



Diamonds: Source-to-Use, 2018



This edition of the *Journal* is dedicated to the Diamonds: Source-to-Use conference held during June 2018 at the Birchwood Conference Centre in Johannesburg. It was attended by 107 delegates, some of whom came from as far away as Botswana, Namibia, Canada, the UK, and Belgium. It was the seventh conference in the series, which targets the full spectrum of the diamond pipeline from exploration through to sales and marketing. 2018 saw a renewed enthusiasm in the diamond mining sector in Southern Africa, even if it was tempered by tough economic conditions and political uncertainties. The theme of the 2018 conference, *Thriving in Changing Times*, bears testimony to how large and small companies are adapting to these circumstances, addressing risk and applying advanced technologies to well-tested exploration, mining, and processing methods.



Ernie Blom (Blom Diamonds), one of the keynote speakers, on the state of the diamond market, Thulo Khati, (Petra Diamonds) discussing aspects of kimberlite/country-rock contact delineation at Finsch Diamond Mine, and Andy MacDonald (SRK Consulting) presenting details of the valuation of diamond projects at the Diamond Reporting Workshop

There were 26 presentations of the highest scientific quality, eight of which were delivered by international delegates. In addition to the geological, metallurgical, and mining papers that formed the backbone of the conference, various presentations also featured ideas on the fundamental aspects of financing diamond projects, as well as a fascinating glimpse into the world of laboratory-grown (synthetic) diamonds. One of the highlights of the conference was the presentation by Norman Lock and Stuart Vercoe of the fascinating history of the discovery of Jwaneng Diamond Mine – the flagship operation of Debswana.



Jwaneng in the 1970s (photo courtesy of Stuart Vercoe) and more recently in April 2018 (photographer unknown) showing the progress in nearly 50 years of mining



The conference also featured a workshop (20 registrants) dealing with public reporting compliance issues around diamond projects and three technical site visits. A full-day visit was made to Cullinan Diamond Mine (courtesy of Petra Diamonds), where 13 delegates were able to see both the underground workings and the upgraded processing plant. Half-day site visits were made to Debtech and Ruzow Diamond Cutting Works.

The Symposium proceedings were provided electronically to delegates and are available to the industry at large on <https://www.saimm.co.za>. The success of the conference was enhanced by the generous sponsorship of Imexsar (Pty) Ltd, the MSA Group, Geo-Explore Store and De Beers Technologies – South Africa.

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