

Nunawading & District Lapidary Club
Executive Officer,
Victorian Environmental Assessment Council,
Level 39, 2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Sir/ Madam,

In response to your call for submissions on the "Central West Investigation Draft Proposals Paper - August 2018", I now place before you this Club's submission.

The Nunawading & District Lapidary Club Inc. had its beginnings in February 1967 and currently has 260 members. The general objectives of the club are;

- To bring together those interested in collecting gems, minerals and fossils.
- To promote exchange of knowledge in gem cutting, jewellery making, enamelling, minerals and fossils.
- To provide facilities and training courses to enable members to improve their skills in Lapidary and allied crafts.
- To promote and foster the formation of group activities within the Club.
- To provide appropriate social activities for members.
- To maintain a regard for and an active interest in preservation of wildlife, natural reserves and fossicking areas.
- To promote the spirit of competition in the Club, in Victoria and in other States.

Attached is the field trip code of ethics given to each new member. The clubs field trip officer ensures that these are followed on every club field trip. Thus, the main thrust of our submission relates to the collection and gathering or 'fossicking' of minerals and/or lapidary material within the ambits of the Central West Investigation Area. Fossickers regularly visit the investigation area. Excluding fossicking many members have no reason to visit the area.

National parks encourage camping, bushwalking, 4WD, bike riding, and horse riding on specified tracks. Regional and nature parks also allow most recreational activities however the club feels that recreational fossicking has not been given recognition. Possibly because it appears to be grouped with prospecting and possibly because, not having the information we did not make a submission to the original inquiry.

In several instances throughout the Investigation recreational tourism and 4WD driving, horse riding, trail-bike riding are listed in primary positions with metal detecting, prospecting for gold well down the list. The importance of the hobbyist mineral collector and/or fossicker for semi-precious gems seems to have been forgotten or, perhaps, not recognised would be a better phrase. Fossicking by the lapidary hobbyist is recreational tourism and collectors/ fossickers put money into the area's economy by utilising caravan parks, eating at local RSLs, bowling clubs etc. or buying food supplies from the local traders.

With the expansion of the Wombat State Forest and the Lerderderg State Park plus the inclusion of other State Parks and Forests and one each Flora Reserve and Conservation Reserve into the Wombat-Macedon National Park, it appears that we will lose many fossicking sites. Our endeavours to fossick for sapphires, garnets, zircons and zeolites in the Wombat and Sailor Creeks plus many other creeks and their tributaries will, we hope, be able to continue as we only use hand held tools, and do our best to preserve the vegetation.

Gold can also be found in these same creeks coursing the area. Hopefully, we will also still have access to the graptolites and fossils available.

The draft report talks of destruction of habitat and the land by commercial miners in the past. Yes, this happened in the past, but laws prevent this now. As a club affiliated with the Victorian Gem Clubs' Association Inc. (VGCA), under their and our 'Code of Field Trip Ethics' (attached) we are ethically bound '*inter alia*' NOT to dig in banks and streams, NOT to damage or undermine trees and other vegetation, and to fill in ALL the holes and remove ALL litter – i.e. leave the place better than we found it.

We are pleased to see the Bacchus Marsh Council Trench (Triassic fossils) and Willey's Quarry, Macedon (Ordovician graptolites) are noted as State Significant sites (refer Appendix 6, pp 190 & 191). Should you desire more knowledge on the Ordovician graptolites please refer to pp 98 – 100 in the Australian Heritage Council's book 'Australia's Fossil Heritage – A Catalogue of Important Australian Fossil Sites' published by the CSIRO in 2012.

Hopefully when your Council prepares its final report, Victorian, interstate and overseas collectors will still be able to improve their knowledge and collections of Victorian material, because access will still be granted to careful collectors holding a Miner's right and gaining permission from the owner or relevant governmental body.

New parks will be a plus for threatened species, tourism, recreation and nature in central Victoria but access must be inclusive, not exclusive and managed. The club does not advocate giving fossickers "carte blanche". The club can manage its members on official field trips and does not want access removed because of the behaviour of others over whom it has no control so we have no issue with having to seek permission to fossick in areas set aside for that activity.

Currently Gemstone only fossicking is permitted in

- Cape Liptrap Coastal Park
- Great Otway National Park
- Mornington Peninsula National Park (zeolite only)

- Warby-Ovens National Park

Mornington Peninsula National Park where fossicking is permitted for zeolite only for scientific research purposes and collection by mineralogical clubs subject to permit conditions. Is an example of how access can be managed. (Page 48 of In the Mornington Peninsula National Park and Arthurs Seat State Park Management plan May 1998- Amended 2014 and 2016.)

On application by a club a fossicking permit stipulating date, number of fossickers allowed and the conditions of entry is issued. As the Management plan stipulates. Parks can then “Monitor use and, if damage and risks are unacceptable, consider permitting collection for scientific purposes only” The Club has no problems with this.

Yours faithfully

Mike Quinn

On behalf of the Committee of Nunawading & District lapidary Club

NUNAWADING & DISTRICT LAPIDARY CLUB_{INC} A10126



FIELD TRIP RULES and CODE OF ETHICS

RULES:

1. While on field trips ALL MEMBERS and VISITORS shall comply with:
 - a. The Traffic Act and Regulations and shall observe road rules and courtesy.
 - b. The Mining Act and Regulations.
 - c. The directions of any Officer of the Departments concerned when on Crown Lands, including State Forests.
 - d. The directions of the owner or any person in charge of private property on which permission has been granted to enter.
 - e. The directions of the Field Trip Officer or his Deputy.
2. Firearms and explosives shall not be used or taken on field Trips.

3. Members shall not light fires in prohibited places or on TOTAL FIRE BAN DAYS. Fires shall be extinguished before leaving the area.
4. Members shall not engage in commercialisation of Gemstone areas visited by the Club.
5. Members shall wear safety helmets, glasses and strong boots when quarry rules require it, and are advised to use these safety items at all times.
6. Dogs and other animals shall not be taken on field Trips.
7. Club badges and Name badges shall be worn at all Club field Trips.
8. At the discretion of the Field Trip Leader, coloured ribbons shall be prominently displayed on cars when on field Trips.
9. Field Trip Leader shall carry a 1st Aid Kit on all Club Field Trips.
10. Members shall ensure that their visitors and children observe these Rules and Code of Ethics.
11. Members shall advise the Trip Leader or Deputy of their intention to leave the group.

CODE OF ETHICS:

Meeting:

1. Be on time. This not only saves you wasting the rest of the day trying to find us, but it gives everyone more time at the collecting spot.
2. When you arrive, park as far off the road as practicable and don't obstruct a driveway, signs or notices.
3. NEVER PARK OPPOSITE DOUBLE LINES at the meeting spot.
4. Don't start a 'public meeting' in the middle of the road - or on the shoulder.
5. When asked, gather round the Trip Leader to receive instructions, and always be ready to move off at the appointed time - and at a moment's notice.
6. If you desire a speed limit on the convoy or if you have any questions, ask the Trip Leader before moving off.

Convoy:

7. Follow the Trip Leader, even if you know where the collecting area is. If another Club car pulls out ahead of the Trip Leader, do not follow it. It may have been sent ahead for a reason.
8. Always keep the car behind in view. Never mind the one in front, it is his job to maintain contact with you.
9. Do not turn into a by-road or cross an intersection without making sure that the car behind is close enough to see where you have gone.

10. If you have to break convoy for some reason, tell the car behind you - otherwise he may follow you.
11. Do not proceed if a member has a flat tyre or mechanical trouble - he may need help.
12. Leave spaces through the convoy so that other motorists can thread their way through, but never leap-frog through the convoy yourself.
13. To assist others in convoy or even on the way to the meeting spot, make sure you have a Club sticker on the rear window.
14. On arriving at the collecting area park sensibly, leaving access for others. Don't block the track or roadway. Remember, others may wish to leave before you.

Collecting

15. Always request permission to enter private property. If in doubt, ask at the nearest house, shop or service station. If you are leading a trip and permission has previously been obtained, always let the owner know that you have arrived.
16. Be sure to abide by any instructions or restrictions set by the owner. You, and the Club, want to be welcome again.
17. Do not tramp over ploughed or cultivated fields. Keep off crops. Stay on the fence line, or follow the creek to your digging spot.
18. Do not leave the area, private property or otherwise, dotted with miniature mine shafts. FILL IN YOUR DIGGINGS and leave the area as nearly as possible as you found it. Be sure gutters and drains are clear.
19. NEVER use explosives or carry firearms. Many excellent collecting areas have been lost to the fossicker due to this sort of activity.
20. Do not undermine banks or trees and cause erosion.
21. Remove all litter, and ensure fires, when permitted, are extinguished and covered with soil. Do not chop trees down to make your fire - use fallen and broken limbs.
22. Avoid going near livestock. You may stampede a flock of lambing ewes, or be stampeded yourself by an irate bovine.
23. Avoid damaging fences or other property.
24. Leave gates as you find them - open or closed.
25. In the interests of safety, confine your collecting to the surface. Entering disused mine shafts is not encouraged, and may result in serious accidents. Members enter such working at their own risk. Naked lights should not be carried. A miner's safety lamp will detect the presence of foul air, but some knowledge in this direction should be studied before entering underground workings.

26. Do not poach other people's claims. If you see tools and gear left in a digging, this is a sign that the member is coming back, possibly after lunch or a duty call.
27. DO please help the newcomer, at least to an extent that he knows what he is looking for, and is not wasting his time looking in the wrong place. Remember, you were a ROOKY ROCKY once.
28. Don't be greedy - leave something for someone else. There is no point in taking more than you can possibly use.

Safety:

29. The Club, its Officers or its members shall not accept any responsibility whatsoever for the safety of members or visitors when taking part in any Club activity, regardless of the cause of any accident or injury. The personal safety of any member or visitor shall be the sole responsibility of that person.
30. When searching in quarries or below high banks, members are warned of the danger of falling rocks and debris, and they shall take all precautions to prevent accidents due to falling rocks, soil etc.
31. Do not tunnel in under an overhang. It is very dangerous. Deaths have occurred on field trips in Australia due to this practice.
32. Don't crowd your mates - you could finish up with an eyeful of pick!
33. When breaking rocks such as common opal, quartz, basalt etc, wear safety glasses. Thick gloves are also recommended, as these rocks can have razor sharp edges.
34. Check that your tools are safe to use. Loose and cracked pick heads and hammers are a real danger. Clean off those jagged metal edges from the striking edge of your chisel etc. Do not use axes, carpentry hammers or similar woodworking tools - they are not designed for rock work.
35. Always carry a basic 1st aid kit with you to the collecting area. Do not leave it in the car, which could be some distance away in the event of a cut, sprain etc.

Finally:

36. Please adhere strictly to all rules and precautions, not only in the interests of safety, but also for the good name of the Club, the Victorian Gem Clubs Association, and the hobby.

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Reissued: June 2000