

AGA

Q&A

A PERIODICAL PUBLICATION OF THE ACCREDITED GEMOLOGIST ASSOCIATION

Introduction

This is the premier of a new publication of the Accredited Gemologists Association. It is called, obviously, AGA's Q & A.

Our purpose is to provide a forum for communication among our members. Our primary commitment is to inform our membership of developments within the industry and to provide an interchange of ideas among members. The basis mechanism is to provide answers to your questions. We will sometimes publish the questions and solicit answers, sometimes we will publish the questions and provide an answer from our sources and solicit other opinions. We will reserve the editorial right to shorten, condense and otherwise edit questions and/or answers to make this publication one that you can read quickly. We want this publication to be one that you will read and not just put aside for later.

But...the most important idea is to participate. There must be something that gives you trouble. There must be something you can contribute. A little secret, a shortcut something to help the other members of the AGA. Please share. Please get involved and help.

You can write, phone, or FAX me:

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As the old joke goes, call me anything, just call me!

B. Young McQueen

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Tucson Short Takes

Impregnated Diamonds: Yehuda Treatment.

The manager of Dialase, the NY company with a license to impregnate diamonds using the Yehuda treatment reported the following. Dialase is selling every stone they treat and have a waiting list for certain sizes. The prices for larger treated stones are 40% less and smaller stones are 25% less than untreated stones of equal grades.

Don Palmieri, of *DMM*, reports that liquidity for these stones in the secondary market (among most diamond dealers) is nonexistent.

Rolex appraisal problems

Does she or doesn't she? Phoney watches, phoney bands; be very careful. Some tips:

Re: Rolex Stainless and gold model, especially with Jubilee bands: Many of these are being made from stainless steel models. Check the model # (four figures between the top lugs, under the band) if the model # is for a stainless steel watch and the watch is a stainless and gold, *Voila!* Proof, not just a suspicion. Call Rolex at (212) 758 7700 to confirm model # and/or develop a list.

Phoney Rolex Presidential bands: Check the screws under a microscope--threaded wire = phoney, milled and threaded = real.

The following are Rolex oyster case production dates vs. serial nos. These refer to Oyster type watches only, excluding speciality models.

Serial Number	Date
28000	1926
30430	1927
32960	1928
35390	1929
37820	1930
40250	1931
42680	1932
45000	1934
63000	1935
81000	1936
99000	1937
117000	1938
135000	1939
164600	1940
194200	1941
223800	1942
253400	1943
283000	1944
348100	1945
413200	1946
478300	1947
543400	1948
608500	1949
673600	1950
738700	1951
803800	1952
868900	1953
934000	1954
1012000	1955
1090000	1956
1168000	1957
1246000	1958
1324000	1959
1402000	1960
1480000	1961
1558000	1962
1636000	1963
1714000	1964
1792000	1965
1871000	1966
2163900	1967
2426800	1968
2689700	1969
2952600	1970
3215500	1971
3478400	1972
3741300	1973
4004200	1974
4267100	1975
4539000	1976
5006000	1977
5482000	1978
5958000	1979
6464000	1980
6910000	1981
7386000	1982
7862000	1983
8338000	1984
8814000	1985
9290000	1986
9799000	1987
9999999	1987
R000000	1987

Questions & Answers: We will publish answers and give you credit. Please help if can.

Estimating the depth of a diamond in a closed bottom setting where the leveridge gauge won't fit. How do you do it?

It seems that I burn up microscope bulbs every time I turn around and they are very expensive. Some last me less than a half-hour. Does anyone have a cheap source?

Grading and valuing broken melee. We know recutting is out of the question. How do you handle?

I sometimes appraise stones that I'm less than 100% sure of the identity, eg. a flawless emerald of African appearing color. What does the GIA do when there are no inclusion in a stone like emerald?

I received a mailing from an organization named, *International Association of Certified Gem Professionals*. Is this a reputable group? They want \$179 for first year dues. But if I act quickly I can take advantage of a \$80 off coupon.

I appraise a lot of white metal jewelry and have little difficulty telling white gold from platinum, even by weight and "feel", but I have a lot of difficulty telling platinum from palladium. Can you help?

We know of two methods: 1. If you can heat the metal (short of the melting point), the palladium will turn to a purplish color upon cooling, platinum will be unaffected; 2. A streak of the test metal on a stone can be tested with 22kt test acid. The reaction is slow so let it set for up to 5 minutes. The palladium will turn to a reddish brown. Platinum is unaffected.

Comments:

We often assume internally flawless sapphire (under 63X) has got to be synthetic, right? Look out! There are internally flawless blue, yellow and bi-color sapphires from Australia.

Investment mess is not dead. **Paul Downing of Majestic Opal Co.** in Tallahassee reports a flood of low grade black/gray opal in Florida. People are being ripped off on this material, trading away land, etc.

SI-3

In a climate of apparent loosening of clarity grade standards by the GIA, David Atlas makes his case for a SI-3 grade. David's comments (unedited) follow:

"SI-3

By: David Atlas, GG, ASA
Master Gemologist Appraiser

On top of all the unpleasant baggage in the jewelry business we carry with diamond grading scams, colored stone enhancement ethical issues, diamond enhancement revelations, and under-karating of gold; another issue of not only ethics, but of financial concern has arisen. As a subscriber to the Rapaport list, I frequently notice the weekly yet small print comment that they grade as SI only stones that are eye clean.

Many members of the jewelry trade simply do not know that the GIA and other gem Laboratories around the world grades some eye imperfect diamonds over a carat as SI2, SI1, and, in rare instances, as VS2 clarities. Yet, as Rapaport quietly reveals each week, the "inside" dealers of diamonds do not consider eye imperfect stones of a particular clarity grade on a financial or saleability par with their eye clean yet equally graded brethren.

As a result of this "insider" and "outsider" mentality within the inner circle of the diamond trade, and also the apparent lack of definitive clarity standards used in the major laboratories on these types of stones, several issues of importance need to be voiced. Some further refinement of price reporting needs to be made. Diamond retailers, wholesalers and appraisers need better price guides. Obviously, any certificated SI stone is worth no less than an I1 certified stone. An eye visible imperfect SI uncertified stone has not only a difficult time with proper grading at every level, but none of the trade outside of the relative small number of diamond dealers knows how to buy the stone at a right price, how to represent it accurately and unambiguously to their customers, and independent appraisers find no information on this kind of stone being published.

I can understand that with the rise of the recent price guides to diamonds more than ten years ago, dealers seek "blind" areas to help them

make their living. What should we call these areas? I think "loopholes" is appropriate since something a bit less than savory is going on.

A few solutions to the dilemmas present themselves. Rapaport and other price guide editors can and should produce more detailed market data for their subscribers and for the general well-being of our trade. Another further solution would be for the major laboratories to continue their work in standardizing their clarity grading and also to immediately work on the appropriate grading of some new additional SI clarity grades which would properly pigeonhole the various types of stones that are being sold with some logical reference to the prices they bring in the market. At present, the clarity grading system in the SI grades is not logical when referenced to the market that actually exists, to the price guides, or to the GIA's Diamond Course. If GIA graduates can't handle the market structure with the system that was taught, what but havoc can we expect from the majority of jewelers who have little or no formal education in diamonds? If we ignore the situation, I feel certain that our industry will pay a high price.

"There's no point in criticizing if you can't make a positive suggestion," one of my teachers said years ago. I would suggest the major labs consider grading no eye imperfect stone (face-up) better than SI2. This would include the large emerald cut diamonds that might today have as high as a VS2 grade. The real price of these stones won't drastically change since diamond dealers always have treated eye imperfect stones as simply "mis-graded" when they bought them. Diamond dealers primarily make the market we have to live with.

Diamonds that are SI2 eye imperfect must be no more than very slightly eye visibly imperfect. Creation of an SI3 grade for slightly eye imperfect diamonds, is the logical choice. It would not take long for the market makers to fill this gap. These diamonds are strong sellers in our domestic market today. Price list editors should also arrange to print and research the prices for these SI2 and SI3 grades, in both eye clean and eye imperfect, type stones. This would break up the information from one category into four meaningful and reasonably logical categories. It would also restore meaning to the SI1 grade.

Can this be accomplished? Yes, but only if you feel it is important enough to tell those who create the grading standards what you want and need. Their mission is to give you what you require. I don't think any of the major labs has a roadblock mentality. They are bureaucratic and can be slow to act, but their actions need to be well thought out and suitable to the world market before they make changes. But changes will only arise due to re-

quests, pressures, demands, and the force of market reality. By writing to the laboratories that set the standards, the forces that control these standards will gradually be unleashed. This would be a change for the better in the industry. Meanwhile, everyone in the diamond selling, buying and appraisal business should seek market price clarification from price guide publishers and from the diamond dealers from whom you purchase your stones. Don't be deceived any longer that the "Rap price" refers to all SI stones, certified or not, and more than stones of poor make being valued at the prices listed in the many price guides that are published.

Your customers, wholesale and retail, are entitled to accurate grading and reasonable prices. Getting a logical system to describe clarity in diamonds from the GIA and other major trade labs, and having appropriate market pricing guides available to paid subscribers, is not too much to ask. Our industry needs positive input to solve its major problems. Keeping up with the times will never be easy, but doing all we can will go a long way to insure the future of the jewelry trade.

With this as a goal, isn't it worth writing your letters today?"

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Computers for Gemologists

If you have received your August issue of the *Jeweler's Circular Keystone* you will see the first of a regular feature, software reviews by the AGA's Software Review Committee. This committee is headed by Messrs. Thom Underwood and Robert Rosenblatt.

We would like to open this column to an interchange of computer and software information among members. Good experience and bad, whatever you want to share.

To get us started I would like to recommend a little program called, *Instant Recall*.

This is a Personal Information Manager or PIM. This type of program is designed to help us keep up with information. *Instant Recall* works more or less like this.

Information is stored by the program that is inputted via the keyboard by the user. This information can take the form of notes, names, addresses, follow up dates, alarm times, and schedules, among others. It can remind you of birthdays, follow up dates and allow you to find information via a key word search of the free form data base. Let's assume a salesman left you his card saying he was getting a new line of fine quality amethyst in three months. He also had seen an old friend of yours. Raul Jones, that you had not seen in years.

You file this information in *Instant Recall*. A year later you want information about Raul but cannot remember his name. You can search your data base via any key word, such as "amethyst" and bring up this information about Raul.

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RETURN TO SENDER
RENOI À L'EXPÉDITEUR

Unclaimed
Non réclamé

No such address
Adresse inexistant

Address incorrect
Adresse incorrecte

Mailed address unknown
Adresse postale inconnue

