

31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting  
Gemmological Association of Australia (NSW Division)  
6<sup>th</sup> June 2022

## President's Report

The year started with classes organised and teaching beginning and then covid lockdowns which precluded face to face teaching for all classes, with the great help of the Victorian branch we were able to run theory online for gem 1 my heartfelt thanks to them for doing this to help us. Partial relief and online exams organised by federal and in NSW case run by the ESO and teachers allowed to continue some progress for the students.

Construction approval was finally granted on the modifications for Terry St on 6<sup>th</sup> July a full 6 months after submission and at the end of our initial lease on the old building but the owners granted us an extension on the lease as Terry St would not be ready before early September but two other issues delayed it even further the lift was caught in the Suez canal blockage so it was delayed until August and the lockdown on construction and the lockdown on certain suburbs where many of our workers lived delayed construction by another month.

Final notice was given on Wentworth Ave in September for vacation of the premises in October.

Our prime contractor PMG group ensured all works in the ground floor were completed so we could move and store all materials there as the rest of the building was completed an interim step in October.

Moving commenced and was completed in October with the help of many prior to this date in packing all the books in the library and all the specimens in display cabinets and storage units there were hundreds of boxes and equipment to be moved and it took the removalists 4 days to transport to Terry St. All the lab equipment and stones were moved prior to this by many helpers the weekend prior. My thanks to Bill Sechos, Linda Evenhuis, Cheryl Murdock, Jason Reberger, David Von Nierkerk and Lisa Doherty who made this effort possible.

All major works on the top floor were completed early November and the once empty Lab Teaching room and members space were transformed over one weekend into functional spaces for students to resume classes by November 10<sup>th</sup> by the work of just 6 members. The diamond lab was completed a few weeks later. All classes resumed and for many students a crash program to be ready for exams in early 2022. My thanks to all those teachers who rallied around to make this possible.

We are now back into full swing at Terry St and had our first members function a Christmas party at the new premises and it was well attended thanks to Cheryl and Lisa for organising the food and drinks and the new lift for getting some who find climbing stairs is difficult able to attend no more excuses members.

On the financial side if it were not for the extra 6 months' rent, we would have made a profit for the year as it was, we had a loss, but I will let the treasurer report on this he has done a great job in getting grants to help us through the year of covid.

Special thanks to Cheryl Murdock and helpers after two years the stone catalogue is complete and now identifying those unknown stones begins.

Two donations of stone collections one from the family of Marie Sweeney a long-time member of GAA NSW and from the family of Jack Taylor one of founding members and holder of the first Diploma of Gemmology from the GAA are most appreciated.

Finally, we now have a new facility with new construction including new roof that should see GAA NSW well into the future we are equipping the lab with every student having all the basic equipment including microscope at each station this should enhance their learning experience and facilitate teachers' interactions.

With the lifting of covid restrictions restating short courses will commence in 2022 and look forward to seeing you at some of them.

Best wishes to all

Leo Hyde  
President  
GAA NSW Division