

Name: Kathryn Wyatt

Current work: Owner of Imogene Antique & Contemporary Jewellery

GAA study: (list courses completed) Diploma of gemmology, OH&S, Synthetic and Gemmology update, Practical Diamond grading, Advanced diamond Grading, Diamond Technology, Jewellery Sketching, Pearl Threading, Registered Jewellery Valuer.

Any other study? Bachelor of Science, Book Keeping, Phlebotomy, Horticulture and Wine.

Why did you choose to study gemmology? Originally to help my mother on weekends with her Antique Jewellery business. Beatrice Wyatt did her diploma of Gemmology in her 50's so I thought I should do it too. You need to know what you are selling and it is so much easier to do that when you know what you are talking about. I was at that stage working in pathology; I had been on both sides of the bench and found it more lucrative and interesting to sell the equipment and reagents to the laboratories. You had to know your "stuff". Why this reagent or instrument was better than the next one. In short if you did not have qualifications the companies would not even look at employing you.

What was the most intriguing thing you learnt? That if it was Grandmas, it must be antique. Apparently Grandma never bought anything for 50 years before she died OR Inclusions are beautiful and helpful! There are fantastic books filled with pictures of the internal world of gemstones and some are so amazing. They can be like artwork. Also it goes to show truth is stranger than fiction.

How did the GAA help you in your career? Help! It is essential. Part of being an Antique jewellery dealer is you have a second hand dealers licence which means you can buy from the public. You need to know what you are looking at in the jewellery. The customer may not mean to be misleading, they have been told the story and it goes through the family like Chinese whispers, so the "story" you are told bears no resemblance to the truth. How could I possibly buy something if I don't know if its ruby, garnet, spinel, synthetic spinel or synthetic ruby? Don't forget antique jewellery

can have synthetic gemstones in them and knowledge about gems can help with date a piece

Many famous people say you make your money when you buy, not when you sell!

I need to travel to find antique jewellery and see what is out in the world market as that is where you see the reproductions en masse and they are more readily identifiable. So I can't always trust the person I am buying from as I have often just met them. Being a gemmologist also gives me independence and confidence to buy from whoever I choose and wherever I choose.

It's great to have a full written receipt in Australia when I buy something from a wholesaler with full disclosure. However not all the wholesale antique dealers have qualifications and the things they try to sell me... I can but shake my head because if passed them onto my clients as what they are purported to be I would be in trouble for putting those descriptions on a receipt

What do you like most about your job? Having to travel and spend money on beautiful things I understand and can wear and make money from all at the same time. There are lots of great rewarding aspects of this career and one is helping people with their jewellery, fixing it identifying and valuing it for them. They are so grateful.

Career highlight? Hmmmmnot sure. I am certainly am better at public speaking as I provide seminars and courses for the GAA on Antique jewellery. Possibly meeting some heavy weights in the industry overseas and having them say "AHH you're an FGAA, you guys really know your stuff".

Favourite gem? Vivid pink Sapphire

Dream job? This one, which would be impossible without my qualifications as a gemmologist.