

The District of Gemology

Volume 3 Issue 4

November 1996

Two Great Events: **John Latendresse**

Tuesday, November 19, 1996

Richard Liddicoat

Friday, January 17, 1997

Holiday Inn - Rosslyn, VA

Mr. John Latendresse, founder of the American freshwater pearl industry, accompanied by his daughter Gina Latendresse (*President of the American Pearl Company*), will be giving a hands-on exhibition about pearl bearing molluscs and pearls of the world. In

addition there will be a discussion on the current status of the world pearl business. The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn - Westpark in Rosslyn, Virginia on November 19th. Starting time is at 7:00 PM. This promises to be

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President's Letter

By Fred Ward

Our chapter's momentum continues. Our numbers increase along with our activity. We have had a summer of wonderful monthly programs, which will continue throughout the autumn. As I write this we have only two more monthly meetings before our annual holiday auction and dinner. Last year's was a smashing success and, with your help, we plan to surpass it.

Mark your calendars for December 7th. We are a bit earlier than usual but wanted to schedule our function without interfering with other parties or with your own heavy holiday selling season. The Board received several requests to schedule our event on a weekend so there would not be the usual pressure to end the evening early for work the next day. Therefore, we will experiment this time with a Saturday night party, dinner, and auction.

Our holiday auction continues to be an important income producer for the chapter. Without such financial success we would not be able to bring in such outstanding speakers as we have had the last three years. Therefore, we will name an auction committee this month and expect each of you to contribute items for the auction as well as secure donations from your suppliers. Remember, each outside person or firm who donates to our auction will receive a free advertisement in our award-winning newsletter during the coming year. Be sure to tell your suppliers and friends about this offer when you are soliciting donations.

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Special People Will Be At The Annual Holiday Dinner and Auction. Don't Miss It!



*Yes, Fred Ward WILL be at the
Holiday Party and Auction and you
never know whom he may bring!*

President's Letter

Clubs and committees

Finally, so we can better serve the gem and jewelry community in our five-state area, we must continue our outreach to the community. Every

Remind people that they are welcome to join our meetings. Other than our nightly or annual meeting fee, there are no requirements whatsoever except a desire to attend.

time you talk with a dealer, supplier, friend, or colleague who does not regularly attend our meeting, remind each of them that they are welcome to join us. Other than our nightly or annual meeting fee, there are no requirements whatsoever except a desire to attend. I want to urge each of you to bring at least one new person to a meeting or to our holiday dinner before the end of 1996.

Thank you for making this a successful year and for your continuing support in making this the finest GIA alumni chapter in the world.



WANTED: VOLUNTEERS

We are in dire need of volunteers for the Annual Holiday Party and Auction and for contributors for this newsletter. The newsletter would be on time more often if we had more contributors. We need more volunteers in the association. See any board member to offer your help.

Two Views of Gemology

...a fascinating look at the history and evolution of the world-wide pearl industry.



Richard T. Liddicoat, Jr.

To kick off the new year our speaker will be Richard T. Liddicoat, Jr., Chairman of the Board of the Gemological Institute of America. The author of the Handbook of Gem Identification as well as numerous other books and articles. Mr. Liddicoat is well known to everyone in the jewelry/gemstone business. Mr. Liddicoat started with GIA in 1940 when Robert Shipley hired him. He completed the home study curriculum in about eight weeks but did not qualify for the C.G. (then GIA awarded a Certified Gemologist title) until 1941. He has been with GIA since 1940 (with

one exception of eleven years in the Soviet World War II).

His various positions during his tenure with GIA have included Director of Education, 1940-42 & 46-48, Director of the New York branch, 1949-1950, Assistant Director of GIA from 1950-1952, Executive Director and CEO from 1952-1983. The title of President was added in 1970. After a mild heart attack in June, 1983, the CEO duties were relinquished. At that time he was named Chairman of the Board.

Get to this meeting early as it is sure to be standing room only!



Curtis Dahle, G.G. Passes Away

D.C. Chapter member Curtis Dahle died in September from cancer. Curtis worked for years at Dahne & Weinstein Jewelers near Timonium, Maryland as their head appraiser. An excellent musician, Curtis was well versed on many subjects as was evident from his many letters to Editors (including the first to this newsletter). One of his views was that his cancer was directly caused by his exposure to refractive index fluid and specific gravity fluids. While this view was extremely controversial it probably helped lead to the replacement of the old RI fluid with the current RI fluid. Curtis is survived by his wife, Bunny. They had no children.



District of Gemology Newsletter Advertising Rates

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Past Speaker

Sapphires Don't Eat, Sapphires Don't Die

*Or Why I Left Farming
For The Jewelry Business*

By Martin Fuller

Sherlock Holmes always impressed that we should pay attention to the obvious, and it's obvious that Shirley Beck is more than one person. That's all there is to it. It is impossible to do what Shirley has done in one lifetime in one body. Yes, her trusty heat-treater, Dale Siegford, was there to field the overflow of questions, but there was no doubt that Shirley knows her sapphires. And she knows Montana and she knows farming. She's more than ambidextrous - hell, she'll birth your calves if you ask her!

We learned there is a lot more to sapphire mining in Montana than Yogo Gulch, a prominent name in the American sapphire story.



Shirley Beck and Dale Siegford in their store in Philipsburg, Montana.



Shirley Beck, the very entertaining speaker at the September meeting.

Shirley spent the evening speaking very fast about the various sapphire mining operations currently producing in Montana, including American Gem and Gem River Corp. We learned there is a lot more to sapphire mining in Montana than Yogo Gulch, a prominent name in the American sapphire story. We were treated to slides of the mining process, including Dry Cottonwood Creek and the Anaconda Bar, and there was plenty of hands-on material available to help our members become more familiar with sapphire of all colors, available right here in the United States. Examples of heat treated and non-treated sapphire were particularly eye-opening.

Shirley is a font of knowledge and is very open to questions about Montana sapphire.

She welcomes inquiries either gemologically or if you have clients interested in something novel, as well as beautiful, *and* mined in the U.S.A.



Jerry Root, Ira Kramer, and Elizabeth La Nier examine sapphires made in America.



Shirley shows her "before and after" wares to Jean Louis Moulene, Pebbie Barnes, and Camilla Masr.

By Anna M. Miller, GG

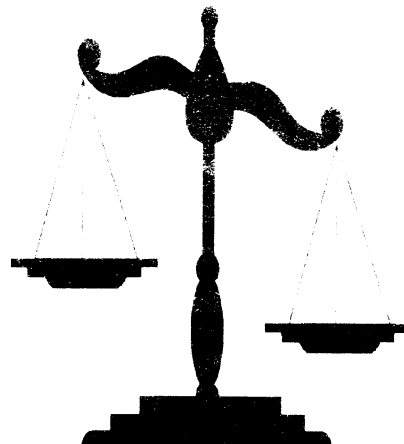
It is best to wait until the porcupine is in the open. Then, watching for his slapping tail, you rush in and pop a large washtub over him. Then...you have something to sit on while you plan your next move. And, here I am still on the washtub.

During my research I ran into some really odd and quirky things. I found out there is a place that markets genuine human shrunken heads (the type from Borneo headhunters).

ability to articulate that knowledge. So, a little soul searching might be in order before you spend the time actually needed to become a professional appraiser. You need to ask yourself, "Do I actually *like* appraising gems and jewelry?" If the answer is "No" - go no further. But, if the answer is "Yes" be ready to give your mind and time to exploring and devouring the subject, and developing an articulate means of expressing what you have discovered. You must have passion for this job... (in simple language really enjoy what you are doing). *Integrity and passion* have a way of coming through in the finished appraisal document.

Also, it takes a lot of book study. Valuation science studies should ideally be supplemented with studies in gemology, mineralogy, crystallography, geology, lapidary arts, metals, jewelry manufacturing, watchmaking, and the study of *fine arts*! And you can add to your expertise by taking adult education classes in Business Law, Economics, and Art History. It all adds up to *scholarship*, an element that is sadly lacking in this fast-paced industry in which we are told by the leading *gemological* institute that if you buy and read 8 or 9 short home-study lessons on a single subject you are "qualified" by virtue of reading those lessons to make financial decisions affecting others. Have *faith* that each of you is intelligent enough to understand this type of *education* (or rather, *shortcuts*) from a *text*. This is one of the *benefits* of understanding and appreciating the art and science of jewelry appraisal and not come suddenly, but by gradual stages of both formal and self-education.

OK. I will get to what you really came to read—the answers to the problems I have posed to you. Let us begin with the same estimates on the South African petroglyphs (February 1996 issues). This would be an assignment for either *Business Valuation* or *Real Estate* appraisers. As these petroglyphs are “fixed to the land” they are “real” and *not* personal property. A *real property* appraiser or *business valuation* appraiser will have to contend with these



questions. Does the petroglyph improve the value of the land? To what extent can income be generated by it? This is a site specific question and has to do with where the land is and the amount of petroglyphs on it. If they use the *Incident Approach* (and they probably would) to value the petroglyphs there must be consideration given to these questions. Are guides going to be paid to show this attraction? How much income will be generated by guides? Also, how much income will be generated by spin-offs such as shopping bags, cards, postcards? These products would naturally have pictures of the petroglyphs on their surfaces. In the long run, this is a value question better left to a Business & Market appraiser.

In 1979 we looked for some feedback on an ivory seat with an 18K gold ball. The seat was bought in the near East and is

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or better than the Biwa pearls at a fraction of the price. They occur in natural colors of pink, peach, mauve, heather and white. There is a tremendous difference in value between the cultured saltwater pearl and the natural one. A natural pearl is all nacre, while a cultured pearl is mostly shell bead with a veneer of nacre over the shell. However, freshwater pearls, while inexpensive, are also all nacre because they can be grown with a piece of mantle tissue alone, without the shell bead. Thus the least expensive cultured freshwater pearls from China rival the most expensive natural pearls in quality. From the strangely shaped rice krispies of the '70s and '80s China's quality improved such that their freshwater pearls can pass for Japanese akoyas at a much lower price. However, because the market wants round pearls the Chinese are now nucleating freshwater mussels with shell beads. They are also rounding out-of-round freshwater pearls and using them as nuclei. It is not certain how the market will react to these innovations.

Pearls have been imitated by plastic beads, both solid and hollow, and glass. Glass dipped in paste and fish scales are known as Majorcas. Ward explains how these imitations can be separated from cultured or natural pearls.

The majority of pearl sales are Japanese akoyas, while high quality Chinese freshwater pearls are relatively unknown at this time. There is a small market at the top for both black and white South Seas pearls. In buying pearls there are five criteria for determining quality: size, luster, surface condition, shape and color. The value of the pearl will vary as these parameters vary. There is a chart at the end of the book demonstrating the relationship among these various criteria to help a consumer understand value.

This book contains the clarity of writing and high quality of photography together with the in-depth subject knowledge we have enjoyed in Fred Ward's publications, and it is a welcome addition to the library of the gemologist and jeweler as well as the consumer shopping for pearls.



There's Fire In Those Stones

Opal Seminar Held in California

By Cathy Gaber

The first thing we learned at the Opal Seminar was that we are perfectly content to let others brave the heat, the lack of amenities, and the abundance of black flies, spiders, and back breaking labor. It is all worth it though for the true opaloholic. This seminar was sponsored by the American Opal Society (AOS) at the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies show and convention in Riverside, CA on August 10, 1996.

Barbara McCondra has made a living mining Australian opal for over 20 years. Lightning Ridge became too expensive to mine, so she now has claims in the Yowah nut fields in Queensland. These opals form in ironstone concretions that range from pea size to softball size. Most are empty, but some contain opal that rivals the quality of opals anywhere. The matrix pieces can contain very colorful patterns in addition to the opal, and they make outstanding jewelry and specimens.



Paul Downing, author of several books on opal, gave a demonstration on how to cut opal. He showed how to select the

best fire layer in a piece of rough, to orient it, and to grind the stone for the best results. His talk on opal evaluation included factors such as body color, play of color, brightness, transparency, pattern, and size, as well as cracking versus crazing. He also discussed doublets, triplets, and synthetics.

Dave Burton, President of AOS, recounted his adventures in the barren Australian outback. Slides of the unusual animal life were followed by samples of magnificent fossil opal that he had worked into jewelry including the Dragon's Tear.

Tim Thomas, of The House of Tibara, offered many tips on buying opal. Just as important as price and taste is the emotional factor, especially if purchasing rough opal. A certain "comfort zone" between the buyer's skill level and the possible destruction of the material must be maintained. Always ask as much as possible about the opal being purchased. Opal that is dug from certain localities such as Virgin Valley, NV or New Field in Australia or from more than 50 feet deep has a much greater chance of crazing. Many participants nodded when he asserted that it is cheaper to buy opal in the U.S. than in Australia.

All the speakers were also dealers at the show, so afterwards, we could go spend our money more wisely. The next AOS opal seminar will be held in conjunction with the state annual show the first weekend in November in Anaheim, CA.



KEYS TO AUCTION SUCCESS - *PREPARATION AND AWARENESS*

By Gail Brett Levine, G.G.

Copyright October 1996 by Gail Brett Levine, GG

During my six years of examining nearly 5,200 jewelry items for Auction Market Resource, I've witnessed winners and losers in the auction marketplace. Unfortunately, there are many auctions where the winner will be more upset than the loser. This is because the winner overpaid! One or more of the golden rules of auction participation were either unknown or ignored. You can be a winner if you learn the ropes. The best strategies you can take to an auction are preparation and awareness. To be a professional requires preparation. Auctions and auctioneers have become sophisticated. This trend will continue.

The best strategies you can take to an auction are preparation and awareness. To be a professional requires preparation.

Inspect the property -- in person, or engage a gemologist/appraiser professional to view the piece on your behalf or, at the very least, obtain a condition report from the auction gallery. Be conscious that the auction gallery is interested in selling the item; expect a rosy

picture. Precaution inspections are mandatory. The best possible scenario is to examine the piece yourself armed only with a ten power loupe. While you are inspecting, talk it up. Ask for opinions from those beside you and the gallery representative behind the counter. All the while look for missing stones, repaired areas, solder lines, damage to the frame, added elements not original to the item. Look at the signature, metal stamp, hallmark, or trademark thoroughly for genuineness. Do not rely on the information in the catalog or the photo. The lot information in bold print is what is guaranteed. Be aware that the photo may have been enlarged and/or color enhanced. Point of information: at auction you are buying "as is, where is."

Do your homework in advance - focus your attention on items that interest you, don't let your concentration wander to other items. Circle these items in the catalog. Find out what similar jewelry items are selling for. Get additional catalogs with the prices realized for at least 3-6 months prior to the auction. Research geographically other auction

galleries for similar pieces and what the accomplished sales prices were. Research at retail stores, pawn shops and antique jewelry stores for comparable pieces. Study price guides, price lists and reference guides -- this will give you a monetary range to expect. Try to go to at least one auction sale before you actually purchase to get the "feel" of the gallery. Take notes, watch bidders, and strike up conversations with the professionals and dealers.



Pre-sale estimates for all lots in the catalogue are intended as approximate guides to current market value and should not be interpreted as prices. Pre-sale estimates can also be used as a marketing tool: the lower the pre-sale estimate the more interest it creates. It makes sense, doesn't it?

Thoroughly read the conditions of sale in the front of the catalog. Almost every auction gallery will have a limited condition statement that will read:

"all statements contained in the catalogue or in any bill of sale, invoice or elsewhere to authorship, period, culture, source, origin, measurement, quality, rarity, provenance, importance, exhibition and

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literature of historical relevance or physical condition are qualified statements of opinion and not representations or warranties."

Additionally, a further caveat has been seen in recent catalogs worded:

"purchasers are reminded that colored stones and diamonds may be enhanced by using one or more techniques, included but not limited to: clarity enhancement, resins and heat treatments. The auction gallery makes no warranty express or implied to the buyer as to whether a natural stone has been enhanced."

Be very aware of the multiple increment policy of the gallery. Be sure to factor in the buyer's premium (and sales tax, if applicable) in your final figure. Set a ceiling on your spending power, write down this number next to the catalog entry. Don't go beyond that limit! The rule of thumb is to ask yourself "can I sell it and get my money back if I need to?" Work within this principle whether you are a dealer or a collector. With this method you can quickly determine what price level you wish to bid at, instead of getting caught up in auction fever. The auctioneer's success depends entirely on stirring up the crowd and creating auction fever. Going beyond your set limit will likely lead to trouble. For a successful conclusion, know:

The payment policy of the gallery and prepare accordingly. Most of the time cash, cashiers' check or a check (upon established credit) and, at times, credit cards are accepted. Many will only accept cash, cashier's checks or money orders. Make arrangements to get cash quickly if required. Usually the jewelry goods must be taken with you or within 30 days. A storage charge can be levied. If packing and handling of purchased lots is done by the gallery, it is done at the entire risk of the purchaser. Sales tax will be added unless you produce your state's tax exemption number. Lastly, just in case you are unhappy with your purchase, read again the Conditions of Sale for return policy under the heading "Limited Right of Rescission" for policy and procedures. In summary, if you are going to an auction, arrive there prepared. Once you are fully prepared, as any professional would be, the only thing stopping you from success is a winning attitude. Luck is great when it happens, but don't count on it. Luck happens when preparedness meets opportunity! There are many good values to be had at auction and you could be the lucky one.

Gail Brett Levine, GG is publisher of Auction Market Resource, independent appraiser and a (very) long time member of the GIA Alumni - New York Chapter.



The Guide Expands Diamond Coverage

*Now Published Monthly
With All Popular Shapes
Evaluated Separately*

The *Guide*, a diamond and colored stone pricing publication for the trade, has expanded its diamond coverage. The diamond section of this book is now a 51 page self-contained booklet that is updated monthly as part of *The Guide*. Included in this booklet are separate pricing charts at wholesale for rounds, pear shapes, marquises, ovals, emerald cuts, radiants, princess cuts, hearts, baguettes, trillions, and more. This is the most comprehensive diamond price guide in the industry. Prices are actual wholesale to be used by jewelers and appraisers without having to discount. A one year subscription includes monthly diamond updates and quarterly colored stone updates.

The Guide:

U.S. \$180⁰⁰ for one year
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BOOK REVIEW

PEARLS

Pearls by Fred Ward, 1995, 64 pages.
Published by Gem Book Publications,
Bethesda, Md.

By **J.B. Tavernier**, Most Senior Reviewer

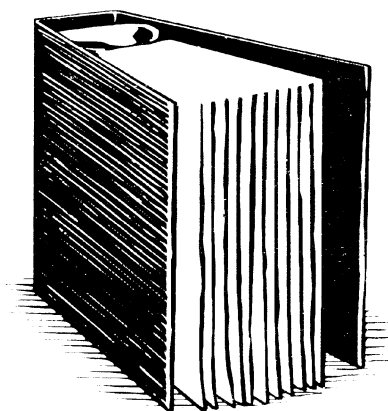
Natural pearls, cultured pearls, saltwater pearls, freshwater pearls, akoya pearls, South Seas pearls, Biwa pearls, rice krispies pearls, black pearls, mabe pearls, Tahitian pearls, blister pearls, mother-of-pearl, seed pearls, half pearls- a plethora of pearls! And Fred Ward sorts them all out for us in **Pearls**, the fourth book in his Gem Series.

Pearls were the most valuable of the gems until the diamond discoveries of the 19th century. Pearl fever reached its peak in Rome during the 1st century. A Roman general, Vitellius, financed an entire military campaign with one pearl earring. Because of their beauty and rarity pearls were considered to be of incomparable value in India, Persia, China, Babylon, Egypt and Rome. This was particularly true of strands matched in size, shape and color; very few natural pearls are round. The value of pearls has been referred to in the Bible, the Talmud and the Koran.

Natural pearls were the only pearls before the advent of culturing in the 20th century. Ward describes the arduous task of recovering pearls from thirty to sixty feet of water by divers with no equipment other than a 50 pound rock to take them to the bottom. The principal sources were the Persian Gulf, the coasts of India and Sri Lanka, the Red Sea, and Chinese freshwater lakes and streams. Then pearls were discovered in the New World during Spanish and English colonization, and the Americas became a major source for both freshwater pearls from the USA, and saltwater pearls from Central America. Over fishing and pollution eventually diminished production from these New World sources. Up until World War II The Per-

sian Gulf, especially Bahrain, was the hub of the industry. Pearls from here went to Greece, Egypt and Rome until the market shifted to Europe after the Renaissance.

Pearls are derived from shelled mollusks-principally oysters in salt water and mussels in fresh water. When an irritant occurs within the animal, it deposits a layer of aragonite (the orthorhombic form of calcium carbonate) over it to reduce the discomfort. If the aragonite completely surrounds something within the animal's mantle or body cavity it is called nacre and is considered to be a pearl. If it coats something attached to the inside of the shell forming a dome, or if it coats the entire inside of the shell, it is called mother-of-pearl. The irritant is usually some debris swept into the shell such as a piece of bone, shell or coral. These are normally flushed out, but occasionally they are caught inside and form the nucleus around which the nacre is deposited. Ward says that sand is never the irritant because it is so easy to flush out.



Virtually no natural pearls are being collected anywhere today. Most US buyers are unwilling to pay the price, although some Europeans are, and many Arabs will buy nothing but natural pearls. The market is small and consists of the reselling of old strands. The advent of cultured pearls, industrial pollution and the second world war destroyed the natural pearl industry.

Pearl culturing began in Japan early in the 20th century. The Japanese were very secretive about the process and were the only source of cultured pearls for a long time. Mikimoto once produced 75% of the world's pearls. Although others eventually discovered his methods, Japan maintained a monopoly through cartels and trade agreements. Finally China and Australia broke the cartel and both produce saltwater pearls. In Japan the akoya oyster is nucleated by inserting a sphere of freshwater mussel shell together with a piece of mantle into the mantle of the oyster; the nucleus is nearly as big as the finished product. Many objects from wood to glass to lead were tried before it was discovered that freshwater mussel shell from the USA worked the best. The nucleated oysters are then suspended beneath rafts until it is time to remove the pearls. Mikimoto determined that 4 years was the optimum time to produce a high quality pearl, but cost cutting has reduced that time to as little as 6 months resulting in a cosmetic layer of nacre over the nucleus. Ward says that a pearl with 0.4 mm of nacre should be sufficient to last a lifetime with normal wear, but a thinner layer will not be adequate. It takes an oyster about 1 1/2 years to grow 0.4 mm of nacre. Although they deny it, the Japanese pearls are bleached, dyed, and polished.

The pearl from the akoya oyster is limited in size, and it was found that the South Seas pearls from a different species of oyster were larger and finer. Australia produces the largest and most expensive cultured pearls. White South Seas pearls are produced in the warm Pacific waters from Australia northwest to Burma. Black South Seas pearls are produced farther east in the Pacific around Tahiti, the Cook Islands and French Polynesia.

Japan takes credit for being the first to culture freshwater pearls in Lake Biwa although the Chinese had been doing this with mabe pearls (not true pearls) since the 12th century. As Lake Biwa production declined Chinese freshwater production has grown. These pearls are equal to

(Continued from page 4)

claimed to be genuine 8th century BC Assyrian. First step is in authenticating the seal. In DC this would be easy by going to the proper Smithsonian curator. No museum curator will discuss values with you, but they can usually separate replicas from the real thing. So, authentication is first step. From there it is research into the markets that sell such items. A number of companies in the U.S. handle these kind of artifacts. Also, auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's might be helpful.

Finally, the finger. Yes, it is a *genuine human finger*. The story is that a doctor in Kentucky accidentally shot it off in a hunting accident. *Because* he was a doctor he knew how to preserve it. He kept it for many years until one of his sons asked for it. The son then took it to a jeweler in New York and had it fitted with an 18K yellow gold mounting. He hung this ornament on a watch chain and wears it to this day. The question is how do we value this? We can take into consideration the gold mounting itself. How much did it cost and how much is the intrinsic value of the gold. Well, what about the finger? Was the guy a surgeon and the loss of this digit detrimental to his career? Nope. He was a country doctor and it did not slow him down in the least. So, the value MIGHT be different if he was a surgeon, this question was not relevant. To put a cash price on the finger itself we can think about two avenues of research. We can see what a Personal Injury Policy (Insurance Company) will pay for the loss of a digit and add that to the price of the gold mounting. And, we can look into *replacement* value. Did you know there are a number of companies in the U.S. that sell skeletons and various individual body parts to medical schools? One such company is called Skulls International Unlimited and they bill themselves as "The leading Osteological specimen supplier." They are located in Oklahoma City. One of the things I found out during research of "replacement" digits is that they will sell you an entire human hand (just the

Professional Appraisal Course Offered in Tucson

The nation's first jewelry appraising correspondence course and practical workshop, *The Master Valuer Program*, will hold a 3-day jewelry appraising class at the Courtyard Marriott, Tucson, Arizona, from January 29th through the 31st, 1997. The course material is part of the curriculum that leads to the *Master Valuer* designation of *Registered Master Valuer*.

Enrollment is open to all. Prior jewelry appraisal experience is not required. The workshop is an intense 3-days of lectures, classroom work and hands-on appraising. The professional standards of methodology and jewelry appraisal report writing for insurance, divorce, estates and damage claims are discussed. Legal issues and the latest US government regulations that concern jewelry appraisers are covered, including the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). Guest lecturers and gemological experts offer valuable identification and pricing information not available in other seminars.

The *Master Valuer Program* is recommended and endorsed by leading gemological and appraisal associations worldwide. The American Society of Appraisers is currently giving 24 Recertification Credits to ASA members who take the *Master Valuer* workshop.

Anna M. Miller, International Director of the MV program, stresses the value of this course to those currently engaged in jewelry appraising, and those considering jewelry appraising. "Jewelry appraisers take on a liability that makes it imperative for them to be able to practice high standards and understand professionalism. And for those just starting in jewelry appraising, this workshop combines training and practical experience to create confidence in the individual."

Class size is limited. For additional information contact Anna Miller, phone/fax (713)485-1606, or *AMV Program*, PO Box 1844, Pearland, TX 77588.



bones, no skin) for \$125.00. It is an interesting research project.

During my research of this question I ran into some *really* odd and quirky things. I found out there is a place that markets genuine human shrunken heads (the type from Borneo headhunters); and I ran into quite an interesting story about the sale of Napoleon'sahem, how can I put this..... reproductive organ? (Is that clear?) It was for sale in the U.S. a couple of years ago but before the sale could get underway the French government complained loudly about wanting it returned on the basis of being a historical and cultural relic.

So that's it for me. Hope you all had as good a time as I did with this column. Please let me know if you get anything weird to appraise. I'll put it in the book I'm currently working on about this subject.

Here are my final words of advice if you want to be a professional gems and jewelry appraiser: You can be expert in *any* subject if you constantly use and put into play these three words: *Observe, Remember, Compare*.



All Cartier Issue By Auction Market Resource

Auction Market Resource for Gems and Jewelry offers a very special year-end issue - **CARTIER!** This Special Issue contains nearly 300 Cartier jewelry items including pearls, certificated diamonds and gemstones, and watches. This volume provides subscribers with much needed technical information, facts, figures, photos, pre-sale estimates, hammer prices and gemological detail of selected Cartier pieces dating from Victorian through modern eras.

The 1996 Special Cartier Issue is based in cooperation with Antiquorum Auctioneers of Geneva which is conducting, in collaboration with the Parisian auction house Etude Tajan, a Cartier sale in Geneva on November 19, 1996: **all** pieces in the sale will have a certificate of authenticity issued by Cartier.

Lael Hagan, GG, noted New York based jewelry historian, writes a definitive article "The Cartier Legacy," giving breadth and depth on the 150th Anniversary of Cartier plus a special interview with Eric Nussbaum, Curator of the Cartier Archives. Ms. Hagan also includes glossaries, bibliographies, and a hallmark overview.

Auction Market Resource for Gems and Jewelry is published bi-annually and is available by subscription only: \$195.00 for the U.S. and Canada; \$225.00 for overseas orders. To add this key resource to your library, contact: Gail Brett Levine, GG, Auction Market Resource, P.O. Box 7683, Rego Park, NY 11374. Phone: (718)897-7305. Fax: (718)997-9057. 76766.614@compuserv.com



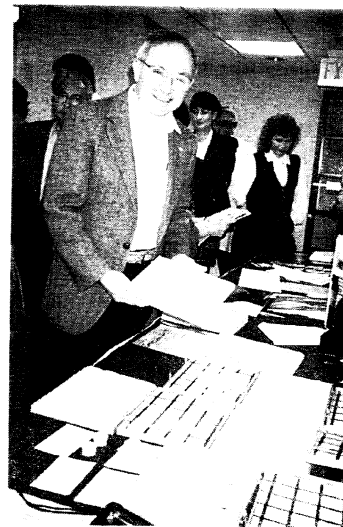
Work Place

Experienced Gemologist Seeks Position

Sibongile Ncube, GG, has experience working at the Sandawana Mining Company of Zimbabwe. Among other things she graded and priced rough, cut gemstones, and trained and supervised gemstone cutters. Sibongile, who goes by Sibo, received her GG from GIA in 1990. She is currently a Student Assistant in the Institute of Information Management at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

For a resume contact Sibo at (703)591-6041 or E-mail: sncube@osfl.gmu.edu.

If you are seeking a job or looking for job applicants, short ads are being accepted to run in The District of Gemology. Job related ads are currently free (subject to change). Contact the Editor, Bill Wise at (301)843-5617.



Past President Bobby Mann exhibited his collection of colorless gemstones at the October meeting. Always on the look-out for a colorless gem he doesn't have, Bobby would be very interested to hear from you if you think you might have one that he doesn't (and you are willing to part with it).

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Last speaker

Charlotte Hodgkinson And Her Husband Alan, The Scottish Gemmologist

By Martin Fuller

Haggis! I knew there was something I forgot to ask Charlotte about. It was haggis! Damn, when are they coming back to town? I won't be able to sleep! We had such a marvelous time at dinner and I forgot to ask Charlotte about haggis! Will the readers of this newsletter ever forgive me? I do feel I've let everyone down. Actually, I don't believe my New World stomach could have handled discussing such matter at dinner. It's one thing if your Scottish, another if like me, you are kiltless in D.C.



Alan Hodgkinson, FGA, expounds on his amazing (and extremely inexpensive) gemological processes and tools

But we did discuss the garden, and the gorgeous house by the sea on the western coast of Scotland, as well as how distressfully far Alan has to cart his golf clubs just to play a round (next to the house). We traded numerous gardening

secrets, most of which I'll save to share with you in the spring issue, but one fascinating tidbit can't wait, and that is their use of seaweed for mulch! Yes, it appears to be an ancient tradition in this farming community to use kelp blown in after fierce North Atlantic storms as a fabulous, FREE, nutritious mulch and fertilizer for the garden and field crops. It seems that the window of opportunity for harvesting the seaweed from the beaches is as temporal as the winds which brought it, so the beachhead bustles at kelp harvest time. And you thought Alan spent all of his time hoisting gemstones to his eye and measuring pavilion angles! Hoisting gemstones has got to be a pleasure after a hard day in the garden hoisting the huge rocks with which Alan which built the retaining wall next to the stream and bridge which grace the grounds of the backyard.

The days are very short during the long winters in Scotland. This is my theory as to why Scotland has produced some very clever people, including Alan Hodgkinson. I believe the lack of light at this latitude has allowed those who Pict (that's a pun!) parents descending from Kenneth I, to garner an appreciation of the phenomena of light, which eludes most of us residing further south of the arctic circle. And, I believe, the pace of life in a country whose entire population is less than that of New York City, does allow one, if not time to stop and smell the roses, then at least time to peer at the sun through gemstones. But none of this explains the genius of the observations noted scientifically by Mr. Hodgkinson. He saw the forest for the trees!! He saw the clues in the unique

spectral colors, he knew there was something more to those doubled images. No, these were not some mystical phenomena!

Alan Hodgkinson, following in the footsteps of such kaleidoscopic Scottish brains as Sir Brewster, shared his observations and developed a method of teaching others how to identify gemstones with none other than their own eyes and the light of the moon! It works, as was demonstrated in but another of our chapters succession of incredible monthly meetings. Mr. Hodgkinson has been working in conjunction with Dr. Bill Hanneman of Washington state in developing a Synthetic Emerald filter which successfully separates a number of common synthetic emeralds from the real thing.

Practice, and hands-on instruction of the various techniques in Visual Optics is highly recommended before you sell your Maxi-Lab. With this fascinating possibility in mind, many in attendance at this meeting would readily sign up for a full day course in hands-on Visual Optics with the master himself. If you missed this meeting, you not only missed a charming brogue, but the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Hodgkinson, and I hope you can rectify the error of your ways by being the first to sign up if we can arrange to have them back for an extended class in Visual Optics. I would propose that we combine it with a lecture on the history of haggis! It's just a thought.



Jerry Root gives Visual Optics a try with Davis Kramer's help while Ron Talley looks on.

The Critical Angle

By Martin Fuller

An article or two in the trade press of late have referred to the difficulties the GIA Gem Trade Labs are having keeping up with the demand for Diamond Grading Reports. The delays are caused by a confluence of very good reasons, including the moving of the entire California grading facilities to Carlsbad, the lack of trained graders accompanying the move to Carlsbad, the problems with the computer programs, the increased demand for the reports - fueled partly by those full page ads telling the trade why having this report is so absolutely necessary. It's a problem, for sure, and I know they're working on it, but being a very proud alumni, I just can't help it if I want to help! So I need to hear it just one more time, why the Gem Trade Lab doesn't recommend to the justifiably upset jewelry industry, to let the highly trained GIA Graduate Gemologist in their

neighborhood grade their diamonds? That IS what we were very thoroughly trained to do. Many of us have even taken ADVANCED CLARITY GRADING. We can grade them loose, we can use master color grading diamonds, we can use the cut Class grading system, and a few labs can muster opinions from three or more graduate gemologists (GIA). The point is, the GIA and Gem Trade Lab could use a few full page ads to promote the credibility of diamond grading reports prepared by those they trained to go out into the world as professional diamond graders. It is very frustrating to be told in one advertising campaign that with a GIA degree the jewelry world is our oyster and then to see on the next page an ad stating that "an important diamond needs an important grading report" (i.e. GTL, not Jill, GG). I would be thrilled to only have to quality grade a loose diamond, and not research a market value. We're here to help you GIA - Just let the industry know!

Around Town

Compiled by Davia Kramer

Corcoran:

Faberge and Finland: Exquisite Objects.
October 17 - January 5.

Walters Art Gallery:

Fabulous and Faberge - Russian Enamels.
November 17 - February 23.

Hillwood

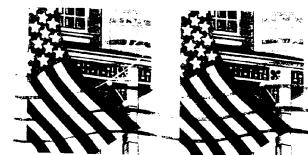
Russian Enamels from Kievan Rus to Faberge
November 21, 7:30 to 9:00PM
Call (202)686-5807

Smithsonian Associates

Diamonds: A Century of Spectacular Jewels by authors Penny Prodon and Marion Fasel.
December 5 at 8:00PM
Call (202)357-3030
Code 1W0-042 \$15.00

The District of Gemology

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MD 20817

Inside This Issue...

Anna Miller * Shirley Beck
Gail Brett Levine * Alan Hodgkinson
Cathy Gaber * And Much More!