

## Spotlight ON Elizabeth Hoy—NSW Committee Member



Self employed as a jewellery valuer, Kareli Valuation Service, for 12 years

As a child I collected rocks, had a microscope, and made jewellery out of shells and beads. In high school I had a lucrative business making and selling belts and accessories.

I wanted to work with my hands in a creative field, and to continue learning after leaving school but was not interested in university, so when my art teacher suggested jewellery making as a career path in Year 11, I promptly left school to pursue it. I first studied jewellery design at TAFE but realised after the first year that learning how to make jewellery would be more beneficial, so I found an apprenticeship. This was in the days before the design and trade courses were under the same roof, jewellery was lumped in with the metalworking trades back then.

Unfortunately, after topping my trade course class, I couldn't continue bench work as a neck problem was becoming progressively worse. So I changed direction and worked in the retail side, designed engagement rings, and studied gemmology. There I formed some friendships which continue to this day, and we combined study with social activities so I immensely enjoyed this course.

By then I was working as a workshop manager, which utilised my knowledge of manufacturing and gemstones, and experience in design and customer service. **I continued studying short courses at GAA**, completing the diamond grading and jewellery valuation courses, and various modules including Opals and Pearls. I had also started demonstrating Gem II practical classes, which gave me great satisfaction for over 10 years, and also kept me in touch with the ever-changing world of gemstones.

In 1997 I started my own valuation business, which was a big step but I felt prepared for it. **The GAA courses not only gave me credibility but confidence as well.**

A few years ago I decided to re-ignite the creative spark that had led me to the jewellery trade in the first place, and I was in a position to take time out and gain further qualifications. However the proposed university degree in gemmology, which I was keen to do, did not eventuate. So instead I have been studying filmmaking (attaining a Certificate IV in Screen), and various forms of writing including screenwriting and journalism article writing.

Ideally in the future I will be able to combine my 25 years of experience and knowledge of jewellery, diamonds and gemstones, with my new skills and training.