

## An Archaeological dig, by Deon van Vuuren from South Africa.

The late Richard Howey's call to arms and too accurate study of human nature struck a cord. (["In Praise of Lassitude"](#))

So, what will I write about in my first Micscape article?

Well, the beginning might be a convenient place to start, so let us go there.

Being an avid tinkerer that enjoys playing with all kinds of interesting electronics, old tools for both metal and woodwork and an amateur astronomer, I frequent a close by metal recycle center where I spend many a Saturday on a true archaeological style dig through other peoples discarded metal goods.

As an aside, the staggering number of vintage tools and still useful goods us humans simply discard is crazy. I have rescued many fully working telescopes, electrical tools, and other raw materials for turning projects, at cents to the Rand. The Rand being our local currency in South Africa.

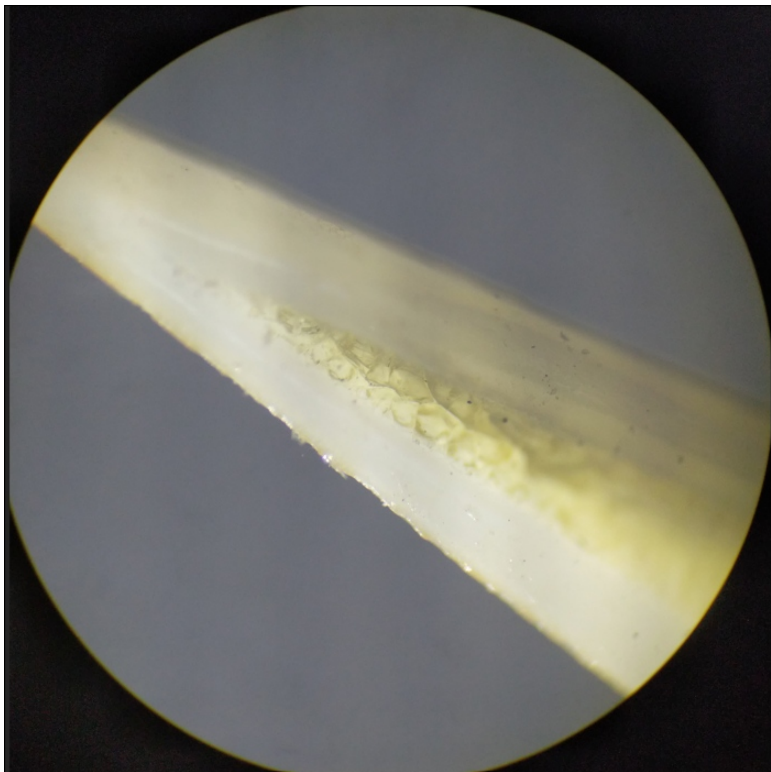
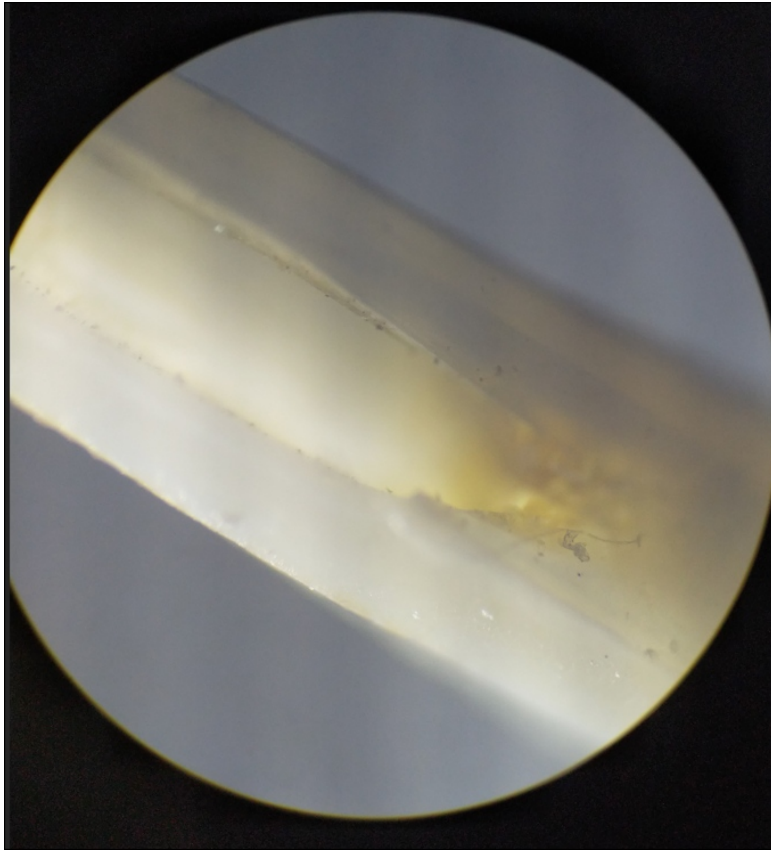
One Saturday a few months ago, while happily digging away, I found a milk crate stuffed full of white and black gold. Standing next to it was the base of a strange white piece of apparatus, which when it all was finally fitted together, formed a Leitz Metallux microscope.

Included in the basket I hastily bought was an assortment of extras like the functional Nikon FX-35A camera and the HFX microscope adapter, an older style Nikon lens adapter, a Leitz Polaroid back and the separate Leitz light housing. Everything was covered in many layers of dust and the trinocular head had something rattling around inside. The infinity corrected Leitz Metallux model I bought came with a motorized stage, three original Leitz objectives and two 8 x eyepieces in the trinocular head. The left side internal prism was totally loose inside the head, which probably led to it being so rudely discarded. I did a quick web search for a repair manual on how to take the head apart. Reglued the prism and everything cleaned up nicely and was working well. I only still need to get the electronics for the motor driven stage sorted out.

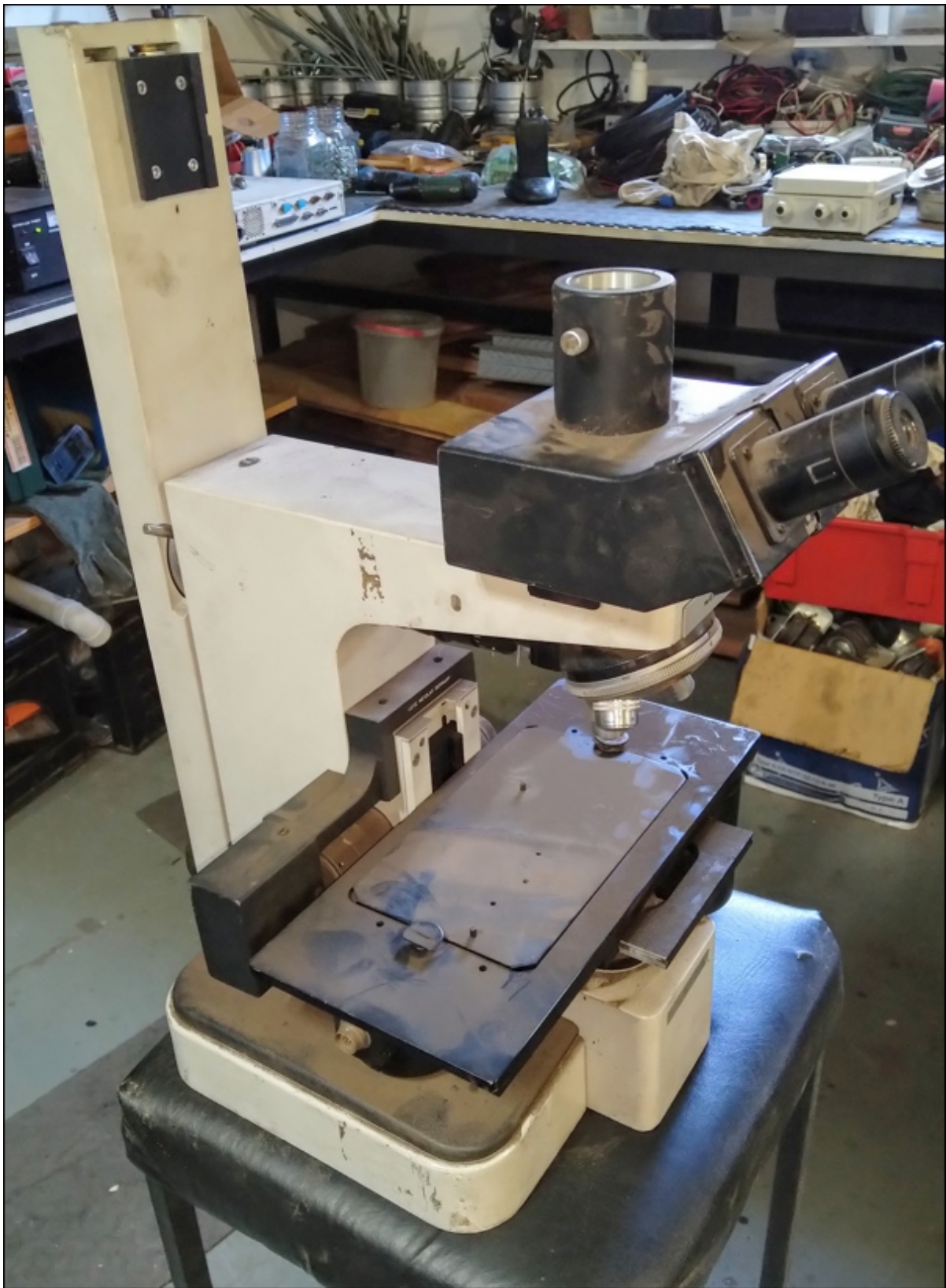
So started my journey into the fascinating world of microscopy. Since I cleaned up and restored the Leitz microscope and converted the light over to LED, I have spent many hours looking through the eyepieces at everything I could fit under those incredible objectives.

Example of a viper fang, with crystalized venom still stuck in it.

(Handheld photos were taken with my phone)



Here are a few photos of how neglected the microscope looked when I brought it home.







Finally, all cleaned up and working, in a place of honor in my house.



Part 2 to follow – another day digging and a rescued Vickers microscope.

All comments to the author at [DeonenZenobia at Gmail dot com](mailto:DeonenZenobia@gmail.com) welcomed.

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