

## Launch of SafeGuard's new Jewellery Portfolio

October sees the launch of the new premier quality valuation, the "Jewellery Portfolio" from SafeGuard. This is an upmarket product which has been designed in response to feedback from customers who are looking for a more prestigious valuation which they can sell at a premium rate.

Many professional jewellers have expressed their frustration that carrying out their own valuations, while apparently profitable, is time consuming and inevitably takes their most experienced staff off the sales floor.

There is also concern about the growing number of treated and synthetic gemstones and diamonds in circulation, which need highly sophisticated equipment to identify with certainty. The recent influx of unusual types and qualities of gemstones which is

being driven by some TV shopping channels is making a valuer's task more and more challenging. Applying retail replacement values to such items is difficult and in these cases particularly, a valuation from an independent expert may be the preferable option for both the retailer and the consumer.

While recognising the benefits of using an outside service, some retailers are still reluctant to use a nationally branded service which is widely available on the High St. The regular SafeGuard service has the advantage of being recognised by some consumers, particularly those whose insurance companies recommend it. However, the new "Jewellery Portfolio" offers an exclusive personal service which may be more suitable to retailers whose own long established, well respected brand name provides the reassurance and credibility the consumer is looking for.

The "Jewellery Portfolio" has been designed to incorporate the benefits of the jeweller's own valuation and those of using an independent expert. The valuation has only a very discreet reference to the SafeGuard brand and the leatherette presentation folder has been specifically designed to give the retailer scope to brand it as his own. The valuation document itself is signed on behalf of SafeGuard, thereby transferring liability for the value to them. The presentation of the valuation is extremely high quality; appropriate to the status and image of every prestigious retail jeweller.

To make the service profitable for the retailer and attractive and easy to sell, the

product has a high perceived retail value at a fixed trade price. Retail prices are completely at the discretion of the retailer.

For more information please contact Kelly Harper on 0121 262 1024 or email [safeguard@theassayoffice.co.uk](mailto:safeguard@theassayoffice.co.uk).



## New Nickel Regulations now enforceable

The changes to the legislation regarding nickel release from Post Assemblies are now enforceable and all testing submitted to the Birmingham Assay Office will be carried out in line with the new regulations, "The Dangerous Substances and Preparations (Nickel) (Safety) Regulations 2005".

The amendments only affect "Post Assemblies" i.e. those parts of an earring or other item which are actually inserted into a body piercing. Other wording has changed within the regulations but essentially the requirements remain the same.

The new legislation has made three major changes:

- The post assembly has to comply with a level of nickel **release**, not a level of nickel **content** as was previously the case.
- There is no longer any differentiation between post assemblies to be worn during the period of healing after piercing and those which are to be worn in a completely healed wound.
- Post assemblies no longer have to be "homogenous", giving suppliers the option of plating them.

The amendments are very much in the spirit of the original legislation and intend to reduce the level of sensitization to nickel. This occurs when nickel and nickel salts

are dissolved by perspiration, which then penetrate the skin, interacting with the immune system to induce nickel allergy which then remains with the sufferer for life.

The new legislation also opens up options for new materials, such as stainless steels, to be used for piercing posts. Some of these alloys have a nickel content of over 10%, but in fact release very little nickel. They are widely used for medical devices such as wound staples, but until now have not been compliant with the nickel regulations for jewellery.

### What is a Post Assembly?

A post assembly is defined as usually having three parts:

- The part that penetrates the piercing, usually a post or a stud;
- The part or parts that hold the assembly in place against one or both sides of the piercing;
- The face of an item used against the opposing side of the piercing to retain the post assembly in place (usually a scroll or clip for an earring, and a ball for a body piercing item).

### Implications for Testing

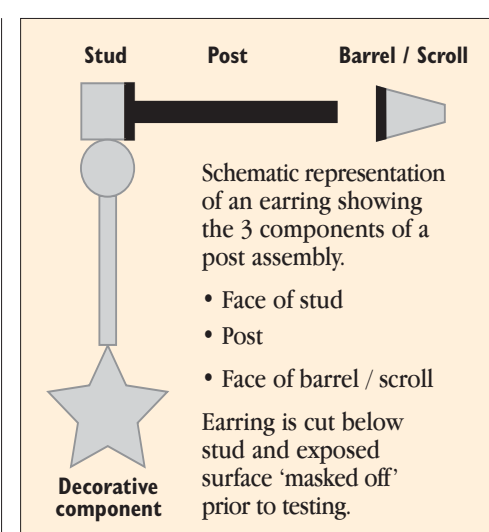
Under the new regulations post assemblies will be subjected to the wear corrosion test - BS EN 12472 if they are plated, then the usual release test - BS EN 1811. The permissible release rate for post

assemblies will be lower, at less than  $0.2\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2/\text{week}$  as opposed to not exceeding  $0.5\mu\text{g}/\text{cm}^2/\text{week}$  for those parts of other products in direct and prolonged contact with the skin. This makes our task as a testing laboratory far more difficult, as we have to carefully break the item down into components and mask off any surfaces which have been exposed by disassembly. We have to be certain that we can identify the nickel release from the component parts which comprise the post assembly, as these have to comply with a lower release rate than any other component parts of the product in direct and prolonged contact with the skin. As usual, the nickel released from each component will then be determined and reported separately.

Despite the extra workload that these changes have created, we are currently guaranteeing nickel test results within **nine days** of receipt of samples.

### Running Lines

The new regulations also state that "it shall not be unlawful to supply a post assembly which it was permitted to supply under the Dangerous Substances and Preparations (Nickel) (Safety) Regulations 2000 and which was first placed on the market in a Member State before these Regulations came into force." Running lines which were compliant with the previous nickel content requirement therefore do



not have to be retested, but random "due diligence" testing should be done using the nickel release tests going forward.

If you would like more information about these changes please phone:

Michelle Tart on 0121 262 1005

Ian Bayley on 0121 262 1043

Marion Wilson on 0121 262 1046 or visit

• [www.theassayoffice.co.uk](http://www.theassayoffice.co.uk) for the latest updates

• [www.dti.gov.uk](http://www.dti.gov.uk) for the Guidance Notes to the Regulations and more details of "The Dangerous Substances and Preparations (Nickel) (Safety) Regulations 2005".



## The family run friendly company with a wealth of experience

Hockley Mint Co Ltd launched their first catalogue 10 years ago. Since then the company has grown from strength to strength. The driving force behind the company is that of Ian Merrell and Jill Stevens, brother and sister, with a combined 70 years of manufacturing experience.



Their management team and committed staff have grown the company from 4 to 45 employees.

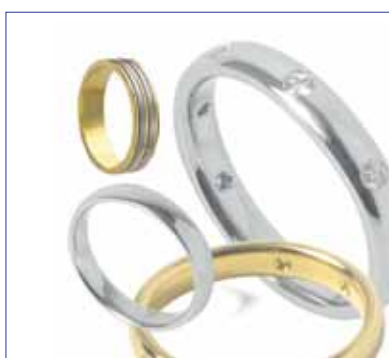
The product range has been painstakingly built by Ian, using top designers and the ultimate team in the CAD department.

This shift to modern manufacturing techniques is a far cry from where it all began. From its original base within Merrell Casting to its new location over 6 years ago, Hockley Mint commands the corner stone of the Jewellery Trade.

Initially, expert model makers created the patterns by hand. These precise pieces were then reproduced into castings, mounted and polished to a high finish. The integration of CAD over the last 5 years has enabled the model makers and design team to produce an unprecedented range of mounts.

Ian and Jill have "led the line" with the in-house production of each catalogue the company has released. This tradition continues with the long awaited Ring Finder 3 the largest available range of mounts, wedding rings and cast components, together with chains, solder, rhodium, .... etc.

With a strong foothold within the industry the company is committed to offering an unrivalled service and quality built on an established base of commitment and dedication.



### Hockley Mint Co Ltd

166 Warstone Lane Birmingham B18 6NN  
Tel: 0121 242 0042 Fax: 0121 242 0044 Email: hockleymint.co.uk

## The Hardware Man's Daughter

Birmingham Assay Office has helped to sponsor the publication of a new book which turns the spotlight for the first time on the women in Matthew Boulton's life. *The Hardware Man's Daughter*, by Shena

Mason, is the story of Matthew Boulton's beloved daughter, Anne (1768-1829). Very little was known about Miss Boulton, but over the past six years her life has been painstakingly pieced together from research in the Matthew Boulton Papers in Birmingham City Archives. Sometimes tiny fragments in letters, bills, notebooks and diaries have produced a wealth of detail about her health, education, interests, friends, clothes, travel, love-life and household.

Shena, whose previous book was *Jewellery Making in Birmingham* (1998), became interested in Miss Boulton while working on the project to restore the Boulton family home, Soho House.

*The Hardware Man's Daughter* is due to be published by Phillimore & Co. Ltd. at the beginning of December.



## New Assay Office directors appointed

The Assay Office has reconfirmed its strategy of continued investment in both statutory and non-hallmarking activities and announced the appointment of four new Directors, to bring more customer focus to its forward planning and day to day operations.

During the last six years the organisation has grown its hallmarking base and invested in developing many new services for the jewellery, gemstone and precious metal industries. The Birmingham Assay Office now has five operating divisions in the U.K; Statutory Hallmarking; AnchorCert Diamond and Gem Certification in Birmingham and London; Technical Services and Consultancy; and SafeGuard Valuations.

All of the new Directors are currently part of the Senior Management team at the Assay Office.

They are: John Knowles *Finance Director*  
Les Helyer *Operations Director*  
Dippal Manchanda *Technical Director*  
Marion Wilson *Marketing Director*  
They join Eric Emms *Director, AnchorCert London* to create a new internal Board.

Michael Allchin, Chief Executive and Assay Master, said, "The Birmingham Assay Office's hallmarking operation is the largest in Europe and we have successfully grown and developed our non-statutory businesses in recent years. We are committed to offering our customers a broad range of high quality services and I am pleased to announce the promotion of the new Directors to support the Wardens and Guardians of the Birmingham Assay Office.

I wish them every success in their new roles."



John Knowles  
*Finance Director*



Les Helyer  
*Operations Director*



Dippal Manchanda  
*Technical Director*



Marion Wilson  
*Marketing Director*

## New General Manager for SafeGuard



Carla Goodfellow has been appointed as the new General Manager for SafeGuard. For the past 18 years, Carla has been with G&A, part of Abbeycrest plc., ultimately as Production and Operational Site Manager.

During that time she has travelled

frequently to Thailand where she became the main contact for the new factory that G&A have had built in Thailand.

At SafeGuard, Carla will be responsible for SafeGuard Valuation and AnchorCert Diamond Certification in Birmingham. Her main objective is to ensure that both of these operations offer our customers the best possible service in terms of speed, efficiency and quality.

## Two long-term retirements in Assay Office Marking Department

Two of our long-term personnel are to retire shortly.



Margaret Burns, who joined the Office as a member in February 1975 is a happy-go-lucky person who enjoys life - with her son, John, daughter-in-law, Debbie and 2 grandchildren, Craig age 16 and Danielle 14.

She is looking forward to retirement and time to pursue her hobbies of gardening, eating out and holidays.

She is shortly moving to a new house in Four Oaks with her partner.



Dennis Round has been with the Office even longer than Margaret. He joined the Office in November 1965 and has spent all his time as a marker.

He was appointed Training Officer and Section Leader in 1978 and upgraded to Leading Hand in 1982. His hobbies are photography and music - all types except 'pop'.

Hopes to travel - especially Switzerland and Europe in general and to pursue the building of his 'family-tree' to greater extent.

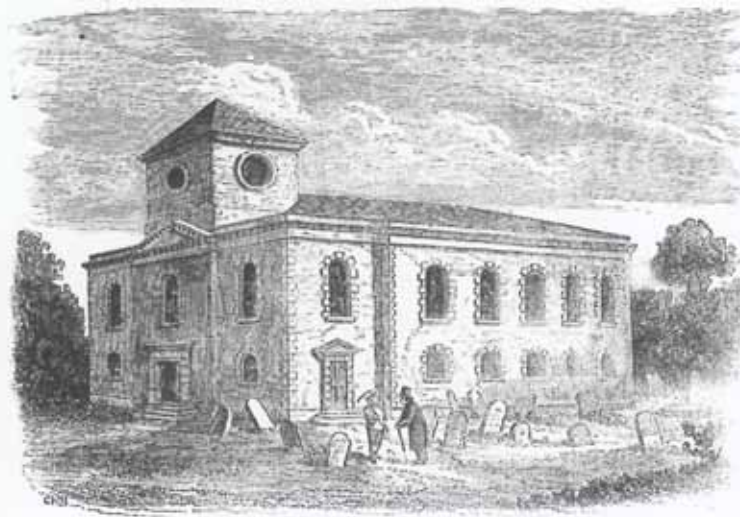
## Charity walk raised £1,413

Michelle Tart, at our Laboratory, confirms that the total amount of money raised from this year's Assay Office walking challenge was £1,413.00.

The team of 12 trekked 24.5 miles from Cleeve Hill to Chipping Campden. The money has been shared between two charities - The Birmingham Children's Hospital and the Foundation for Conductive Education. We would like to say 'Thank-you' to everyone who helped raise this fantastic amount!



# The Bells of St. Paul's



bells. Chairman of the Guardians, Roger Burman, and Rev. Tom Pyke, Vicar of St. Paul's Church are seen at the earlier signing of the sponsorship agreement. The actual founding of the bells took place at the world's largest bell foundry, John Taylor Ltd of Loughborough in Leicestershire.

The historic Parish Church of Birmingham, St. Martin's, has had a reputation for excellence in bell ringing for very many generations, and still holds that reputation today. As far back as 1755 the St. Martin's Guild of Church Bell Ringers was formed. That same Guild is joining forces with St. Paul's Church in a project of some historical significance.

In the mid-eighteenth century, as Birmingham grew, there was a lot of pressure on St. Martin's. With overcrowding around it, congestion at the church was becoming a problem. The solution lay in building more churches, or chapels as they were called, with funds raised by public subscription. One of these new churches was to be St. Paul's Chapel to be built in St. Martin's Parish, on land given by Charles Colmore, up the hill on the north side of Great Charles Street. So in 1776 the project was started. Although the architect included a spire and a peal of bells in his thinking, not enough money was raised to build the spire. No spire, no peal of bells for this side of town. It was not until 1823 that a spire was added, but again there was no money, nor appetite to install a peal of bells. And so it has remained, until now.

And what better time? Much is happening around St. Paul's. The Jewellery Quarter is buzzing with developments. Residents are returning, a village is emerging, vitality is evident, and a voice is needed. What more fitting than St. Paul's provide a "voice" for the Jewellery Quarter with a peal of bells?

The Assay Office have been proud to be associated with this worthwhile cause and have been delighted to sponsor one of the



*Rev. Tom Pyke, Vicar of St. Paul's Church and Roger Burman, Chairman of the Assay Office Guardians.*



## About bells in Churches throughout the U.K.

There are 5,205 churches in England with rings of bells - mostly C of E, just a few R.C., Non-conformist and secular towers.

Nearly 800 have 5 bells, an uncounted number have 4 or 3 bells-but these are not often rung.

Most have 6 bells (approx 2700 churches) and about 1700 have a full octave of eight bells.

Only about 200 churches have 10 bells and over 90, mostly cathedrals and big town churches have rings of 12 bells or more.

## The 10 bells of St. Paul's and their sponsors

Bell	Sponsor
No.1	The Treble Bell - The Grimmett family
No.2	The Mills Family
No.3	The Horton family
No.4	The Martineau family - to remember 5 generations of Mayors and Lord Mayors of the City of Birmingham
No.5	The Voice of St. Paul's Bell - Given by the Friends and Congregation
No.6	The Assay Office Guardians
No.7	The Ringers' Bell
No.8	The Memorial Bell
No.9	Common Good Bell - Birmingham Common Good Trust, Edward Cadbury Charities (inc)
No.10	The Tenor Bell - jointly given by Chord, St. Paul's Square and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

## Tuning the Bells

A bell is a musical instrument as well as a casting, and so it must be in tune both with itself and with the other bells in the set.

The profile of a bell is designed to give a particular tonal character to the bell. Its musical qualities are obtained by



machining small particles of metal from the surface of the casting.

Great attention is paid by Taylors, the bell founders, to ensure the highest standards of precision are maintained. They are pioneers of modern bell tuning throughout the world.

## Casting the Bells



*Removing the molten metal from the furnace prior to casting.*



*Casting the bell, the metal is an alloy of copper and tin.*

# Downturn in jewellery hallmarking continues

The downturn which appears to be affecting the majority of the retail trade over the past few months seems to be continuing within the jewellery trade according to hallmarking figures just released by the Joint Assay Offices of Great Britain for the quarter ending 30th September 2005.

The total number of gold, silver and platinum articles marked was 7,102,284, a drop of nearly 23 per cent over the corresponding figures for 2004.

**Gold** was hit severely, its total was 4,772,569 which represented a drop of 22.9 per cent over last year. All standards suffered - even the higher grades were affected - 22 carat

down 28.9, 18 carat down 25.8 and 9 carat 22.3 per cent.

**Silver** too, returned poor figures. Sterling Silver (925) was 22.1 per cent down at a total figure of 2,247,565 articles.

**Platinum**, despite its recent run of constantly growing figures also fared badly.

Its total of 82,150 articles was 14.1 per cent below last year's figure. Commenting on the quarter's figures Michael Allchin, Assay Master at the Birmingham Assay Office said "The hallmarking numbers continue to reflect the reported downturn in consumer spending and de-stocking by all parts of the supply chain."

## WORK DEALT WITH BY THE ASSAY OFFICES OF GREAT BRITAIN, FOR THE QUARTER JULY - SEPTEMBER 2005

### Number of articles

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
4,063,556	63,922	476,679	168,333	11	68	4,772,569	417	2,244,535	2,013	600	2,247,565	166	125	81,843	16	82,150
-22.3%	-15.2%	-25.8%	-28.9%	120.0%	-20.9%	-22.9%	-74.1%	-22.1%	-5.8%	-77.4%	-22.2%	5433.3%	-59.3%	-14.1%	-60.0%	-14.1%

### Weight of articles

GOLD (Grams)							SILVER (Kilograms)					PLATINUM (Grams)				
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
15,406,524	374,888	2,685,911	1,618,030	35	811	20,086,199	5	53,993	192	45	54,235	9,164	898	725,977	151	736,190
-29.1%	12.3%	-17.4%	-23.4%	-27.08%	-77.41%	-26.8%	-85.1%	7.2%	26.8%	-54.4%	7.0%	83209.1%	-49.7%	-4.5%	-45.9%	-3.4%

Percentage figures show an increase or decrease (-) compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.

**Our New York Office**

**New Strategy for American Operation**

After carrying out industry research and a major strategic review, the Birmingham Assay Office has decided to implement a significant shift in the focus of its American operation in the short to medium term. The American Assay & Gemological Office will move out of its New York Office in West 47th Street (the heart of the New York diamond district) by the end of October, and concentrate its activities on providing metal analysis for the jewellery industry and other precious metal users worldwide.

Testing and analysis of precious metal has been fundamental to our organisation since it was founded by an Act of Parliament over 230 years ago. The Birmingham Assay Office is widely acknowledged for its expertise in

these areas but, as technology advances, major investment is required to widen the range of specialist testing procedures which we can offer in order to fully develop the potential of our business. Focussing specifically on this area of the American market and pooling expertise and investment at the Birmingham headquarters makes sense.

Many of the precious metal samples submitted to the New York office have always been sent to Birmingham for analysis. The shuttering of the New York Office will have little impact on this and the Assay Office will continue to offer our American customers an accurate, efficient service with consistent results delivered at a competitive price.

## From the Office collection



Wine coolers were among the more spectacular items in the display of silver which would have adorned the sideboard of a wealthy family in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Assay Office recently added this handsome pair to its silver collection. Made by the firm of Matthew Boulton, they were hallmarked in 1810-11, a year after Boulton's death.

The wine coolers are 24cm high, campana-shaped with gadroon ornament and reeded handles with vine terminals.

They have Sheffield plate liners, held in place by detachable silver collars. Each is engraved with the arms of the Earl of Guilford; the badge of the Order of St Michael and St George hangs from the arms, and the Earl's crest appears on the collars. The total weight of the silver (excluding the liners) is 4,424g.

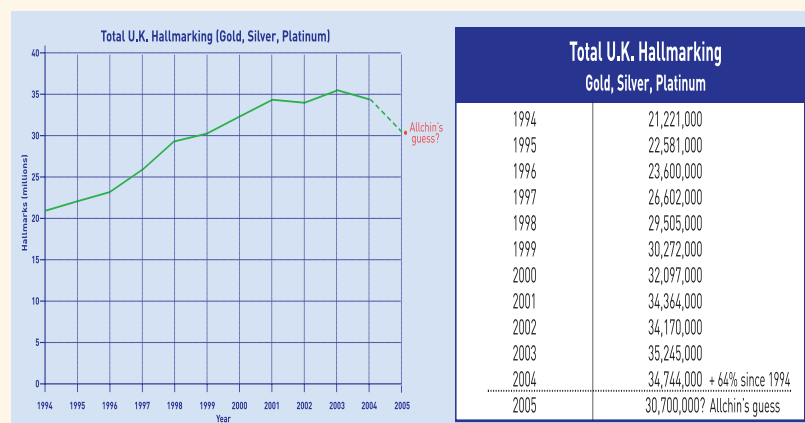


(The spelling GUILFORD is right).

# Enter now for our Charity Sweep Stake on the Total Hallmarking Figures for 2005

We introduced this Sweep Stake at the IJL in September and initial response was good. Enter your guess now (at £2 per entry) and see just how close you can come to the actual number of articles hallmarking by the end of 2005. The estimate made by Michael Allchin was 30,700,000. What do you think?

Entry costs £2.00 per guess - 50% to the winner and 50% to the British Jewellery, Giftware and Finishing Federation Benevolent Society.



To assist you with your entry in our sweep stake we give you below the details of how the figures were for the 3 quarters of 2005.

	2005	Total for 2005 to date
1st quarter	5,902,366	5,902,366
2nd quarter	6,153,866	12,056,232
3rd quarter	7,102,284	19,158,516
4th quarter	?	?

To total articles marked for 2005

Your guess

Send your entry at £2.00 per guess to Marie Brennan, The Assay Office, P.O. Box 151, Newhall Street, Birmingham B3 1SB. (Cheques payable to Birmingham Assay Office) or hand your cash in at our trade counter.

My guess for hallmarking in 2005 at per £2.00 for entry

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_  
 7. \_\_\_\_\_ 8. \_\_\_\_\_ 9. \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose cheque for: £ \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_