

Gem & Jewellery News

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NAG New Chief Executive

Dr Michael Sanderson, Chief Executive of the National Association of Goldsmiths (NAG) and Secretary General of CIBJO (and SJH member), is leaving to become Chief Executive of the recently privatized Engineering Training

Authority

(ENTRA). Although his tenure has lasted only a little over a year his distinctive style and bonhomie will ensure that he is greatly missed by the many friends he has made in the jewellery industry. We hope that we

will continue to see him at jewellery functions and Society meetings.

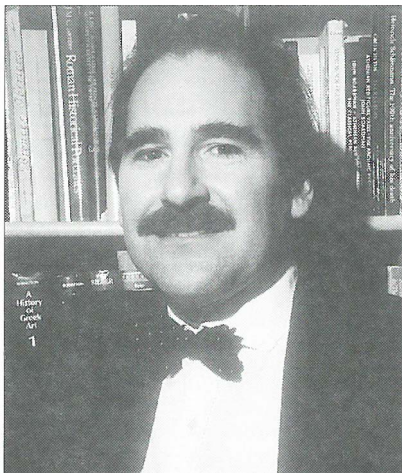
Former GJN Editor

Taking over from Michael as Chief Executive of the NAG on 1 July will be Dr Jack Ogden. He will also be nominated as the next Secretary General of CIBJO. Jack is, of course, already well known to many in the jewellery world, not least to readers of this publication, much of which he has written since its inception. Jack belongs to the fourth

generation of a distinguished jewellery family and was involved in the trade into the early 1980s, working in Harrogate, London and Switzerland. In 1971 he was awarded the GA Diploma (with Distinction) and served for six years during the

1970s as a member of the Diamond, Pearl and Precious Stone Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce (the forerunner to the current laboratory of the GAGTL). He left the business in the mid-1980s to devote himself more to the

academic world as an internationally acknowledged expert in the history, materials and technology of jewellery. Since 1990 he has been directing the Cambridge Centre for Precious Metal Research which was established to provide a resource and research focus for studies of jewellery and precious metal objects of all periods and regions. This international business has included advising dealers, collectors, museums and auction houses on very varied aspects of jewellery, from studies of national treasures to the detection of counterfeit designer



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costume jewellery. His 1982 book *Jewellery of the ancient world* remains the standard work on the materials and technology of early jewellery, and he was the co-author of the superb *Greek gold jewellery of the Classical world* catalogue of the exhibition by the same name in the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and currently the State Hermitage in St Petersburg.

SJH Founder

His desire to bring together all those interested in jewellery, from craftsmen to curators, from retailers to researchers, led him to found the Society of Jewellery Historians in 1977, and he has organized many of

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EDITORIAL

In his editorial in the March issue of *GJN*, Michael O'Donoghue made some important points about museum displays. As a museum curator of over 30 years' standing, I should like to expand on these. The museum visitor, whether a six-year-old child or an international expert, is entitled to see an attractive and interesting display, but it is clearly impossible for us to cater *equally* for such disparate interests and knowledge. We have to aim for a notional average visitor, and leave it to parents and teachers to interpret the displays for young people, and to our professional colleagues to pursue their research through catalogues and other scholarly literature and through direct contact with curators, including the use of study collections. Local museums often set their labelling level to suit the secondary-school pupils who visit them in great numbers, while nationals such as the British Museum envisage an adult without special knowledge as the typical reader of the panels and labels. In labelling an item of Roman gold jewellery, everyone will wish to know what it is, how old it is, and where it is from, but the additional information wanted by an artist, a Roman archaeologist, a goldsmith and a scientist will be different: we cannot include it all, or the objects would disappear in a flood of text.

When planning a new exhibition, a curator cannot simply select suitable exhibits and then write the book-length series of explanatory labels which must accompany them. Most museum objects are unique and irreplaceable, and our first duty is to their safety, preservation and security. We must liaise with specialist conservators, who often lay down strict conditions of temperature, humidity and light levels, or veto the use of certain materials in showcases. Designers are the acknowledged experts on gallery and showcase layouts, colours and lighting. Their preferences and those of curators, conservators or security staff do not always coincide: sensible compromises must be reached.

Many objects require individual purpose-made mounts if they are to be shown to advantage and safely supported. Showcases must be secure against theft, but convenient and safe to open when objects need to be removed for research, photography or loan to other institutions. Permanent displays must allow for the addition of new acquisitions as well as temporary removals. The physical safety of visitors and staff must always be a major consideration, and the layout of cases may therefore owe as much to the Fire Officer's wishes as to the curator's or the designer's. Other museum departments may want to have some input into a new gallery, to create complementary inter-departmental themes and avoid repetition. The Education Department has its own agenda, and needs displays which take account of school curricula and enable large parties to be accommodated and addressed in a gallery.

Next time you visit a museum and judge that a display is too simple or too complex, too crowded or too sparse, too bright or too dim, give some thought to the multitude of conflicting requirements which have been carefully assessed by those who put it together. And if you want more information, or have something to tell us, write (courteously!) to the museum concerned; in addition to research, publication, exhibition work and the provision of study facilities, an important facet of curatorial work is the response of the public and discussion of their individual enquiries.

C.M.J.

AROUND THE TRADE

In this column we endeavour to keep you informed of business matters affecting dealers from a trading perspective. We welcome views and questions from all readers handling gemstones and jewellery on a commercial basis.

Supermarket sales

You may recall that in an earlier article in this column I expressed my surprise at the amount of jewellery being sold through television home selling in the United States and now in this country. On a recent visit to the USA I was given some further statistics. The largest retailer of jewellery and watches in the United States is Wol-Mart, a supermarket/discount chain. Last year their jewellery and watch sales totalled \$960,000,000.00 (nearly one billion dollars) which represented 1.97 per cent of their total sales. In fact of the top twenty outlets in terms of selling by value, only four are what we would call traditional jewellery

outlets. These include the Zales Corporation and Sterling. It is not clear what type of jewellery is sold through the other outlets, but it would be interesting to know whether they are creating new markets or encroaching on traditional jewellers.

These trends are already visible in supermarkets and hypermarkets in Europe and I am sure we will see them soon in Tesco, Safeways and other such outlets in the UK.

Filled diamonds

I have another story from the United States, this time concerning disclosure of treatments. Readers will be aware of the furore caused there when it was discovered that a store in St Louis was selling filled diamonds without full disclosure. One of the shopkeepers accused of such a practice later committed suicide. Recently CBS commissioned Ms Antoinette Matlins, a gem and jewellery expert well known in the States as an author and lecturer, to buy diamonds on 47th Street (the Hatton Garden of New York). She reports that of seven or eight jewellers she approached not one told her that she was being shown filled or treated diamonds. After she paid her money, one jeweller stated on the receipt that the stone was treated. On enquiring what this meant she was told that the stone had been improved to make it even more beautiful. All the diamonds she purchased had been filled. This experience emphasizes the need for the trade to act in the matter of disclosure because the practices so dramatically highlighted in St Louis are still going on.

Hallmarking

Another item which has not yet been fully resolved is the harmonization of the fineness markings of the precious metals. In the UK it is mandatory to have all jewellery articles over a certain weight hallmarked. This is not the position in all the EU countries, as some of them have made hallmarking voluntary. There has been tremendous pressure on the trade in this country to drop hallmarking, but it has been such a successful protection for consumers that it has become one of the pillars of the jewellery trade in the UK. It is unclear what the position will be with regard to unhallmarked jewellery imported from other EU countries. This is a problem that could drastically affect the home jewellery manufacturing trade.

CSO control

One of our readers in Quebec (Canada) has sent us some press cuttings from that side of the Atlantic expressing worry should De Beers lose some of its present control over the diamond market. De Beers, through the Central Selling Organization (CSO) in London, has over the years maintained diamond prices by buying the bulk of rough diamonds produced worldwide and then selling sufficient to maintain price stability. Maverick operators have periodically appeared, such as during the recent smuggling of rough stones out of Angola. These stones had been recovered from dried up river beds; no deep mining was involved and the stones were there for the picking. Although it was an expensive exercise, De Beers

The London Diamond Bourse and Club

At the first Annual General Meeting of the newly formed association combining the London Diamond Bourse and the London Diamond Club held on 8 March 1995, it was agreed that the title of the new organization should be the London Diamond Bourse and Club. Freddy Hager and Eddie Goldstein were elected joint Presidents and the Committee would be formed by those who served on the committees of the original Bourse and Club.

A celebratory supper for members and guests, sponsored by Barclays Bank and Malca Amit UK Ltd, was held on 7 June at the King David Suite, Great Cumberland Place, London W1.

managed to buy much of this extra production.

Worry was expressed in the press articles about the volume of stones produced in Russia, mostly in the remote province of Yakutia. These stones have been sold through a centralized organization in Russia and De Beers have signed contracts to buy and market the bulk of such goods. The fear is that local politicians may try to market such goods themselves and thus obtain a bigger slice of the pie. Whether we like it or not, De Beers has been the most stabilizing factor in the diamond trade, and should prices suddenly fall it could be catastrophic for both the diamond and the jewellery trades. An uncontrolled world supply of rough diamonds could cause large price fluctuations and this would have an unpredictable effect on retail sales as confidence in the concept 'a diamond is forever' would be under threat. Such speculation is taking place now because the De Beers deal with Russia expires later this year. However, the president of the CSO, Mr Anthony Oppenheimer, is expecting no dramatic changes to the marketing agreement when it is renegotiated.

Coloured diamonds

Speaking as a dealer in coloured gems and diamonds, including coloured diamonds, I am getting somewhat fed up with enquiries for strong pink and red diamonds. The pink stones are readily available in sizes up to 0.06 to 0.07ct, and they look very pretty set next to white and yellow stones, but they are extremely rare and expensive from 0.20ct and up. The red ones are even more expensive. The pinks and reds are still unobtainable through irradiation and treatment, unlike the blues and greens. So if you get a customer who wants a marquise-shaped pink diamond around one carat in weight, please enlighten them about the rarity of such a stone, even if they claim to have

Variation on a theme

To add even more variety to the synthetic stone market, an abstract from the February 1995 edition of the *ICA Gazette* informs us that a new range of colours for synthetic garnet is being marketed by a Russian company. It is producing gadolinium gallium garnet (GGG), long known in its colourless form as a diamond simulant, in a range of 16 colours including bright green, black cherry, orange and violet.

seen such a stone in a local jeweller's shop – they have probably seen a cubic zirconia.

Ban on treated gems

An interesting article I read in one of the Far East trade journals stated 'Thailand's gem traders and exporters have resolved to cease dealing in treated gemstones from Chanthaburi (an important source of sapphire and ruby for Bangkok) following foreign buyers' rejection of such goods exported from Thailand and Japan's threat to ban imports of Thai gems.' The article goes on to state that the ban will apply to such treatments as glass-filling of rubies and sapphires. It

will be interesting to see how buyers and traders assess the cheaper end of the market where so-called Burma rubies contain a higher proportion of open fissures – will such stones without an infill be marketable? I for one shall follow this story with interest.

Judgement

One last story, this time from Singapore. There a jewellery shop had sold a quantity of blue beryl of a rare kind known as Maxixe beryl, but after a period of time these stones had faded in colour after prolonged exposure to light. The aggrieved buyer claimed that the stones had been treated to deepen their colour and that this had not been mentioned on the invoice. The judge found in favour of the plaintiff and the jeweller was required to make a full refund including interest on the sum involved. The judge stated 'A gem is so designated because it is beautiful and attractive. In the case of a coloured gemstone, it must possess the ability to retain its colour even when subjected to heat and light.'

This interesting judgement will no doubt cause a considerable amount of speculation in the future, not least its implied extension of the concept 'a diamond is forever' to other gemstones!

H.L.

Slick Silver

Modern health and safety officers would no doubt prevent the re-introduction of an attractive type of ornamental inlay noted in a comb in use in Egypt in the early nineteenth century. Gill's *Technical Repository* (New Series 3, 1829, p. 253) describes the comb as being decorated with grooves containing a mercury/tin amalgam 'just retaining a sufficient degree of consistency to remain in the grooves, and not to fall out easily; and that the brilliant metallic surface was continually renewed whenever the comb was rubbed, or wiped clean, at any time.'

Jack Ogden

RECENT EVENTS

Suffragette jewellery

Dr Elizabeth Goring's lecture to the Society of Jewellery Historians on 27 February gave insights into the jewellery inspired by the suffragette movement in the early decades of the twentieth century. Her work in this area followed her research on a portrait of the Scottish suffragette Flora Drummond (painted by Flora Lion in 1936, and now in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery) for the 1991 exhibition *The Art of Jewellery in Scotland*. Flora Drummond is portrayed wearing a suffragette medal on a green, white and purple ribbon, beside which is a striking Arts and Crafts pendant made of a cluster of large purple and green stones on a matching jewelled chain. The colours green, white and purple (representing hope, purity and dignity) had been chosen by Mrs Pethick-Lawrence for the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), the largest of the Suffragette organizations. Use of the three colours spread quickly, most prominently on banners and ribbons, but also on goods ranging from tea services to bicycles. Inevitably they were used in jewellery, whether mass-produced, home-made or specially commissioned presentation pieces.

Although purple, white and green were the defining colours of the WSPU, Dr Goring made it clear that it would be unwise to assume that jewellery in these colours necessarily indicated sympathy for this cause. Amethysts and peridots were popular stones in their own right, and these colours were being combined in many parts of Europe purely for aesthetic reasons. At the same time, very different combinations of colours had been adopted by other suffragette groups, and

these were equally likely to have been used in their jewellery. Some of the most poignant (and least ambiguous) suffragette jewellery was made in plain silver, such as the hat-pins shaped as convict's arrows and the Holloway brooches designed by Sylvia Pankhurst to commemorate prison service.

Amongst the Arts and Crafts jewellers, Charles Ashbee is thought to have designed jewellery in SWPU colours worn by Christobel Pankhurst; Arthur and Georgie Gaskin designed and made the amethyst and enamel necklace acquired several years ago by the National Museums of Scotland; while Ernestine Mills, suffragette and pupil of the enameller Alexander Fisher, was responsible for several surviving pieces. From photographs many more pieces which may be suffragette jewellery can be seen, but the limitations of black-and-white photographs and the individual nature of the jewellery make it a difficult area to research. As is so often the case, much rests with the provenance of a piece, and Dr Goring closed her lecture with a plea that if any documented pieces were known to members of the Society she would be glad if they would let her know.

Clare Phillips

Enseignes

On 3 April at the Society of Antiquaries Dr Yvonne Hackenbroch gave a lecture to the Society of Jewellery Historians entitled 'Early Renaissance hat badges'. A resumé of her talk follows.

The *enseigne* is the most characteristic masculine adornment of the early Renaissance period, disclosing as it does aspects of a wearer's per-



Renaissance hat jewel with the bust of a Roman emperor, in embossed gold. Probably English, from the first half of the sixteenth century. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

sonality. Only a few have survived, compared to the many known from portraits of original owners. Therefore, we consider *enseignes* and portraiture together in this brief talk.

As the name indicates these hat badges, known as *enseignes*, originated in France, linked to medieval pilgrim badges, though different in as much as these had been mass-produced, usually of base metal, whereas *enseignes* are almost unfailingly made of gold. They rarely reproduce the figure of a venerated saint, but indicate facets of a wearer's character and ambitions. Hence it is that the appearance of the *enseigne* reflects the early Renaissance cult of personality.

When Charles VIII, King of France, invaded Italy in 1494/95, he as well as members of his army displayed distinctive badges on cap and sleeves; only the one worn by the King was of gold – worn as a sign of ultimate authority. This initiated the new fashion for personified hat badges, taken up at once by medalists, goldsmiths and jewellers, who were usually trained in the same workshops. Humanist themes soon became alternatives to the once

predominating religious ones. Moreover, excavated Roman coins and gems provided additional incentives for creating *enseignes* with classical imagery.

The reaction to these new influences varied immensely. The French King, François I, likened himself to Hercules, whereas the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I, continued wearing religious themes. However, his grandson, Charles V, chose the Columns of Hercules as emblem of the vast Empire he ruled. Within his Empire, the *enseigne* was adopted in the Netherlands and Spain. In England, hat badges were rarely worn, because Henry VIII rejected them once he had become head of the Church of England. He felt disinclined to wear the same type of personal adornment as Catholic rulers on the Continent, preferring

to display the magnificence of Tudor kingship, in the form of large precious stones. The few surviving English hat badges were probably not worn at court.

The religious, political and social changes brought about by Counter-Reformation and Mannerism, ended the vogue for *enseignes*. Precious stones from the New World, of hitherto unknown size and intensity of colour, offered a welcome alternative. Moreover, the fashion for higher hats encouraged the wearing of feather-shaped *aigrettes*. Lastly, engraved patternbooks, now available in most workshops, ended the uniqueness of individual *enseignes*. No longer understood by later generations, who had never entered a Humanist's studiolo, they were almost forgotten.

Yvonne Hackenbroch

SJH COMMITTEE

Nominations

Members of The Society of Jewellery Historians are reminded of Rule 6 which states:

Nominations for election to the Committee, at the next Annual General Meeting, must be (a) by recommendation of the Committee, or (b) must be received in writing by the Honorary Secretary, from two Ordinary or Honorary Members of the Society, not later than 30 September, and be accompanied by the consent of the person so nominated.

MUSEUM NEWS

New galleries at the British Museum

The Department of Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities at the British Museum is currently planning a new suite of galleries, the first phase of which should be completed in autumn 1996. Towards the end of 1995, the existing displays of the British and European Iron Age and Roman Britain will have to be dismantled, and the material will remain off exhibition until the new galleries are open. Other museum services in this department, such as access to the study collections and loans to other institutions, will also be affected. If you want to admire exhibits like the Iron Age goldwork from Snettisham, or Roman jewellery and silver tableware from Britain, visit the museum this summer, otherwise you must wait until late next year, when these treasures, amongst other things, will be even more effectively displayed.

C.M.J.

Body language: jewelry and accessories at the National Design Museum

Decorative Arts Galleries, Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, 2 East 91 Street, New York, NY 10128-9990. 14 March to 3 September 1995.

The jewellery we choose to wear—from the beaded amulets found in ancient burial sites to the pierced body ornaments of today—reflects who we are, what cultural groups we belong to, our status, and our aesthetic and spiritual sensibilities. For thousands of years, jewellery has been used to protect, enhance and adorn the human body, and it has always had special meaning for the maker, the wearer and society.

Using human anatomy as a starting point for the installation *Body Language* will explore such topics as style and ornament in jewellery design, the functional origins of

many forms and jewelled objects that carry written or symbolic messages. Over one hundred examples from the National Design Museum's collection of jewellery and small precious objects will be on display. These include Egyptian mummy beads, stylish eighteenth-century court jewellery, exquisitely fashioned gold and enamel snuff boxes, rare examples of nineteenth-century goldwork, finely-crafted cameo and micro-mosaic jewels, gemstone buttons, twentieth-century costume jewellery, and the works of contemporary designers experimenting with new and unusual techniques.

The Ilias Lalaounis Jewelry Museum, Athens

This private museum opened at 4a Karyatidon St., Athens, in December, and was inaugurated in March 1995.

In addition to jewellery designs by

Ilias Lalaounis, it includes a collection of ancient Greek jewellery and a workshop where techniques are demonstrated. Educational programmes and lecture series are in full swing.

Die Schraube zwischen Macht und Pracht; das Gewinde in der Antike

(The Screw between Power and Splendour; the screw-thread in Antiquity)

Museum Würth, Künzelsau-Gaisbach, 8 April – 16 July 1995;

Archäologisches Landesmuseum Baden-Württemberg, Konstanz, 30 July–29 October 1995.

An exhibition on this subject might not at first sight appear to be of special interest to the readers of *Gem & Jewellery News*: but in fact, one of the principal uses of the screw thread in the late-Roman period was in the finest and most intricate gold jewellery. This exhibition brings together a superb range of such jewellery from many museums in Europe and America and is accompanied by a splendid, fully-illustrated catalogue written by Rüdiger Krause, Astrid Schürmann, Barbara Theune-Grosskopf and Barbara Deppert-Lippitz.

Naum Slutzky (1894–1965): a Bauhaus artist in Hamburg

Exhibition at the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg 11 May to 2 July 1995.

A goldsmith of Russian origin, Slutzky was responsible for some astonishingly avant-garde jewellery designs in the 1920s and 1930s. This exhibition, with fully-illustrated catalogue, includes some 70 pieces of jewellery, many from private collections and shown for the first time.

Chief Executive

Cont. from p. 33

its highly successful symposia. As well as serving on the Editorial Board of *GJN*, he is a former editor of *Jewellery Studies* and an associate editor of the *Journal of Gemmology*. He has also been an adviser to the Department of National Heritage on matters relating to Treasure Trove.

Jack Ogden lives in Cambridge with his wife, Dr Eleni Vassilika, who is Keeper of Antiquities at the Fitzwilliam Museum. They have two children.

Commenting on Jack's nomination for the post of Secretary General of CIBJO, Mr Eric Poyser, former President of CIBJO, said, 'I am very pleased that the NAG will nominate Dr Jack Ogden as the next Secretary General of CIBJO. Dr Ogden's knowledge and experience will be invaluable to CIBJO as will his familiarity with working in an international environment. I have every confidence that he will be received by our international colleagues with an enthusiasm equal to mine.'

Jack will bring to his new appointment an immense breadth of jewellery knowledge and enthusiasm, and we wish him many successful years ahead.

A message from the tome

My great-grandfather, the founder of the family jewellery business and, as mentioned in these pages a few issues ago, a keen amateur archaeologist, assembled a vast number of notebooks of newspaper and magazine cuttings about archaeological subjects. I have assumed that he must have compiled such volumes on early jewellery technology, one of my main interests, but have never found these, either amongst the surviving members of the family or in the Leeds library which was the recipient of most of his material. When recently I first entered what will soon become my office at the NAG headquarters, there on the bookshelf were his volumes of cuttings on ancient jewellery technology. Just how they reached the NAG is a mystery, but their presence there did confirm to me that my new position was somehow meant to be!

Jack Ogden

Gem-testing weekend

In March the GAGTL travelling workshop was held in the Friendly Hotel in Bolden near Sunderland in the north east of England.

Participants studied general gem-testing techniques and looked at many of the problems which are currently confronting the jewellery trade over a full two days. The course was led by Doug Garrod, who was assisted by Clive Burch from Sunderland and Tom and Margery Watson from Edinburgh.

A similar course will be held in Edinburgh on 21 and 22 October

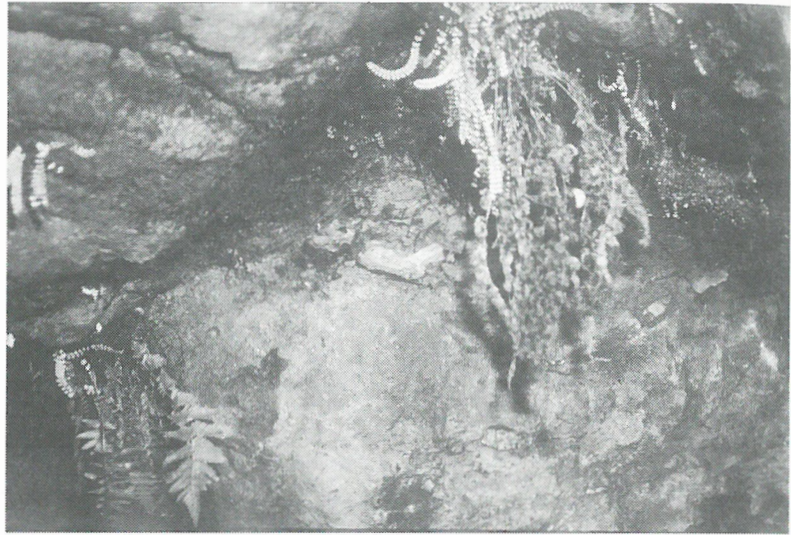
and will be repeated in Sunderland on 28 and 29 October. For further details on either of these courses contact Doug Garrod in the Education Office.

Have you got the needle?

The SJH Chairman would be delighted to hear from anyone who has a needle for a pearl-testing endoscope.

Tour of Idar-Oberstein

The five-day Idar-Oberstein study tour organized by the GAGTL Education Department took place at the end of March. A group of thirty-nine gemmologists, geologists and enthusiasts boarded a coach at the crack of dawn for our journey through France, Belgium and Luxembourg to Germany, where we arrived at our destination in time for dinner. We were staying at Gethmann's Hotel, which was warm, welcoming and situated in vast, snow-covered pine forests half an hour's drive from Idar.



Agate and amethyst geodes are seen *in situ* inside the Steinkaulenberg mine near Idar.

Dennis Reed, a member of the group, trying his hand at old-style agate cutting in Idar: the water-driven Weiheschleife.



During the following three days we were taken to many and varied places. The Edelsteinmuseum in Idar has a fantastic collection of gemstones, crystals and carvings, all beautifully displayed, while the very different Oberstein Museum is a labyrinth of small rooms, each containing treasures connected with the gemstone trade and its history.

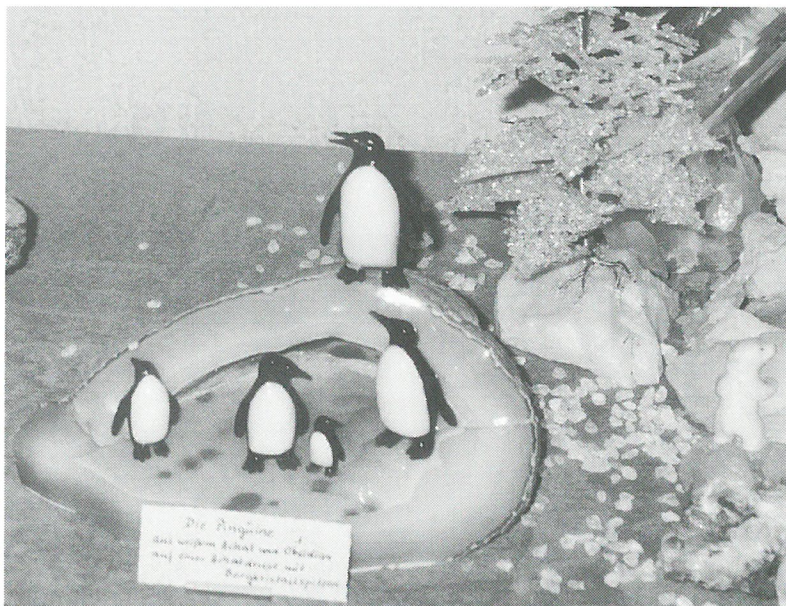
That history was demonstrated to us with visits to a working stone cutting and polishing museum, and to the Steinkaulenberg mines nearby, one of the origins of the agates and geodes which we saw *in situ* in the mine galleries.

The Deutsche Gemmologische Gesellschaft opened its doors for the group to see their gemmology classes in progress and the fine equipment in their gem testing labs. Synthetic crystal production was seen in action in the laboratories of the Research Institute next door to the DGG and then we returned to enjoy the DGG's gracious hospitality. Also included in the tour were visits to Ruppenthal's huge showrooms and the smaller but fabulous showrooms of F.A. Becker; there was time to wander around and browse, or succumb to temptation and buy!

In retrospect the tour was a cross between paradise and a gemmological refresher course. My memories



A view from the comfort of Gethmann's hotel.



One of the many delights in the Oberstein Museum.



Gerhard Becker (right) presents Ian Mercer with a copy of the Idar Edelsteinmuseum Guidebook signed by himself and Professor Bank for the Association's library. Photo by Iain Macarthur

will be of superb gemstones, carvings, geodes, agates, the snow falling every evening, walks in the pine forests, good wine and excellent company, and the very warm welcome which was extended to us all throughout.

Our thanks must go to Susanna van Rose, Dennis Reed, Ian Mercer and Doug Garrod for organizing and leading a superb trip.

Maggie Campbell Pedersen

Because of popular demand, a second tour of Idar-Oberstein has been arranged, details of which are given on p. 48.

GEMMOLOGISTS IN SINGAPORE

New qualification

In March this year the Singapore Gemologist Society launched their 'Certified Gemologist' qualification.

Some years ago certain sectors of the trade in Singapore felt threatened by new developments such as diffusion-coated sapphires and filled emeralds. The situation has not improved and there are increasing quantities of filled diamonds and rough and cut synthetic stones in a variety of guises in circulation. In response to this situation, proposals initiated by an enthusiastic group of gemmologists in Singapore, already with GG or FGA qualifications, have been brought to fruition over the past year. The Society and its Certified Gemologist Plan will be a point of reference for the gem trade and will provide a mechanism for monitoring activities by qualified practitioners in gemmology. At the launch of the Plan held at the Mandarin Hotel, the President of the Society, Mr Tay Thye Sun, outlined the background to development of the Certified Gemologist Plan, which will be managed by the Certified Gemologist Advisory and Management Board and is supported by the Consumers Association in Singapore, the Jewellery Industry Training Centre of Singapore and the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board.

The guest of honour was Mr Koo Tsai Kee, President of the Consumers' Association of Singapore. He congratulated the Singapore Gemologist Society on its initiative and went on:

'Emigrants from China, India, the Middle East and South East Asia to Singapore have long hoarded gold and silver as means of preserving the value of money. Today, their richer children and fashion conscious grandchildren have begun to



The new 'Certified Gemologists' of Singapore pictured with Dr G Brown (fifth left), Mr Tay Thye Sun (sixth left), Mr Koo Tsai Kee (seventh left) and Dr A Gupta (Examiner, far right).

diversify their ancestors' collection into other precious stones and metals. These include diamonds, coloured stones, gems and metal jewellery. But unlike gold and silver, diamonds and gems do not lend themselves to easy authentication... Usually consumers just have to trust the reputation of the shops and the sales persons in the jewellery shops.

'With this scheme, consumers will be educated and protected, and complaints can be channelled to the relevant authorities for them to take the necessary action.'

He then spelled out some ground rules for success:

'I must, however, caution the authority that in order for consumers and the consumer authority to take the Certified Gemologist Plan (CGP) seriously, the Singapore Gemologist Society, and the

Singapore Gemologist Advisory and Management Board must ensure high standards both in its certification process, and in the enforcement of its rules and regulations. The Society and the Board must not shy away from adverse publicity on its own members when there are clear cases of fraud and unprofessional conduct.'

Following his speech, the first group of successful candidates in the scheme were awarded their diplomas by Mr Koo and then Dr Grahame Brown delivered a colourful presentation of some of the latest gemstones produced in Australia.

As external examiner for the Plan, Dr Brown was thanked for his support along with all those who had contributed to the committees in drafting the Codes of Practice and Conduct, and in determining the correct procedures.

GEMSTONES – FACT AND MYTHOLOGY

Emerald

Emerald is a variety of the beryl family with a remarkably intense and attractive shade of green. The particular character and intensity of the green is due to small quantities of chromium and vanadium in the crystal structure. The chromium content is the defining factor in distinguishing an emerald from a green aquamarine—another variety of beryl with a different quality of greenness.

In times past

In ancient times emeralds came from mines in Egypt and also perhaps from locations in what is now Afghanistan. Cleopatra prized her emeralds more than other gems. She may have dropped her pearls in wine for Mark Antony but she kept the emeralds for herself! The ancient emerald mines of Cleopatra were discovered again about a hundred years ago near the Red Sea, but no emeralds of high quality were found: the mines were exhausted thousands of years ago. Numerous mummies in ancient Egypt have been found

Holy Grail

One legend says that Satan (Lucifer) lost the emerald from his crown when he fell. The emerald was shaped into a bowl which the Queen of Sheba sent to Nicodemus. Christ used a bowl at the last supper and Joseph of Arimathea used the bowl to catch blood at the crucifixion. He brought the bowl to Britain where it became known as the Holy Grail.



Postage stamps from Zimbabwe and Brazil depicting emeralds.



with an emerald decorating their necks, a symbol of flourishing greenness and eternal youth.

The Romans used emeralds from Egypt in their jewellery, but they were typically left in their natural hexagonal crystalline form and drilled along the long axis to make beads for threading on necklaces and earrings. Even when set in rings, the natural form was often left untouched.

Glass imitations of emeralds are found in Roman ornaments, copying not only the vivid green colour but also the hexagonal shape of the natural crystals. Natural emeralds and glass substitutes may even be found in the same piece of jewellery, for example a necklace in the late fourth-century treasure from Thetford, Norfolk, in the British Museum. One wonders if there were any codes for disclosure in the ancient world!

The most romantic tales of emeralds are those that come from the New World. The Spaniards arriving on the continent of South America were stunned to see emeralds finer and larger than any ever seen before. They spent years trying to find the source of the fantastic green stones,

bullying and torturing the poor Incas until they discovered the mines in what is today Colombia. There, the mines at Chivor, Coscuez and Muzo produce the richest and finest emeralds. Treasure hunters seeking wrecks of Spanish galleons are occasionally rewarded with treasures containing magnificent emeralds.

In retaliation against the Spanish conquistadors for robbing them of their finest stones, the priests of Peru spread the story that the test of a true emerald was that it should withstand the blow of a heavy hammer on an anvil. Emeralds are hard (between 7.0 and 7.5 on Mohs' scale) but to the chagrin of many a jeweller they are somewhat brittle. Thus many a valuable stone was utterly destroyed. A modern version of this rather malicious advice concerns the distinction between a real and synthetic emerald: heat both stones—the real one will be reduced to a white powder whilst the synthetic will retain its colour and shape!

Amongst Muslims emerald has always been held in the highest esteem, for green is the sacred colour of the Prophet. And the emerald, lending itself to the engraver, has been chosen as a favourite vehicle

for texts from the Koran. Thus the treasuries of the Shahs of Persia, the Sultans of Turkey and the Moguls of India contain some of the most fabulous emeralds in the world. One of the finest of such collections can still be seen in the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul.

Many of the fine stones in these Middle Eastern treasuries came from the Muzo mines of Colombia and there must have been merchants and traders who took almost immediate advantage of the discoveries of the Spanish conquerors.

Visual powers

There is an old saying that a poisonous snake could not look on an emerald without losing its sight and this idea appears in Moore's famous lines:

Blinded like serpents when they gaze

Upon the emerald's virgin gaze.

Even Shakespeare was aware of this amazing property of emerald when he mentions in the poem '*Lover's complaint*':

The deep-green emerald, in whose fresh regard Weak sights their sickly radiance do amend.

The moral imperative

De Boot (1636) alleges that the emerald '... will preserve the chastity of women; or will betray the violation thereof by straight-way bursting into fragments'.

Pliny said 'nothing greens greener' than emerald; he added that it was the only gem which delighted the eye without fatiguing it. He said his eyes were restored when gazing at emerald, perhaps the origin of the legend that it could restore the sight of the blind. It is said that the Emperor Nero had a monocle made from an emerald. Through this he would gaze at the world and admire his gladiators. Ancient gem carvers would keep on their benches an

emerald upon which they gazed to relieve eye strain.

Science has since demonstrated that the colour green does relieve eye strain. It is more difficult to explain, however, the claims of Dr W. Rowland (1669) that, when drunk, emerald '... stops all Fluxes whatsoever, chiefly the Dysentery, whether they come from a sharp humour, or venom; and it cures venomous Bitings.'

Purity

Emeralds are rarely clean. The network and clusters of inclusions seen in the depths of the emerald are referred to as *jardin* by the French, because they resemble foliage. With many precious stones purity can take preference over depth of colour, but with emerald the reverse is the case. Depth of colour is usually preferred to a cleaner but lighter coloured stone. Also frequently inclusions in the form of fissures reach the surface and are 'open'. Such a stone would lend itself to oiling. In recent years natural and synthetic resins have also been used to fill and partially disguise open fissures.

Sources today

Today emeralds still come from Colombia, but the largest producer is Brazil. Traditionally Brazilian emeralds were often paler and contained more inclusions than Colombian stones; they came from the states of Bahia, Minas Gerais and Goias. But the discoveries of new mines such as Nova Era are producing gems to rival the best in the world.

Another source of fine emeralds is Sandawana in Zimbabwe. Here the rough comes in well-formed crystals of good colour but small size and the stones are best suited for cutting into small rounds and squares. Zambia again produces very fine emeralds but the majority, found and marketed in large quantities, tend to have a dark colour and some have a bluish tone.

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Madagascar, Nigeria and Russia have all become significant producers of emerald in the past ten years.

Emeralds are cut and polished in the mining countries and in two main centres – Jaipur in India and Tel-Aviv in Israel. The Indians tend to cut Brazilian stones, whereas the Israelis have tried to corner the production from Zambia.

Early enhancement

Theophrastus records that the *smaragdus* (emerald) possesses the peculiar property of changing the colour of water in which it is immersed to green. Could these have been the first stones treated with green oil?

Most crystals of emerald have grown in medium- to high-grade metamorphic rocks but some come from pegmatites, the host rock of other gem beryls like pale blue aquamarine, pink morganite, golden heliodor and pale green beryls.

However, in Colombia emeralds occur in neither pegmatite nor high-grade metamorphic rock but in slate formations criss-crossed with veins of calcite, pyrite and emerald. (In Chivor these veins also contain feldspar.)

The rarity of large clean natural emeralds of a strong green colour makes them, like large rubies, among the most expensive stones in the world. This has stimulated development of synthetic emerald and many fine examples are now on the market. The better known ones are those produced by Chatham and Gilson, and now Biron which is marketed as the Kimberley emerald.

I would like to acknowledge use of material from the ICA Gembureau, Bentley & Co's book *The romance of the jewel* by Stopford A. Brooke, and from Catherine Johns.

H.L.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1995 GAGTL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Gemmology in Britain

The 1995 Annual Conference is to be held on Sunday 1 October at the Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London W1.

The theme of the day will be *Gemmology in Britain* and topics will range from stones found in the British Isles to Victorian jewellery with highlights of historical gemmology and the latest equipment in use in the Gem Testing Laboratory in London.

The keynote speaker will be Alan Hodgkinson who will open the morning session with an illustrated lecture on the gemstones of Scotland. He will also give a demonstration of his visually beautiful and practical gem techniques later in the day. Other speakers will include Helen Fraquet, author and expert on amber and David Lancaster of Christie's who will be speaking about gemstones in Victorian jewellery. Ian Mercer will take us back to the beginnings of gemmology in Britain and staff of the Gem Testing Laboratory will give an up-date on current methods of gem and pearl testing.

As well as the full programme outlined above, delegates will have the opportunity to examine treated gems currently on the market with the expert guidance of our laboratory staff.

Full details of the Conference will be circulated in the near future.

1995 Gem Conference Vancouver

The 1995 Gem Conference, organized by the Vancouver Community College and the Canadian Gemmological Association, is to be held at the Vancouver Renaissance Hotel on Vancouver's spectacular waterfront from 20-22 October.

The agenda includes a wide spectrum of gemmology and jewellery-related topics with presentations from national and international speakers. The keynote address will be by Dr John Sinkankas, pre-eminent mineralogist, respected author and lapidary whose work appears in the Smithsonian Institution.

For further information and to receive the registration package contact Continuing Education, Vancouver Community College, 250 West Pender Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1S9, Canada. Call (604) 443 8380 or fax (604) 443 8393.

GemForum 1995

The Canadian Institute of Gemmology has expanded its annual GemForum events. The Vancouver GemForum will take place on 7 October with Thomas E. Tashey from the European Gemmological Laboratories addressing the SI3 issue and new developments in colour grading of gemstones.

The Toronto GemForum is to be held on 21 and 22 October and the

speakers will include Peter Read and Roy Huddleston from the UK.

For more information about the CIG's GemForum events call/fax (604) 530 8569 or write to CIG, PO Box 57010, Vancouver, BC V5K 5G6, Canada.

Exhibition at Wartski's

Wartski will be holding an exhibition devoted to the work of the artist goldsmith Kevin Coates from 13 to 24 June. His many important public and private commissions include a Welsh Dragon paperweight for His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, the St Chad Cup for Lichfield Cathedral, the St George Centrepiece for 10 Downing Street, the Amity Cup for the Goldsmiths' Company, and the Carrington Cup for the Victoria and Albert Museum.

A number of these works will be on show at Wartski, 14 Grafton Street, London W1X 4DE, together with many jewels and objects from private collections. Preparatory designs and drawings will form part of the exhibition, as will the most recent work, which will be available for sale. A specially made jewel has been pledged by the artist to be auctioned to the benefit of the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund.

The exhibition will take place from 13 to 24 June inclusive, Monday to Friday 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. For further information please telephone Katherine Purcell at Wartski on 0171 493 1141.

SALEROOM NOTES

The Star of the Season

One of the largest D-colour, internally flawless pear-shaped diamonds ever to reach the saleroom featured in Sotheby's sale of Extraordinary Jewels, held in Geneva on Wednesday 17 May, and sold for \$16,548,750, more than doubling the estimated price of \$7.5 million. It was bought by Sheikh Ahmed Fitaihi who runs a chain of jewellery shops in Saudi Arabia.

The stone, which has been named The Star of the Season, weighs 100.10ct and takes second place only to the 101.84ct Mouawad Splendour diamond, also sold by Sotheby's Geneva nearly five years ago. In 1990 the Mouawad Splendour sold for \$12.8 million, a standing world record at the time for a single gemstone. The Koh-i-noor diamond in the Crown Jewels weighs only slightly more than the 'unnamed diamond' at 105.6ct.



Photo courtesy of Sotheby's

A number of large diamonds of around 100ct have passed through the auction houses during the last ten years, and there is speculation in the trade as to the source.

M.O'D.

GAGTL Gem Tutorial Centre

13-14
September

Gem detection – the introduction

Spend two days mastering the basic methods of gem identification and detection. A commonsense approach aimed at helping you distinguish a variety of gem materials.

Price £105.75 (including sandwich lunch)

29 September

Visual optics

This inexpensive method for gemstone identification is presented by Alan Hodgkinson who has developed its use over many years. Practise this fascinating and useful technique with a range of gems.

Price £58.75 (including sandwich lunch)

11 October

Preliminary workshop

A day of practical tuition for Preliminary students and anyone who needs a start with instruments, stones and crystals. You can learn to use the 10x lens at maximum efficiency, to observe the effects and results from the main gem testing instruments and to understand important aspects of crystals in gemmology.

Price £47.00; GAGTL students £33.49 (including sandwich lunch)

October

Enquire within: pearls

A concentrated look at all aspects of the subject, including the origins and detection of natural, cultured and imitation pearls. Gain experience from a member of the Laboratory staff.

Price £76.38 (including sandwich lunch)

22-23
November

Synthetics and enhancements today

Are you aware of the sheer numbers and varieties of treated and synthetic materials that may be masquerading amongst the stones you are buying and selling? Whether you are valuing, repairing or dealing, can you afford to miss these two days of investigation?

Price £223.25 (including sandwich lunch)

Please phone the Education Office on 0171-404 3334
for further information

NOTE: All prices include VAT at 17.5%

GEMS

John Slocum of Slocum Stone fame has produced, or is in course of producing, an imitation of amber from a plastic-like material. Pieces that I have seen contain insect inclusions and also very characteristic white, circular discs, profuse in some specimens. I have not yet heard of a commercial promotion for this material.

American Gem Corporation (chairman and chief executive, Greg Dahl) controls more than 110 square miles of the alluvial sapphire claims in Montana. [Details of this will be described in *Montana sapphires* by Michael O'Donoghue, to be published late this year by Chapman & Hall, London.] The claims include Eldorado Bar, Dry Cottonwood Creek and Gem Mountain (Rock Creek) and yields of sapphires are said to average 44 to 225ct per cubic metre in the Dry Cottonwood Creek gravels with some gravels giving up to 1000ct per cubic metre. As always, the recovered stones are mostly pale blue and green but heating, now well established with predictable and permanent results, produces very fine colours. Those containing a central orange spot will often turn a magnificent orange throughout after heating.

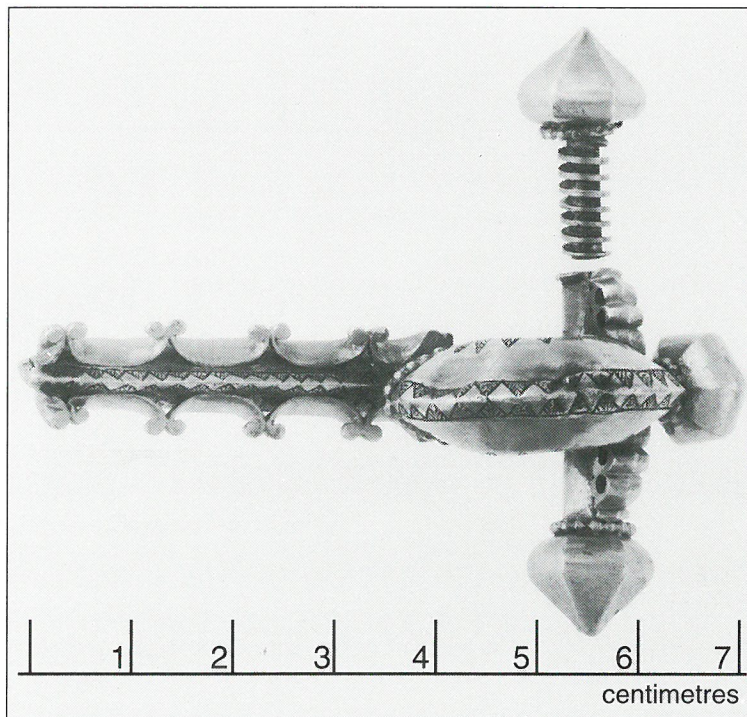
M.O'D.

Members of the GAGTL wishing to raise issues concerning GAGTL activities are reminded that they may contact the Chairman of the Members' Council, Mr Colin Winter, c/o the GAGTL, 27 Greville Street, London EC1N 8SU.

COMPETITION

As a change from Jack Ogden's ingenious conundrums, here is a simple picture competition. The object here is made of gold; what is its function, and how old is it? There is a clue elsewhere in this issue!

C.M.J.



Answer to the competition in the last issue

A larger than usual response to the last competition. In brief a goldsmith is given a tapered, circular section rod of gold (17.5 gzukkis long, 1.75 gzukkis in diameter at one end and 2.25 gzukkis in diameter at the other) and needs to cut it into two equal weight parts to make it into a pair of bracelets. His only measuring instrument is a ruler made from an old bicycle spoke marked off in 1/12 gzukki units. How did he work out the place to cut the rod?

The answers produced some interesting, and involved, mathematics but I have no idea if they were right or not! Most of you realised that there was a simple method and that the figures were just there to confuse you. All the goldsmith had to do was to balance the rod across the bicycle spoke – if he marked and cut at the point of balance he would automatically have two equal-weight sections! Too many correct answers to name you all, but well done.

Jack Ogden

WHAT'S ON

Gemmological Association and Gem Testing Laboratory of Great Britain

London

Meetings are held in the GAGTL Gem Tutorial Centre, 2nd Floor, 27 Greville Street, London EC1N 8SU (entrance in Saffron Hill). The charge for a member is £3.50. Entry will be by ticket only, obtainable from GAGTL.

- 12 June **Annual General Meeting, Members' Reunion, and Bring and Buy** (no charge).
- 16 June **Annual Trade Luncheon** to be held at the Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, London SW1.
- 16 October **Recent developments in the diamond industry**
Howard Vaughan

GAGTL Conference

The 1995 Annual Conference is to be held on Sunday 1 October at the Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London W1. See p. 45 for further information.

Midlands Branch

Further details from Mandy MacKinnon on 0121-444 7337.

- 18 June **Gem Club** to be held at 3 Denehurst Close, Barnt Green. 2.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.

North West Branch

Meetings will be held at Church House, Hanover Street, Liverpool 1. Further details from Joe Azzopardi on 01270 628251.

- 21 June **Luminescence as a means of identification**
Geoffrey Simpson
- 20 September **Natural history of jewellery**
Dr John Franks
- 18 October A gemmology evening – no charge, open to members and friends.
- 15 November Annual General Meeting

GAGTL tour of Idar-Oberstein

3–7 October 1995

Visits to incomparable mineral and gem museums, historic and modern gem cutting workshops, and a mine with agate and amethyst in the rock walls.

Travel by luxury coach on Tuesday and Saturday with three full days in Idar-Oberstein.

Price: £370.00 per person

to include travel from London and half-board accommodation at the well-appointed Gethmann's Hotel.

For further details contact Miss Sarah Kimber at GAGTL on 0171-404 3334 (Fax 0171-404 8843)

Society of Jewellery Historians

Unless otherwise stated, all Society of Jewellery Historians' lectures are held at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, London W1 and start at 6.00 p.m. sharp. Lectures are followed by an informal reception with wine. Meetings are only open to SJH members and their guests. A nominal charge is made for wine to comply with our charity status.

- Monday 19 June Dr Graham Dry will speak about twentieth-century Pforzheim jewellery.
- Monday 25 September Dr Jack Ogden FSA FGA will give a lecture entitled **The Golden Crescent: the origins and chronology of early Islamic Jewellery.**

SJH Colloquium

On 4 and 5 November 1995 at the Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London W1, an International Colloquium is to be held on the theme **Diamond cuts in historic jewellery.**

- Monday 6 November Hugh Tait FSA, past President of the Society, will give a lecture entitled **Problematic Renaissance Jewellery before and after Vasters.**
- Monday 11 December Jane Short, Instructor at Central School St. Martins, will speak on **Enamelling techniques and modern design.**

The copy date for contributions for the September issue of *Gem and Jewellery News* is 24 July