldprospectors Association  
(arturo.ramella@iol.it)

Our journeys start with the planning. This happens sometimes hours, sometimes days, sometimes a whole year before we depart! In fact, the trip I want to tell you about began eleven months before we arrived at the airport for our flight from Milan to Helsinki. But - one step at a time. People who do goldpanning for a hobby often travel and a good thing about this is that you meet up with the same people in very different places.

In September 97 a huge group of Finnish friends came to visit us in Biella before going on to Umeå for the World Goldpanning Championships. We had the opportunity to visit the town, the ancient gold mine of La Bessa, to go goldpanning on the river Ivalo and to have a superb dinner in a restaurant in the mountains. We found time to have a car accident, too!

As we all enjoyed each other's company so much, we flew and we promised each other that we must meet again not too far in the future. No sooner said than done! The plan to travel to Finland began - an

e-mail message sent in November to Tankavaara confirmed our intentions. In response a message from the North in February asked if we preferred to hike in the forest or have a boat cruise on Lake Inari. Goldprospectors organise their travels in detail!

At the beginning of August, after some defections, eleven of us met up at the airport for the plane to the north. It was my third flight to Lapland, but some of my companions had only heard about the midnight sun, reindeers, mushrooms, lakes, reindeers again, rivers, forests, lakes again, before that time. The same newcomers expected to find an icy environment, both in terms of temperature and contact with people. But among gold prospectors one can never feel cold! In fact the temperature in Ivalo at 23.00 hours wasn't what you would say very hot, but from the first meeting with Kauko and Inkeri next morning, we could feel that this journey would be one to be remembered. Hours hiking in the Lapland forest for a start, canoeing on the Ivalojoki rapids, the ceremony for the commemoration of the 1868

gold rush and a memorable dinner at the Old Goldprospectors Restaurant, warmed our first day there.

Then there were competitions, very good for us, sure, but secondary to the purpose of the trip. There are some moments that will stick in our hearts and in our memories much longer than the final classifications where our names were at the top of the different lists.

We will remember more about the 'Lapinkullan Ystävät' meeting, the Sami Museum, Ukko Isle, the lake and the real goldprospectors restaurant in Inari; about the whole day with Pirjo as a fantastic guide, about the long chat about goldprospecting in Lapland with a very special friend Sepe, his birthday party, the midnight sunset viewed from the wooden bridge of Vuotso; about the "mushrooms walk", goldprospecting and lunch at Vuijemin Haara offered by Raija and Pentti, and we will remember names such as Lauttaoja, Hangasoja, Tankavaara, and learning about nature in the extreme climate in this corner of the world. We will remember for a long time the words,

sometimes difficult to listen to and to learn, our trying to learn them, the gestures that helped us, the will to exchange something between each of us. What I want to convey to you, readers, through these poor sentences, is the atmosphere that you can find among the different people that we are. We can meet each other infrequently, sometimes once a year, but it is just as if we were neighbours (or better, and I think some readers will understand me well).

We looked at a road map not many days ago with some Italian friends, just to check where the place is

that will host the next World Championships in the Czech Republic, to plan the journey, and, as an impossible trip with a finger following the roads, we travelled all Europe noting places we knew and trying to put together places and faces, hardly remembering names, sometimes, but visualising the faces. We remembered a talk with a man, yes, tall and with fair hair or brown beard?, who talked to us about offering hospitality in Poland when we go for the Championships in 2000, but we didn't remember his name. And we talked about how, in our little world, the goldpanners world I mean,

which every year grows larger and larger as new countries join us, we be able to share with another of these strangers who look like us, help hospitality and warm friendship.

Well, I said, gold, our gold, gold nuggets we every time we go look for gold with someone are within ourselves... you have to try to think how many nuggets you have found all around the world that you can call their own names or, at least, you recognise their faces. They are very rare.

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## **Tankavaara and the Millenium**

Turn of the year 2000 is a remarkable event in all over the world. Countless people is planning to spend it in an unforgettable way or in some special place. Also Lapland is preparing to offer special programmes to the visitors. One of the most extraordinary programme will take place in Tankavaara Gold Village when a traditional tin of a new year will be changed to the gold.

In many countries the habit of the New Year Eve is to foretell the future from the shapes taken by melted tin. In Tankavaara the reception of the New

Year 2000 will happen more festive than usual since metal alloy which will be casted won't be tin and lead but pure gold of 24 carat.

Gold piece of 10 grams will be casted a common lucky charm but visitor can also cast their own New Year's charm from gold amount of 1 gram. Since the melting point of gold is so much higher than the melting point of tin the melting will happen in the special crucibles. Tankavaara is going to create this as a tradition for the coming millenium.



## Glories of the Past

By Anne Doran

### 235 Tonnes of Gold Sold in Nine Years

This was the heading in one of the local newspapers of the day. According to the Australian Mines

Department, Dunolly and districts has produced a greater number of gold nuggets than any other goldfields in Australia.

A total of 339 nuggets has been found in a radius of 20 miles of Dunolly, of which Dunolly produced, the highest number.

126 nuggets totalling 20.741 ounces.

Others were:

The Welcome Stranger-Moliagul-2.285 ozs

The Blanche Barkly-Kingower-1.742 ozs

2 nuggets (unnamed)-Dunolly-3.000 ozs

The Precious-Rheola-1.621 ozs

The Poseidon-Poseidon-703 ozs

The McEnvoy-McIntyre-810 ozs

The Magnum Bonum-Tarnagulla-422 ozs

Replicas of these nuggets are on display at the Dunolly Museum.

**First Gold Discovery in Victoria - Australia**

In 1848 gold was discovered on the site of the Amherst township on the boundary of the Glenmona and Dunach forest pastoral runs by a shepherd named Thomas Chapman.

Following the discovery, the nuggets were displayed in a Collins Street - Melbourne jewellery store, causing an anxious Government to send Captain Dana and a detachment of native police to maintain order.

Calm prevailed until 1851 when payable gold was discovered in Clunes, Victoria's "first gold town".

### The Welcome Stranger of Moliagul

The world's largest gold nugget "The Welcome Stranger" was discovered near the black reef - Bulldog Gully in Moliagul (approx. 10 miles from Dunolly and 23 miles from Maryborough) on Friday 5th February in 1869 by two Cornish miners named John Deason and Richard Oates.

The two mates arrived in Victoria - Australia in 1854 after spending some time on the Bendigo diggings. They arrived in Moliagul in 1862.

For a time they washed surface soil in an old fashioned puddling machine worked by horsepower. On the day of the discovery, John Deason was digging near the roots of a big tree to get wash dirt when his pick struck something hard. On examining the obstacle he was amazed to see the huge golden mass.

He called his mate, Richard Oates, to view the remarkable discovery and together they eventually removed the nugget from the soil and took it to Deason's house, where it was placed in the fire to burn off some of the quartz debris.

As robbery with violence was common on the goldfields in those days, Deason and Oates concealed the nugget at the back of the fire place and kept the fire burning for several days.

After several more days, the nugget which weighed gross weight 2520 ozs. or 66 kilos, was loaded on a wagon covered with sacks and transported to Dunolly with close friends forming an escort.

The Welcome Stranger

nugget was sold to the London Chartered Bank in Broadway - Dunolly (this building still stands today and is classified by the National Trust). Owing to the nugget's great size, about 2 feet long and 1 foot wide, it could not be weighed on the largest scales at the bank, so was taken to the nearby blacksmith shop and reduced to several smaller pieces on an anvil which is located in front of the Museum building.

It is recorded that Deason and Oates sold 2.285 ozs. of the gold the rest they kept for themselves. The towns of Moliagul - Tarnagulla - Dunolly are known as "The Golden Triangle".

Today's value of The Welcome Stranger would be worth \$4 million Australian.

### **Can Anyone Help?**

I came across a little gem last year and I am wondering if any of our many gold panners from around the world would remember this event and shed some light on several names which were mentioned in a conversation from a fellow miner.

He told me that the 1st Australian Goldpanning Championship was held at Epsom Pottery, a short distance from Bendigo - Victoria, Australia, on 23rd and 24th April 1977.

The winner of this 1st Goldpanning Championship was David Henderson from Daylesford - Australia. Second was Doars (or David) Prosser the Canadian Champion and third was Jessie Starner, former Canadian Champion. The event was sponsored by H.C. Sleight from Golden Fleece Petroleums.

My informant also told me that when the Canadian delegation came down to Australia they were celebrating the anniversary of the Klondike Rush in Dawson - Canada. He said that the Lady Mayor (of German extract) led the Canadian delegation.

From Finland he recalls, Esko - Langa, the father and Tuomo the son. He also said that the first World Championships were held in Finland in 1976.

So I made several phone calls to see that I could find out. Presto! I stumbled to an elderly gentleman who clearly remembered the goldpanning championships. He surprised me by saying he would send me several photos. One of the winners and one of the designers of the trophy.

The design trophy is a plaque of polished wood 3ft x 1ft bronze plaque. Carved relief are a windlass, mallet and dishes. The name of the designer has not been recorded. A week later, enlarged photocopies arrived.

Just maybe, there could be someone reading this who could remember the event? I would be interested to hear from anyone with further information, as we are starting to compile our history of goldpanning championships in Australia.

From - The Land Down Under,

Mrs. Anne Doran  
RMB 1630, Dunolly, VIC  
3472, Australia



## World News - with a Dutch accent,

By J C G Schoenmaker of Klaaswaal

*When the editors begin any issue of Golden Times, they write to all the correspondents and are confident that their man in Holland will be sure to send material. We take this opportunity to say, "Thank you, Koos".*

**New Zealand** scientists are "digging for gold" but using mustard plants which are grown on auriferous ore. The gold is absorbed into the system and recovered by burning the leaves to release the gold.

**Russia's Association of Banks** is planning to strike gold coins with a face value of a million roubles in the hope that this will win back confidence in the Russian currency.

**South Africa** announces an alliance between the Canadian Gold Corporation and the Anglo-American Corporation in a move to issue a one-ounce gold coin to mark the Millennium in 2000. It is seen as a way of circulating excess gold.

**Scotland** had a success story when the talented goldsmith, Ian Combe,

created his own goldmine at a burn in the Scottish Highlands. Its location must remain a secret but, in view of the amount of work he has, Ian Combe has hired men to do the panning for him.

**Holland's** Bernard Keiser is confident that he has found 18th century pirate treasure on the island of Chile's Jaun Fernandez. He is expecting to uncover 846 barrels of Inca gold with a value of US\$10M and according to the law in Chile, the finder keeps 25%. The treasure has a long history. The English Lord Anson captured the gold from the Spanish in 1716 and hid it on the island - which became the setting for the story of Robinson Crusoe. (After a dispute with his ship's captain,

Scottish sailor Alexander Selkirk was left on the uninhabited island and it was these experiences which inspired Daniel Defoe to write his famous story in 1719.)

**Gold for Sale.** Koos notices a trend: The Banks are selling their gold and writes that the Bank of Belgium sold 300 tons for US\$2.8M which is half of its reserve. This is not the first time and follows similar moves by Holland and Germany. Why are they doing it? The gold price will go down but the sales are necessary to make up arrears of state debts and in view of the introduction of the Euro coin in 2002, it is no longer necessary to hold vast reserves. Note that one Euro equals Dfls 2.20.

## The Urban Prospector

Unusual research has been completed by and exploration geologist working at the University of Wales in Cardiff, Great Britain. Helen Pritchard's specialism is platinum, which occurs naturally in rocks at one part per billion. By chance, she analysed some samples of dust taken from the roads of her city and had an amazing result of 126 parts per billion. She then washed some samples in a gold pan and had a ten times increase of

But what was the secret?

The precious metals were falling from car exhausts fitted with catalytic convertors and the best 'hot spots' were the cracks between the paving stones of the affluent areas where there were extra new cars. An expert says that although each converter holds no more than three grams of platinum, 35% of the world's production is now used in this product which is designed to remove 95% of

## Stories You Never Read in Golden Times

I dislike magazines and newsletter which publish recipes and crossword puzzles just to fill up some space. During my time as joint-editor, I kept a cookbook handy but I never had to use it. Instead, I had a big folder called "ideas for a rainy day" and which I might have used when there was a shortage of material. Thanks to circumstances, I never had to use them... until now. Here is a synopsis of the best ones:

- \* Review of an exhibition called "Gold: Past, Present and Future" at the Bank of England in London. As an Editor, I received an informative brochure which I will present to the archives of Golden World.

- \* Details of the 150th Anniversary of Otago and Southland in New Zealand which made me decide to celebrate the Millennium with a visit in 2000.

- \* Review of La Picaja - 30 page newsletter of 130 copies produced by the Associazione Biellese Cercatori d'Oro - which contains photographs, diagrams, cartoons and, best of all,

reproductions from De Re Metallica but no recipes. Page 9 carries the solution to a crossword puzzle.

- \* French announcement about the discovery of gold in California in 1848.

- \* Goldpanning for children - in a theme park called Legoland, which is near the Queen's Windsor Castle, England.

- \* Details of a goldpanning championships in Italy, dated 1997, which carries well-written history of gold discovery in Ovada.

- \* A press cutting; Fidel Castro searches for Spanish gold in the waters of Cuba... with descriptions of the sophisticated searching equipment.

- \* Photographs, but no captions, showing people panning with flat, wooden, square boxes... which makes me think they came from Japan.

- \* Postcards from British museums which illustrate valuable exhibits in gold.

- \* A letter summarising the significance of a beautiful statue of King William III which is covered in gold leaf and stands in a main street in

Hull, England. Pirjo Muotkajärvi photographed for my research in 1995.

- \* A profile of a man who makes facsimile of nugget and items discovered by detector users, which have been handed over to the authorities. He only requires a few hours, in private, to make a copy.

- \* A hand-written letter from a professor of nuclear physics outlining a theory for fingerprinting gold by the radioactivity of heavy trace elements. He says it would make a good project for a Master's degree.

- \* Press releases on gold for sale, a gold credit card, price of gold in the world markets, strikes in South Africa, closure of a tin mine in England, news of Moroccan gold coins discovered underwater and advice on planning family finance complete with a illustration of Vincent Thurkettle. The caption says, "Few have seen it rich".

At last! Now I can have a celebration bonfire.

Ron Callender

### Golden Times

The official newsletter of the World Goldpanning Association

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Website: <http://www.urova.fi/~kulta>



## Preliminary News from the Czech Republic The 1999 World Goldpanning Championships

Now that the Coloma championships are over, it is time to look ahead to the next world event which will be held at Kocaba, near Mala Lecice in the Czech Republic, from 23rd August to 29th August 1999. The venue is a remote valley of the Kocaba River which is about 30 km south of Prague. We are very pleased with the location because it is in a historic mining district which includes the former Royal mining town of Novy Knin and nearby are the Jilove and Mokrsko deposits.

Not only is it one of the most attractive places in Central Bohemia, it is also the most convenient of all the places we have ever considered as a competition area. Kocaba is situated in a beautiful, deep valley; it is well away from the densely populated areas, yet is not too far from Prague.

Kocaba offers plenty of space for competition, for camping, for parking and many other activities, such as excursions to gold and silver deposits, and Prague. During the week there will be an International Gold Symposium, displays of gold and a gold market; every evening there will be traditional music, country dances and campfires at the competition area. Not only that, our goldpanning activities have the approval and full support of the local people from the two villages in the vicinity.

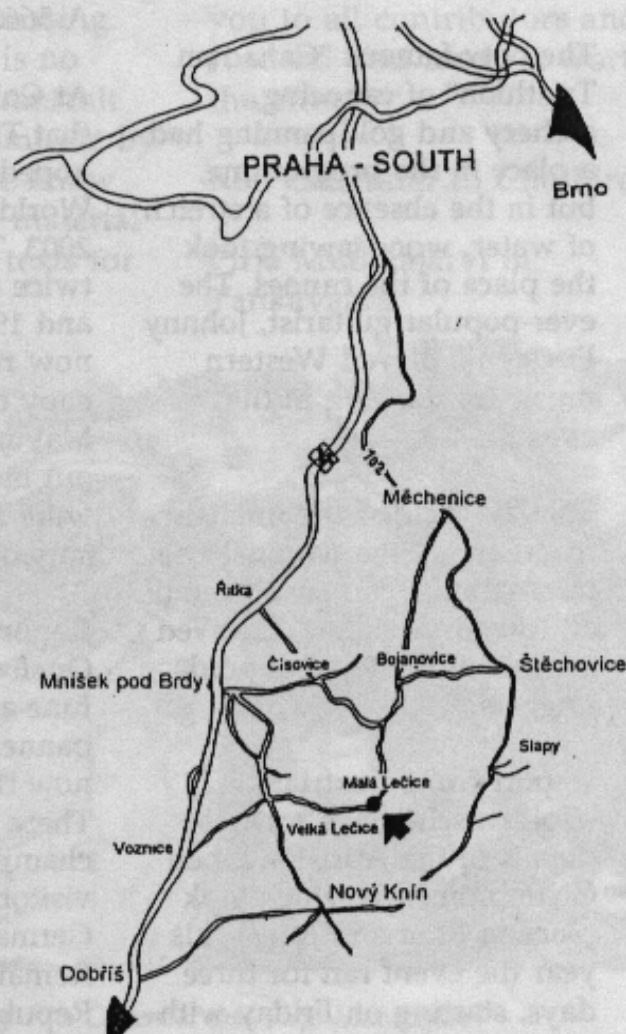
We know that our language might be a problem but we have decided to help our visitors to fix accommodation by running an agency for reservations. We are preparing the necessary documentation now, and it will be distributed in February 1999.

For further information and a registration form, please contact one of the following officials of the Czech Goldpanning Club at Geologicka 6, 15200 Prague 5, Czech Republic.

Dr Pavel Lhotsky on Phone/Fax +420 2 5817390 or e-mail: [lhotsky@cgu.cz](mailto:lhotsky@cgu.cz)

Dr Veronika Stedra on e-mail: [stedra@mira.cz](mailto:stedra@mira.cz)

Mrs Helena Horackova on Fax +420 2 57320438 or e-mail: [secretar@cgu.cz](mailto:secretar@cgu.cz)



## European Round-up

### Report from Germany:

Norbert Kurtz reports a successful International Open Championship in June - the 12th in the series and the tenth to be held at Goldkronach. The annual business meeting of the DGSV started the proceedings on Friday night; from then on, it was fun and contests. The goldpanners assembled for breakfast before the 10am opening ceremony, and while the elimination heats were in progress, other competitors took part in the "Goldpanning Jackpot" which carries a Champion title and money prizes.

The now-famous "Canadian Triathlon" of canoeing, archery and goldpanning had a place in the programme, but in the absence of a stretch of water, woodsawing took the place of the canoes. The ever-popular guitarist, Johnny Firestone, played Western music for dancing in the evening.

Sunday decided the finalists from among the national and international competitors and all category winners received awards in the form of gold nuggets.

### Report from Austria:

"Goldwasch-News" carries details of the Austrian Open Championships which took place in Rauris in June. This year the event ran for three days, starting on Friday with

excursions into the nearby national park and opportunities for training in gold washing. The day ended with a supper-lecture by Dr Paar who spoke on "Gold Deposits". Competition continued for the next two days, and included a Goldwashers' Evening being held round a fire on the mountain top on Saturday.

Details of next year's championship, again to be held in Rauris on 18th, 19th and 20th June 1999, are already available and the top prize is a 15g nugget. For more information, contact: Austrian Open Goldpanning, A-5661 Rauris, Austria.

At Coloma, there were stories that The Austrian Association hoped to be the hosts for the World Championships in 2003. The world event has twice visited Rauris - in 1986 and 1994. Golden Times has now received confirmation in copy of a letter from the Mayor of Rauris which sets out his request and offers a wide range of attractions in support.

**Report from Italy:** The Italian Open was held at Ovada in June and more than 100 panners took part in what is now the 16th in the series. There were 8 world champions present with visitors from France, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Romania and the Czech Republic. The results were

also declared for the Wor Cup and Domenico Trerc (1997 world champion at Vigevano) took the title "Champion of the World" received 50g of Orba gold. The runner-up was Frant Hrala of Czech Republic.

The next Italian Open takes place in Ovada on 12th & 13th June 1999 and will include contests, the elect of Miss Nugget, picture displays and the 1st International Mineral Ma. Details are available from Federazione Italiana Cerc d'Oro, 15077 Predosa (Al) Italy.

**Report from Finland:** The Golden Week of Lapland (2nd to 9th August 1998) concluded with the Finnish Open being held at Tankavaara. Sunday's opening ceremony took place at Njurgalahti and excursions to the goldfields of Lemmenjoki, Ivalo and Laanila continued until the weekend, when a gold symposium, a mineral market and an evening dance took place at the Gold Village on Friday. By day, the emphasis was on competition, which included a "joker" round and another for free tools; the evenings concentrated on with a gold auction in Nugget Square, selection of Superperson of 1998 and a party in the Nugget Restaurant.



# GOLDPANNING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN 1999

## National Championships

### \* German and Bavarian Championships

22.-23.5.1999 Riedenburg  
Information: Goldwäscher e. V.,  
Gertraud Veitz, Wundtsrase 9,  
80939 München, Germany, Tel.  
+49 89 3112512

### \* Italian Championships

12.-13.6.1999 Ovada  
Information: Federazione Italiana  
Cercatori d'Oro, 15077 Predosa  
(AL), Italy, Tel/Fax.+39 143  
873176 (Dr. Giuseppe Pipino)

### \* Austrian Championships

18.-20.6.1999 Rauris  
Information: Austrian Open  
Goldpanning, Post Box, A-5661  
Rauris, Tel. +43 6544-6237, Fax.  
+43 6544-7049, e-mail:  
Erich.Hutter@habag.rauris.net

### \* Yukon Championships

1.7.1999 Dawson City, Yukon,  
Canada, Information: Klondike  
Visitors Association, Box 389,  
Dawson City, Yukon, Canada  
YOB 1G0, Fax. 867-993641, e-  
mail: kva@dawson.net

### \* French Championships

10.-11.7.1999 La Tour, Camping  
Lac de l'Oasis, Information:  
ORBIS, 3 rue de Dijon, app. 505,  
Besancon 25000 Planoise, France

### \* Swedish Championships

20.-21.1999 Antis, near Siikavaara  
in Swedish Lapland, Information:  
SGV, c/o John Hagberg,  
Moränvägen 26, S-13651 Haninge,  
Sweden, Tel. 08 500 25886

### \* Finnish Championships

6.-8.8.1999 Tankavaara  
Information: Goldpanning  
Finnish Open, FIN-99695  
Tankavaara, Tel +358-16-626171,  
Fax. +358-16-626261.

### \* Japan Championships

8.8.1999 Hamatonbetsu,  
Hokkaido, Japan, Information:  
All Japan Goldpanning  
Association, 154, Hamatonbetsu,  
Esashi-Gun, Hokkaido 098-57,  
Japan, Fax. +81-1634-2-4766

### \* Swiss Championships

20.-22.8.1999, Willisau (LU),  
Switzerland, Information:  
Goldwasch - Tour & Shop,  
Postfach, Muligass 4 Kirchplatz,  
CH-6130 Willisau, Tel. +41-41-  
9700310, Fax. +41-41-9700510, e-  
mail: Victor.Jans@goldwasche.ch,  
http://www.goldwaschen.ch

## European Goldpanning Championships

### \* European Goldpanning Championships in 2001

End of June 2001, Biella, Italy  
Information: Associazione  
Biellese Cercatori D'oro, Piazza  
Mazzini n. 54, 13872 Borriana BI,  
Italy, Tel. 015-446597, Fax. 015-  
94939, e-mail:arturo.ramella@iol.it

## World Championships

### \* World Goldpanning Championships in 1999

23.-29.8.1998, Kocaba Valley near  
Mala Lecice, Central Bohemia,  
Czech Rep., Information: Czech  
Goldpanning Club, Geologicka 6,  
15200 Prague 5, Czech Republic.  
Tel/Fax. +420-2-5817390, e-mail:  
lhotsky@cgu.cz (Dr Pavel  
Lhotsky), e-mail: stedra@mira.cz  
(Dr Veronika Stedra), Fax. +420-  
2-57320438, e-mail:  
secretar@cgu.cz (Mrs. Helena  
Horackova)

### \* World Goldpanning Championships in 2000

27.8 - 3.9.2000 Zlotoryja, Poland  
Information: The Polish Guild of  
Gold Prospectors, 59-500  
Zlotoryja, Rynek 1, Poland. Tel.  
48-076-781873, fax. 48 (076) 781-  
873,http://www.lwgnica.tpsa.pl/  
rtzloto/gold.

### \* World Goldpanning Championships in 2001

Maryborough, Victoria, Australia  
Information: Australian  
Goldpanning Association Inc., 27  
Derby Road, Maryborough, VIC

3465, Tel/Fax. 03-54614709 or  
Swain Events, Level 4, 114  
Flinders Street, Melbourne,  
Victoria, Australia, 3000. Tel. 613  
96639399, Fax. 613-96639499, e-  
mail: Libby@SwainEvents.com

### \* World Goldpanning Championships in 2002

26.8.-1.9. 2002, Kutcharo Lake  
Side, Hamatonbetsu, Japan  
Information: All Japan  
Goldpanning Association, 154,  
Hamatonbetsu, Esashi-gun  
Hokkaido 098-5792 Japan,  
Tel.+81-1634-2-2345, Fax. +81-  
1634-2-4766

## Other competitions

### \* Offene Steirische Meisterschaft

6.-6.6.1999 Pusterwald,  
Steiermark, Austria  
Information: Wolfgang  
Steinkellner, Pusterwald 124, A-  
8764 Pusterwald, Tel/Fax. 0 3574  
2233

### \* Lannavaara Open

3.-4.7.1999 Lannavaara, Sweden  
Information: Agne Söderström, Tel  
0981-31060, 31055

### \* Kopparberg Open

10.-11.7.1999 Kopparberg, Swede  
Information: SGV, c/o John  
Hagberg, Moränvägen 26, S-1365  
Haninge, Sweden, Tel. 08 500  
25886

### \* Jukkasjärvi Open

17.-18.7.1999 Jukkasjärvi, Sweden  
Information: Per-olof & Marareta  
Sandström, Idrottsvägen 20, S-  
98139 Kiruna, Sweden, Tel/Fax.  
+46-0980-1720

### \* Biella Open, Victimula The

Goldpanners International  
Meeting, 23.-25.7.1999 Biella, Italy  
Information: Arturo Ramella,  
Tel/Fax. +39-15-94939, e-mail:  
arturo.ramella@iol.it

### \* Eldorado Goldpanning Championships

28.8.1999, Barkerville, B.B.,  
Canada

GOLDWINING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN 1999

*The  
Golden Beer  
of Lapland*

LAPIN  
KULTA  
OLUT



# THE 1998 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

A Special Supplement to Golden Times

## Report by Derrick Grady

Overall this was an American experience. To be more precise, it was a Western American experience. The whole competition field was filled with attractions, eateries Miner's Kitchen, Texas Tornado, Kettle Korn and so on), 'interactive demonstrations' (including the Original 16 - 1 Mine Inc. remelting of an \$10000 ingot of gold), Highway 50 Wagon Trains, volunteers dressed in high fashions of the 1850's, a performance tent complete with running entertainment, a drinks stall fully equipped with a 'barker' performing "Find the Lady" three card tricks. ("Montgomery Seed at your service!" offering gold 'nuggets' with which to make bets.) Soon the real gambling outfits arrived, faro, blackjack, and the rest. Californians have not forgotten who grew rich as a result of the Gold Rushes. All of which and much more was part of the Californian Sesquicentennial (150 years) celebrations at the Marshall Gold Discovery Park. The 1998 World Gold Panning Championships fitted seamlessly into this scenario. Even the countries represented by competitors were seen by speech makers at the Opening Ceremony, (in particular, California Secretary of State Bill Jones,) as replicating those of 1849 Gold Rush participants.

The permanent area devoted

aspects of competition panning. The water troughs were effectively operated by the officials and a large number of spectators accommodated. All the service areas, bibbing, bucket filling, scrutineering, judging etc. were conveniently sited as was a generous Press facility. Everyone was impressed by the sheer numbers of volunteer helpers and the contribution they made. With such evidence of careful planning it was strange that competition data came in the form of raw computer printouts using a very small font size and no explanation. Information about social events was equally scarce making difficulties for attendees who had been lodged in places as far away as Auburn or Placerville. A simple daily timetable of events in the form Day, Time, Event would have been helpful.

Under guidance of Geroqe A Wheeldon, (Chief Justice) the Judging team gave an exemplary performance. Exactly what most people expect at a world event with everything discussed and agreed, once and for all, in the Judge's tent. I liked the certainly of the final acceptance signature. And, everyone kept their gold! There were long intervals between events - it was nice to chat with other competitors

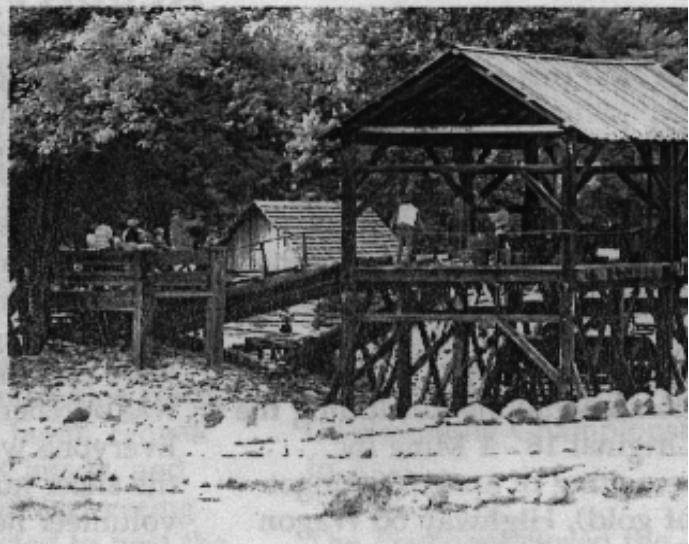
passing that became crucial for people with flights to catch on the last day. Many left without knowing the final results which was a pity because, during the closure ceremony, international aspects of the Championship came to the fore emphasized by the hand-over to Kocaba 99.

The banter and repartee between Ron Stockman, (whom we all hope is now fully recovered,) and Will Wood, erstwhile Long Tom, Mayor Fairplay, CA. will remain for me a featured memory of Coloma 1998. Though this became a form of verbal "wallpaper", it was a very effective means of keeping the show moving. Thank you and congratulations to everyone Coloma especially Rosanne who had a dream and made it happen!

Footnote:

Many people thought the cost of entries very expensive, far more than any previous occasion. There was much comment about this especially with the evidence of considerable sponsorship. But the stated aim of restricting entries to a manageable number was achieved. Perhaps this issue needs action by the International Committee rather than leaving Championship organizing groups to find a solution? What would be the effect of

# PICTURE PAGE : COLOMA 1998 :





# : WORLD GOLDPANNING CHAMPIONSHIP



## Report from the 1998 WGA Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the WGA took place in the Odd Fellows Hall, Coloma, California on 1st of October during the World Goldpanning Championships. There were present 33 representatives from 17 countries. Kauko Launonen was elected as a chairman of the meeting and Inkeri Syrjänen acted as secretary.

The annual report and accounts for the period 1st July 1997 to 30th June 1998 were circulated and accepted. All income had been allocated to publication of the association's newsletter, 'Golden Times', and to the

postage costs for its world-wide distribution. The delegates agreed that membership fees would remain unchanged and the budget for 1998/1999 was approved. It was stated that the board of the association will try to find a way to cover the publishing costs of the 'Golden Times'.

Applications to host the 2002 World Championships were received from Japan, Slovak Republic and Canada, and after discussion and voting Japan was elected to host the event. It was also decided by the meeting that Biella Goldprospectors Association

from Italy will host the European Goldpanning Championships in 2001.

Other upcoming issues included the suggestion that the association should pay more attention to the veterans. Further information about World Goldpanning Championships in 1999 in Czech Republic was also given and Austria announced the interest in hosting the World Goldpanning Championships in 2003.

The President closed the meeting at 8pm and thanked the participants for an interesting and active meeting.

## All the Results for 1998

### Men

1. Veikko Keränen, Finland
2. Pavel Lhotsky, Czech Rep.
3. Sten Bergström, Sweden
4. Giorgio DeLorenzi, Italy
5. Armando Pasqualini, Italy
6. Luca Pasqualini, Italy

### Women

1. Marlise Ludi, Switzerland
2. Kaija Niehoff, Finland
3. Helena Rezna, Slovak Rep.
4. Rosa Angelia Milanese, Italy
5. Jarmila Kanova, Slovak Rep.
6. Valeriane Dubuc, South Africa

### Senior

1. Matti Kärkkäinen, Finland
2. Frederie Bouton, France
3. Anita Patala, Finland
4. Werner Kurtz, Germany
5. Ilse Baron, Austria
6. Aulis Rosensten, Sweden

### Youth

1. Pia Keränen, Finland
2. Christopher Rauschnot, USA
3. Heidi Hongisto, Finland
4. Jon Olsson, Australia
5. Scottie Terrell, USA
6. Kate Barker, Australia

### Children

1. Amanda Dann, USA
2. Ralf Thurkettle, England
3. Monica Nordling, Canada
4. Brian Beffa, USA
5. Curtis Bills, USA
6. Felix Ludi, Switzerland

### National Team

1. ITALY
2. CANADA
3. FRANCE
4. SWEDEN
5. U.S.A
6. CZECH REP.

### Open Team

1. Moonshine Panners, Finland
2. Mariponi, Italy
3. Delorenzi Giorgio, Italy
4. Top Team, France
5. Checziatokopov-Trecin, Slovak Rep.
6. Team Tunturi, Finland

### Men's Beginner

1. Jaroslav Sykora, Czech Rep.
2. Scott Terrell, USA
3. Michael Penney, USA
4. Kinya Mizutani, Japan
5. Graeme Barker, Australia
6. Milan Sulc, Czech Rep.

### Women's Beginner

1. Wendy Barker, Australia
2. Beth Palmer, Australia
3. Renee Wilson, USA
4. Leila Menna, Finland
5. Tuija Tunturi, Finland
6. Natalia Suarez, Spain