



The perks of a jewellery valuer

To be a jewellery valuer requires consistently keeping up to date with the latest gemmological trends, prices and processes to ensure we conduct accurate valuations.

As part of my ongoing education in the industry, I recently took part in a two-day education opal trip hosted by the NCJV (National Council of Jewellery Valuers) in Lightning Ridge.



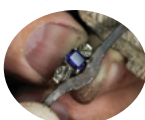
Lightning Ridge is a small mining town located in north western New South Wales, close to the southern border of Queensland and home to the famous and highly prized black opal. The town has a population of about 2,000, consisting mostly of miners who spend tireless hours working their claims of land in at times extreme conditions to find black opal that has been slowly declining in recent years.

'This gives me great insight when it comes to valuing this beautiful gemstone.'

As the timeframe to get there would have been almost two days, my father flew me in his four-seater light aircraft, reducing the timeframe significantly to 4½ hours each way and allowing me to witness the most beautiful scenery along the way.

The area in which it is situated was part of a large inland sea covering most of Australia over 97 million years ago and it is believed that as the sea retreated, it caused the ground to become more acidic, increasing the silica content – the constituent of opal.

continued on page 5...





Wisdom from the Bench

When we speak of jewellery from our workshop being totally handcrafted, it means exactly that. We begin with our gold (raw material) alloyed to the carat and the colour that a design may call for.

The chosen metal is then shaped and fabricated using mechanical rollers, machines utilising a set of reduction 'wire' grooves, or a flat surface, or shaped using blocks and punches to form the basis of our desired shape, or components such as wires and tubes (known as chenier).

Once a shape has been formed, then by using drills, hammers, saws, files and other 'abrasive' techniques we can further shape and refine the design.

Heat is also a major part of the construction process used when soldering, fusing or annealing.

Displayed here are some images of recent designs being created using these age-old techniques.

Setting of gemstones requires a different set of skills but similar tools and techniques.

During the year we have also been developing interesting ways for clients to extend the joy and excitement of creating their unique pieces. From sitting with the designers and craftspeople and

having the opportunity to be part of the process of selecting gemstones, we can now document the creation of your special piece and offer you the choice of a book or a printed leaflet in a presentation folder.

Having a photographic essay of the creation of your unique piece is the next best thing to having made the piece yourself

These beautifully presented books are offered in a full colour, 'coffee table' sized, hardback, limited edition and document with pictures the full process, including the design, along with details of materials used, or a printed leaflet in a presentation folder.

Greg John
FGAA Dip DT



Gemmology Corner

Garnet

There are many different varieties of garnet, but no gemstone that is simply called 'garnet'. The name actually refers to a family of different gemstones. There are six main garnet species, specified by their chemical composition: almandine, grossularite, andradite, pyrope, spessartite, and uvarovite. Altogether there are currently at least 16 different varieties of garnet, distinguished mainly by colour.

'There are many different varieties of garnet ... distinguished mainly by colour.'

Almandine (Almandite)

Typically red with a violet tint; the most common member of the garnet group



Star

Some almandine garnets display asterism when polished as cabochons, and are known as 'star garnets'



Grossularite (Grossular)

Hessonite (cinnamon stone)

Bright golden orange



Tsavorite

Bright to emerald-green; second most valuable of all the garnets



Leuco

Colourless, transparent variety – extremely rare



Andradite

Demantoid

Olive-green to emerald-green; the most valuable of all the garnets, due to its outstanding lustre and dispersion



Topazolite

Yellow to lemon-yellow



Melanite

Glossy black – beautiful lustre; can be distinguished from other opaque black gems by its magnetism due to the presence of iron



Pyrope

Best known of the red garnets with a distinctive red colour that often resembles the colour of ruby



Hydrogrossular

Typically translucent to opaque – usually available as cabochons



Rhodolite

A mixture of pyrope and almandite. Ruby-red to purple



Mali

A mixture of grossular and andradite – discovered in the West African country of Mali in 1991; colours include yellow, greenish-yellow, yellowish-green, yellowish-brown and brown



Uvarovite

Rarely found in gemstone quality – specimens sought after by collectors for their outstanding brilliance and colour



Spessartite (Spessartine)

Typically mandarin-orange to orange-red



Colour-Change

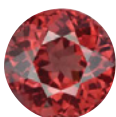
A mix of spessartite and pyrope, this rare garnet changes from brownish or orange in daylight, to rose-pink in incandescent light



daylight
incandescent

Malaia

Primarily a mix of pyrope and spessartine, discovered in the Umba River Valley bordering Tanzania and Kenya



Leon Corn
FGAA Dip DT





Pictured above, clockwise from top left:

1. 9 carat white gold diamond pendant* \$525
2. 9 carat white gold topaz and diamond ring \$915
3. 18 carat white gold diamond, garnet, peridot and tsavorite pendant and chain \$1,040
4. 18 carat rose and white gold pink spinel and diamond ring \$9,090
5. 18 carat white and rose gold pink and white diamond pendant* \$1,740
6. 9 carat white gold South Sea pearl drop earrings \$680
7. 18 carat white gold sapphire and diamond pendant and chain \$1,285
8. 18 carat white gold emerald and diamond ring \$6,640
9. 18 carat white gold freshwater pearl and diamond pendant* \$825
10. 18 carat yellow, white and rose gold orange sapphire and diamond ring \$5,610

*Chain not included

Staff achievements

Previous newsletters have celebrated Eleanor Hawke's unique talents as a creative and gifted jeweller. Winner of the Apprentice of the Year in her first two years of study, she was (belatedly) awarded the top prize again in her final year (completed in 2017). Three years, three triumphs!

Eleanor's talents honour her great-grandfather Arthur Hawke who started as a jewellery apprentice in 1912 and in the late 1920s he established the iconic jewellery manufacturing business the 'House of Hawke' – a brand that was widely known through its promotion on the popular television shows of *Pick a box* and *In Melbourne Tonight*. Her mother, Pam, a talented and passionate seamstress, no doubt contributed to Eleanor's creative side.

Eleanor has very special talents, enhanced by the careful and loving guidance of her master jeweller, Greg John;

her great mate and fellow jeweller, Jarrad, who works at the bench alongside her; not to mention the state-of-the-art technology in the Abrecht Bird workshop.



'Three years, three triumphs.'

She is a star shining brightly in an era that sees the industry decimated by cheap and inferior mass produced imports. And she looks forward to handcrafting very special pieces for our clients that will not only be loved by them but will be passed on to future generations because they are produced by hand and are made to last.

The perks of a jewellery valuer continued from page 1

Lightning Ridge is also an important paleontological site and home to the only known deposit of land-based opalised fossils in the world, dating back to the Cretaceous period.

As part of my tour, I was privileged to witness a number of industry-based processes that gave me a deep insight into how this beautiful stone transforms from ground to finished product.

I was fortunate to visit (and descended into) an opal mine, where I was shown how the opal is retrieved from the soft sandstone, refined and sorted to find the precious opal. This process has thankfully been made a little easier by automated machines rather than the historical technique of pick axe and shovel.

Other aspects I was privy to witness were how opal is cut, graded and priced. This gives me great insight when it comes to valuing this beautiful gemstone.

Opal has gained popularity in the overseas market over the years, and due to this demand, the majority is exported. With its play of colour unlike any other gemstone (in my opinion), black opal is truly one of the most beautiful, historic and interesting gemstones available today.

Kylie Beachley

FGAA Dip DT Regt Valuer RV348
Office Manager



We do it all.



Gift Ideas



Pictured above, clockwise from top left:

11. 18 carat white gold purple sapphire and diamond ring \$3,990 12. 18 carat white and rose gold pink and white diamond ring \$8,530
 13. 9 carat yellow gold emerald and diamond channel set ring \$935 14. 9 carat yellow, white and rose gold green tourmaline and diamond ring \$1,880
 15. 18 carat white gold diamond, peridot, blue topaz and amethyst earrings \$640 16. 18 carat white and rose gold ruby and diamond ring \$3,020
 17. Akoya pearl necklace with 9 carat yellow gold magnetic clasp \$1,705 18. 18 carat white gold diamond ring \$1,090
 19. 9 carat white gold diamond crossover earrings \$1,325 20. 9 carat white gold tanzanite and diamond ring \$2,430
 21. 9 carat white gold sapphire and diamond ring \$650 22. 9 carat yellow and rose gold belcher bracelet \$2,785
 23. 9 carat yellow gold lapis lazuli and diamond drop earrings \$710

Pictured on page 1: 18 carat rose gold ruby and diamond ring \$1,450

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The exception will be white gold articles that require rhodium plating (additional charge) – we will endeavour to have these pieces available at the end of the same day.