

Jewel Beresford FGAA

Currently I am retired and intending to stay that way.

At the time I began my Diploma in Gemmology studies I was running my own rock & gem shop named "Jewel's" in Hobart. My husband and I were also the proprietors of three pizza takeaways and when not "rocking" I used to help out in the pizza shops, usually till closing at 2am. I had two children, one just twelve months and the other eight years old and two BIG dogs!!!. How busy I was is very obvious as I look over my original notes, all are written on the back of pizza menus, complete with bolognaise sauce and parmesan cheese. I dreaded being a borderline pass and being asked to produce my many worksheets, what a mess!!!

I remember applying to join the Division and being asked if I was in the trade. I said "Yes", they said "No". It took someone to make a point on precedence for me to become a member. How things have changed, now there are probably as many people that study gemmology as a passionate interest as there are because they hold a position in the industry.

Gemmological study was hard work for a girl who left school at fifteen, failed science and was a dud at maths but passionate and persistent she was and she achieved her goal. On the closing of "Jewel's" after some twelve years, I ventured forth as a sales assistant in various antique businesses whilst also having involvement in our restaurant enterprises which had changed by this time to being Hobart's only theatre restaurant and two other English style establishments. (My husband never did understand the meaning of one is enough).

On completion of my studies I became a committee member in Tasmania Division and continue to be so having held various positions over the thirty years of my membership.

I like to think my "job", unpaid though it may be, is to convey to any who will listen the wonder of gemstones, to pass on through teaching the knowledge I have acquired and to promote gemmology throughout Tasmania. I have over the years made great like minded friends and have a store of memories to treasure. The highlight of my involvement with the Gemmological Association of Australia has been the receiving of the honour of life membership, a gift I value highly.

Like many gemmologists I have a broad spectrum of interest, I collect gemstones and crystals for students to study. I cut and polish ornamental gems and design and create gemstone necklaces. The world of ornamental gems reflects much of the history of civilization and history is another subject that holds huge interest for me. Ornamental gems are to me the most underrated part of the gemmological world and having said that I believe that on the other end of the spectrum, diamonds, well those of the white hue are the most overrated.... But that is another story.

My most treasured possession is a loving husband who understands my passion and is supportive in every way of my continuing involvement in it.