



Henry Grossbard Leaves a Radiant Legacy

On April 23, 2005, 79-year-old Henry Grossbard was walking across Sinatra Drive near his home in Hoboken, N.J., when he was struck by a vehicle authorities believe to be a Honda Odyssey minivan. When Henry Grossbard died that night, the Diamond District lost an important character in the fabric and history of the diamond industry. Grossbard had worked in the District since the 1940s and is credited with inventing the radiant cut for diamonds.

A native of Vienna, Grossbard emigrated to the United States during World War II. The 16-year-old was taught diamond cutting, together with his father Jacob and sister Esther by a cousin who had previously immigrated to America. He quickly gained a reputation for fine

craftsmanship, and as that reputation grew, he started buying rough for his own account. He partnered with another cutter, Alan Gilbert, to

form his first company, G&G Diamonds, which took offices at 15 West 47th St., the building that still houses the Grossbard family business, RCDC Corporation.

Grossbard was quoted as saying, "It takes years to develop the instincts and the confidence necessary to cut such an expensive item." His creative abilities never rested. He even created a special round stone cut in honor of her majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand for her 60th birthday in 1992.

A visionary in the field, his legacy began when he developed the "brilliantized step cut" that he used to create the radiant cut. He combined the rectangular step cut faceting traditionally used in rectangular shapes with the triangular and kite-shaped brilliant cut faceting of a round diamond.

"Since I was always a fan of this elegant shape, I



Radiant cut inventor Henry Grossbard, above and far left, devoted his life to diamonds and leaves behind a legacy that has been taken up by his family, led by son Stan, left.

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wanted to create a new cut that retained the shape of a traditional emerald cut, but infused it with the brilliance people expected of their diamonds," Grossbard told New York Diamonds.

The radiant cut was launched on several fronts in 1977, including an advertising campaign with Van Cleef & Arpels in New York.

"When Van Cleef ran ads promoting the Radiant Cut, they lent the full legitimacy needed to enhance the marketability of my father's cut," Henry's son Stan Grossbard explains. Stan's father also launched the Radiant Cut in Hong Kong at a grand opening of a high end jewelry store known as Lane Crawford's Jewellery Boutique. Additionally, he partnered with fine jewelry stores in the United States to promote the cut.

Those on 47th Street who knew Henry Grossbard remember his friendly dimpled smile and signature cap, as well as his positive outlook on life. In fact, his adventurous spirit may have been the factor that enabled him to create a new diamond cut before computer simulations existed. Mr. Grossbard once explained that his experimentation could only be done on fine diamonds which gave the smallest distortions. In an article with the China Morning Post in 1977, he compared the process to making a sculpture, where the experienced craftsman must visualize the finished stone from the rough.



Henry Grossbard with the Queen of Thailand, for whom he created a special round cut stone in 1992.

Over the years the diamond industry has had many ups and downs, and in his sixty years on 47th Street, Grossbard experienced all of them. Even during the difficult years of the early 1980's, he never lost his love for the diamond trade.

In 1988, Stan gave up his law practice to help his father continue to build the business.

"My father always told me that it was important to have a trade, and he gave me the gift of understanding the craftsmanship," says Stan. "My sister Rebecca and I, as well my wife, Dawn, and our extended family at RCDC Corp., are more committed than ever to carry on his legacy.

"Going into the business was the best decision I ever made. It gave me an opportunity to learn from the master, and to get to know my Dad better than most children get to know their parents."

Stan has taken the company to new levels by harnessing the "Original Radiant Cut" brand. He has focused the company on maintaining his father's legacy - radiants worthy of Henry Grossbard's original vision. The company boasts strong partnerships with well established jewelry stores throughout the United States. Rebecca has also been involved with the business for several years, developing relationships with stores on the West Coast. Dawn brings a marketing background and has assisted with the branding of the Original Radiant Cut. RCDC also has a valuable family of long-term staff members.

"My father invented the cut and gave me the knowledge and eye for realizing the essence of his invention," Stan says. "My father's passing has made us more determined than ever to continue providing the marketplace with the most stunning Radiant Cuts available."

The Hoboken Police Department is still searching for the driver and the silver or light gray, late-model Honda Odyssey that struck Henry Grossbard. The minivan most likely has damage to the front portion and windshield. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Hoboken Police by calling (201) 420-2106. **DDN**