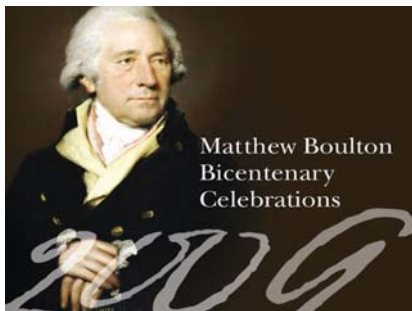


SPRING 2009

## BOULTON BICENTENARY LAUNCHED AT SPRING FAIR

**A**lthough Matthew Boulton himself (in the guise of a live interpreter) could not be present due to heavy snow, the Boulton Bicentenary Celebrations got off to a fitting start at the International Spring Fair at the NEC in February!



In 1773, Matthew Boulton successfully campaigned for an Assay Office in Birmingham and, of all the enterprises he was involved in, The Birmingham Assay Office is the only one to remain 200 years after his death.

A candelabrum, commissioned for the Bicentenary by the Wardens of The Birmingham Assay Office, and made by Birmingham designer/maker Shona Marsh, was unveiled at The Birmingham Assay Office stand on February 2.

The unveiling marked the official launch of Matthew Boulton 2009, and many members of the heritage and jewellery community joined the Wardens of The Birmingham Assay Office for this significant event. Guests were welcomed by Kay Alexander, Chairman of the Wardens and Michael Allchin, Assay Master and Chief Executive.

In designing the candelabrum, Shona Marsh drew on Boulton's original designs in silver.

Her contemporary piece was displayed alongside an original Boulton candelabrum from The Birmingham Assay Office Silver Collection.

Together the two pieces formed an appropriate representation of the past and the present of an institution that has its eye fixed firmly on the future.

### TIMELINE

New technology was also in evidence at the launch. The Birmingham Assay Office worked in partnership with Matthew Boulton College. Students from the College produced a timeline of milestones in the history of The Birmingham Assay Office and also filmed various stages of the making of the candelabrum. Their DVD can be viewed at [www.theassayoffice.co.uk/boulton\\_video.html](http://www.theassayoffice.co.uk/boulton_video.html)



Matthew Boulton College students (L to R) Kayne Jackson, Jason Hand, Sam Hashemi, Daniel Queen, Phil Loveridge, Rob Hildreth.

### EXHIBITIONS

The candelabrum is the centrepiece for the first exhibition in the new ground-floor exhibition space at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, which opened on March 28.

A permanent exhibition in the museum's new first-floor gallery, entitled 'Story of the Jewellery Quarter' is also open to the public. It showcases the huge range of precious metal products that have been made in the Quarter over the past 200 years including toys and larger silver items from The Birmingham Assay Office Silver Collection.

The Birmingham Assay Office has also worked in partnership with Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery on the exhibition 'Matthew Boulton: Selling What All the World Desires'. Other partners in this project include Birmingham Libraries and Archives, the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, the University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University and the Lunar Society. It opens to the public on Saturday, May 30 when there will be exciting things happening in Chamberlin Square.

Visit [www.theassayoffice.co.uk](http://www.theassayoffice.co.uk) and [www.matthewboulton.org.uk](http://www.matthewboulton.org.uk) for details.



shona marsh  
designer silverware

The Matthew Boulton Bicentenary Candelabrum by Designer/maker Shona Marsh.

The Barber Institute and The Birmingham Assay Office have also worked in partnership on the exhibition 'The Art of Making Money'.

Opening at the Barber Institute on May 8, the exhibition will explore the phenomenal output of the Soho Mint with the majority of the coins, medals and tokens on display being drawn from the collections at The Birmingham Assay Office.

### CONFERENCE AND CONCERT

In addition to the exhibitions, an international, interdisciplinary conference will take place at the University of Birmingham from July 3 to 5. Details are available from [www.cbamh.bham.ac.uk](http://www.cbamh.bham.ac.uk) and [www.theassayoffice.co.uk](http://www.theassayoffice.co.uk)

To coincide with the conference, a concert of Boulton's favourite music and readings from the Matthew Boulton Papers, entitled Hark! I Hear Musick will take place on Saturday July 4 at St. Philip's Cathedral. Tickets are on sale at the Gas Hall reception at Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery and the Central Library Ticket Shop.

Boulton's Soho House is still standing, and it will be open from April to October featuring a display of pieces and books from The Birmingham Assay Office collections. During May half-term, Soho House will also be offering a series of workshops aimed at families and children.

For a full calendar of events, turn to the 'History and Heritage' page and keep visiting our website for more news.

### IN THIS ISSUE

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# HALLMARKING



## COMPETITION-WINNING JEWELLERY TO GO ON SALE



CHARLES GREEN  
SINCE 1824

Rachael Briggs, a sparkling student at Birmingham's School of Jewellery, has scooped first prize in a competition to showcase Birmingham's newest jewellery talents.

Rachael won the competition which was organised by a partnership between Birmingham based jewellery manufacturer Charles Green & Son and the School of Jewellery.

The competition was open to students on the new BA Jewellery and Silversmithing Design for Industry Course. Tasked with creating a matching wedding and engagement ring, to be sold as part of a high quality production range, the winning designs will now be produced in precious metals to go on sale as part of Charles Green's product range.

As well as winning £250 cash, Rachael will receive two week's work experience at Charles Green where

she will also develop a matching eternity ring and gents' wedding ring to complement her other designs.

Tom Green, Chairman of Charles Green & Son and a member of the judging panel said the competition reflected the fact that Birmingham was determined to remain a centre of excellence for the jewellery profession. He added: "We were extremely impressed by the students' enthusiasm and their designs. They were involved in a realistic process throughout and had to take into account costings, marketing and promotion as well as timescales, on top of mastering rigorous technical skills."

Sinade Prosser took second prize and third prize was shared between Kirsty Davies and Danielle Hall. ■

## SUPPORT FOR TALENTED STUDENTS

The Birmingham Assay Office continues to provide support to Students at the School of Jewellery in a variety of different ways.

An annual bursary from The Birmingham Assay Office has been awarded to students taking part in the MA course for Jewellery and Silversmithing over the last three years. The recipients of the bursary have gone on to pursue careers within the jewellery or silversmithing trade.

This year's bursary was awarded to Simon Pattison, whose talent was also



Simon Pattison



Simon Pattison's award winning vessels

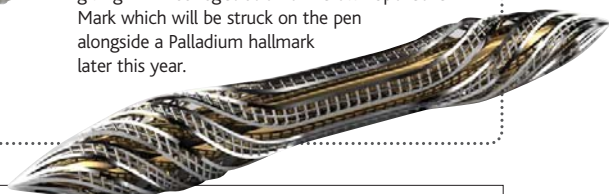
recognised in the Goldsmith Craft and Design Council Awards where he was joint winner of The Gil Packard Post Graduate bursary worth £250. He was also commended in the 2D Design Work category for silversmiths.

Jack Row, a Degree Student at the School is focussing on becoming a CAD designer and is inspired by the technicality and problem solving of a piece. He has chosen to design and create a pen in Palladium targeted at the high end corporate gift range.



Jack Row

The Birmingham Assay Office is providing help and advice to Jack with his final year project including giving him free registration of his own Sponsor's Mark which will be struck on the pen alongside a Palladium hallmark later this year.



## SUPPORT FOR BRITISH SILVER WEEK 2009

The Birmingham Assay Office will be lending its support to British Silver Week again this year.

Now in its second year, British Silver Week aims to further promote contemporary British Silversmithing to an even wider audience.

The Birmingham Assay Office plans to provide sponsorship to three Students from Birmingham's School of Jewellery to participate in the event.

Numerous other events are being planned for British Silver Week, details of which are available at [www.britishsilverweek.co.uk](http://www.britishsilverweek.co.uk) ■

BRITISH SILVER WEEK 2009

## PALLAS ATHENE PALLADIUM HALLMARK IS ON THE WAY...

We had hoped that by the time this edition of *The Anchor* was published, the first Palladium Hallmark would be ready to be struck, but the timetable has changed because of an inaccuracy in relation to the wording of the amendment to the Hallmarking Act.

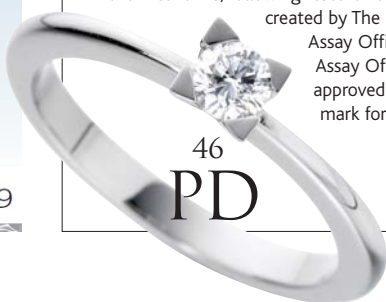
This means that the Order will now have to be re-presented to the Minister in June 2009. The good news is that once approved, the amendment to the Act will immediately become live.

In the meantime, following research and designs created by The Birmingham Assay Office, the UK Assay Offices have approved a traditional mark for Palladium.

This will be an additional optional mark which can be struck on Palladium alongside the three compulsory symbols of the UK Hallmark.

The proposed mark, illustrated here, is an image of Pallas Athene, who was the Greek Goddess of wisdom, war and crafts, after whom the asteroid Pallas was named.

This was a newly discovered asteroid when the brilliant astronomer and researcher, William Hyde Wollaston identified Palladium as a separate Platinum Group metal in 1803. ■





## ANCHORCERT GOES FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH



AnchorCert's reputation and consistent performance is well established and the team is proud to have had their Accreditation to ISO17025 reconfirmed after the annual independent audit by UKAS.

This formal confirmation of competence and consistency goes hand in hand with the confidence

the trade is showing in AnchorCert. Recent customers include London Auction Houses such as Christie's, Sotheby's and Bonhams and Birmingham-based Fellows and Sons. Many stone dealers, importers and retailers are also discovering the benefits of AnchorCert which, since the recent closure of the Gem-A laboratory is the

### ANCHORCERT DIAMOND GUIDE – A HIT

The new AnchorCert Diamond Guide & Gemstone Index was launched recently at the NEC Spring Fair and has become an instant hit with customers.



This compact, pocket-sized reference book is stuffed with comprehensive information on diamonds including sieve sizes, facet diagrams for the most popular cuts, as well as facts about clarity, colour and carat size and weight.

The illustrations are a great visual aid and there is also an explanation of the range of reports and certificates available from the AnchorCert service.

The Guide also contains an alphabetical glossary of popular gemstones, birthstones and zodiac stones. For more information and to request a copy contact AnchorCert on Tel: 0871 423 7922 or email gem@theassayoffice.co.uk

only UK based facility with the full range of equipment and expertise to fully assess diamonds.

Anu Manchanda, Senior Gemmologist, has visited SSEF in Basel for more intensive training on Pearl identification and thoroughly enjoyed exchanging views and knowledge with the renowned experts there. "It is great to see AnchorCert being recognised as part of the international gem testing community" says Anu. "We are all extremely proud of the high standards of expertise and service that AnchorCert has achieved and we are committed to continuing to grow the business."

### SUPPORT FOR SCOTTISH CONFERENCE

AnchorCert is once again this year lending its support to The Scottish Gemmological Conference which will take place from Friday to Monday May 1 - 4, at the Queens Hotel in Perth.



A broad range of talks, workshops and demonstrations will be on offer this year. Some of the topics to be discussed include: gemstone treatments today, the history of synthetics, jewellery and dress of Mughal India and Tourmaline from Mozambique.

AnchorCert will supply diamond and gemstone material to the conference delegates throughout the weekend and will also be on hand in the demonstrations and sales area in the main hall on Sunday, May 3 to provide information and advice on any diamond, gemstone, testing, hallmarking or jewellery valuation queries that delegates might have. Social events are held each evening, including the Ceilidh (dinner/dance) on the Saturday. The last day of the Conference is a practical hands-on field trip to the Campsie hills where delegates will collect jasper.



For more information and to book a place please contact Catriona McInnes Tel: 0131 667 2199 or email: scotgem@blueyonder.co.uk

## ANCHORCERT TRAINING SELL MORE DIAMONDS!

Following the success of bespoke training courses run for specific retailers, AnchorCert is now offering a one day training package designed to help retail staff sell Diamonds.



The course focuses particularly on how to sell up to a better quality, whether this be confirmed by a Diamond report or simply its description.

The course can be tailored to meet specific needs but the core content assumes a basic understanding of diamond characteristics. Delegates learn how variances in the "four C's" affect the overall look and appearance of the stone, coupled with the impact this has on price. Other issues such as treatments, from basic laser drilling to more sophisticated laser enhancements, are also covered.

Trainer, Marie Chalmers says: "F Hinds, Beaverbrooks and Aurum group all booked training with us last year. The feedback from the staff was excellent and we are given to understand that the training has had a very beneficial impact on sales.

"We are not teaching people to grade the diamonds but to really understand the difference between the diamond products they are selling. Customers are shopping around more and more and a well-informed sales person can make all the difference".

For more information about Diamond training please Tel: 0871 423 7992 or email gem@theassayoffice.co.uk.



### MEET THE ADMIN SUPPORT TEAM

Meet the staff who provide first class support to the expert team of AnchorCert gemmologists and who work closely on a daily basis with AnchorCert Customers. All members of the AnchorCert Admin team have had experience of working with SafeGuard Jewellery Valuations or The Birmingham Assay Office Hallmarking operation. This is a prime example of the philosophy which enables staff to be multi-skilled and equips them with a broad base of knowledge in all aspects of the jewellery industry.



**Nazin Tariq, AnchorCert Administrator**

Naz began working as a trainee in the SafeGuard jewellery valuations division in 2002.

In 2004 she took up a full time

General Administration position in the AnchorCert Diamond Certification Laboratory. Although she is involved in all the day to day admin duties, Naz specialises in screening and measuring the stones and finished pieces that customers send in using the dedicated Sarin equipment. In her spare time Naz is quite a film buff and enjoys nothing better than a good horror movie and of course is a Bollywood devotee. She also enjoys visiting theme parks with her husband Azeem.



**Graham Bookes, AnchorCert Administrator**

Graham joined The Birmingham Assay Office in 2003 working in the preparation department.

He moved up to AnchorCert in

2005 and quickly became an integral part of the team. Along with Naz, Graham speaks regularly to a wide range of customers either on the phone, via email - and in person when stones are brought in by customers. Every day duties include booking work in, dealing with all the paperwork, preparing items for the gemmologists, taking photographs, customer liaison, preparation of certificates and reports, quality control and invoicing. There is certainly never a dull moment in the AnchorCert Laboratory. Graham likes to socialise when not at work and is one of the many millions who is in to social networking.



**Sophie Whitehouse, AnchorCert Marketing Co-ordinator**

Sophie has been at The Birmingham Assay Office since 2004 and began working as part of the SafeGuard team. She joined

the Marketing Department in 2006 as Marketing Assistant and by the end of the year had become Marketing Co-ordinator for AnchorCert, dealing with all new AnchorCert accounts and enquiries. She also takes care of the marketing materials for customers to promote the AnchorCert service. Sophie is a confirmed shopaholic and when not at work she is a dedicated gym and keep fit fanatic. She will be running with several other members of staff in the Great Midlands Fun Run on May 31. If you would like to make a donation to show your support please contact Sophie on tel: 0871 423 7922 or email gem@theassayoffice.co.uk.



## INSTITUTE OF REGISTERED VALUERS OFFERS EVEN GREATER REASSURANCE

The transformation of the well established NAG Registered Valuer scheme into the new NAG Institute of Registered Valuers or IRV, is now complete.

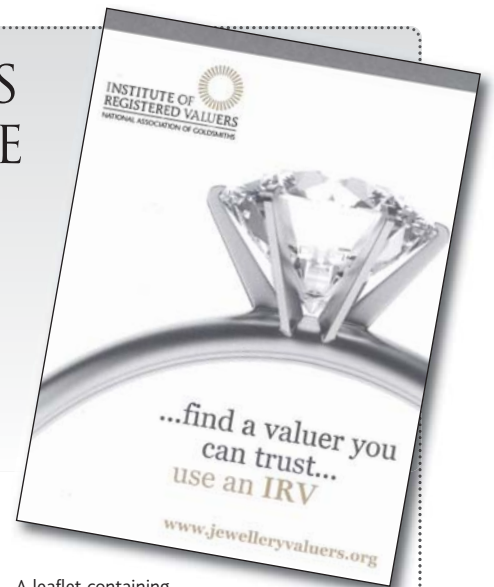
IRV is a response to the changing environment in which NAG Valuers operate. However, the objectives of the scheme remain the same – to promote professionalism among valuers and to give customers reassurance that their valuation has been carried out by a qualified and experienced individual.

Registered Valuer status is now subject to continual professional development and monitoring, adding to the recognition of the qualification. The Institute has two tier membership, with long established practicing members designated as "Fellows" to indicate their additional experience.

The new system is of particular benefit to SafeGuard. SafeGuard valuers will now be able to apply their Registered Valuer status to all the documents they produce, adding to their authority and validity.

This is particularly important in the current environment where the demand for valuations is growing and the knowledge and experience required to produce an accurate valuation has never been greater.

Volatile metal prices, sophisticated gemstone treatments and synthetics, a multitude of retail channels and an influx of items bought abroad are all making the valuers' life more difficult. Consumers and insurance companies need the reassurance that valuations have been carried out by a competent professional.



A leaflet containing details of the new IRV scheme is enclosed with this issue of *The Anchor*. ■

## WATCH AUTHENTICATION REPORT WELL RECEIVED

The new Watch Authentication Report, launched by SafeGuard at Spring Fair, has received a very positive response from the trade.

The increasing quantity of high quality, fake watches and a growing number of consumers who are happy to knowingly buy them, mean there is increasing scope for counterfeiters. There is also a growing trend amongst some consumers to buy a genuine top branded watch and have it enhanced by adding diamonds or other embellishments. Others may choose to create their own "hybrid" model using genuine parts.



An experienced valuer will usually have some instinct that the piece is not quite right, but this can only be confirmed by taking the back off the watch and checking serial numbers with the manufacturer. The watch has then to be resealed professionally by an authorised workshop. The SafeGuard Watch Authentication Service does exactly this. The service has already proved useful to police when recovering stolen goods and SafeGuard is offering authentication prior to a valuation in circumstances where the valuation would have to be based on unproven assumptions, which may devalue the piece.

For more information contact [safeguard@theassayoffice.co.uk](mailto:safeguard@theassayoffice.co.uk) or phone 0871 423 7992. ■

## DICKENS DIAMOND RING REALISES £26,000

Nigel Ward from Nigel Ward Auctioneers in Pontrilas, Herefordshire, paid a personal visit to the SafeGuard offices housed within The Birmingham Assay Office building, in January this year. Following his tour of the operation, Craig O'Donnell the resident antique jewellery specialist carried out a Jewellery Assessment report on a ring with a fascinating history.

The Auction House then used the image of the Jewellery Assessment Report to promote the piece on its Auction website and also attracted PR from the media including BBC Radio 2 and The Times newspaper.

The SafeGuard Jewellery Assessment Report provided an independent verification of the 0.9 carat Diamond ring which was inscribed on the inside of the ring with the words "Alfred Tennyson to Charles Dickens 1854". Also included with the ring were various documents supporting the ring's provenance. Enquiries were received from as far afield as Australia, and viewing of

the ring was hugely in demand with many people wishing to inspect and touch an object that had such close connections with two famous nineteenth century personalities. This historically important Dickens' diamond ring sold in late February for £26,000 to an anonymous telephone bidder.



SafeGuard jewellery, watch and silverware assessment reports are proving to be an extremely desirable way of providing independent verification and assurance to purchasers as to the quality of the items for sale by auction and this in turn leads to the higher end of the price guide and above being obtained for sales. This cost effective method of achieving higher priced sales is increasingly being taken up not only by Auction Houses and sales rooms, but also by many reputable antiques dealers and pawnbroking organisations. For more information please call SafeGuard on Tel: 0871 423 7992 or email: [safeguard@theassayoffice.co.uk](mailto:safeguard@theassayoffice.co.uk) ■

## CREDIT CRUNCH INCREASES INTEREST IN JEWELLERY VALUATIONS

With sales of new stock items slowing down as consumers have less money to spend, repairs and services are becoming a more important sector for many retail jewellers. Insurance companies are tightening rules in anticipation of a rise in fraudulent claims, encouraging pre-loss valuations and rising metal prices are also a driver for valuations.

The net result is that there is plenty of potential valuation business to be realised and these

services have the benefit of requiring no stock investment while offering positive cash flow – an unusual situation for the jewellery retailer! SafeGuard is seeing the benefit of the current economic climate, particularly where retail managers exploit it to the full. Some very successful in store Valuation Event Days have already been held this year and have offered the additional benefit of pulling potential customers into the store and adding to customer satisfaction. ■

### SAFE GUARD AT MAPPIN & WEBB REGENT ST

SafeGuard is pleased to be participating in Coutts London Jewellery Week again, this time with a jewellery valuation event for customers at Mappin & Webb, Regent St.

COUTTS LONDON JEWELLERY WEEK



MAPPIN & WEBB

Following the success of Coutts London Jewellery Week 2008, this year's event takes place from June 8 to 14. Full details of the SafeGuard Event will be featured on the London Jewellery week website at [www.londonjewelleryweek.co.uk](http://www.londonjewelleryweek.co.uk) and on [www.safeguardvaluations.com](http://www.safeguardvaluations.com) ■

# THE LABORATORY



## OLD GOLD RUSH QUICK MELTING & ASSAY SERVICES IN DEMAND.



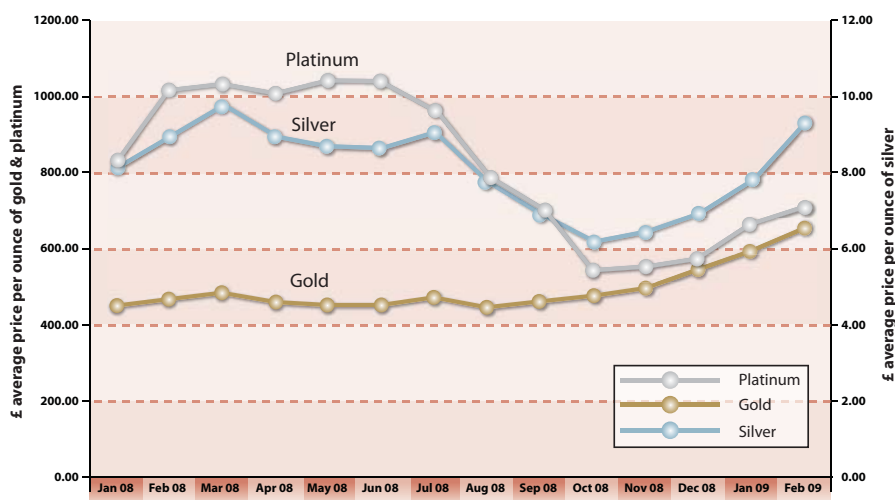
After a year of high but steady gold prices, the market started to rise significantly late last year, increasing from an average of £477 per ounce in October 2008 to £655 in February 2009, as illustrated on the graph.

This ongoing increase in price, alongside consumers' reduced disposable income, has resulted in an "Old Gold Rush" which is flushing bagfuls of scrap gold out of jewellery boxes around the UK.

Pawnbrokers continue to be especially busy, and demand is not expected to drop in the near future.

All this inevitably impacts on the existing Melt and Assay Service offered by The Laboratory, which is being upgraded and expanded to meet demand. New furnaces will soon be installed and an improved service offered under the experienced eye of Dippal Manchanda, Chief Assayer and Technical Director. "Our customers want a quick, accurate and independent melt and assay service, provided in an energy efficient and environmentally friendly way. It makes sense to update our facility in a way that will meet all these objectives" says Dippal. If you need to process and realise the true value of your precious metal scrap and have not used us before, why not give us a try? You can be assured of a fast, accurate, professional, independent and efficient service, qualities that have stood the test of time.

Contact Tim Smith on 0121 262 1036 for more information. ■



## UKAS ACCREDITATION COMPETENCE ASSURED.

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) recently visited The Laboratory to carry out their full four year detailed audit and assessment for our compliance to the ISO 17025 standard, 'General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories'.

ISO 17025 gives customers independent reassurance from the very highest level that The Laboratory delivers accurate and consistent results, through suitably qualified and experienced staff competently implementing clearly documented analytical procedures suitable for purpose. The UKAS auditors were impressed with what they found, and Accreditation to ISO 17025 was reconfirmed in every case.

One of the latest tests from The Laboratory was newly accredited, EN 71-2 testing for compliance to flammability requirements.



This new service is offered in response to demand from customers submitting work for nickel and lead testing, who also needed to check for prohibited flammable materials, something especially relevant to certain toys and textiles when exposed to a small source of ignition. This test requires a specially constructed chamber with a controlled atmosphere. Items are tested in accordance with international standards and regulations, assessing their ignitability and flame spread rate as appropriate. ■

## GIFTWARE ASSOCIATION AWAY DAY AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Birmingham Assay Office is pleased to have been asked to contribute to the programme for the Giftware Association's Annual Away Day and AGM on May 11.



Marion Wilson, Sales and Marketing Director, will give a short presentation to clarify the relevant parts of the REACH Directive and Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoSH) legislation for members, as well as other product quality and safety concerns including those relating to nickel and lead.

Marion says: "These are very important issues and members of the Giftware Association need to ensure that their products comply with legislation. Some of the areas, such as Lead in adult items, are not clear cut and there is not even a consensus as to how articles should be tested and what the compliance level should be.

*"It can take a long time to identify the correct information and understand its implications for individual products. The presentation will give a simple overview of the various regulations; which products sectors they apply to; and the due diligence procedures required to ensure compliance."*



Other speakers during what promises to be a very varied and useful day for GA members include Richard Hatton, a business specialist in contract renegotiation, Dennis Reid, international sportsman and motivational speaker and other experts discussing the rise of e-tailing and how to track design trends.

Says Isabel Martinson, chief executive of The Giftware Association: "We have endeavoured to present a balanced programme, which addresses the economic downturn in a positive way and introduces other speakers – experts in their own fields - who will have something interesting to say to both suppliers and retailers." ■

# MEET THE TEAM



## BRUMMIES ON TOUR...

The Birmingham Assay Office social club is off on its first outing of the year and members will shortly be sunning themselves (hopefully) on the beaches of one of England's classic resorts – Southport.

The group will be setting off by coach from Birmingham early on Saturday May 16. Once they arrive there will be plenty of things for everyone to do. The shopping is superb and there is a wonderful choice of restaurants and pubs – many of which will be inspected by the staff – no doubt !! Whilst not shopping, eating or drinking most of the group will be looking forward to strolling along the sandy beaches and taking the time to relax and unwind – away from it all. ■



## JUNE TAKES EARLY RETIREMENT...

After giving 33 years service to The Birmingham Assay Office, June Russell, Hallmarking Floor Manager, has taken early retirement.

June, a former Redcoat at Butlins, started work at The Birmingham Assay Office on January 5, 1976 and has been a dedicated, hardworking and committed member of the team ever since. She started out in the Progress Department but quickly moved onto the Examining Department and then to the Preparation Department, where she spent the majority of her time.



June (Pictured Left) during her time as a Butlins Red Coat.

Her commitment to the business resulted in her promotion to manager of the Laser Marking facility and, latterly, she also took on management responsibility for the Hallmarking Department.

June's colleagues organised a retirement party on February 27, which was attended by past and present employees of The Birmingham Assay Office, at which she was presented with an array of retirement gifts.

June now plans to take things a little easier and enjoy all the things she never had time to do while she was working - including spending time at the gym but, most importantly, making time for her family.

June's retirement has resulted in a re-organisation of the management responsibilities within the Hallmarking area. Julie Burns has taken on responsibility for the Silver section, Laser Facility and Hallmarking Punches; Rose Nightingale takes on responsibility for the Gold section and Inspection/Examining; while Dale Carroll is responsible for managing the evening shifts. ■



June Russell (Left) is presented with one of many retirement gifts by Kathy McMillen – Hallmarking Operations Manager.

## MEET AND GREET EVE



Many customers and visitors to The Birmingham Assay Office will be familiar with the voice and face of Eve Madden, who is responsible for ensuring that our front of house is managed professionally and efficiently.

(L to R) Eve Madden, Kelly Fisher, Dr Sally Baggott

Eve has worked at The Birmingham Assay Office for 31 years having joined in 1978.

Her role includes ensuring that calls are directed to the appropriate departments and answering customer enquiries. She is also responsible for 'meeting and greeting' the many visitors we have to Newhall Street including customers, members of the public and the many groups who participate in our organised Silver Collection Group Visits throughout the course of each year.

Eve is also responsible for organising meetings held in the Conference Rooms at Newhall Street.

## SILVER VISITS

Our programme of Silver Collection visits, which incorporate a presentation by Curator Dr Sally Baggott and a guided tour of The Birmingham Assay Office's historic silver collection, are becoming increasingly popular.

Kelly Fisher, Marketing Co-Ordinator is responsible for promoting them. Kelly says "The Silver Collection Group visits provide a unique opportunity to view the fabulous collection of silver and learn about the history of hallmarking in the UK". ■



## NEW HR ADVISOR

Katie Randall, who has joined The Birmingham Assay Office as Human Resources Advisor, is a HR Professional with nine years experience working in both the Public and Private sectors, including the NHS and BMW.



Katie Randall

She has supported and advised businesses on recruitment and selection, employee relations and employment law.

Katie joined The Birmingham Assay Office in October 2008 and to date has enjoyed every moment of working here.

She is really looking forward to helping the business manage its HR function with the introduction of new policies and procedures including the achievement of the Investors in People status which will support all employees and the business. ■

# HISTORY & HERITAGE



## THE AUSTRALIAN CONNECTION CONTINUES...

In the last issue of *The Anchor*, Curator, Dr. Sally Baggott reported that the Gold and Silversmiths Guild of Australia had been in contact with The Birmingham Assay Office.

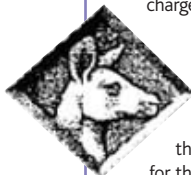


The influence of *The Anchor* right across to the other side of the world continues, as Sally found out when she received an email from Jolyon Warwick James who is based in Australia and lectures on silver internationally.

Jolyon wrote: "I just thought you might like to know what a wonderful communication tool *The Anchor* is! Through its pages, two people in Australia, unknown to each other but with a common interest, have linked up - and a small mystery has been solved.

"I read the article 'Hallmarking Down Under' which refers to the researches and writings of Kevin Hitchins regarding Hallmarking in Australia. I have not met Kevin and was not previously aware of his article. I contacted the Gold and Silversmiths Guild, which was mentioned in *The Anchor*, to obtain his contact details. My interest lies in my having the records and plates where the hallmarks were recorded for 1923 to 1928. He believed these to have been lost and was delighted to hear that in fact they exist.

Amusingly, the records include what appears to be the annual report for 1923 which states 'The assay office has at times been accused of high charges and the best method of dealing with such a question is by comparison with the fees from Birmingham and Glasgow Offices, which are the same and typical of English charges... A table of charges follows.'



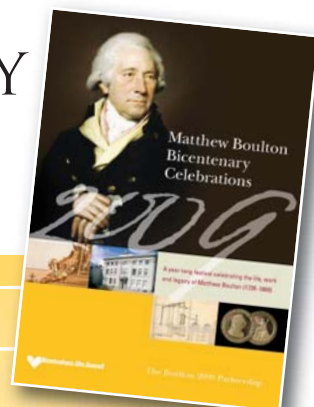
I am very much looking forward to meeting Kevin Hitchins who is in Melbourne (I am in Sydney), reading his article and showing him the records. My thanks to *The Anchor* for the introduction and for uniting a common interest!" ■

## BOULTON BICENTENARY EVENTS CALENDAR

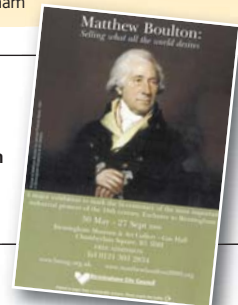
For regular updates of events for 2009 please visit [www.matthewboulton2009.org.uk](http://www.matthewboulton2009.org.uk) and [www.theassayoffice.co.uk](http://www.theassayoffice.co.uk)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS IN 2009

28th March	Matthew Boulton Commemorative piece on display at the opening of the new galleries at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter
8th May	'The Art of Making Money' at the Barber Institute, University of Birmingham. The exhibition will run until 15th May 2010.
30th May	'Matthew Boulton: Selling What All the World Desires' at the Gas Hall, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. The exhibition will run until 27th September 2009. - Event in Centenary Square to mark the opening of the exhibition
3rd-5th July	'Where Genius and the Arts Preside' Matthew Boulton and the Soho Manufactory 1809-2009. Interdisciplinary academic conference, University of Birmingham
4th July	'Hark! I hear Musick!' Concert of Matthew Boulton's favourite music with readings from the Matthew Boulton Papers at St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham



Included in this issue of *The Anchor*, is a flyer for the exhibition, *Matthew Boulton: Selling What All the World Desires*. The exhibition will open in the Gas Hall at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery on Saturday May 30th. Partners in this project include The Birmingham Assay Office, Birmingham Libraries and Archives, the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, the University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University and the Lunar Society.



## THE STORY OF THE JEWELLERY QUARTER

March 28th saw the opening of the new first-floor gallery at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter.

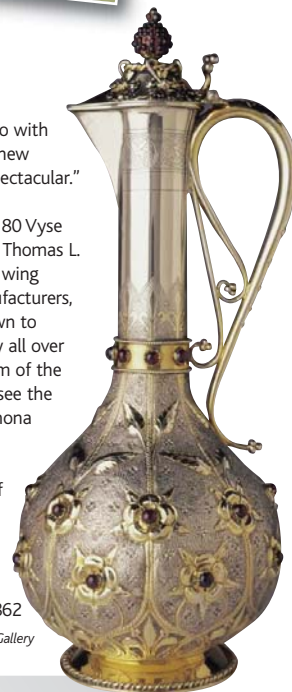
The permanent exhibition there includes a glittering array of objects, all made in the Jewellery Quarter. The Birmingham Assay Office has loaned objects from its Silver Collection, including a pair of pistols, bearing Hallmarks for 1773, the year The Birmingham Assay Office opened, and with furniture made by Charles Freeth; a vinaigrette by Nathaniel Mills from 1837, and a mourning ring by Thomas Aston from 1851. Last, but certainly not least, are two pairs of candlesticks by Matthew Boulton from 1783 and 1807.

The new first-floor gallery and the temporary exhibition space on the ground floor have been made possible by extending into 80 Vyse Street. Dr. Sally Baggott, Curator worked at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter for a time, and she is thrilled that the new galleries are opening soon. Sally said "When I first went to work at the Museum in 2004 as a visitor assistant, the Curators were talking about the

extension and what they might do with the space. I can't wait to see the new galleries, I am sure they will be spectacular."

"This is particularly interesting as 80 Vyse Street used to be the premises of Thomas L. Mott who specialised in butterfly wing jewellery. They were prolific manufacturers, and the name of T.L. Mott is known to collectors of this type of jewellery all over the world." Visitors to the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter will be able to see the contemporary candelabrum by Shona Marsh, commissioned by The Birmingham Assay Office to commemorate the bicentenary of Matthew Boulton this year. ■

Claret jug made by John Hardman & Co., 1861-1862  
Image courtesy of Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery



## SILVER VISIT SOUVENIR SHOP

Shopping for books and souvenirs is a new attraction for visitors to the Silver Collection at The Birmingham Assay Office!

After hearing from the Curator, Dr. Sally Baggott about the history of Hallmarking and the establishment of The Birmingham Assay Office, visitors view the Library and the Silver Collection, and now they can buy books on Hallmarking and the history of The Birmingham Assay Office, along with small silver items, such as thimbles, teaspoons and cufflinks.

"The shop has been very successful so far. Visitors are keen to buy something to remind them of their visit to The Birmingham Assay Office," said Sally. ■

# INDUSTRY NEWS



## FOOTBALLING JEWELLERS WANTED

The British Jewellery and Giftware Federation (BJGF) will again be holding a Charity 5-A-Side Football Tournament this year on Saturday, July 11 at the Goals Soccer Centre, Tameside Way, Perry Barr, Birmingham, B42 2UB.

Come on all you sporting jewellers across the UK! Enter a team before 30th April and it will only cost £69+VAT. All the proceeds go straight to the BJGF's Benevolent Society, which supports workers from our industry who now find themselves in financial difficulty. You can keep fit, have fun and help others in our industry at the same time. For more information and to book a place go to [www.bjgf.org.uk/events.asp](http://www.bjgf.org.uk/events.asp) or contact Laura Cartwright on 0121 236 2657 or email: [laura.cartwright@bjgf.org.uk](mailto:laura.cartwright@bjgf.org.uk) ■

## BJA AGM

**T**he Annual General Meeting of the British Jewellers' Association took place in the beautiful surroundings of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London on March 18.

Barry Dobson, entering his second year as Chairman of the BJA, gave a report on the activities of the Association and industry developments in 2008. Following the AGM, Sarah Sevier, head of buying and product development at



V&A Enterprises, and responsible for the Museum shop's contemporary jewellery collection, together with Nicholas Humphery-Smith, MD of Ancestors Group, which has a licence to produce fine and costume jewellery inspired by the V&A's collections, gave a presentation to the audience.

Members also enjoyed a buffet lunch courtesy of International Jewellery London, and then had the opportunity to visit the new Bollinger Jewellery Gallery, opened in May 2008, which houses the Museum's stunning collection of over 3,500 jewellery exhibits.



The collection documents the development of jewellery from the bronze age to the present day and displays magnificent jewels and gemstones from all over the world. ■

## HALLMARKING NOT AFFECTED BY EU SERVICES DIRECTIVE



The European Services Directive, intended to allow free movement of service providers within the EU, is due to be implemented into national legislation by January 2010.

There has been much concern during the past two years as to whether hallmarking would fall within its scope. The major concern was that the Services Directive would allow any 'cross-border' hallmarking provider to come into the UK and start hallmarking without any obligation to advise the British Hallmarking Council.

The way the legislation works such providers would have been subject to the laws of their own country - which may have been far less stringent than those of the UK. The fear was that the directive would open up a massive loophole and effectively devalue the UK's long established hallmarking system.

After much debate and legal opinion at the highest level NWML advised the Minister that hallmarking is NOT in the scope of this Directive and there will therefore be no change to our current system.

This is the third major piece of EU legislation that has threatened the rigorous consumer protection offered by UK hallmarking in recent years. It is important that the jewellery trade works together to make our consumers aware of the benefits of hallmarking. ■

**birmingham**  
21-24 JUNE ENGLAND  
2009 100<sup>TH</sup> ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

## ROTARIANS DESCEND ON BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham and the surrounding area promises to be lively in late June when 20,000 Rotarians arrive from around the world for their International Convention, to be held at the NEC, starting on Saturday June 20. The Convention offers delegates a packed programme including exhibits in the "Hall of Friendship" at the NEC and bookable trips and visits around the area.

The Birmingham Assay Office plans to attract Rotarians into the Jewellery Quarter with some specially organised visits to The Birmingham Assay Office to see the Silver Collection, and learn something about our history, our founder Matthew Boulton and the ongoing significance and importance of hallmarking. ■

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE: JEWELLERY INDUSTRY INNOVATION CENTRE

The Jewellery Industry Innovation Centre (JIIC) is a unique centre of practical expertise for the jewellery industry and allied trades.

There is nothing similar in Europe.

The quality and scale of the JIIC's activities over the past 11 years is impressive. In the past 5 years alone the JIIC has worked with 270 individual companies delivering

a total of 427 new product development consultancies. JIIC provides the industry with an holistic approach, enabling it to build its knowledge and skills base.



Gay Penfold, Manager of the Centre, said: "The JIIC is a credit to Birmingham City University and the School of Jewellery and has been financially self-supporting throughout its life.

"Exciting discussions have started regarding plans for a purpose built JIIC extension to the School of Jewellery. This will mean that the JIIC can move out of its rented accommodation and become an integral part of the School and its courses, extending its expertise to those who will become tomorrow's industry, whilst continuing to undertake close-to market research and provide consultancy to industry." ■

## SILVER IS STILL STRONG IN DECLINING MARKET

The steady increase in precious metal prices combined with a weak pound and consumer uncertainty continues to hit the trade hard.

Hallmarking numbers for the first quarter of 2009 have continued to decline, down 24% on 2008 to 3.1 million, a drop of nearly 1 million articles.

Total gold articles were down 41.1% overall; the hardest hit category being 9ct gold down 838,916 units a drop of 44.3% against the same period in 2008.

Demand for white metals, particularly silver and platinum is holding up well compared to gold with the total number of silver articles hallmarked in the quarter at 1,740,809 down just 1.4% on the same quarter in 2008.

Platinum units hallmarked totalled 62,753, a reduction of 8.3% against the same period last year.

Work dealt with by the Assay Offices of Great Britain, for the Quarter January - March 2009	GOLD							SILVER					PLATINUM				
	375 9 carat	585 14 carat	750 18 carat	916 22 carat	990	999	TOTAL	800	925 Sterling	958 Britannia	999	TOTAL	850	900	950	999	TOTAL
NUMBER OF ARTICLES	1,056,055 -44.3%	25,657 -18.9%	214,671 -32.4%	74,995 -13.0%	10 100%	223 120.8%	1,371,611 -41.1%	100 -24.8%	1,734,302 -1.7%	4,858 388.7%	1,549 -9.1%	1,740,809 -1.4%	2 -96.3%	75 -57.1%	62,669 -8.1%	7 75.0%	62,753 -8.3%
WEIGHT OF ARTICLES Gold & Platinum (g) Silver (Kg)	4,206,448 -42.6%	149,876 -27.7%	1,545,572 -26.4%	672,590 -13.1%	18 100%	6,451 204%	6,580,955 -36.8%	3 0%	26,605 -8.4%	146 84.8%	82 -63.9%	26,836 -8.6%	25 -90.7%	554 -48.8%	607,050 3.6%	54 50.0%	607,683 3.5%