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·Minelab · Times·

Talk to Minelab on www.minelab.com!

Introduction to Plexus Corporation, (USA)

Historically, Minelab has used contract manufacturers internationally to produce everything from shafts and loaded printed circuit boards, through to the complete manufacture and assembly of control boxes. Most of this was through our factories in Adelaide or Bandon, Co. Cork (Ireland). Dealing with many partners internationally and having a number of manufacturing sites worldwide is quite a complex task to manage.

Therefore, to consolidate our manufacturing and to "piggy-back" onto the benefits that working with our parent company Codan Limited offers, we have chosen to work with Plexus Corporation, headquartered in Neenah, Wisconsin (USA). Plexus is a public company listed on the NASDAQ under the symbol PLXS, and were incorporated in 1980. From December 2009, manufacturing of Minelab detectors has been divided between the Adelaide factory and two of the three Plexus' Penang, Malaysian manufacturing plants.

Being an American company specialising in the manufacture of low volume, highly technical and precise circuitry, the Plexus plants maintain a quality control regime just as stringent and accurate as most European or Australian manufacturers. Two years ago, Codan Limited chose Plexus to be the principal manufacturer of their range of HF radios. Most of these radios are made to military spec performance and quality control. Since the shift, quality control issues and warranty returns have maintained the same very high standard as previous Australian made product.

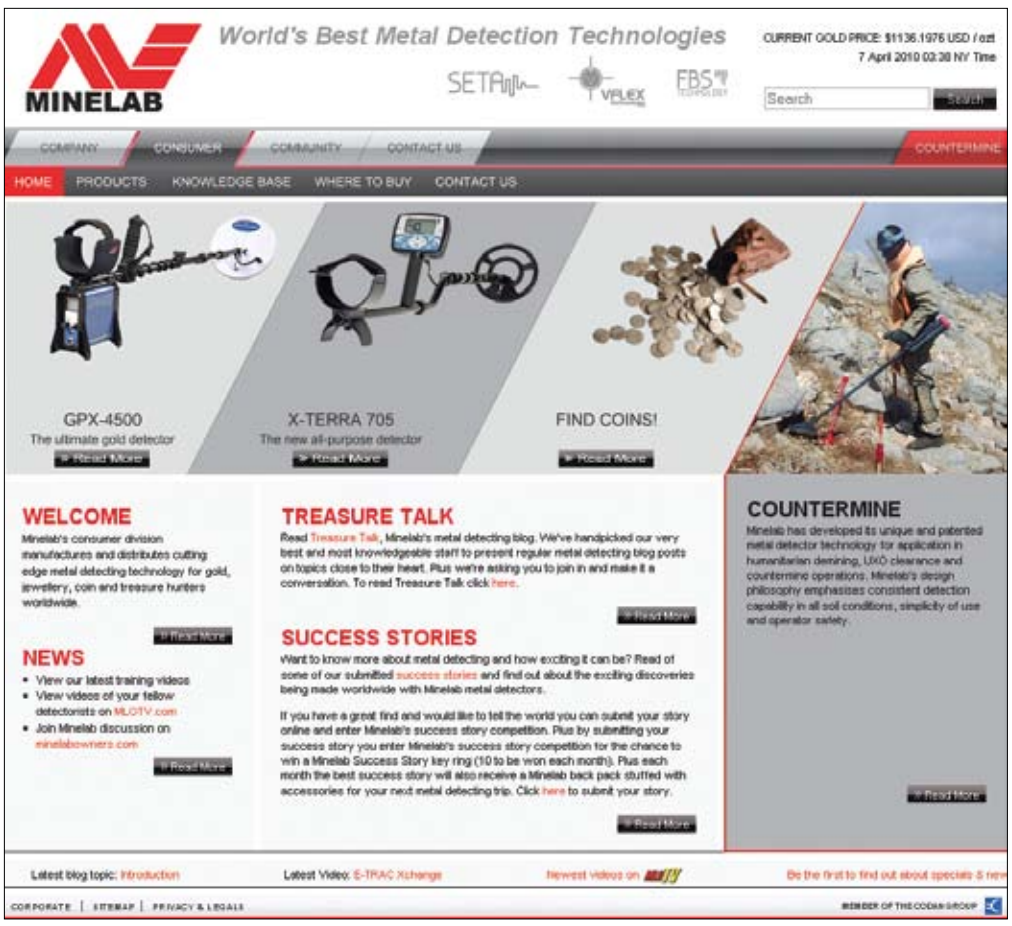
The Plexus business strategy is to engage in unique and high technology products that require their core competencies. The organisational structure of Plexus is set up to give unique and specialised attention to the individual needs and requirements of each product variant. At a recent visit to Minelab, Mr WK Lim, Customer Director of Plexus Asia Pacific, stated their long-term commitment to maintaining their very high level of quality control on every unit they produce.

Some of the other world renowned products currently made in the Plexus plants are:

- X-ray fluorescent spectrometer for elements analysis;
- Metrology equipments (for surface profiling) and atomic force microscope;
- Pacemaker monitoring devices - FDA class III medical products;
- Optical spectrum analyser;
- Network routers including CTO & DOF services;
- High frequency radios with encryption and frequency hopping features (for Codan Limited)
- And many more technically advanced products.

Minelab's reputation is riding on the quality of our products and both companies know that is not something that either one will take lightly. Minelab metal detectors are yet another sign of the global market we live in, designed in Australia, made in Malaysia, by an American owned company from parts sourced from all over the world!

New features on the website



In the last issue of the Minelab Times we announced the launch of the all-new Minelab website. The feedback we have had on this new site has been fantastic so we have decided to take it to the next level. The team here at Minelab have been busily working away and are excited to announce there are even more fantastic new features appearing on the website now:

- **"Treasure Talk" Blog** – for weekly posts from a regular team here at Minelab on various detecting topics and your chance to post comments and queries for us to answer.

- **Events calendar** – providing details for all detecting related events worldwide so you don't miss anything in your local area or anywhere you might be travelling through.
- **Links** to clubs, associations, etc. relevant for any detectorist – whether you are new to detecting or are a veteran swinger this is your one stop shop for metal detecting contacts.
- **Success Stories** – if you have a great find and would like to tell the world about it, you can submit your story online and enter Minelab's success story competition. By submitting your success story you get a chance to win a Minelab Success Story key ring (10 to be won each month). In addition, each month the best success story will also receive a Minelab back pack stuffed with accessories for your next metal detecting trip.
- **Instructional Videos** – our expert detectorists know all of the Minelab machines inside and out and are here to share their tips and tricks with you in a series of videos you can watch from the comfort of your own home day or night.

- And much, much more…

There is going to be much more activity on Minelab's website in the comming months, so keep checking regularly for more brand new content.

We would love to know what you are doing and where you are going so feel free to drop us a line anytime and tell us about your event or club. All submissions will be considered for website publication based on relevance. We look forward to hearing from you through your success stories, blog comments and enquiries.

Happy browsing on www.minelab.com!

The U.S. president in the goldfields

In December 1896 a big bushy-bearded American engineer arrived in the London office of the international mining firm of Bewick, Moreing & Co and introduced himself as Hoover of New Mexico. "You Americans are an amazing people" the London director said. "I understood you to be about 34 years old, but you don't look a day over 25". The Englishman would have been even more surprised to learn that Hoover had not yet turned 23. However, before he left the office, he had been appointed as the company's mining consultant for the new West Australian goldfields.

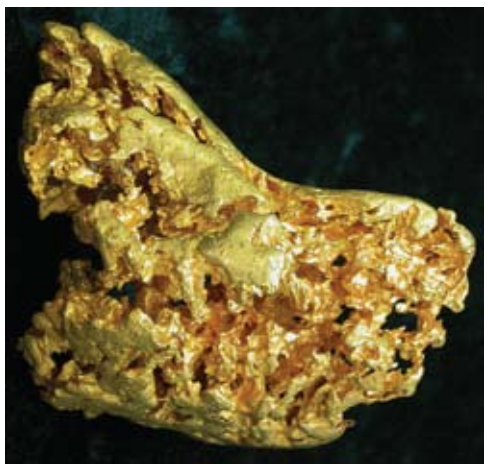
Early the next year Hoover landed in Albany and joined the march for what was then known as the land of sand, sorrow and sore eyes. According to the map, the track led to Coolgardie but eventually it took Herbert Hoover a long way further. He followed it to wealth, fame and power, to the presidency of the United States, and a popularity few men have enjoyed.

Herbert Clark Hoover was born in 1874 in Iowa where his father was the village blacksmith. He was orphaned before he was eight, brought up by kindly relatives in Oregon and took his first job as a buggy driver for a real estate agent in Portland. Despite a meagre schooling he scraped through the entrance exam to Stanford University where he studied mining engineering.

One of his early jobs was managing a mine in New Mexico when he received a letter to report to Bewick, Moreing & Co in London. They needed a man in West Australia but stipulated that he should be about 35 years old "in order to cope with Australians".

His work was to report on new goldfields, buy the claims which looked like making money and sell unprofitable properties. It was a rough life in a country where water was precious and heat, flies and dust constant enemies. Hoover proved to be silent and shrewd, he travelled all over the goldfields by horse, buggy or camel. Among the many big mining deals he put through for his employers was the famous Sons of Gwalia mine at Leonora, which he ran himself for a short while.

In 1899 the Chinese Government ordered a survey of the country's mineral resources and asked Bewick, Moreing & Co to recommend a man to take charge of the immense assignment. After the Boxer rebellion, Hoover moved back to the United States and by 1914 he was a millionaire with a world-wide reputation as a mining engineer and metallurgist. In 1929, he contested the presidential elections, winning with a landslide majority, however eight months into office the Stock market crash and the Great Depression made his position untenable, loosing to Franklin Roosevelt in 1933.



The other memorable achievement of Hoovers lifetime was the translation and subsequent publication of the very important but almost lost "De Re Metallica". This book , originally written in 1556 in Latin, documented the then knowledge in geology, mineralogy, mining techniques, refining and smelting. This book has become an important research document even now in modern times.

The bank that never shuts

For over 30 years I have been enjoying and profiting from my hobby of metal detecting. Over the years I've owned a lot of different detectors, years ago we had to use standard land detectors and then try to modify and waterproof them to do some wading but for the last 10 years, my favourite detector is the Minelab Excalibur. The main things I love about the Excalibur is the fact that I can easily discriminate out the junk items, a lot of the other underwater detectors don't do that well and the depth that the Excalibur will find targets is extraordinary, it's sensationally strong.

My favourite spots are either beaches or lakes that are used as swimming areas. What I particularly like to look for are areas where lost coins or jewellery are likely to be caught up and held. The classic area for this are rocky areas that allow the items to work their way in-between the rocks. Some spots I've been going back to time and time again, due to the tides, etc they just keep replenishing themselves with new items all the time …. "the bank that never shuts".

One interesting idea that I have and don't mind passing on to others is in regard to retrieving the target. When I'm searching in the water, I don't use a shovel or a sand scoop. What I have made up is a paddle that I use to fan the water over the area and wash the sand away exposing the target. This is far easier in rocky areas where the items are often wedged into the crevices. The other clue that I can give is the importance of griding an area. Try to become systematic in your search and instead of wandering around aimlessly, keep to a grid pattern so that you detect an area thoroughly.

The photo is just some of the jewellery I've found in the last year. It's amounted to about 50 to 60 gold rings plus lots of other jewellery, total weight is a little over 1.5Kg. In addition to that are heaps & heaps of silver and something like one quarter or a third of a ton in lead sinkers.

Ray B.

Good deed detecting

David first took up the hobby of metal detecting around six years ago investing in a second hand Minelab Sovereign. For the first year or so he really didn't find much despite his best efforts to learn the tricks of the trade. It wasn't until he sent his detector in for a service that things started to change. His hard work and dedication was suddenly paying off when not long after getting his machine back he found five rings straight off the bat.

Fast forward five years down the track and David now owns an assortment of Minelab detectors, all of which have paid for themselves well and truly with the finds they have made. An avid detectorist, it is not uncommon for David to head out detecting two to three times a week. Whilst he enjoys searching for gold as well as coins and jewellery and finds himself everywhere from the goldfields to the parks and beaches near and far, it is sweeping the beaches that David enjoys best. Detecting in the shallows not only works a treat on the arthritis but also is much easier to dig than hard soil. Plus there is the added bonus of keeping you fit and active, on a good day when the finds keep coming it can be quite a work out!

We all well know detecting is not just an enjoyable hobby but that you can find some pretty valuable items whether it be gold, coins or jewellery. But for David one of the most rewarding aspects of metal detecting is reuniting people with their lost jewellery. Through word of mouth and the lost and found section of the newspaper David has returned many a missing wedding and engagement ring to the finger on which it belongs, much to the delight of the happy (and relieved) couples.

One local South Australian resident can vouch for this after recently losing his wedding ring at Semaphore Beach, in the surf no less. After hours of fruitless searching in desperation the couple placed a notice in the lost item section of the newspaper. Believing their chances of finding the ring were slim, a replacement had already been ordered when they received a phone call from David. After a quick chat and covering the details of where the ring had been lost and what it looked like David set to work detecting the area. Before too long there was a beep, and digging around under the sand revealed a gold gents wedding ring. While the chances may have been slim it turned out this was in fact the ring they were searching for. The couple were absolutely ecstatic with the find and touched by David's generosity and good deed. Although a replacement ring had been ordered the original ring had been blessed at the couples church wedding service, something that simply wasn't replaceable. For David it's not about receiving any rewards, it's all about the great buzz you get making people happy.

Whilst David has a great deal of success in his metal detecting one thing he is sure of is that he couldn't have done it without the support of detecting clubs. It is primarily through involvement with his detecting club, the Southern Seekers at Christies Beach, that David has learnt about the different tools, techniques and ethics of metal detecting. Learning from other detectorists has provided a wealth of invaluable advice, not to mention making a few good mates along the way to share it all with.

Annual Wedderburn Detector Jamboree 2010

Another really great day was had by all who attended the Annual Wedderburn Detector Jamboree. Every year the detecting fraternity turn up to Wedderburn in the Victorian Golden Triangle for a fun day of testing their skills against all their friends and rivals.

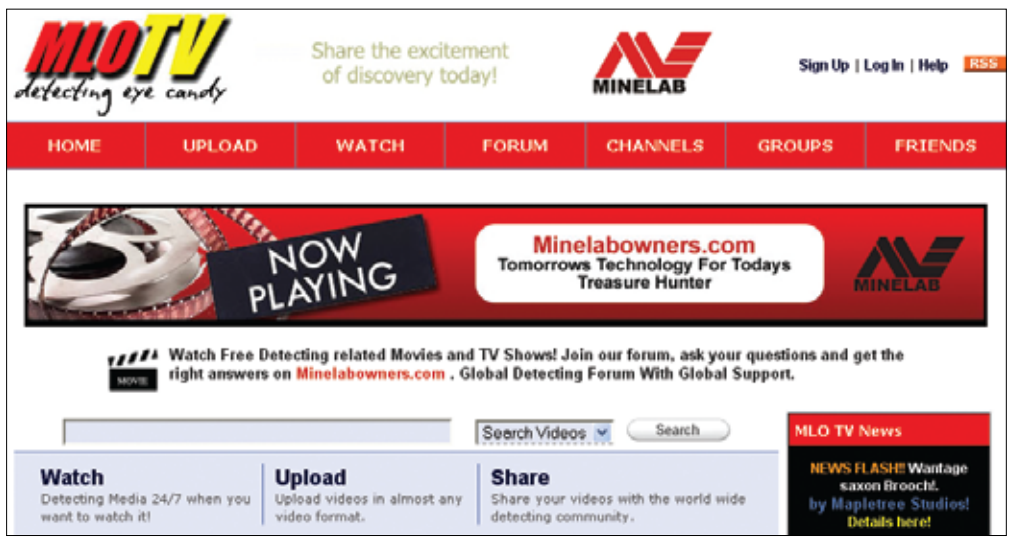
Wedderburn started holding a metal detecting competition some years back as part of their tourism promotion, given the famous goldfields that encompass the whole area. Famous locations like the "Potato Diggings" and Beggary Hills have become well known to prospectors Australia wide.

Normally held in March each year, the Wedderburn Treasure Hunt is open to all comers both experienced and beginner, and it is not that unusual for a newbie to come out the winner. You see the token hunt involves detecting the designated area of bush picking up metal tokens, which have been cleverly hidden. The major prize winners are drawn from a barrel of found tokens so you can win with one token or win with twenty.

This years event was dampened by a few showers but this did not deter the contestants. Literally hundreds take part each year and due to the hunt being held on such a rich goldfield there are always a couple of nuggets proudly displayed after the hunt by lucky finders.

This years winner of the GPX-4500, donated by Minelab each year, was a very happy and excited Ronny D.

Your videos on MLOTV



Inspired by the new Minelab instructional videos and want to see more tips, tricks and finds? Or even share your own detecting movies? We introduced it some time ago, so some of you may be familiar with it already, but we just thought we would give you a little reminder about the fantastic website MinelabOwnersTV (MLOTV).

This website is dedicated to providing a platform where visitors can watch free detecting related movies and TV shows as well as share their own detecting videos and participate in online discussion forums. It's a great resource for anyone who seeks the latest in detecting insights and information covering tips and techniques, handy hints, the latest news and member finds. With content submitted by users worldwide, from Australia to Italy, Canada to Africa, and everywhere in between, there is bound to be something there to interest everyone. It's full of fun and jam packed with information so find out what you have been missing and visit: www.mlotv.com today!

Our Manager receives top honour for Landmine Crusade in Cambodia

Minelab Electronics are very proud of the announcement that Mr Hugh Graham, General Manager Minelab Countermine Division, has been awarded one of Cambodia's most prestigious civil honours for his personal commitment to reducing the number of "live" landmines in the former war-torn country.

Mr Hugh Graham was awarded the esteemed "Gold Medal for National Construction Grand Cross", which is only granted by the King of Cambodia, His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni. The medal was only one of two awarded at a high level ceremony in Phnom Penh, attended by over 2,000 people including Government Ministers, UN officials and diplomats.

Mr Graham received the medal for his long-term involvement with the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) and its ongoing campaign to clear millions of landmines that still litter the countries "killing fields". Minelab has been supplying CMAC with mine detectors for over 12 years, however it is Mr Graham's personal involvement with the Centre that gained the top honour bestowed by the King.

Hugh and Sue Graham at the ceremony

The biggest nugget in the world

The table had been laid out with a table cloth covering the items underneath. The calm of the man and wife with their friend and partner belied their inner excitement.

At last the visitors arrived to be greeted by their hosts, and no doubt they looked forward to a happy get-together with refreshments later – by the looks of the table….

Now these words could be any from a book of fiction, but this is not so. For this is what happened to John Deason and Richard Oates on February 5th, 1869 at Moliagul, about 30 miles north of Maryborough, in central Victoria, when Deason unearthed the largest nugget of gold in the world. It was aptly named "The Welcome Stranger".

As a young man John Deason arrived in Australia from Cornwall in 1854 and immediately went to the goldfields. After eight years he found himself at Bendigo goldfields but without a lot of success. He had suffered tragedy too, at Bendigo, for it was there that he had lost his first wife and two children. Disillusioned and despondent, he packed his gear and set off west along the bush track that led to Tarnagulla.

Eventually he arrived at Moliagul in 1862, and there he continued to prospect before taking up land. Earlier he had met Richard Oates, whom he had known in his boyhood, and who's gold-seeking adventures had been no more profitable than his own. They became mates, forming a partnership to work Deason's land and continued prospecting in their spare time.

The weather was dry and hot, the water supply low, making it impossible for them to work the puddling machine. On that memorable fifth day of February, John Deason, who had remarried, did some digging while Richard Oates attended work on the farm.

Deason had taken out a few loads of earth, when his pick struck something hard just below the surface. The pick handle broke and he cursed. Using the remains of his pick to lever round what at first he thought was a stone, he then scraped with his hands and saw the glitter of gold. Brushing away the dirt, he was staggered at the sight, the whole rock was gold. Real gold! After 15 years he had found his El Dorado.

Stifling his natural impulse to shout out the great news, for in those days a man who boasted of his find risked robbery and death, Deason covered the nugget with soil and hurried home to tell his wife. He then sent a message to Oates and returned to his claim. When Oates arrived, the two men hovered around their claim for the rest of the day and waited for nightfall when they carted the big nugget to Deason's house and hid it in the fireplace. In the quietness of the night, John Deason, his wife and Richard Oates lit a fire over the nugget to burn off debris and remove the adhering quartz.

Next evening a few friends were invited to the house to what they thought was to be a party. Here, John Deason told them he had "picked up a nice little speck" and then removing the cover that hid the tables 'contents', he revealed the massive nugget.

The following day, accompanied by a bodyguard of friends, Deason and Oates took the nugget to Dunnolly for sale to the London Chartered Bank. Deason first asked the manager how much he would pay for gold by the hundredweight. The manager told him how much per ounce. Deason again told him that he had gold by the hundredweight and asked for payment in those terms, not in mere ounces! Tempers got heated and words began to fly. The bank manager accused Deason of being drunk and showed him the door.

Deason went out, then triumphantly returned with his friends carrying the box of gold, which they dumped on the floor. As there were no scales in the bank big enough to weigh the nugget, it was taken to a local blacksmith, a man named Wallis, to be reduced in size.

News of the great find quickly spread and crowds from the Dunnolly diggings flocked in. All stood in open mouthed wonderment as the blacksmith and his assistant, with a sledgehammer and chisel, hacked the nugget to pieces. Bits flew off to be grabbed by the excited and envious onlookers. Before the nugget was sold, other pieces were broken off and given to friends as souvenirs. The official return showed that the nugget was 98.66% pure gold – nearly 2,316oz – worth 9,436/16/8 pounds. In today's market, it would be worth over 3 million dollars in gold content alone!

To this day, the anvil believed to be the one on which the Welcome Stranger was broken up, is displayed in the Dunnolly main street.

Nell Callister

Do you want to be in our next issue?

Minelab are always interested in customer stories and photos to use in the Minelab Times as well as on our website. If you have anything you'd like to share, or suggestions on what you'd like to see in the future issues, feel free to contact our Marketing Department on 1800 637 786 or Email: ho@minelab.com.au