

Dear Fellow Member,

Re: Membership Upgrades

The Gemmological Association of Australia has been the principle body delivering gemmological, diamond and jeweler related education throughout Australia for over sixty years now.

GAA has over the years grown to be a major organisation. It has over 1600 financial members in six Divisions. More importantly it has over 100 lecturers and demonstrators, servicing the needs of up to 1000 students annually across Australia, most of which provide their time more out of love for gemmology than for the small amounts of remuneration they receive.

The administration and management of GAA's activities at both a Federal and Divisional level is in the hands of some fifty odd volunteers, and that does not include the work done in an honorary capacity by members of the Board of Studies, The *Australian Gemmologist* Editorial committee, Publicity and Marketing and our new E-Committee.

While managed and operated by part time persons no matter how well intentional, knowledgeable or skilled they may be, the GAA has been gradually falling behind the modern day requirements of accredited education and diverse learning environments.

Last year a strategic plan for a more professional approach to the operations of the GAA were proposed, the lynch pin of that plan was the employment of a full time qualified Principal Educational Officer. This has been done with Peter Robertson joining us as our first full time employee at Federal level. Among his initial tasks will be to seek Registered Training Organisation status for the GAA's Divisional teaching centers, formally accredit the GAA's courses and explore online teaching options for current and future planned courses.

Implementation of the strategic plan will result in a much increased level of income for the association over the coming years, but as is often the case money has to be invested before you can see returns.

Right now the GAA really needs financial help to get over this major step in its growth. To this end we are promoting a series of membership upgrades for 2011. Details for the upgrades can be found in the attached flyer with this letter. The revenue raised from members will go towards funding the Strategic Plan and maintain the GAA as the leading educator for the gem, jewellery and related trade in Australia.

Yours in GAA service,



Terry Coldham
Federal President

