

Gold in the News

A look at recent stories concerning gold

Prostate Cancer Treatment

A new treatment for prostate cancer has received further endorsement following new patient treatments. The image-guided radiation method uses small gold pellets placed in the subject's prostate, which are then imaged immediately prior to treatment. Placing of the markers is fast and relatively painless and the improved accuracy allows for a more precise radiation dose and a more targeted area for treatment of the tumour. In the latest treatments a group of 231 study participants undertook the procedure. This type of treatment for prostate cancer first emerged following a trial in Australia two years ago, which was briefly reported in *Gold in the News* at that time (*Gold Bulletin*, Vol. 38,1). It is thought as more patients are treated using this procedure the therapy will yield some of the lowest toxicity rates of any of the definitive treatments for prostate cancer.

Gold Coin Recovered from Historic Submarine

A gold coin is among the items recently recovered from a US Confederate submarine, which mysteriously sunk on February 17th 1864. The coin was carried by Lieutenant George Dixon, commander of the HL Hunley. Scientists at North Charleston's Warren Lasch Conservation Centre are currently working to save a number of artefacts found onboard the submarine, which was the first craft of its kind in history to sink an enemy ship.

Underground Laboratory Makes Top Ten List

The news that the National Science Foundation selected the former Homestake gold mine to be the preferred new site of its national underground laboratory has been named as one of the top ten stories of the year for 2007, according to the *Rapid City Journal*. Situated in Lead, South Dakota, the former gold mine was closed in 2002.

It is thought that once completed, the Deep Underground Science and Engineering Laboratory would be positioned 7,400 feet underground and would be the deepest lab in the world. The depth of the proposed laboratory would shield sensitive scientific experiments from radiation. Construction on the project is not likely to start for a number of years, as it is still pending approval from Congress, the National Science Board and the White House. However, it is thought that an interim laboratory, owned by the state of South Dakota, could be in operation at the former gold mine by the end of this year, according to the newspaper. This interim laboratory would be situated around 4,850 feet underground

Gold Koran Sells for Record £1.1m

According to the BBC, an 800-year-old copy of the Koran has sold for a world record price of £1,140,500 at an auction in London. The Koran, which has been dated to 1203, is believed to be the oldest known complete copy written in gold. Auction house Christie's said it was a world record for both a Koran and an Islamic manuscript. It was expected to sell for between £500,000 and £750,000. The book was sold on behalf of the Hispanic Society of America, and was bought by British trade buyers.

Reawakening Gold for Arthritis

A group of scientists at Duke University have re-awakened interest in the hundred-year-old principle that gold salts can relieve the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory medical conditions. From the early 1900s, injections of gold salts have been used to reduce the inflammation and pain of rheumatoid arthritis, but the treatment, though highly effective, has uncomfortable side effects, including potential kidney damage. Now David Pisetsky, chief of rheumatology and immunology at Duke University's department of medicine, has found that gold salts block the HMBG1 molecule, which is responsible for enhanced inflammation in arthritis sufferers. When the molecule is prevented from being released through gold salt treatment, the inflammatory response to arthritis is weakened.



The work was published in the January 2008 issue of the *Journal of Leukocyte Biology*.