



Dr. Allen M. Bassett and the Ruby Mines of Nepal

Abstract: In the early 1970s, geologist and gemologist Dr. Allen M. Bassett dreamed of building a gem industry in Nepal. An early “Field Gemologist,” his love of minerals – and gems in particular – began as a young boy, never waning as he pursued a doctorate and then a geological career spanning several decades. Early on, his work took him to exotic lands, including a life-changing trip to Nepal as part of the San Diego Himalayan Expedition. Dr. Bassett later became the first Western scientist to trek to these high altitude localities in the Ganesh Himal [Dhading District] and was the first scientist to describe the geology of the region. In his quest to establish a fully integrated gem industry in Nepal, he brought in the first faceting machines, initially starting this endeavor with the unique tourmalines of the Hyakule Mine. He later helped found the Kathmandu-based company "Himalayan Gems, Nepal" and was instrumental in developing the ruby mines of Chumar and Ruyil.



Elise A. Skalwold is an Accredited Senior Gemologist, independent researcher, educator and author. She serves as Consulting Gemological Curator at her alma mater, Cornell University (B.Sc. 1982), and is Contributing Editor and author for the quarterly column *G&G Micro-World* featured in *Gems & Gemology*, the peer-reviewed scientific journal of the Gemological Institute of America (GIA). Ms. Skalwold is a Graduate Gemologist (G.G.) trained in residence at the Gemological Institute of America Robert Mouawad Campus located in Carlsbad, CA. While living in Thailand she worked in the famous gem markets of both Chanthaburi and Bangkok and pursued studies at the Gem & Jewelry Institute of Thailand for which she was subsequently elected a Fellow of the Gemmological Association of Great Britain (F.G.A.). She is an active member of the Society of Mineral Museum Professionals (SMMP), a world-wide network linking curators from large and small institutions from which members draw on combined expertise.

As well as having co-authored the 415 page book [The Edward Arthur Metzger Gem Collection](#) and presently working on a companion volume to it, Ms. Skalwold is an author/co-author of gemology and mineralogy papers featured in *InColor*, *Gems & Gemology*, *The Journal of Gemmology* and *Rocks & Minerals Magazine*. Passionate about gemology, she is actively involved in bringing this science into a university setting for the benefit of students and non-students alike – this is the quintessential theme of her paper “Scholarly Treasure: The Role of Gems in a University Setting” presented at the 2013 GIA-sponsored first-ever Gemological Session of the Geological Society of America (GSA) 125th Anniversary Annual Meeting. Her speaking engagements have recently included the New York Mineralogical Club (co-founded by George F. Kunz in 1886), the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium.

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