

❖The District of Gemology❖

Volume 2 Issue 3

November 1995

Election Issue!

Meet The Candidates - Learn From The Current Board Members How The Past Term Changed Their Lives!

DO IT WITH DON KAY

An Evening of Jadeite

Nov. 16th, 1995

* * *

7:00 pm

The Holiday Inn - Rosslyn, Va.

Don Kay of Mason-Kay will be our guest speaker this month, and I can tell you now, if you like jadeite, you will like Don Kay. His company, Mason-Kay, out of Denver, is extremely well known in the jadeite jewelry community, and Don is an acknowledged expert on the subject.

I recently had the pleasure of experiencing Mr. Kay's expertise at an American Society of Appraisers conference in Denver in June of this year. Of the three days of lectures and lecturers, Don's was one of the most intriguing.

His talk on appraising jadeite includes invariably, the subject of identifying jadeite, a major problem for most of us in the industry, considering the numerous simulants and subtleties of jadeite properties, and especially due to the introduction of such treatments which include dying and the creation of what's known as "B" jade, a formidable item to identify, let alone value.

Please come early, as we anticipate a crowd. Let Michele Zabel know you're coming in advance if possible, and do tell your friends!

P.S. Don't Forget To Bring Your Donations!



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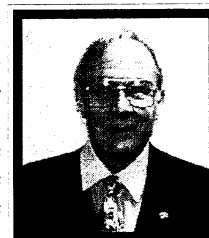
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President's Letter

by Bobby Mann

As my two year Presidency comes to a close, I would like to recap some of the more memorable events of my tenure.



Our goals of continuing education, networking and establishing fellowship were met with a hard working board. I give my sincere thanks to Fred Ward - Vice-President and Program Chairman, Michele Zabel - Secretary, Bill Dougherty - Treasurer, Lorin Atkinson - Member-at-Large and Historian, Martin Fuller - Newsletter Editor, and all the new volunteer committee members.

(Continued on page 3)

GLORIA!

By Martin Fuller

Gloria. Gloria! In excelsius Deo! October 19th was a good day for the chapter. Gloria Lieberman, Vice-President of Skinner Inc., a famous Boston auction house, presented an amazing slide show and discussion of the fine jewelry which passes her way at auction.



Fred & Gloria Oct. 19, 1995

This was no sleepy slide show! The subjects were well chosen, depicting the intricacies of Guillianio and Castellani, as well as Edward Oakes and other well-known designers, and their imitators.

Micro-mosaics, parures, art history, pricing strategy, the whys and wherefores and other mysteries of the auction world were discussed with lively aplomb, and the audience participated in estimating the hammer results of various items. With the aid of Glorias intuitive insight and years of experience, chapter members left the meeting with a new view on the inner workings of auction world.

Gloria was a welcome addition to the long list of potent speakers our board has procured for the education and entertainment of our chapter.

We are also grateful for Glorias' donation of a years subscription to the Skinner's auction catalogue, to our annual Christmas Party Auction!

Thank you Gloria!



Appraisal Study Group

By Tom Mangan

The study group is so **HOT** that people are coming from miles around, just to participate. We have some very knowledgeable appraisers who are willing to share information and everyone learns at least one new idea at each meeting.

We have completed our study of the Jewelers Vigilance Committee draft of minimum standards for appraisers just in time for them to come up with a new improved version. Most of it is common sense stuff, like only appraising things you are familiar with or sell, but the document is worth reading.

We are now beginning to study the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP), published annually by the Appraisal Foundation. This stuff is pretty dry, but important to

know because it is a national standard. It is required by most government agencies, by all real estate appraisers, and is also becoming an international standard in many court cases. If you are not in compliance with USPAP, you are probably not doing it right.

Other items we are sharing include an agreed upon general statement of limitations for jewelry appraisals (High "marks" go to Melanie Marts for that). Also we are compiling a data base of both written and people resources, like who to call when you get that signed Hopi Squash-Blossom necklace or that 18mm natural south sea pearl. We have also agreed to keep logs of actual selling prices for common pieces and to share this and other market data.

Lots of good info! If you would like to know more please come to our next meeting, Tuesday, January 9th, 1996. The meeting is 7:00 PM at Mangan Jewelers in McLean.

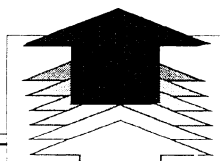


"Look, Bob, another stone with a green/purple flash-effect!"

Board of Directors - Contact Phone Numbers

Clip & Save for Future Reference

| | |
|--|----------------|
| President - Bobby Mann..... | (301) 894-5071 |
| Vice-President - Fred Ward..... | (301) 983-1990 |
| Secretary - Michele Zabel..... | (410) 455-9453 |
| Treasurer - Bill Dougherty..... | (703) 780-0317 |
| Historian - Lorin Atkinson..... | (703) 734-3831 |
| Newsletter Editor - Martin Fuller..... | (703) 442-9008 |
| or Fax those stories to..... | (703) 821-2430 |



Note Changes in Next Issue!

President's Letter

by Bobby Mann

(Continued from page 1)

Our membership has grown over the past two years to 123. Our annual meeting fee for 1994 was \$40.00.

Dec. 19, 1993, I had the honor of presenting Tony Bonanno with a Lifetime Chapter Member Award at his retirement party. This was my first official duty as Chapter President.

1994

Feb. 22, 1994 - We had our first meeting. Jack Abraham - President of Gem resources in New York - a corundum expert and dealer in fine rubies and sapphires.

Mar. 23, 1994 - We had a lively Diamond Round Table, which included Tom Mangan, GG - an AGS retail jeweler, Ronnie Mervis - Retail and Wholesale diamond merchant, and Zohar Kirshenbaum, a wholesale diamond merchant. Fred Ward moderated this discussion with audience participation.

Apr. 19, 1994 - Vivian Swift, Asst. Vice-President and head of Christies watch department spoke on vintage and antique watches.

May 26, 1994 - Campbell Bridges, mining geologist and discoverer of Tsavorite in 1961, spoke on the adventures of gem exploration in Africa, and the marketing of Tsavorite.

Jun. 8, 1994 - Our chapter sponsored a GIA 2-hour hands-on seminar in Advanced Diamond Clarity Grading.

Jun. 21, 1994 - Tom Chatham, president of Chatham Created Gems, Inc. spoke to our chapter about synthetic flux grown rubies, sapphires and emeralds, as well as on synthetic diamonds.

Jul. 12, 1994 - Patti Geolat, GG, FGA, ASA, spoke about her new book, "The Professionals Guide to Jewelry Appraising".

Aug. 1994 - With the hard work of Michele Zabel, our first Gemological Resources Directory was published, with 37 pages of networking possibilities for our members.

Aug. 1994 - Volume 1, Issue 1 of our chapter newsletter, "The District of Gemology" appears on the stands. With Martin Fuller's efforts six full pages were published.

Aug. 16, 1994 - Eve Alfille, the founder and president of the Pearl Society, Eve spoke on the First International Pearl Conference, the production, classification, marketing and future of the Akoya, South Sea, Chinese Freshwater, and natural pearl industries.

Sep. 21, 1994 - We had our 10th Anniversary Meeting and Party. Dr. Wm. Reams, Jr., Director of the Lora Robbins Gallery at the University of Richmond, our first guest speaker in 1984, returned to entertain us all - truly a unique speaker! Cake and Bubbly!

Oct. 13, 1994 - Leslie Kinder-Anderson, GG, Gold, Silver and Platinumsmith, to discuss manufacturing techniques and detecting repairs in jewelry.

Nov. 11, 1994 - Anna Miller, GG and noted author, jewelry historian and lecturer, spoke on her book, "Cameos Old and New".

Dec. 14, 1994 - Our annual Christmas Party and Auction was held at the Hunan Regent in Arlington, Virginia. Forty-eight attended and we received 62 donation lots from 33 donors. Due to the success of the auction, we were able to keep our 1995 meeting fee at \$40.00! (Less than \$4.00 per meeting!)

1995

Jan. 17, 1995 - Our very own internationally known author, lecturer and gemologist, Mr. Fred Ward, was our first speaker of the year, on the subject, "The Truth About Pearls".

Feb. 21, 1995 - We presented, "The Tucson Report". Chapter members who had attended Tucson 1995 shared their experiences in a show and tell format.

Mar. 1995 - Believe it or not, Volume 2, Issue 1 of "The District of Gemology" in eight glorious pages, hit the stands. Thanks go out to Martin Fuller.

Mar. 21, 1995 - Richard Drucker, GG and publisher of "The Guide", spoke on the process of accumulating pricing information for appraisal purposes, and conducted an experiment in pricing with those in attendance.

Apr. 18, 1995 - An Appraisal Discussion Panel consisting of James Joliff, Gail Brett Levine, Karen Sternberg, Martin Fuller, Jerrold Root and Curtis Dahle was the subject of the meeting. Fred Ward moderated this discussion with audience participation.

May 23, 1995 - Eitan Goldman, co-owner of Clarity Enhanced Diamond House, a subsidiary of Goldman-Oved Diamond Corp., spoke on their method of diamond fracture-filling. A new feature, "Show & Tell", was added to the meeting format during the 7-7:30pm networking time slot. I kicked-off this program with a display of my collection of almost 100 colorless gemstones.

May 24 & 31, 1995 - In conjunction with our chapter, GIA sponsored, respectively, "Identifying Challenging Synthetics", and "Detecting Fracture-Filled Diamonds", both 2-hour hands-on seminars. Each class held 45 of our chapter members, at a reduced rate, with a long waiting list (Sign up early next time!).

Jun. 7, 1995 - The Belgian Embassy and the HRD held the Antwerp Diamond Conference at the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown. This was an "invitation-only" event, available to our chapter members who signed up.

Jun. 22, 1995 - David Federman, Executive Director of Modern Jeweler Magazine, spoke on "The State of the Trade and Turmoil in Pearls". Carole Scott displayed vintage fashion jewelry from her collection during the "Show & Tell" period.

Jul. 20, 1995 - John S. White, former curator of Gems & Minerals at the Smithsonian Institution spoke on "Gemstones of the U.S.". Chapter members displayed gemstones with eye-visible inclusions during "Show & Tell".

Aug. 1995 - The 2nd Gemological Resource Directory, 42 pages of networking possibilities for our members, is published due to the hard work of Michele Zabel.

Aug. 1995 - Volume 2, Issue 2 of "The District of Gemology", our chapter newsletter is published by Martin Fuller. 12 pages - bigger and better!

Aug. 8, 1995 - Robert Weldon, senior editor of Jewelers Circular-Keystone Magazine, spoke on "Gem & Jewelry Photography Secrets". Chapter members displayed difficult synthetics during "Show & Tell".

Oct. 19, 1995 - Gloria Lieberman, Director of the Antique Jewelry Department and Vice-President of Skinner, Inc., a major Boston auction house, spoke on antique and period jewelry at auction.

Coming Attractions

Nov. 16, 1995 - Don Kay, of Mason-Kay, will speak on appraising jadeite jewelry.

Dec. 13, 1995 - We will hold our annual Christmas Party and Auction.

The success of our Christmas Party and Auction is very important to our chapter. We need lots of Auction Donations and a big turn-out of members and guests. This is our biggest fund-raiser, and it will determine our 1996 meeting fees, as well as the number and quality of our speakers. - Plan to attend and bring guests! All are welcome - and donate to the auction!

Do not forget the Chapter Bulletin board, which is available to us all at each meeting. Be sure to check it for current information and up-coming events. Also - our VCR Tape Library, run on the honor system, is available at the meetings. Check one out, bring it back to the next meeting, and pay the treasurer \$5.00 for your education.

If you haven't had the opportunity to attend a meeting, come and join us! Learn, network, socialize, and get involved if you care! Volunteer committees are making our chapter one of the finest in the organization.

Your board is working hard, planning the chapters future. All comments and suggestions are welcome.

Sincerely,

Bobby Mann
President



Ed. Note: - Fabulous job, Bobby - over thirty chapter sponsored events in 2 years!

Speaking is Believing



By Fred Ward

Two years ago, when we were all much younger, the DC GIA chapter offered me an opportunity to broaden my horizons, expand my presentation information database, and perform a service that the chapter, in its collective infinite wisdom, and I, in my terminal naivete, never fully appreciated or comprehended. Consider for a moment this exact month, but two years ago. We were one of the more active national GIA chapters, potentially a winner, but much like a budding teenager, with more promise than delivery. The New York chapter did more, some skeptics said. There were also rumors about a California chapter or two with possible star quality, but no one seriously thought anything in New York or California was believable. And North Texas was always held up as a beacon of sorts, except that no one knew where North Texas was.

So we pondered. What if? Just what if? What if we took our 30+ chapter members and increased that by, say, 50%. Impossible the skeptics said. Well, what if we took our 30+ members and doubled them. Now the laughs were louder than the applause. OK. What if we triple our 30+ members to a cool hundred? This was serious stuff, and the skeptics were running over the field like Dallas on a good weekend. The DC chapter with 100 members...ha, ha, ha.

Do you remember what Tonto said when 500 Indians came riding over the hill

yelling and screaming, early for the dawn massacre? The Lone Ranger asked, "Tonto, what time is it, anyway." And Tonto replied, "It's time I became an Indian." And in our case, was it time to become a skeptic? Not on your life.

Two years ago we set about with twin missions: to have a DC chapter meeting each and every month of the year, something that had never been done before; and to have an outstanding speaker for each of those meetings.

That we did. We made GIA meetings a part of everyone's month, and we seduced, cajoled, and enticed many a wonderful speaker to our room. We had Campbell Bridges, Bob Weldon, Gary Bowersox, Tom Chatham, and almost two dozen others. Of course, we also had a flight of fancy from Richmond to ground us in our own mortality, but, with a modest effort, we can forget that. Along the way, with ever increasing enthusiasm and continually growing numbers, both on our rolls and at our meetings, the old attendance of 30+ grew to 50, then 60, 75, 90, 105, and rests today at 125! We have 125 paid members, an all-time high, and our bank account reflects our recent success. We ended the year in 1994 with \$200 to our credit. Today we have more than \$4000, which allows us to bring in out-of-town speakers, schedule classes, and breathe easy.

We have a fine chapter. It is the only GIA chapter with meetings every month and speakers at all except our Christmas meeting. We are growing, and we are successful, and we will continue on this upwardly mobile path. Your infectious enthusiasm spurs this chapter to new heights. It is our chapter, and we now can make it do and be anything we want. And that, along with a rousing good time, makes me very proud.

Sincerely yours,

Fred Ward



My Tenure As Secretary



By Michele Zabel

It all began on a cold day in January 1994! What a piece of cake this new job. All I have to do is print announcements and mail them out. No problem. WHAT!!! NO MAILING LIST??? Then the thought of having to create a mailing list for the Washington DC Chapter finally sunk in... Where do I begin!!!! The new Board wanted to handle all the mailing to the alumni on their own and yours truly got to create such a list. I scoured through all the gemological directories I could find and wrote to association presidents to acquire permission to reprint the names of their members that lived in the area. Through the help of all the Board members and many chapter members submitting new names of interested people, our mailing list now contains the names of only those who are active and interested in gemology.

From our innocent beginnings with 35 Chapter members, we have grown to an astounding 123 Chapter members in two years. All of this has come about because of the incredible speakers we have had every month. We have become the only Chapter to host fantastic speakers 11 times a year. The caliber of our members has gone from those who came to one meeting a year to those who have attended every month for the last two years!

(Continued on page 7)

DONATION OVATIONS!

Generosity never ceases to amaze me. The donations are pouring in, thanks to the efforts of all in our chapter, especially those on the Donations Volunteer Committee (DVC), chaired by Lois Berger, (LB), and assisted by Melanie Marts, (MM). The committee has divided our chapter by area code and has been contacting chapter members for donations to the Annual Christmas Party Auction (ACPA). The DVC announced that the donations for the ACPA are A-OK and we should have a great time at the CP (Christmas Party), which is not BYOB. Well, it could be BYOB if it meant BYOB at the CP as in "Buy Your Own Booze at the Christmas Party". (So... YOU WRITE THE NEWSLETTER!!!)

LB faxed me two pages of names of chapter members who are donating to the ACPA, and that was two days ago. In the interest of not leaving anyone out, I will defer from printing the honored names at this time, but just wait...the Next Newsletter (NN) will be dedicated to those who answered their chapters' call.

Now, because we did promise, we will mention the names of some of our revered corporate donors, who have graciously, once again, (or even for the first time), bestowed upon our hallowed chapter their benevolence. Not only will we mention their names and beg forgiveness in advance for those we might inadvertently forget, but for those who saw fit to get ad copy to us by the much delayed-in-their-benefit press-time, we shall donate to our benefactors, as much ad-space as our humble newsletter will allow.

It is the least the GIAACWDC can do!

REVERED CORPORATE DONORS

(As of Press-Time)

* * *

GIA Alumni Office

GIA Bookstore

GIA GEM Instruments

Pala International

Dendritics

Gem World International (GWI)

Quantum Leap

The Jewelry Judge

ZK Imports

Skinner, Inc.

Auction Market Resource

Wise Jewelry Applications

Blue Planet Gems

Gemological Products Corp.

* * *

These generous gifts are the press-time tip-of-the-iceberg. We still have a month to go. Who have you asked for a small donation? Knock wood, I have been fortunate enough not to have been turned down once. If you know someone in the industry who can appreciate the value of our organization, ask them! We will give at least honorable mention to them in our newsletter which reaches over three-hundred jewelers and gemologists in four states, and for those donating items over \$100 in retail value, we will donate a humble display ad in one of our quarterly issues in 1996.



*Frankly
Fake*
By Carole
Scott



Christie's first "Period Costume Jewelry" auction was Thursday, October 12, 1995. In some ways the results were disappointing. Sources tell me that a lot of pieces did not do well, but some pieces did very well. The following pieces exceeded the minimum estimated reserve and reflect buyer's premium:

1. Cuff bracelet, silver metal, faux sapphire cab and crystals with enamel flowers and stems. Attributed to DuJay, c. 1935, \$2,070.

2. An art deco bracelet of silver metal, faux gems on an open work crystal bed. French hallmarks, c. 1930, \$2,990.

3. A Hobe Parure of gilt metal, faux emerald beads and miniature hand-painted portraits on ivory. Made for Bette Davis to wear in "The Little Foxes", \$1,725.

4. Cuff bracelet and earrings of vermeil by Nettie Rasenstein, c1945, worn by Lana Turner for the film "Betrayed", \$1,495.

5. Ciner bracelets with pendant ear clips of silver metal with crystal and faux emeralds, worn in "Love Has Many Faces" by Lana Turner, \$3,450.

6. Ciner necklace and ear clips of faux turquoise and crystal with a picture of Lana Turner wearing them, \$1,840.

7. Collar of gun metal, set with faux peridot and unusual crystal design attributed to Schreiner, c. 1960, \$1,955.

8. Collar of gilt metal, set with faux sapphire, faux emerald and braided snake chain forming a cowl when worn. French origin, c. 1960, \$6,900.

The most expensive piece was:

9. A Pauline Trigere floral bib necklace of PateDe Verre, gilt metal. The multiple florets were of blue, aqua, and amethyst pate' de verre, each set with crystal center. Attributed to Gripoix, c. 1960, \$11,500.

Who says all that glitters is not gold!



Meet The Candidates!

As of the other day, while I was a-speaking to LB, aka (Lois "The Gentle Dynamo" Berger), concerning the rate of ballot return for this article, I was pleased to learned that as of press-time, we'd had approximately a 30% response from our members, of which, some 99% seemed actually to be in favor of some of the candidates! Oh, yes, there was the expected, "Alfred E. Neuman" write-in for Treasurer, but our hand-writing analysts are busy making sure that culprit won't remain a mystery for long! (Sorry, Tom. Had the newsletter been out on time, that rascal would have read all the nice things we were thinking of writing about you and your run for office and they would have thought twice about it, but Noooooooo. It didn't get out on time and now you have no one but the editor to blame for the apparent insensitivity of that write-in voter.) Democracy can be so convoluted! Fate takes such unexpected turns.

So this is **Tom Mangan**. He is the owner of Mangan Jewelers in McLean, Virginia, and he is running for Treasurer. He is well known to most of the regularly attending chapter members, but for those of you don't know him quite as well, just imagine him with a navy blue knit ski cap and dark glasses, with his collar pulled high up around his neck. Get the picture? That's how our gentle Tom looks when he's out at dawn, ice fishing in the winter on some estuary near the Potowmack.



"But is he good with money?", you ask. Well, you should see how fast he collects the money for the appraisal group! Would you buy a 50/50 ticket from this man? "Without a second thought!", I'd say. And I'd be right, too!

"A Vote for Tom is a Vote For Our Next Treasurer!"



Fred Ward - Is our candidate for President. He is currently our Vice-President, and has been, along with Bobby Mann, Michele Zabel and Bill Dougherty, part of arguably the most prolific board this chapter has ever experienced.

In his role as Program Chairman, we have had more guest speakers per chapter member per diem, than I can recall since my participation with this organization, which began in the mid-80's.

His picture can be found on the 2nd and 4th pages of this newsletter, for those few of you who do not know Fred. As far as what to expect during Fred's presidency, if elected? Fred will not settle for less than was accomplished in his term as Vice-President. He sets his sights on the horizon, and only looks back to gather notes from his vast experience on the planet before moving into the unknown. (He'd be a good president, too!).

Michele Zabel - You know Michele, whether you know it or not. Her picture and tale of tenure as secretary is found on page 4, of this publication. The hardest thing about voting for Michele for vice-president is that we know we will lose her as secretary. If she could only be both...But then, what would that do for our growth. To grow, to get better, is to follow that horizon stalker, Fred, and allow someone else to build on Michele's accomplishments as secretary. Yes, I'd vote for Michele for VP.

Greg Duncan - Grandson of Tony Bonanno, and son of Mr. Duncan, Greg has graciously assented his nomination for the demanding job of chapter secretary. We were unfortunately unable to capture his photo with our digital camera in time for this publication, but for those of us that know his grandfather, if you just think about Tony in his prime of youth, sans goatee, you will get the picture.

Greg is currently with Charleston Alexander Jewelers, of Falls Church, and is a very welcome addition to our slate. Greg, enjoy your relative (no pun intended) anonymity while you can. You are getting aboard a rocket ship.

Ed. Note: - I hope you all will forgive the blatant editorializing on these fine candidates. They are the cream of the crop, not to mention, they volunteered! Show your support and send in your ballots, due by Nov. 25th, and thank you- in advance!

Ed.

(Continued from page 4)

Secretary's Report

When you think about it we have a wonderful group of people that attend our Chapter meetings. We not only have gemologists, mineralogists, artists and jewelers but people just interested in learning. But, most important we have people willing to share their knowledge and experiences.

One of the most enjoyable parts of my job was meeting the unique, interesting people that previously were just names on our mailing list. The most rewarding aspect was being able to assist each of you with your individual needs. I hope that my efforts helped and made you feel welcome. All of YOU are the reason that this Chapter is so successful. Thank you for making my term so satisfying.

Michele R. Zabel, Secretary
Washington, DC Chapter
GIA Alumni Association



TREASURY NOTES

BY
Bill Dougherty

It is with great joy and not a little amazement that your Treasurer proudly reports that the Washington D.C. Chapter of the G.I.A. Alumni Association is solvent! This is indeed a joyful state because I vividly remember the "shoe string" budgets of years past; when more than three or four meetings a year were bordering on fiscal suicide

In the past two years our Chapter has grown to more than 100 members. We now have a meeting every month (12 outstanding meetings a year). This phenomenal growth in activities would not have been possible without the support of each and every member.

When an organization grows as rapidly as our group has, operating expenses grow at an even more accelerated rate. We have been able to accommodate this growth with several fund raising activities throughout the year, e.g., G.I.A. Seminars, 50/50 raffle, sale of Fred Ward's books, and particularly our Christmas Party Auction!!

The Annual Christmas Party and Auction is only weeks away! This is the most important fund raiser of the year. I encourage every member to attend. For only \$25.00 per person you can enjoy an evening of fine cuisine, hearty drinks, good company and good fun. Please note - the Chapter does not make one cent on the dinner. We rely on the proceeds from the auction to fortify our bank balance.

SO!! - COME ONE, COME ALL!! Be of good cheer, and bring your checkbooks and credit cards!

A successful auction means that our new Treasurer (Election of Officers in December) will have a comfortable balance to work with at the start of his term in office. Further, the new Board of Officers will be in a position to continue the fine programs and activities that have made this such an outstanding Chapter.



Sincerely, Bill Dougherty

Nuggets from the Past

The Histerical Society



By Lorin Atkinson

By May 30th, 1985. (Our second year and 4th meeting!), we were still trying to find a cheap place to congregate.

The fourth meeting was held at the Sheraton Washington in conjunction with the Gem & Mineral show. Our speaker was June C. Zeitnar, a lecturer and author for Lapidary Journal. She talked about birthstones and their history throughout the ages (which is generally the focus of history!) There were 24 in attendance!

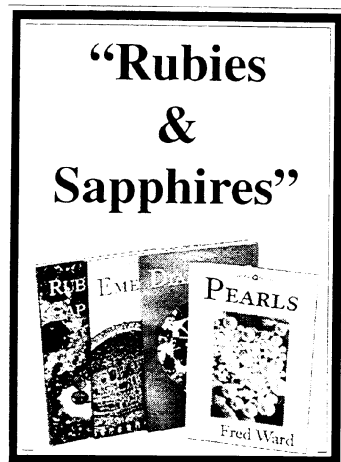
On October 16th, we met at the Metropolitan Methodist Church in Washington, D.C., with Joel Arem talking about his updated version of The Color Encyclopedia of Gemstones, with emphasis on synthetics. Only 18 members found this obscure location.

Our final meeting of the year was our holiday social, held at the West Park Hotel, in Rosslyn, Virginia. All dined on Chicken Cordon-Bleu, Spinach Salad, and Cheesecake.



Spot Readings

"Palatable Views for you to Muse"



F. Ward 1992. *Rubies & Sapphires*. illus., 64 pgs. publ. by Gem Book Publishers, Bethesda, Md.

Rubies and sapphires have fascinated people through the ages. Not only their beauty, rarity and durability give them their value, but also the fact that they are concentrated, transportable wealth. These and many other topics are covered in Fred Ward's *Rubies & Sapphires*, including geography, mining, and the economics of corundum, together with its synthesis, simulation and industrial applications. Buying tips and care of the stones complete the story.

The book begins by explaining that rubies and sapphires are varieties of the same mineral, corundum (aluminum oxide), and that the differences in color are due to minute amounts of trace elements. Most people not associated with the gem industry are unaware of this. These varieties of corundum occur together in certain locations as in Burma and Sri Lanka, or separately in other locations as certain African countries and the USA. Some locations produce only sapphire. Rubies and sapphires have been valued for as long ago as 3000 BC, although it has not been until relatively recently that most dealers could separate them from other stones they resemble.

The author has visited most if not all of the major corundum producing areas of the world including the famous Mogok tract in Burma where he was the first journalist admitted since 1962. Other areas discussed and photographed include Thailand, Cambodia, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, Australia and Montana. Mining techniques are described from sifting stream-bed gravels to blasting hardrock with dynamite and tunneling under ground.

Reshaping and cutting gemstones was the first attempt to enhance the rough material. Attempts to fashion jewelry were made in ancient times, but not until granulated corundum (emery) was imported from Asia could gems harder than quartz (excluding diamond) be polished. It was not until the Renaissance in Europe that faceting was seriously done. Most cutting is done in Asia where cheap labor is available. Because of this labor pool, much cutting is still done by hand, even though faceting machines are available. Thailand has a unique position in that it is where the vast majority of rubies and sapphires are cut. This gives it a dominant role in the economics of the gem trade. If the activities of its dealers are concentrated more in one gem-mining country than another, that country's gem industry will prosper more than gem industries where Thai dealers are absent.

Heating of stones is next described, from crude blowpipes to sophisticated computerized furnaces. This treatment can enhance color or even create it as in turning colorless sapphire into beautiful blue stones. Heating can also clarify some stones. This is so prevalent in the trade that it is mostly

accepted among dealers and consumers alike. Diffusion, the latest technique to enhance stones, is also covered. This technique, however, is not widely accepted.

The history of synthesizing corundum is discussed, including the flame fusion (Verneuil) process of growing rubies and sapphires, the flux grown rubies, and the pulled (Czochralski) rubies and sapphires. The latter method grows the finest crystals used for industrial purposes, such as the 1/32 inch thickness of colorless sapphire over the window on the checkout counter of your local Giant, across which the can of low-fat spaghetti sauce is dragged for laser reading of the bar code.

The author has visited most of the famous gem and jewelry collections in the world, and the excellent photographs depict many beautiful pieces of jewelry and gems. The great variety of colors demonstrated by corundum are illustrated. We even learn that one enterprising dealer, employing the scientific method (not for the squeamish), demonstrated that "pigeon blood" is a term which should be limited to hot-pink sapphire, not the true red of ruby.

Although this book is aimed at the layman, it should be in the gemologist's library. It is a well written, concise presentation of ruby and sapphire with beautiful photography.

J.B. Tavernier
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Fred? Oh, Just A Minute... He's Out Back...

Gems Are Looking Up "Down Under"

Text © 1995
By Outback Correspondent Fred Ward

It's time to view Australia as the Exotic Continent, as different from its neighbors as India is from England. Australian gem producers want to capitalize on their South Pacific location, great natural beauty, clean water, enormous resources, and a particular affinity they and Americans feel for each other. Now they are determined to exert a bit of that famous Aussie individuality to gain control of their world-class products. We know about the country's position in opals. The surprise is that it is also the bold market leader in pearls and diamonds.

This past August the newly formed South Seas Pearl Consortium (SSPC) invited me along with three other "gem journalists" to visit the annual harvest of what are now the largest finest cultured pearls in the world. Though the SSPC draws members from Indonesia, the Philippines, Hong Kong, the USA, and Australia, it is increasingly clear that this is an organization whose main goals and financing center in Australia. The trip provided me with the opportunity both to stay current in a fast-moving industry and to update my *Pearls* book. Once committed to such a long trip, I also wanted to see Argyle to update my *Diamonds* book as well as tour the Australian opal fields to research and photograph a new *Opals* book for 1996. The Australians showed great hospitality and openness by providing boats and planes, welcoming me into mines that are usually closed to outsiders, and in providing wonderful access to a huge variety of activities.

Because I have based this report on private discussions with industry managers and leaders throughout Australia, reading it carefully may provide you with advance market, buying, and investment information on several gems. You can also sharpen your

own buying strategies as well as counsel clients about trends.

ARGYLE DIAMONDS

Everything about Argyle is different: it is located in Australia; it has lamproite instead of kimberlite as its host rock; it is already the world's largest diamond mine; it has a known and limited life; its miners do not live at the mine; it set new rules for dealing with De Beers; it cuts all the share of gem-quality stones it keeps; Argyle alone has transformed how people regard brown diamonds; and for the first time anywhere, it supplies "intense pink" and "plum-colored" diamonds.

When I did my *Diamonds* article for *National Geographic*, there was no Argyle mine. I did use some material provided by the mine for my *Diamonds* book, but once I decided to go to Australia for pearls, I wanted to personally experience the world's unique diamond operation.



"Yipeeeee!
We Don't Have To Live At The Mine!"

You could drive to Argyle, deep in northwest Australia's Kimberly region, but you probably wouldn't want to do it. Airplanes are the only

sensible solution, which is how the entire staff of some 700 people arrive for work. All the managers live a half-hour flight away, in Kununurra, and all the other workers commute from Perth, about the distance from Chicago to Los Angeles. Half fly in every fortnight for 12-hour swing shifts, the first week by day, the second by night. Then they get two weeks off while their counterparts work. The mine goes non-stop, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This intense schedule is largely responsible for Argyle's undisputed position as the world's largest diamond mine, producing about 37% of the world's diamonds this year, 43 million carats of a global total of 114 million carats. Argyle, which only came on-line in 1986, already surpasses the volume of any diamond mine in Africa, in Russia, in Botswana, or anywhere else. For those with calculators, that totals a stunning 117,808 carats a day, every day of the year. It means 58,904 carats on each 12-hour shift, 4,908 carats an hour, which makes Argyle one enormous operation!

Only about 5% of the diamonds are gems. Another 45% are what Argyle calls "near gems," which includes the browns, and the remaining half are industrials. The "near gems" and pinks have captured most of the attention about Argyle. Before the Australians transformed the world's thinking about diamond color, brown diamonds automatically went into the industrial boxes. Attitudes changed once Argyle massively advertised light brown diamonds as "champagne" and dark browns as "cognac."

Although Argyle contracted with De Beers to sell 78% of its stones, including almost all its gems, Argyle reserved all its pinks for cutting and direct marketing. The pinks, and there are about 6000 faceted carats of them annually, give Argyle a distinct reputation. These are not the pale pinks we associate with South Africa. Argyle's pinks are plum-colored to near-red, often identified as "intense pink" on grading reports. Two have been graded "red" by labs over the years, and one fetched just over \$1

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

million a carat. Each year Argyle groups its best 45-50 pinks into a "tender." After conducting a silent auction in three cities (this year they are Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Geneva), it announces the winning bid for the lot or for each individual stone.

Argyle's relentless mining pace is rapidly depleting the resource. At current extraction rates, the mine will be uneconomic to operate above ground around 2004. They can add another decade to its useful life by going underground, but at greatly increased costs. Argyle's parent companies will base that decision on the outlook for diamond demand and prices, which have been anyone's guess with recent recession problems in the U.S. and Japan and all the uncertainties association with Russia.

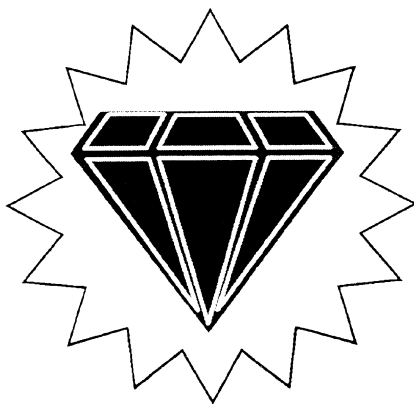
Like Russia, Argyle is negotiating a new 5-year contract with De Beers. Argyle wants to sell more of its gem-grade stones; De Beers wants the same, plus sales rights for more of the mine's colored diamonds. How De Beers settles these two international contacts will impact diamond prices and distribution.

No matter how the contracts go or when Argyle moves underground, pink prices should increase. Rarity affects value, so only 50 intense pink diamonds a year makes a rare gem. My advice—invest now, because the sole intense pink source may produce for only a few more years, after which there may be none at any price.

* * *

Pearls & Opals...

*More Adventures of Freddy Outback.
In the next issue - Stay Tuned!*

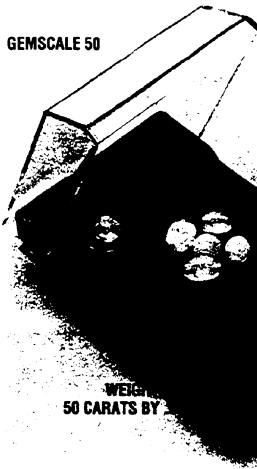


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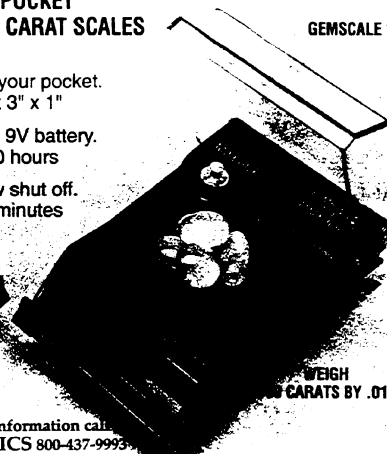
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* * *

The Critical Angle*By Martin Fuller*

As the old board shuffles its mortal cocoon, and metamorphoses into a new corpus, so must also this old editor give up the Bic-Sword and hand the dusty rusty 486Dx266 version of our "District of Gemology" off to a new Kerouak-in-the-rough, armed hopefully with the power of Dead (Line) Reckoning.

So I am in search of someone, some trusting soul, some inspired and dedicated chapter member with an understanding significant other, to whom we can transfer the duties of Publisher/Editor of our beloved, "District of Gemology".

It is a job not without its rewards, and I can vouch that they will be justly earned. A good staff of volunteers is at your command, including me, and by mustering your trusty staff to supply you with articles on diskette, as I have of late

learned, the only typing you do is of your own volition! So be as volatile as you like!

The guidance of the board is just a phone call away, and it is a chance to work at the core level of your chapter, should you be so inclined, with some of the most talented people in our industry.

So think about it, and give me a call or speak to me or one of the present or soon-to-be board members at a meeting if you are interested in the job. I have truly enjoyed it, and am grateful for the opportunity.

Now we have at last count, 39 of our chapter ballots returned to Lois Berger. That's nearly ninety left to go. Send them in (or else I'll keep this job!)

Best regards,

-Martin

The District of Gemology

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