The allure, magic and mystery—A brief history of diamonds

by G. Smith*

Synopsis
This paper describes the allure of diamonds over time and highlights the magic and mystery of famous diamonds. Consideration is given to the effectiveness of marketing in the diamond industry. It is concluded that diamonds are held as cherished possessions, valued far above their real market price, retained as valued heirlooms, and widely used as a form of highly liquid currency. In order to sustain value, both from an investment and jewellery perspective, demand has been stimulated to keep pace with growing global supply while the illusion that ‘diamonds are forever’ has been fostered to ensure that most diamonds, once sold, do not re-enter the market.

Introduction
Diamonds are formed over billions of years, under intense heat and pressure, deep in the earth’s crust. Diamond, as a material, is a natural mineral consisting essentially of pure carbon crystallized in the isometric system. Diamond is the hardest substance occurring in natural form. Physically, diamond has a hardness of 10 on the Moh scale (9 000 on the Knoop indentation scale), a relative density of approximately 3,52 and a refractive index of 2,42.

Diamonds have impurities that result during crystallization comprising small amounts of elemental material, other than carbon, and minute inclusions, which can have a significant effect on physical properties. Diamond colour can be white (colourless), yellow, brown, green, orange, blue, pink, grey, black or red, depending on the presence, type and quantity of impurities or structural defects. As a mineral resource, diamonds are scarce and exhaustible. As a commodity, diamonds are luxury goods. Historically, diamonds were first mined in India over 3 000 years ago with the modern industry commencing with discoveries in South Africa in the late 19th century. Diamonds are presently mined in approximately 25 countries around the world, with the main producers (accounting for approximately 85 percent of the world’s supply of rough diamonds in 2002) being Botswana, Russia, Angola, South Africa, Canada, Namibia and Australia. The world’s leading diamond cutting centres are in Antwerp, Tel Aviv, Bombay and New York. Approximately 115 million carats of gem and industrial diamonds are recovered, of which about 40%-50% are classified as gem or near gem. The rough gem trade value during 2002 was US$8 billion, with sales generally keeping pace with global economic growth.

Each individual diamond is unique in nature. A rough diamond represents raw potential and huge risk as no one can be certain of the response of the stone to the cutter’s wheel. Every cut and polished diamond thus reflects the intricate work of a skilled master craftsman who has released this hidden potential.

Diamond geology and occurrence
Diamonds are sourced from two primary rock types: kimberlites and lamproites, both of which are highly potassic, magnesium rich (ultramafic), alkaline igneous rocks. Despite considerable debate on origins, it is generally agreed that these rock types served as vehicles that transported diamonds from the upper mantle to the crust. Diamonds are considered to have been formed from reactions involving reduction or oxidation of simple carbon, bearing compounds like carbon dioxide and methane. Most natural diamonds are believed to have been crystallized between 90 million and 3,3 billion years ago in suitable sub-crustal zones within the earth’s mantle from either of two rock types—peridotites or eclogites. It is thought that subsequent episodic intrusions of kimberlitic magma disaggregated these diamondiferous rocks with explosive force and transported the fragments, including diamonds, up to the crust from the

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deeper lying mantle. Disaggregation of these diamond-bearing fragments yielded indicator minerals such as red garnet, olivine, chrome-diopside, chromite and orthopyroxene, in the case of peridotite, and orange garnet and clinopyroxene from eclogite.

Not all kimberlitic rocks contain diamonds as the intrusions may not have passed through diamond-bearing zones; diamonds may have been displaced during transport or re-assimilated depending on intrusion rate. It is likely that geothermal gradient had an impact on diamond survival during transportation; diamondiferous kimberlites tend to be in regions underlain by the older Archaen craton. The probability of finding an economic diamond occurrence in kimberlites is estimated to be about 1:200.

Kimberlite and lamproite, generically known as kimberlites, were intruded into the earth’s crust as pipes (diatreme) and fissures (dykes or sills). Diamonds eroded from kimberlites and transported by rivers (ancient and recent) have been concentrated in alluvial deposits. Alluvial deposits commonly yield a high concentration of gem quality diamonds, which can be ascribed to the natural attrition of fractured or highly included stones during transportation. Diamonds that are ultimately transported by rivers to the coast occur in littoral and marine deposits extending from above the current shoreline to the edge of the continental shelf.

History

The name diamond arises from a Greek root of ‘adamas’ meaning unconquerable and indestructible. Diamonds have been a source of fascination for centuries. They are the hardest and most brilliant of all precious stones and have throughout history been a symbol of status, power, wealth, love, spirit and magical power.

Diamonds have been sought the world over, fought over, worshipped and used to cast love spells. Throughout history, they have been portrayed as magical objects of desire, protecting the wearer from harm, bringing good luck, embodying celestial spirits, and endowing the wearer with charm and the ability to attract others.

Diamonds have held a special allure for royalty, with monarchs and their cohorts competing with one another for possession of renowned gems, often using them as instruments of diplomacy. Until the 15th century only kings wore diamonds as they were considered a symbol of strength, courage and invincibility. Some went into battle wearing heavy leather breast plates studded with diamonds and other precious stones as it was believed that the wearer was thus imbued with supernatural powers as diamonds were considered to be fragments of stars and the teardrops of the gods.

During the Middle Ages more attention was paid to the value of diamonds, rather than the mystical powers surrounding them. Due to the heightened public awareness of the value of diamonds, mine owners perpetuated myths that diamonds were poisonous. This was to prevent the miners swallowing the diamonds in an attempt to smuggle them out of the mines. The popularity of diamonds surged during the Middle Ages, with the discovery of many large and famous stones in India, such as the Koh-i-Noor and the Blue Hope.

Over the centuries, diamonds have been associated with romance and legend and have developed unique status as the ultimate gift of love. It was said that Cupid’s arrows were tipped with diamonds with a magic that nothing else could equal. The Greeks believed the fire in the diamond reflected the constant flame of love. It wasn’t until 1477, when Archduke Maximilian of Austria gave a diamond ring to Mary of Burgundy, that the diamond engagement ring was introduced. At that time diamonds were considered talismans or charms that could enhance the love of a husband for a wife. From this time forward, the royal tradition of giving a diamond engagement ring began to be embraced by people around the world. Placing the ring on the third finger of the left hand dates back to the early Egyptian belief that the vena amoris, vein of love, runs directly from the heart to the tip of the third finger.

The cutting of diamonds into the complex faceted forms we now associate with these gems is actually a relatively recent practice. For centuries, rough diamonds were kept as talismans, and often not worn at all, though natural octahedral stones were sometimes set in rings. A Hungarian queen’s crown set with uncut diamonds, dating from approximately 1074, is perhaps the earliest example of diamond jewellery. We know that the royalty of France and England wore diamonds by the 1300s. In sixteenth century England, fashionable lovers etched romantic pledges on window-panes with the points of their diamond rings, known as scribbling rings.

The earliest record of diamond polishing (with diamond powder) is Indian, and probably dates from the fourteenth century. There are also contemporary references to the practice of diamond polishing in Venice. The earliest reference to diamond cutting is in 1550 in Antwerp, the most important diamond centre of the period, where a diamond-cutters’ guild was established.

Indian diamonds reached Venice by two Mediterranean routes: the southern route was by way of Aden, Ethiopia and Egypt, and the northern route was through Arabia, Persia, Armenia and Turkey. Following the discovery of the Cape sea route to India by the Portuguese, Antwerp flourished as a diamond centre, as the city was well situated to receive vast supplies of rough diamonds from Lisbon as well as from Venice.

After Spanish attacks on Antwerp in 1585, many diamond cutters relocated to Amsterdam. The Netherlands, with its liberal civil policies, attracted diamond craftsmen (including many Jews) who were fleeing religious persecution in Spain, Portugal, Germany and Poland, and the cutting industry flourished.

In the late1600s, as the English fortified their interest in India, which was still the world’s central diamond source, London became an important cutting centre. Later, London became the primary world market of diamond rough. Today, there are cutting centres all over the world, most notably in Belgium, Indian, Israel, South Africa and the USA.

Famous diamonds through history

There are a small number of diamonds in existence which, either on account of their size, beauty, ancient associations or current history, create a special interest. These famous diamonds often have complex and even controversial
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Value added blasting

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Value added blasting

The name of this diamond means ‘Mountain of Light’ and its history, dating back to 1304, is the longest of all famous diamonds. It was captured by the Rajahs of Malwa in the sixteenth century by the Mogul, Sultan Babur, and remained in the possession of later Mogul emperors. It may have been set in the famous Peacock Throne made for Shah Jahan. After the break-up of the Persian Empire the diamond found its way back to India. It may have travelled to Afghanistan with a bodyguard of Nadir Shah, who fled with the stone when the shah was murdered, to be later offered to Ranjit Singh of the Punjab in exchange for military help. After fighting broke out between the Sikhs and the British, The East India Company claimed the diamond as a partial indemnity, and then presented it to Queen Victoria in 1850. The jewel was displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851 where it was thought to display insufficient fire and it was decided to recut it from its original Indian form. The cutting reduced the stone from 1 986 carats to 108.93, but did not add much to the stone’s brilliance, and it is considered that the historical value of the diamond was diminished by the cutting. It was first worn by the Queen in a brooch. It was later set in the state crown, worn by Queen Alexandra and Queen Mary, and in 1937 it was worn by Queen Elizabeth for her coronation. It is kept in the Tower of London, with the other crown jewels.

The Star of Africa

At 530.20 carats, the Star of Africa (Cullinan I) diamond is the largest cut diamond in the world. Pear-shaped, with 74 facets, it is set in the royal sceptre (kept with the other crown jewels in the Tower of London). It was cut from the 3 106 carat Cullinan, the largest diamond crystal ever found. The Cullinan was recovered in South Africa in 1905 at the Premier Mine.

The Cullinan was cut by Joseph Asscher and Company of Amsterdam, who examined the enormous crystal for around six months before determining how to divide it. It eventually yielded the Star of Africa, the Lesser Star of Africa (Cullinan II – 317.40 carats), seven other major stones, and 96 smaller brilliant-cut stones of nearly flawless clarity. The principal diamonds are mounted in the British crown jewels. When the Cullinan was first discovered, certain signs suggested that it may have been part of a much larger crystal, but no discovery of the ‘missing half’ has ever been authenticated.

The Excelsior

The Excelsior is probably the second largest stone ever found at 995.2 carats. A high-clarity, blue-white stone, it was found in 1893 by a South African mine worker who picked it out of a shovelful of gravel, hid it from his overseer and delivered it directly to the mine manager. As a reward he received £500 and a horse equipped with saddle and bridle! The name Excelsior, meaning ‘higher’, came from the stone’s original shape—flat on one side and rising to a peak on the other. It was cut into 21 diamonds, the largest being 69.80 carats. The diamonds were sold to undisclosed parties. The Excelsior 1 was purchased in 1996 by Robert Mouawad. A smaller, 18 carat marquise stone cut from the Excelsior was displayed at the 1939 World’s Fair by De Beers.

The Great Mogul

Probably the largest Indian diamond, the Great Mogul, has an obscure history. It was first described by Jean Baptiste Tavernier following his legendary trips to the Orient, as being egg shaped and weighing about 280 carats. The rough stone was alleged to have been found at Kollur and to have weighed about 787 carats. Named after Shah Jehan, who built the Taj Mahal, its current whereabouts is not known, and it may no longer exist as a single large stone. It has in the past been confused with several other famous diamonds. The Koh-i-Noor may be part of the Great Mogul, the Great Mogul itself, or a recut version.

The Koh-i-Noor

According to some sources, the Koh-i-Noor diamond was found in the Godavari River in central India 4 000 years ago. The name of this diamond means ‘Mountain of Light’ and its history, dating back to 1304, is the longest of all famous diamonds. It was captured by the Rajahs of Malwa in the sixteenth century by the Mogul, Sultan Babur, and remained in the possession of later Mogul emperors. It may have been set in the famous Peacock Throne made for Shah Jahan. After the break-up of the Persian Empire the diamond found its way back to India. It may have travelled to Afghanistan with a bodyguard of Nadir Shah, who fled with the stone when the shah was murdered, to be later offered to Ranjit Singh of the Punjab in exchange for military help. After fighting broke out between the Sikhs and the British, The East India Company claimed the diamond as a partial indemnity, and then presented it to Queen Victoria in 1850. The jewel was displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851 where it was thought to display insufficient fire and it was decided to recut it from its original Indian form. The cutting reduced the stone from 1 986 carats to 108.93, but did not add much to the stone’s brilliance, and it is considered that the historical value of the diamond was diminished by the cutting. It was first worn by the Queen in a brooch. It was later set in the state crown, worn by Queen Alexandra and Queen Mary, and in 1937 it was worn by Queen Elizabeth for her coronation. It is kept in the Tower of London, with the other crown jewels.

The Darya-i-Nur

The Darya-i-Nur is a flawless, transparent pink stone, estimated at 175 to 195 carats. It is the largest and most remarkable gem in the crown jewels of Iran, and was one of the spoils of Persia’s attack on Delhi in 1739. It is now set in a gold frame with other diamonds, topped by a crown bearing lions with ruby eyes, holding scimitars. It was worn by the last Shah of Iran for his coronation in 1967.

The Hope

The ironically named Hope diamond (named for its purchaser, Henry Thomas Hope), a 44 carat blue diamond set as a pendant with sixteen white diamonds, may have had a long and illusory history before it became associated with a run of bad luck for its owners. It is thought to be a part of the famous Blue Tavernier diamond, brought to Europe from India in 1642. The Blue, purchased by King Louis XIV who had it cut to 67.50 carats from 112 carats to bring out its brilliance, was officially designated the ‘blue diamond of the crown’. The diamond was stolen during the French Revolution, and a smaller diamond of similar colour was sold in 1830 to Hope, an English banker.

After inheriting the diamond, Hope’s son lost his fortune. It was eventually acquired by an American widow, Mrs. Edward McLean, whose family then suffered a series of catastrophes: her only child was accidentally killed, the family broke up, Mrs McLean lost her money, and then committed suicide. When Harry Winston, the New York diamond merchant, bought the stone in 1949, many clients refused to touch the stone. This diamond fluoresces with a unique reddish colour when exposed to ultraviolet light and is on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington.

The Regent Diamond

Found on the Kistna River, India in 1701, this 410 carat stone was originally known as the Pitt diamond. The diamond was sold to Thomas Pitt who sent it to England to
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have it cut and polished to a cushion shaped diamond of 140 carats. In 1717 it was sold to the Duke of Orleans, regent of France, from which it gets the name Regent. The royals used the stone in many ways, including setting it in the crown of Louis XV, as a hair ornament of Queen Marie, and as an adornment in the hat of Marie Antoinette. After the French Revolution the stone was set in the hill of Napoleon Bonaparte’s sword. Napoleon’s wife, Marie Louise, carried the stone back to Austria upon his death. Later her father returned it to the French crown jewels and it remains in the French Royal Treasury at the Louvre.

**The Sancy Diamond**

The Sancy is a 55 carat diamond believed to have come from India and named in the 16th century after Seigneur de Sancy, a French ambassador to Turkey. This pale yellow stone that fluoresces yellow and pink, has become one of the most famous diamonds in history. The Sancy Diamond has been loaned to the French kings, Henry III and Henry IV, sold to the English king, James I, and travelled to Paris by way of James II. It has been used to raise money for war, lost during a battle, bought by a cardinal, willed to the French crown and stolen in a great heist of the French crown jewels. Later it was a part of the Napoleon court, purchased by a Bombay merchant, shown at the 1867 Paris Exhibition, finally making its way in 1906 to America’s Lady Astor as a wedding tiara. In 1978, the Astor family sold the Sancy Diamond, returning it to France again. It is now housed in the Louvre.

**The Taylor-Burton Diamond**

This 69.42 carat pear shaped diamond, cut from a rough stone weighing 240.8 carats, was recovered in the Premier Mine in 1966. In 1969 the diamond was auctioned and purchased by Cartier Inc at a record price of $1 050 000. Subsequently the diamond was bought by Richard Burton, for Elizabeth Taylor, and named the Taylor-Burton. The stone was displayed at Cartier’s with crowds of up to 6 000 people a day flocking to view the stone! The stone was sold in 1978 for $5 000 000 and has had several owners since then.

**The Centenary Diamond**

Discovered at the Premier Mine, in July 1986, the Centenary diamond weighed 599.10 carats in the rough. Together with a small select team, master cutter Gabi Tolkowsky took almost three years to complete its transformation into the world’s largest modern-cut, top-colour, flawless diamond. Possessing 247 facets, the aptly-named Centenary diamond weighs 273.85 carats, and is only surpassed in size by the 530.20 carat Great Star of Africa and the 317.40 carat Lesser Star of Africa, both of which are set into the British crown jewels. The Centenary Diamond was unveiled, appropriately at the Tower of London, in May 1991.

**The Kimberley**

Originally a 490 carat rough, this champagne coloured stone named after the Kimberley Mine in South Africa, was cut to 70 carats in 1921 and to its current emerald shape in 1958. The Kimberley was widely exhibited until it was sold to an undisclosed collector from Texas in 1971.

**The Star of Sierra Leone**

The third largest diamond to be recovered to date at 968.80 carats was eventually cut into seventeen exquisite individual diamonds, six of which are now set in the Star of Sierra Leone brooch.

**The Tiffany Diamond**

The largest golden diamond known today, at 128.51 carats, the Tiffany is cut in a unique cushion shape. It was given 90 facets, 32 more than the standard brilliant cut, and these extra facets give the great yellow diamond the effect of smouldering fire.

**The Transvaal Blue**

This 25 carat blue pear shape was cut from a rough found in the Premier Mine, South Africa. It was once owned by Baumgold Bros., but has been sold since then to an undisclosed buyer.

**The Jubilee Diamond**

Many gemmologists believe the 245.33 carat Jubilee is the most perfectly cut of all large diamonds. Its facets are so exact that it can be balanced on the culet point, which is less than two millimetres across.

**The Oppenheimer Diamond**

The 253.7 carat almost perfect yellow crystal was found in the Dutoitspan Mine, Kimberly, South Africa in 1964. It was acquired by Harry Winston, who presented it to the Smithsonian Institution in memory of the late Sir Ernest Oppenheimer of DeBeers Consolidated Mines.

**The Great Chrysanthemum**

This 104.15 carat pear-shaped diamond was cut from a 198.28 carat brown rough supposedly found in South Africa in 1963. Julius Cohen, a New York dealer, bought the rough and had it cut to reveal the diamond’s rich golden-brown, chrysanthemum-like colour. In 1971, the diamond was exhibited at the Kimberley Centenary Exhibition in South Africa. The diamond was also shown in the Diamonds International Academy Collection at the Diamond Pavilion in Johannesburg in 1965.

**The Idol’s Eye**

The flattened pear shaped 70.2 carat stone, the size of a bantam’s egg, was once set in the eye of an idol. Legend also tells that it was given as a ransom for Princess Rasheetah by the Sheikh of Kashmir to the Sultan of Turkey who had abducted her.

**The Hortensia Diamond**

This peach coloured, 20 carat stone was named after Hortense de Beauharnais, Queen of Holland, who was Josephine’s daughter and the step-daughter of Napoleon Bonaparte. The Hortensia has been part of the French crown jewels since Louis XIV acquired it, and is currently on display in the Louvre, Paris.

**The Dresden Green**

This 41 carat, almond-shaped stone is the largest apple-green diamond known. Although of Indian origin, nothing
was known of it until Frederick Augustus II of Saxony purchased the diamond at the Leipzig Fair in 1743 for about $150 000. Set in an elaborate shoulder knot, the stone was exhibited with the other crown jewels of Saxony in the famous Green Vaults under the Dresden Palace. After World War II, these gems were confiscated by the Russians, but were later returned to Dresden in 1958 and are once again on display in the palace.

Diamond magic

Diamonds were once believed to hold many magical, mystical and medicinal properties, with the phosphorescence of certain diamonds being considered proof of the stone's extraordinary powers. Diamonds were thought to calm the mentally ill, and to ward off devils, phantoms and even nightmares. They were supposed to impart virtue, generosity and courage in battle, and to cause lawsuits to be determined in the wearer's favour. A house or garden touched at each corner with a diamond was supposed to be protected from lightning, storms and blight.

The ancient Indians believed that the human soul could pass through various incarnations, animating gemstones as well as plants and animals. The ancient Hindus attributed so much power to these precious stones they went so far as to place diamonds in the eyes of some of their statues.

Plato, the Greek philosopher, shared the belief that gems were living beings, produced by a chemical reaction to vivifying astral spirits. Later philosophers divided precious stones into male and female specimens, and even claimed that they could 'marry' and reproduce!

In the Middle Ages it was believed that a diamond could heal if the sick person took it to bed and warmed it with his body, breathed upon it while fasting or wore it next to the skin. A diamond held in the mouth would correct the bad habits of liars and scolds, and diamonds were worn as a talisman against poisoning.

One anecdote, written during the Dark Ages by St Hildegard, relates how a diamond held in the hand while making a sign of the cross would heal wounds and cure illnesses. Diamonds were also ingested in the hope of curing sickness. During the early Middle Ages, Pope Clement VII unsuccessfully used this treatment in a bid to aid his recovery.

Diamond powder administered internally, however, was a legendary poison. The Turkish Sultan Bajazet (1447–1513) was perhaps murdered by his son, who slipped a large quantity of powdered diamond in his father's food. In the 16th century Catherine de Medici was famous for dealing out a quantity of powdered diamond in his father's food. In the 16th century Catherine de Medici was famous for dealing out death by diamond powder, and Benvenuto Cellini, the famous Italian goldsmith, described an attempt on his life by an enemy who ordered diamond powder to be mixed in his salad. However the lapidary responsible for grinding the diamond filched the stone, replacing it with powdered glass (thereby saving Cellini) and proving, once again, the allure of diamonds.

The association of diamonds with poison may have been promoted to discourage the practice of stealing diamonds by swallowing them, particularly during mining.

Marketing

Diamonds are not a commodity like gold; gem diamonds are a pure luxury item with very little intrinsic value. Their worth comes largely from the perceptions of those who buy and wear them. This perception has been carefully structured, building on the glamour of history, conspicuous consumption, perceived scarcity and romanticism—all enhanced by skilful marketing.

The marketing slogan ‘a diamond is forever’ has become a part of modern language, a concept that in popular imagination links the symbolism of the indestructible diamond to the ideal of eternal love, as enduring as the precious stone it describes.

The popularity of diamonds as an adornment and as a symbol of enduring love is the product of a well-structured and executed marketing programme to ensure steady consumption and retention of gem diamonds. The marketing process was predicated on the concept that consumers would perceive diamonds, not merely as precious stones that could be bought or sold according to economic conditions, but rather as an inseparable part of courtship and married life.

The process was initiated in the late 1930s when De Beers engaged N.W. Ayer, an advertising agency, to create a new image for diamonds among Americans. At this time the tradition of giving diamond rings for engagements in America had survived the Depression, although the demand was for smaller, poorer quality stones. The subsequent marketing initiatives have become a part of modern history, with diamonds being promoted in the motion picture industry as well as by individual stars, by royalty and by a variety of industry bodies.

Epstein reported the observations of Dr James Bossard, a Professor of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania: ‘...The engagement ring... is a symbol of the ability to get your man in the competitive race... It has further features that it is not too easily given (too expensive), it is visible (it sparkles), it is permanent (other things wear out), and it advertises the economic status of the giver... Large scale society makes for impersonal relations. One result of this is to place marked emphasis upon outward manifestations and visible evidence.'

The giving of diamond engagement rings has become firmly rooted in modern society and widely spread as Western values are adopted in the steady ebb and flow of globalization.

The following extract from an advertising campaign illustrates the marketing approach.

‘The instant two people decide to marry is probably the most intimate and important moment of their lives. It marks the moment two become one forever. As a gift of love, diamonds evoke the romance and magic of traditions that have spanned centuries.’

Conclusion

Diamonds are held as cherished possessions, valued far above their real market price, retained as valued heirlooms and widely used as a form of highly liquid currency.

In order to sustain value, both from an investment and
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jewellery perspective, demand (think of the eternity ring, the acceptability of women buying diamonds for themselves, the rise of men’s jewellery, and the millennium diamond) has been stimulated to keep pace with growing global supply while the illusion that ‘diamonds are forever’ has been fostered to ensure that most diamonds, once sold, do not re-enter the market.

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References


New century ushers in new name for diamond mine*

Cullinan—De Beers Premier Mine, which has become synonymous with the slogan ‘A century of famous diamonds’ in celebration of its centenary, will usher in the new era with a new name.

Premier Mine, as it has been known for the past 100 years’ will now be known as the Cullinan Diamond Mine. The name change was announced by General Manager of Cullinan Diamond Mine, Hans Gastrow, at a staff function attended by more than 2 000 employees held on Friday, 14 November as part of the mine’s centenary celebrations. ‘It gives me great pleasure to announce the name change to the most important stakeholder, the employees of Cullinan Diamond Mine’, said Mr Gastrow.

The name change is aimed at recognizing the brand that has become associated with Premier Mine. The name of the village of Cullinan has its beginnings in 1903 when it was named after the pioneer and entrepreneur Sir Thomas Cullinan. It later came to the fore again when in 1905 the largest pure rough diamond was discovered and named the Cullinan Diamond. Further, the Cullinan Diamond was to have a significant role for Premier Mine and De Beers when it came to be associated with the British crown jewels. The name change will now place emphasis on the link of this great diamond mine with what is now the famous Cullinan brand.

The Cullinan brand that has been associated with

Premier Mine and the village of Cullinan has contributed Cullinan towards fast becoming a tourist destination of note. In this light, the mine has been challenged to adapt and strive towards being a proactive corporate company. This has also compelled the company to think beyond its mining activities and bottom line and to commit to its corporate social responsibility within the community in which it operates. Tourism and tourism development are thus catalysts to allow for job creation, economic development and empowerment which would result with the mine upholding its best practice status and contribute towards it not only being a winning company but a more responsible corporate citizen.

The Cullinan brand and the profile of the company can thus be put to good effect in discharging responsibilities and driving the various programmes identified, that is, promote Cullinan Diamond Mine as a preferred tourist destination of choice, which will lead to increase in job creation levels and sustainable economic empowerment in the greater Cullinan region.

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