
GEM NEWS

Stephanie Dillon, Editor

AGS CONCLAVE '81

The American Gem Society's 47th annual conclave was held at Chicago's Marriott Hotel April 24-28. Its theme, "Gemology: The Total Concept," was introduced in a speech by Michael Allbritton, GIA's supervisor of one-week gemology classes.

At this year's meeting, Arnold Bockstruck, C.G., was elected president of the jewelers' organization for a tenure of two years.

The convention featured many laboratory workshops, organized by GIA staff and AGS members, which afforded opportunities for the practical application of gemology. Highlighted were several chief concerns of jewelers: appraisals, the detection of synthetics and imitations, grading mounted diamonds, handling repairs, and the place of gem knowledge in selling.

The conclave was attended by approximately 1300 AGS members and their families. Of this total nearly 700 are registered jewelers.

An announcement from the AGS board of directors that next year's conclave may be declared open to non-members was a source of discussion among attendees. The directors have yet to agree on guidelines for such a move.

ARGENTINE RHODOCHROSITE

A joint Japanese-Argentinian mining venture is currently rehabilitating the Capillitas rhodochrosite mines of Catamarca, Argentina. The intention is to use electrolytic methods to process the ore, which is rich in gold, silver, and copper, and then to continue to mine the rhodochrosite.

Capillitas was mined first by the Incas for gold and later by the Spaniards for copper. In the early 1900s, both English and French concerns operated the mine. Although the Incas discovered the rhodochrosite and adopted it into use and legend, it was not until 1937 that the mine was worked exclusively for rhodochrosite, by Dr. Franz Mansfeld. In 1942, the military government assumed control over the mine and rhodochrosite production was halted; it was resumed in 1951.

The deposit lies in arid, mountainous terrain at an

altitude of 3,000 m above sea level. The mine has approximately 66 km of tunnels running on several levels with numerous entrances.

From estimates based on earlier production, the mine is expected to yield 200 to 300 tons of rhodochrosite annually.

AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENTS

View toward Gem Cutting. A diamond-mining concern, with the cooperation of the Australian government, is studying the possibility of establishing a gem-cutting industry in Perth, the capital of Western Australia. Presently, all gemstones are taken out of the country for cutting in Germany or Thailand.

Diamond. Diamond mining in the Kimberly region of Western Australia recently produced an 11-ct. crystal. Fancies have also been discovered in the Ashton Joint-Venture fields, notably some attractive pink stones.

Emerald. The Aga Khan mine, in the state of Western Australia, has been worked intermittently since 1906, yielding emeralds as a by-product of ores. The quantity of emeralds taken out has never been revealed.

Currently, an examination of the emerald-bearing rock is under way. Host rock is known to extend at least 1.6 km beyond the present workings. Both open-cut and underground methods are being used to remove the ore and the emeralds.

Most of the emeralds are small, the largest crystal yet found being 9.6 cts. The material is comparatively clear. In the past it has been sent to Germany for cutting, but current production is being stockpiled, along with the scheelite also produced from the mine, awaiting a decision on the establishment of local cutting facilities.

Sapphire. Up to 40 separate companies are currently mining sapphires in the 30 square miles of known reserves in Central Queensland. The chief product is yellow sapphires, generally found in 3- to 10-ct. sizes. The largest piece of translucent rough discovered thus far is 2,000 cts.

U.S. PERIDOT

One of the most important sources of jewelry-sized peridot in the world today is the San Carlos Apache reservation, east of Phoenix, Arizona.

The source is a mesa, measuring approximately 2.5 km × 4 km, which resulted when a volcanic eruption produced a basalt flow. It is estimated that peridot may comprise 40% to 50% of the entire structure. The material has formed in pods of basalt, coating the basalt with stones that may be as small as grains of sand or as large as good-sized pebbles. The Indians separate and sell the peridot, which is exported throughout the world and frequently marketed as the product of other regions.

A comprehensive report on this locality is slated to appear in an upcoming issue of *Gems & Gemology*.

ZAIRE BREAKS WITH DEBEERS

With the sale this spring of 620,000 cts. of diamonds to three independent European dealers, the government of Zaire marked the end of its 14-year exclusive marketing arrangement with DeBeers Consolidated Mines Ltd.

The sale, announced by Sozacom, Zaire's mineral-marketing agency, accounts for about 10% of this year's anticipated production at Miba (Société Minière de Bakwanga), the country's main diamond mine.

The change is not expected to have a major effect on the world diamond market. Over 95% of Zaire's production is industrial quality; this output represents approximately 30% of the world supply of industrial diamonds.

EXHIBITS

Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History—900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90007. Telephone: (213) 744-3328.

"Sweat of the Sun, Tears of the Moon" is the largest exhibit of Colombian gold artifacts and rough and cut emeralds ever to be exhibited outside of the Republic of Colombia. Opened July 4 and continues through September 6, 1981.

Smithsonian Institution/National Museum of Man—1000 Jefferson Dr., SW, Washington, DC 20560. Telephone: (202) 357-1304. The exhibit "5000 Years of Korean Art" comprises 345 treasures from Korean national museums, universities, and private collections. Over 30 gold artifacts from the Three Kingdom Period (1st c. B.C.—7th c. A.D.) exemplify advanced skills in metalwork. The pieces, including three spectacular crowns as well as pendants and earrings, are set with jade and other gemstones. The show inaugurates the Thomas M. Evans Gallery for special exhibits. Runs July 15 through September 30, 1981.

American Museum of Natural History—Central Park West & 79th St., New York, NY 10024. Telephone: (212) 873-1300.
The Gardner D. Stout Hall of Asian

Peoples, opened last October, includes rubies, sapphires, and jadeites in an exhibit of the dress, carvings, and historic gem trade of Asia. In the near future, the Guggenheim Hall of Minerals will feature a display of gem materials from San Diego County, California.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Winner of the 1981 Schuetz Memorial Fund Jewelry Design Contest is Sara A. Hitt of Palo Alto, California. Her design is for a pair of gold cufflinks set with triangle-cut black onyx.

The Schuetz scholarship, awarded annually for a distinguished design in men's jewelry, provides \$500 to pursue jewelry-related study at an institution of the winner's choice. Ms. Hitt intends to use her award to continue home study courses through GIA.

A scholarship to study at CFH (the Jewelers' International Institute of Marketing and Management) in Lausanne, Switzerland, from February 8 to June 4, 1982, is being offered by GIA. The program is a comprehensive course on watch and jewelry shop management, comprising eight weeks of product knowledge and selling (which includes the study of diamonds, colored stones, gold, jewelry and

watches; window display; and selling techniques) and eight weeks of shop management (which covers marketing, shop outfitting, security, personnel management, and all aspects of business finance).

The scholarship, for 2400 Swiss francs, covers half the price of the course, textbooks, working documents, and teaching materials, plus a number of field trips. Deadline for application to GIA is September 20, 1981.

The Broer Scholarship for resident GIA students has been announced by Richard T. Liddicoat, Jr., president of GIA. The program is named in honor of the late Carleton G. Broer, a long-time member of GIA's board of governors and its vice-chairman at the time of his passing. Broer was president of the Broer-Freeman Company, a retail firm in Toledo, Ohio. He served as vice-president of the Retail Jewelers of America, director of the Ohio Retail Jewelers Association, and was twice president of the American Gem Society. He was the first recipient of the society's Robert M. Shipley Award, in 1969.

Gems & Gemology welcomes news of exhibits and events of a gemological nature. Please contact Stephanie Dillon, Gemological Institute of America, 1660 Stewart St., Santa Monica, 90404. Telephone: (213) 829-2991.