

WINTER 2007/08

3RD – 7TH FEBRUARY

SPRING FAIR 2008

A COMPLETE SERVICE TO THE JEWELLERY INDUSTRY



Since The Birmingham Assay Office Act was passed in 1995, allowing the organisation to offer products in addition to its statutory Hallmarking services, the company has developed a complete portfolio of independent, innovative and user-friendly products for the jewellery, precious metal and gemstone trade.

This year's Spring Fair will be the first at which all The Birmingham Assay Office services are promoted on one stand, offering visitors the opportunity to discuss the latest changes to hallmarking legislation, the benefits of AnchorCert Diamond Certification and SafeGuard Jewellery Valuations or the highly successful Quick Nickel test offered by The Laboratory.

Sales and Marketing Director Marion Wilson says: "This is the obvious step forward for the organisation. We offer a complete service to the jewellery industry but in recent years we have had our staff split between the AnchorCert /SafeGuard stand and the Joint Assay Offices of Great Britain stand.

"Many customers now use at least two or three of our services and it makes sense for us to be able to answer all their queries in one place rather than have them trek from one stand to another. We are really looking forward to welcoming them all to our new, united stand."

REGISTER ON-LINE FOR FREE ENTRY TO SPRING FAIR

Enclosed with this edition of The Anchor is your invitation to Spring Fair. Register on-line and you will save £30.00 and won't have to queue when you arrive.



BENEFITING FROM CHANGE

SPRING FAIR SEMINAR

The UK jewellery market is changing faster than ever before and it is increasingly important that suppliers and

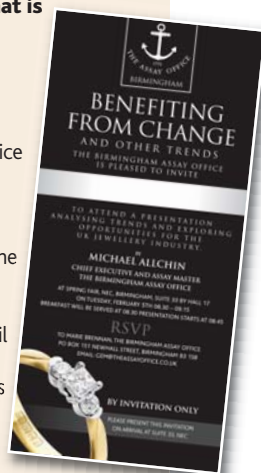
retailers understand what is happening to customer demand and are able to respond accordingly.

At Spring Fair 2008, The Birmingham Assay Office will be staging a Breakfast Seminar, on Tuesday 5th February, to present and interpret the trends from the last 12 months in order to put jewellery in context against the rest of the retail trade and to explore the implications of the changes that the industry is experiencing. Michael Allchin, Chief Executive and Assay Master, who will present to an invited audience says: "The Birmingham Assay Office is in a privileged position because we actually see almost half of the jewellery entering the UK market and we talk to key members of the trade every day.

"Figures show that the 'flight to quality' which was evident during 2006 has continued and, anecdotally, we understand that those jewellers who have responded with good quality, well designed, innovative jewellery and services have thrived during 2007.

"Consumer shopping habits are changing and this has implications which we need to predict and plan for.

"It is essential that we all understand the dynamics and the new challenges of the market in which we are operating and the Seminar is designed to help us achieve this."



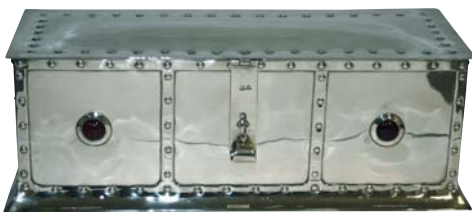
SEE US IN HALL 17 ON STAND B40.

SILVER COLLECTION AT THE SPRING FAIR

The Birmingham Assay Office Stand at the Spring Fair will feature a rare opportunity to see pieces from the unique Silver Collection, which tells the remarkable story of the history of hallmarking in Birmingham.

The objects on display will include rare pieces produced at Matthew Boulton's Soho manufactory, together with 19th century and early 20th century pieces. The Birmingham Assay Office has played a significant role in the history of Birmingham silver and the integrity and independence of all our current businesses is underpinned by this heritage.

Opportunities to see pieces from the Silver Collection on public display are rare, but



recognised groups are welcome to visit us at The Birmingham Assay Office by prior arrangement. Charges do apply. The Curator, Dr Sally Baggott, is also available to give talks to groups and societies on a range of subjects.

For more information please email: info@theassayoffice.co.uk or telephone: 0121 236 6951.

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HALLMARKING

INDEPENDENT HALLMARKING STILL UNDER THREAT FROM EU REGULATIONS

It is four years since the retirement of the European Precious Metals Directive and some might assume that the status of statutory Independent Hallmarking in the UK is now safe. However, this is not the case. The Assay Offices of Great Britain have been fighting a continuing battle to ensure that third party hallmarking, the original and most robust form of consumer protection, remains intact for the benefit of both the public and the Trade.

The latest threat to Hallmarking from changes to European legislation arises from the "Internal Market Package for Goods" which has been under discussion for over 12 months. Part 1 of this is a Mutual Recognition Regulation which, in general terms, says that anything subject to a 'technical rule' which has not already been specifically harmonised will now be automatically harmonised.

Michael Allchin and the other UK Assay Masters spent much of 2007 poring over the nuances of the legislation, gathering advice and lobbying support from colleagues throughout the EU to ensure that Independent Hallmarking is not

wiped out by default as a result of this legislation - which is otherwise widely supported by the government.

The Houtwipper Judgement in the European Court of Justice established "mutual recognition" by stating that Hallmarks which were "equivalent" - (ie in the case of the UK, applied by an independent third party with the same fineness standards, no negative tolerance, and legible to the consumer) - should be recognised in other Member States. Nevertheless, UK representatives are keen to ensure that the legislation itself is worded in such a way as to keep the principles and practices of hallmarking safe.

Further threats will doubtless follow; it is important that the UK jewellery trade recognises the value of a UK hallmark, share that message with the consumer and are ready to fight to keep this protection if it becomes necessary. ■



2008 KAYMAN AWARD WINNER

This year's Kayman Award focussed on designs in mixed metals in recognition of recent changes to the Hallmarking Act.

The winner was designer-jeweller John Moore, who graduated from Manchester Metropolitan University in 2002. His VANE collection - in brightly coloured aluminium and sterling silver - was inspired by repetition, rhythm and the relationship between individual pieces and the greater mass.

The judging panel, which included Michael Allchin, Assay Master at The Birmingham Assay Office, together with jewellery journalists, retailers and designers, were unanimous in their praise for Moore. "These pieces provide an innovative and interesting use of mixed metals and are at the cutting-edge of jewellery design and production," said Michael Allchin.

John's work, together with that of the three runners-up, will be exhibited on the BJA stand at Spring Fair Birmingham 2008 (Hall 17 Stand C37) where the formal prize-giving will also take place.

Other prize winners were: 2nd. Julie Spurgeon for her innovative, STIPA collection in 9ct gold and sterling silver. 3rd Neil Rayment for his men's jewellery range.

Atelier Gilmar of Monmouthshire was highly commended. ■



CENTREPIECE SUCCESS

Centrepiece, the exhibition of work by 32 contemporary jewellery designer makers and silversmiths, took place in Birmingham during the lead-up to Christmas. The exhibition, which for the first time this

year was held at two sites - Symphony Hall and the newly refurbished Town Hall - was a great success for those who participated.

A competition, organised by Centrepiece in collaboration with The Birmingham Post, resulted in the three winners receiving a unique opportunity to participate in a private view of the historic silver collection at The Birmingham Assay Office.

Craig O'Donnell, one of The Birmingham Assay Office's senior valuers and an expert in antique silver, gave a talk to the winners about the organisation, its history and hallmarking in general.

The three lucky winners were Yasmin Samaraweera, Mrs Morrison and David Ricketts. ■



MEET LIZ BROGAN THE NEW SUB OFFICE SUPERVISOR

Liz Brogan, the new Sub Office Supervisor, is still a "newcomer", having worked for The Birmingham Assay Office for only 11 years. She started work in the balance room in 1996, preparing articles for fire assay/cupellation.



Liz Brogan

Liz also spent some time as part of the sales and marketing team before returning to the balance room a couple of years ago when she was trained to operate a range of state of the art X-ray Fluorescence machines.

The continuing success of established Sub Office sites such as Curteis, Cooksons, Optima, Family Jewels, Gecko and QVC has meant that additional supervisory staff were required to support Sub Office Manager Mark Malin with the day to day running and administration of these "mini" assay offices.

We all wish Liz well in her new role which will take her all round the country. ■

TRADE DIRECTORY FOR THE BIRMINGHAM JEWELLERY QUARTER

A recent study of craft-based firms in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter has highlighted the need for a Trade Directory which will be used to increase the profile of those businesses.

In partnership with The Birmingham Assay Office and Advantage West Midlands, the Jewellery Quarter Regeneration Partnership (JQRP) has

started work on the directory which it is hoped will include around 150 jewellery and allied businesses that can provide skilled services to the trade.

Businesses that would like to be included are urged to contact Prim Currie at the JQRP on 0121 464 1194 or email prim.currie@birmingham.gov.uk as soon as possible. Entries will cost a nominal £10 each. ■



A GREAT YEAR FOR ANCHORCERT

AnchorCert Diamond and Gemstone Certification services are still only six years old but the business is growing from strength to strength and, underpinned by The Birmingham Assay Office, the brand is now firmly established.

Regular customers include a wealth of well known jewellery retailers from throughout the UK and AnchorCert Full or Mini Reports on diamonds or Tanzanites can now be found in larger scale retailers such as Goldsmiths, Ernest Jones, Fraser Hart, F. Hinds and QVC.

An ever increasing number of independent retailers such as John H Lunn, Laings and Midas, are also using AnchorCert services from either Birmingham or Hatton Garden direct, and manufacturers and importers such as Slade and Kempton, Perfection, and Alfred Terry are regular customers.

"Two things which have really driven the business this year are our new Tanzanite grading service and our accreditation to UKAS 17025"



said Anu Manchanda, Senior Gemmologist for AnchorCert Birmingham.

"UKAS accreditation of our diamond grading system was an important achievement for us. There are currently only two diamond grading facilities in the World that have attained this status and it demonstrates the level of attention to detail and carefully followed procedures that give our customers complete confidence in us". ■

SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ANCHORCERT & F. HINDS



F. Hinds is a well established customer of AnchorCert Diamond Certification and Director and Diamond Buyer Andrew Hinds recognises how crucial it is that sales staff fully understand the implications of the information on the AnchorCert mini report in order to gain maximum added value from it.

Assisted by AnchorCert Account Manager Marie Chalmers, Andrew Hinds organised intensive training for over 170 staff in eight separate two-day sessions.

The delegates already had some gemmological knowledge and the course content was very

interactive, focussing on F Hinds' buying policy and how the AnchorCert mini report should be used to assist the customer to make their choice and, ultimately, help to clinch the sale. Early results have been very encouraging and F. Hinds are delighted with the reaction from their staff.

"Every sales assistant wants to be able to sell more and when it comes to diamonds it's a matter of having confidence in the product you are selling and in your own knowledge" said Andrew.

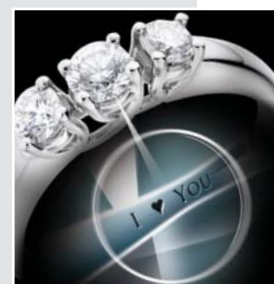
"Results suggest that we have achieved our objectives and we feel that AnchorCert has definitely helped us to grow our business." ■

BE MY VALENTINE

Valentine's Day is on the way again and AnchorCert is ready to add that extra hint of romance.

An AnchorCert certificated diamond carries that extra bit of authority and reassurance and shows it's the real thing.

And, for a really unique gift, what about a diamond with a secret romantic inscription on the girdle? Messages of up to 18 characters can be applied to any diamond, loose or mounted as long as the girdle is accessible.



AnchorCert is holding the current Trade Price of only £15.00 until February 8th.

Turnaround time for both services (certification and/or inscription) is 5 days, so any articles received before 6th February will be back in time for the big day. ■

FLUORESCENCE AND CUT GRADE ON MINI REPORT

The development of the AnchorCert Certification service relies upon anticipating, understanding and responding to customer demand and being innovative. The objective is to offer services which will add value to gemset jewellery products in a rapidly changing market and provide helpful information for both sales staff and their customers.

In January 2008 AnchorCert will introduce the latest innovation - Fluorescence and Cut Grade. Both can be added to the AnchorCert Mini report as optional extras.

Customers can opt to include Cut Grade for any loose, round brilliant diamond and Fluorescence for any loose or mounted diamond at an additional cost of only £3.00 each. This extra detail will provide a much more informative report. ■





SAFE GUARD NOW IN LONDON

SafeGuard jewellery valuations has made another stride forward by making its independent valuation service available in the heart of London's jewellery district.

The service will be provided from 88-90 Hatton Garden, the offices also used by AnchorCert Gemmological Office, London.

Administrator Lisa Kitchener will be happy to receive articles for valuation and newly appointed SafeGuard valuer Steve Jordan will

carry out the valuation work at the office on a regular basis. Jewellery Valuations will normally be completed and ready for collection within a maximum of six working days. Postal valuations should still be sent to the SafeGuard address in Birmingham.

Marion Wilson, Sales and Marketing Director, is upbeat about the new service. "We know there are customers in Central London who have a client base with different requirements," she said. "Steve has excellent experience of the upmarket trade and we are confident that this new 'branch' of SafeGuard will prove extremely successful." ■

SafeGuard Valuer Steve Jordan



JEWELLERY ASSESSMENT REPORT

SafeGuard Independent Jewellery Valuation Service is launching a new "Jewellery Assessment Report" in response to requests from many manufacturers, importers and retailers.

They are looking for an independent assessment of multi stone diamond, or diamond and coloured stone rings, to verify the quality, give the consumer confidence and help to secure the sale.

The new report, which will be previewed at Spring Fair in February will include an overall assessment of the quality of the stones and a description of the item, the precious metal and its hallmarks.

SafeGuard Director, Carla Goodfellow said: "We already have customers using this service but we feel that

the existing Valuation Document format is not appropriate and have redesigned the report to meet our customers requirements. This new Jewellery Assessment will certainly help them to secure sales".

The SafeGuard Jewellery Assessment offers an expert opinion on the overall quality of the article, offering helpful information and sufficient reassurance to retailers and the consumer at a cost of only £25 trade. ■

MEET STEVE JORDAN

Meet Steve Jordan, the new face of SafeGuard Independent Jewellery Valuations in the South. Many of you will already know Steve as a well respected independent valuer with many years of experience in the Greater London area.

His career began over 30 years ago as an apprentice valuer in Norfolk and he later established his own independent valuation company in Cambridge.

In the late 1990's he accepted a contract with Phillips Auctioneers of New Bond Street and was responsible for cataloguing and valuing items of jewellery for over 50 fine art and specialist jewellery auctions. Steve also carried

out the valuation of all Masonic jewels – over 25,000 in total – at the Grand Lodge Museum in Queen Street, London.

Prior to joining SafeGuard, he worked as a consultant to both retail jewellers and valuation companies with clients including Hancocks & Co, Searle & Co (Royal Exchange) and Gurr Johns of Pall Mall.

Carla Goodfellow, Operations Director, feels that Steve's appointment is a major landmark for the business. "We have been looking for an expert to fulfil some of the potential we had identified in Central London and we are delighted to have another high calibre valuer join the SafeGuard team" said Carla. ■

MAPPIN & WEBB

The prestigious Mappin & Webb division of Aurum Holdings, (the recently re-christened Goldsmiths' Group), is the latest big name to be added to SafeGuard's client list.

Mappin and Webb and Watches of Switzerland join David M Robinson, Pykes, Prestons, Peplows of Worcester and many other prestigious brands that regularly use SafeGuard for jewellery valuations.

Richard Gerrard, Commercial Director for Aurum, is confident that the move will prove beneficial to the company.

"SafeGuard has given Goldsmiths stores an excellent service over recent years and it made great commercial sense to extend the jewellery valuation service to Mappin and Webb," he said. "Early indications are very promising and we have already seen a good uptake on the premier jewellery valuation product 'The Jewellery Portfolio'.

"We look forward to working closely with SafeGuard to develop our jewellery valuation business further." ■



Richard Gerrard.



THE LABORATORY



TRADING STANDARDS AND THE BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE

In all aspects of its business, **The Birmingham Assay Office works closely with Trading Standards to protect the consumer, and in November, The Office was pleased to welcome Mr. Chris Neville, Acting Head of Trading Standards and Birmingham City Laboratories and Councillor Neil Eustace, Chair of the Public Protection Committee.**

Trading Standards is responsible for enforcing the law regarding Hallmarking, and in the past year, of 12 Hallmarking offences investigated, 11 have resulted in prosecutions. The Birmingham Assay Office plays a significant role in such cases, assaying the articles under investigation and

then providing a Section 9 Witness Statement which is used in court.

Highlighting the Hallmarking operation, The Laboratory, AnchorCert and SafeGuard, Chris Neville said: "The Birmingham Assay Office is an important part of consumer protection, ensuring that the public can be guaranteed that articles of precious metal are what they are claimed to be. From its origins, The Birmingham Assay Office has developed into a number of areas that have expanded its consumer protection role substantially."

In his report to the Public Protection Committee, Councillor Eustace told his colleagues at Birmingham City Council that he found the visit 'fascinating'.

Describing The Birmingham Assay Office as a 'highly professional organisation', he stressed the importance of working closely with Trading Standards.

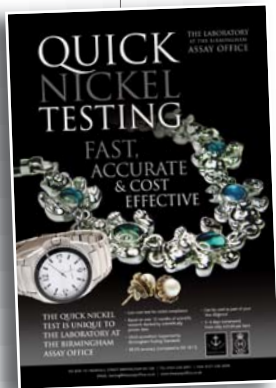


Chris Neville



Councillor Neil Eustace

NEW NICKEL TESTING ADVERT



The Laboratory will be launching a new advert in 2008 aimed at promoting its highly successful Quick Nickel Testing service.

Look out for it in a range of industry magazines. For more information on this and other Laboratory services please contact Tim Smith, Account Manager, The Laboratory, Tel: 0121 262 1036

email: testing@theassayoffice.co.uk

HUGE DEMAND FOR LEAD TESTING

The media focus on lead testing of Children's Toys and Jewellery in August 2007 prompted an immediate response from the jewellery, watch and fashion trade, as well as from Toy Manufacturers, retailers and Trading Standards Authorities.

The ongoing focus of the scare has caused many companies to review their due diligence procedures in respect of Lead and Nickel testing and The Laboratory has been inundated with enquiries and work ever since.



Technical Director Dippal Manchanda reports "We have been amazed by the response. Existing customers, and companies who have never used us before are still phoning for advice and this issue is obviously not going to go away. We have had to recruit more staff and extend our daily shifts to keep up with the demand and deliver the results quickly. People obviously trust our reports; our UKAS accreditation for lead (EN 71 part 3) and nickel testing plus the good reputation of The Birmingham Assay Office definitely gives them confidence."



Full details of the legislation and tests available can be found on The Birmingham Assay Office website www.theassayoffice.co.uk under the section 'Lead - The Facts' and in the dedicated Nickel section of the website. ■

MICHELLE TART - SENIOR TECHNICIAN



Michelle now and in 1991.

What did you do before working here?

I came here straight from school and did a day release at college to get a HND in Metallurgy.

When did you start working here?

5th August 1991.

What jobs do you do on a daily basis?

I look after the Nickel testing department.

What changes have you seen in the lab during your time here?

Massive changes- it was a small Lab doing basic gold, silver and platinum testing.

Now it is a massive department doing an extensive range of testing with a big team.

What do you enjoy about your job?

The daily challenges to meet customer needs and working with a great group of people.

You have raised over £15,000 for charity.

What sort of things do you get up to?

I like to do things that challenge me. I'll have a go at most things, I have driven a tank, skydived, walked miles, and even bunjee jumped - I love the adrenaline rush.

STOP PRESS!

For the first time The Laboratory will be exhibiting in Hall 4 - Jewellery and Fashion Accessories at The Autumn Fair which takes place at the NEC, Birmingham, from 7-10 September, 2008.



MEET THE TEAM



CARLA AND EMMA JOIN THE BOARD

Congratulations to Carla Goodfellow and Emma Rogers, both of whom have been promoted to the Internal Board of The Birmingham Assay Office.

Carla, who is now Operations Director for the SafeGuard Valuations and AnchorCert Diamond Certification services in Birmingham, joined the company in August 2005 as General Manager for SafeGuard and AnchorCert after many years at Gallery & Abbeycrest Plc.

Under Carla's management both divisions have flourished and her team is enjoying a huge amount of success and growth this year.

Emma replaced John Knowles when he retired in Autumn 2006 and has quickly become involved in all aspects of the business.

The rapid expansion of the non-statutory businesses gave her a baptism of fire but Emma has already played a key role in the Company's growth during a challenging trading period.

Emma and Carla join, Dippal Manchanda - Technical Director, Marion Wilson - Sales and Marketing Director and Eric Emms - Director AnchorCert London, on the Internal Board. ■



Carla Goodfellow



Emma Rogers

SUPPORT FOR REHAB UK



Staff at The Birmingham Assay Office have been raising funds for Rehab UK, a charity which provides services and support for people with acquired brain injury and their families through assessment, rehabilitation, training and a development programme that enables them to break into the workforce.

Pictured here is Bev Pearce, an experienced member of our Hallmarking team, receiving her prize for accurately selecting the name of the bear... "Hoppy" in one of the fund-raising events. Bev is one of our key hallmarking operators and joined The Birmingham Assay Office 5 years ago. She was delighted with her prize which takes pride of place at her workbench!! ■

CHRISTMAS CARIBBEAN STYLE

The staff at The Birmingham Assay Office celebrated Christmas "Caribbean style" with authentic and delicious dishes, jamaican rum punch and jamaican rum cake as well as the more traditional Christmas pudding.



A wonderful steel band provided festive entertainment and even the catering staff got in the party mood, limbo dancing under a length of tinsel - very creative...

A great time was had by all and the announcement by The Assay Master of a Christmas Bonus for all the hard work the staff have put in over the past year was greeted with great delight. ■



LIFE OF A PLACEMENT STUDENT ALEX GRIBBLE IN THE SALES & MARKETING DEPARTMENT

After two years at University I thought I would take the plunge and commit myself to a year of work. I am currently studying Business Studies at Birmingham City University and always wanted to see what the world of marketing was really like.

I never realised how much I would enjoy my placement and how many great people work here. No day is the same - one day I may be delivering The Anchor around the



Jewellery Quarter, the next I may be constructing our display at IJL in London.

Over the past five months I have learnt so much and have gained experience in doing a variety of tasks, including updating our CRM database, sending out Press Releases or finding editorial coverage in a variety of journals.

Everyone has been very welcoming, and I have made some good friends here. I hope, one day, to come back to work here on a permanent basis. ■

A MAGNUM FOR THE MASTER

A prize draw in aid of Muscular Dystrophy was drawn on Friday, 14th December and the prize - a magnum of champagne was won by Chief Executive and Assay Master Michael Allchin.

Over £105 was raised for the charity. Many thanks to the staff and customers of The Birmingham Assay Office for their generous support. ■



INDUSTRY NEWS

JEWELLERY QUARTER BIDS FOR WORLD HERITAGE STATUS

An edition of the BBC programme, *Inside Out*, broadcast in November, generated a great deal of excitement around the Jewellery Quarter.

The programme featured Bristol Architect, Niall Phillips, visiting the J.W. Evans factory in Albion Street, and talking to Clive Dutton, Director of Planning at Birmingham City Council. Niall, an expert on historic buildings, focused on the history of the built environment in the Quarter and also on

the rich inheritance of skills in the area. He was very effective in making the point that the Jewellery Quarter is deserving of World Heritage Site status.

World Heritage Site status is granted by UNESCO, operating to very strict criteria but the UK Government must first be persuaded of the value of the Quarter as they would be responsible for putting the proposal to UNESCO.

Gaining World Heritage Site status can take years and Clive Dutton, in support of the bid, is to put a proposal before Cabinet in January.

Clive told us: "This is Birmingham raising the bar in terms of aspiration on the World stage. Just saying we are going to do it is almost as good as getting it." The Birmingham Assay Office has written to the Government in full support of the proposal. ■



JEWELLERY QUARTER TV ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Businesses in Birmingham's famous Jewellery Quarter made sure that they were on everybody's Christmas Shopping List this year.

The Jewellery Quarter Marketing Fund brought together over 40 jewellery businesses to raise money to fund a TV advertising campaign which ran from 5th - 12th December, totalling 33 slots on the television.

The TV ad has also been used on the plasma screens in Birmingham's Bullring Shopping Centre which attracts over 40 million visitors a year. On Saturday 15th December, a free vintage bus service ran from the City Centre to the Jewellery Quarter where Shops, Galleries and the Museums put on events to make it a special Christmas for visitors to remember. ■



FIRST TIME AT THE NPC

Representatives from The Birmingham Assay Office were delighted with the welcome they received when they exhibited at the National Pawnbrokers Conference in October for the first time.

Chief Executive and Assay Master Michael Allchin and other senior members of the Birmingham team attended the conference to promote all the services offered by The Birmingham Assay Office including Hallmarking, SafeGuard, AnchorCert Gemstone Certification and The Laboratory's Precious Metal Testing. Carla Goodfellow, Operations Director for AnchorCert Birmingham and SafeGuard said: "We had no idea what to expect but were impressed by the friendly response we received and the very positive comments about our services.

"Many of the delegates already use us but it is always good to meet people face to face and get some honest feedback. Our independent services are perfect for pawnbrokers as they add value to



Carla Goodfellow with Chris Green of Cheque Cashers (UK) Limited on the BAO Stand

a product and help to establish consumer confidence." Des Milligan, Chief Executive of the NPA, said: "We were delighted that The Birmingham Assay Office supported the conference. Delegates were impressed by the wide range of services on offer and the level of expertise available to all of our members".

Margot Walker, Vice President of the NPA added: "The NPA was delighted to welcome The Birmingham Assay Office as a new exhibitor at our conference. Its presence added gravitas to the event and provided an excellent opportunity for our members to learn about the services it provides." ■

ENCOURAGING HALLMARKING FIGURES - SILVER IS THE STAR!

Overall UK Hallmarking numbers for 2007 were 25,413,275, a small increase against 2006 of 2.1%, ie 523,000 articles. Much of the increase occurred in the second and third quarters while the final quarter was relatively flat at 0.5%.

Gold continued to decline, dropping over 800,000 units, mainly 9ct. By contrast, silver showed a huge increase of 16.5% amounting to 1.3m articles and Platinum grew by 8.5%, 27,000 articles.

Chief Executive, Michael Allchin commented "The figures reveal a continued steady move away from gold in favour of silver, reflecting a strong demand for white metal and probable resistance to the high gold price."

Work dealt with by the Assay Offices of Great Britain, for the Quarter October - December 07	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	4,812,515 -5.94%	71,867 57.1%	594,067 -4.2%	116,775 -16.7%	2 100.0%	277 105.2%	5,595,503 -5.5%	610 278.9%	3,129,944 13.2%	2,103 -5.4%	3,566 -32.6%	3,136,223 13.1%	0 -100.0%	274 -16.5%	80,634 8.3%	30 114.3%	80,938 8.2%
WEIGHT OF ARTICLES Gold & Platinum (g) Silver (Kg)	17,398,274 -7.5%	441,210 35.3%	3,653,754 10.7%	1,013,420 -19.9%	56 1,300.0%	6,619 248.6%	22,513,333 -5.0%	16 312.7%	49,152 4.8%	151 14.2%	438 113.6%	49,757 5.3%	0 -100.0%	2,819 12.6%	711,182 18.6%	220 139.1%	714,221 18.6%

For the Year 07	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	13,262,000 -6.11%	178,888 12.7%	1,888,206 -1.3%	543,522 12.2%	173 394.3%	1,248 118.9%	15,874,037 -4.8%	1,113 -26.5%	9,182,034 16.6%	5,258 -24.0%	8,078 -25.1%	9,196,483 16.5%	7 -65.0%	1,062 17.9%	341,512 8.5%	174 83.2%	342,755 8.5%
WEIGHT OF ARTICLES Gold & Platinum (g) Silver (Kg)	49,262,850 -6.7%	1,505,141 41.6%	11,878,707 9.6%	4,955,459 11.0%	1,233 420.3%	22,536 85.1%	67,625,926 -2.3%	183 335.0%	157,230 12.1%	488 -7.8%	2,470 271.8%	160,371 13.3%	384 220.0%	10,467 73.0%	2,921,874 3.5%	1,080 -74.6%	2,933,805 3.5%