

Black Star of Queensland



Guernsey's

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The 6 largest historically known sapphires in the world are:

1	Black Star of Queensland	733 carats	On Loan to The Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto, Canada)
2	Star of India	563 carats	J.P.Morgan Collection, American Museum of Natural History (New York, USA)
3	Peter The Great's Nose (Russia)	548 carats	Green Vault Museum (Dresden, Germany)
4	Queen Marie of Romania	478 carats	Private collection
5	Logan	423 carats	National Gem Collection, Smithsonian Museum (Washington, USA)
6	Catherine the Great	337 carats	Diamond Fund, The Kremlin Armory Museum (Moscow, Russia)

Characteristics of the stone

The 733-carat Black Star sapphire is an oval-shaped gemstone cut as a cabochon like all other star sapphires, but the rays or legs of the star are not as long as the normal blue star sapphire and other colored star sapphires, which extend from the center to the girdle. The rays in blue star sapphires are also fairly thin and narrow and tapers towards the girdle. On the other hand, the rays of this black star sapphire are shorter and thicker extending about half way from the center towards the girdle. The rays are not of equal length; some are shorter than the others. However, the center of the star is much bigger and brighter than the normal star sapphires. The appearance of the bright six-rayed star in a totally black background is amazingly beautiful. The beauty of the stone is further enhanced by its white gold setting in which the large black stone is surrounded by a row of 35 pear-shaped smaller white diamonds. The color contrast is indeed breathtaking. Like all other star sapphires the star moves with changing angles of illumination and observation.

The black star sapphire like all other sapphires belong to the group of minerals known as corundum, a crystalline form of aluminum oxide (Al_2O_3), that is after diamond, the hardest known natural substance, with a hardness of 9 on the mohs scale. Corundum crystallizes in the hexagonal system, resulting in pyramidal or rounded barrel shapes. Like diamonds, corundum was formed billions of years ago deep inside the earth, below the earth's crust and in the mantle, under conditions of high temperature and pressure. Subsequently, when the magma cooled down it formed igneous rock deposits and the corundum was incorporated in these deposits. Later as the igneous rocks were transformed into sedimentary and metamorphic rocks the corundum was also incorporated into these rocks. Continuous weathering and erosion of the rocks over millions of years released the corundum crystals which were washed down the hills and deposited in the flood plains of rivers as alluvial deposits.

In the pure state corundum is colorless, like pure diamonds which are also colorless. However the incorporation of trace quantities of impurities in the crystal structure of corundum, causes a wide range of colors, which includes all the colors of the rainbow such as violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red and pink. Others colors include gray, brown and black. All colors of corundum except red are known as sapphires. Red corundum is known as ruby. The common color in sapphires is blue. Other colors such as violet, green, yellow, orange and pink are known as fancy colored sapphires. The blue color in sapphire is caused by trace quantities of iron and titanium. Green color is caused by traces of nickel, orange color by traces of chromium and iron.

The star effect or asterism in star sapphires is caused by abundant microscopic inclusions mainly rutile, a natural form of titanium oxide (TiO_2), aligned in a three fold pattern inside the stone that reflects the light entering the stone through its dome shaped face, into a six-rayed star pattern.

Accidental discovery of the rough stone and its use as a door stop

The Black Star of Queensland was a gem of enormous size weighing over a thousand carats and once thought to be worthless and used as a door stop for over a decade, but today has turned out to become one of the priceless gemstones in the world.

The enormous gemstone was discovered accidentally in 1938 by a young boy of around 12 years named Roy Spencer when he was playing around in the claim where his father used to prospect for sapphires, known as the Reward claim, which lies within the Anakie Sapphire fields in the Rubyvale area, in the State of Queensland. The Anakie Sapphire fields is the largest of all sapphire mining areas in Australia with an area of around 900 sq. km. Immediately after picking up the enormous black crystal the boy lost no time in running back home to show his accidental find, to his father Mr. Harry Spencer, who was one of the pioneering miners of the central Queensland gemfields. Mr. Harry Spencer was not impressed, and after examining the enormous black crystal just threw it aside, saying it was just a large black crystal. Perhaps it was not known at that time that sapphires could also exist as black gemstones. The enormous black crystal was then fortunately used as a door stop, in the Harry Spencer household for around a decade, without being thrown away as something worthless.

Realization of the true value of the stone

After about a decade Mr Harry Spencer came to know that sapphires do indeed exist sometimes as black gemstones, and may be worth quite a fortune depending on its quality. He subjected the humble black stone, that had served him well for almost a decade as a door stop, to thorough examination and realized that it may be worth a fortune. He weighed the stone and found that it weighed an enormous 1,156 carats. Mr Spencer was quite sure of the quality of the stone, but was not experienced enough to detect that the stone could eventually be transformed into a star sapphire. The humble door stop that was treated with scant respect for almost a decade, was suddenly elevated to a higher status, and began receiving royal treatment from the poor miner. The gemstone was washed well and wiped and kept in a safe place, until a prospective buyer could be found.

The sale of the rough black stone to Harry Kazanjian

The word got around quickly that an enormous gem-quality rough black sapphire was available for sale, and in 1947, the Armenian-born jeweler Harry Kazanjian traveled all the way from his adopted home town of Los Angeles, in California, to have a look at the sapphire with a view of purchasing it. Harry Kazanjian examined the enormous black stone and was impressed, and immediately started negotiations with Harry Spencer for the purchase of the gemstone. Finally Harry Kazanjian agreed to pay \$ 18,000 for the gemstone, which Harry Spencer accepted. The agreed amount was duly paid, and the black stone which had remained in the Spencer household for almost 10 years, changed hands.

Cutting of the rough black stone into a black star sapphire

With the money realized Harry Spencer was able to construct a new house for his family. Harry Kazanjian carried the rough gemstone to Los Angeles, where he studied the sapphire for at least two months. Through his long years of experience in examining rough stones Harry Kazanjian was convinced of the hidden asterism in the rough stone, and accordingly cut the stone as an oval cabochon, sacrificing 423 carats of the rough stone. The finished black sapphire that weighed 733 carats, revealed a brilliant six-pointed star when exposed to natural or artificial light. Like all other star sapphires the star was more pronounced when the source of light, such as direct rays of sunlight or light originating from a pen torch, was directed straight at the dome-shaped face of the stone. Cutting a star sapphire is an expert job, and needs

experience and special skills. A wrong judgment or an error may result in a failed star, or a star with some rays missing or star displaced to a side. The estimated value of the expertly cut black star sapphire was \$ 1 million in the year 1949.

The black star sapphire brings luck to the Kazanjian family

Since the purchase of the black star sapphire in 1947, the business of the Kazanjian family boomed, and they eventually became one of the leading gem dealers in the world. The family attributed the success achieved in their business to the luck brought in by the black star sapphire. Thus the Kazanjian family held on to the black gemstone for a long time in spite of several attractive offers to purchase the stone. During the period of their ownership the Kazanjian family was generous enough to loan the priceless gemstone to the Natural History Museum of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, in 1969, to be put on display together with the Hope diamond, the largest blue diamond in the world, which is of Indian origin, but presently belongs to the Institution.

Sale of the Black Star of Queensland by the Kazanjian family

The Kazanjian family retained the Black Star of Queensland for a long time not only because of its mystical value as a stone of good fortune, but also because of its rare and unique beauty as the largest black star sapphire in the world. However they eventually parted with the stone, when they received an attractive offer from a customer who had previously seen the stone as a young man and was now desperate to own it, as he had promised his mother at that time that he would purchase the Black Star for her one day. The customer who wished to remain anonymous was very eager to fulfill his childhood promise to his beloved mother. Details of the transaction such as purchase price, the date of purchase, the identity of the buyer etc had not been disclosed.

In the year 2002, the Black Star of Queensland was sold again by its anonymous owner to another anonymous buyer, who became the fourth owner of the stone after its original owner Mr. Harry Spencer. The sale price of the sapphire was not disclosed but the estimated value of the sapphire at that time was around \$ 100 million.

Display of the Black Star Sapphire of Queensland at the Royal Ontario Museum

In the year 2007, the new owner of the Black Star Sapphire of Queensland, who purchased it in 2002 from its anonymous owner, loaned the rare gemstone to the Royal Ontario Museum of Canada, for an exhibition organized in connection with the Architectural Opening and Building Dedication of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal on June 2nd 2007, an ultra modern building designed by the architect Daniel Libeskind. This is the second time the unique gemstone had gone on display after its first display in 1969, at the Natural History Museum of the Smithsonian Institution, at Washington DC. The Black Star of Queensland was exhibited with the surrounding band of 35 smaller white diamonds, and was the centerpiece of a general exhibit, that explained all aspects of the gemstone known as sapphires, such as their chemistry and structure, how sapphires were formed in nature, the distribution of sapphires in the world, the mining of sapphires, and the importance attached to sapphires in different cultures.



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PREPARED FOR:

Mr. Jack Armstrong and
Mrs. Gabrielle Grohe

NUMBER: 328-235

DATE: 10/26/07

PAGE: 1 of 1

VALUATION FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES

ONE PLATINUM, BLACK STAR SAPPHIRE AND DIAMOND BROOCH

The handmade piece titled the "Black Star of Queensland" contains:

One (1) oval cabochon cut natural Black Star Sapphire weighing 733 carats and measuring approx. 55 x 45 x 25 mm., with a well defined star, good cut. According to historical records, this stone is the largest gem quality Sapphire in the world.

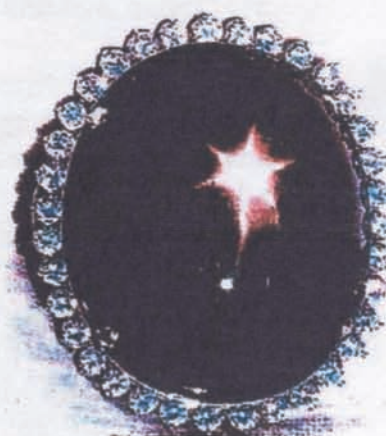
Thirty-five (35) round brilliant cut Diamonds, total weight approx. 12.00 ct., I – J colors, SI₁ – I₁ clarities, good cuts.

The Star Sapphire is prong set in the center and surrounded by prong set Diamonds.

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Charles I. Carmona, G.G.
Gemologist/Appraiser



The image is approx. actual size.

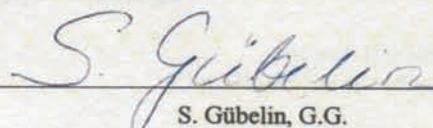
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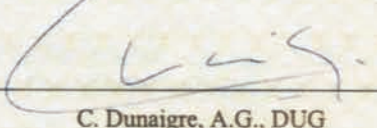
**Duplicate of Original Report
dated 4 September 2003**

No.	0309003
Datum . Date	4 September 2003
Gegenstand Objet Item	One polished gemstone (tested insofar as mounting permits), set in a white metal pendant with thirty-five round diamonds (identified at random).
Gewicht Poids Weight	733 ct (as indicated by the client)
Schliff Taille Cut	oval, cabochon
Abmessungen Dimensions Measurements	approximately 56.0 x 46.9 x 26.3 mm
Transparenz Transparence Transparency	opaque
Farbe Couleur Colour	dark brown to black
IDENTIFIKATION IDENTIFICATION IDENTIFICATION	NATURAL BLACK STAR-SAPPHIRE
Bemerkungen Commentaires Comments	No indications of thermal enhancement (NTE). This gemstone displays a distinct asterism (star effect).



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(213) 274-8118 • 272-8191

March 9, 1989

Kazanjian Foundation
9808 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

1. One Sapphire and Diamond Set Attachment

1 Large Rare Black Star Sapphire with well defined Star,
Oval Cabochon

Measuring - Length: 55.03mm
Width: 55.03mm
Depth: 25.06

Weight Uncut: 1165 Carats
Weight Cut & Polished: 733 Carats
Origin: Australia
Color: Black

Cut and Polished by Harry Kazanjian

Encircled with 35 Brilliant Cut Diamonds
I-J Color Grading SI₁ to I₁ Clarity

Total Approximate Weight: 12.00 Carats

Custom Made 18K White Gold Mounting

This Sapphire is Known as The Black Star of Queensland.
The Gem is the Largest Black Star Sapphire in the World.

MUSEUM PIECE

Excerpts from interview with Dr. Shihaan Mohammed Larif and the Gem's owner held April 1st, 2009

Comments:

Question:

After reading the article on the Black Sapphire of Queensland and the amount of money that it brought in 2002, I wanted to ask Dr. Shihaan (the world recognized gems expert, author of encyclopedia "Gems") of his opinion what the "Black Sapphire of Queensland" would be appraised for today?

Answer of Dr Shihaan:

Thank you very much for the question regarding the Black Star Sapphire.

Actually it is not known for how much the stone was sold by the anonymous owner in 2002. The estimate of 100 million dollars was quoted by several leading newspapers.

Considering the enormous size and the perfect star, I am not surprised at the estimate.

Take a look at the current prices of black star sapphires: These are the prices of smaller black star sapphires.

>1.0 carats 3 to 10 US\$ per carat

>1.0–4.99 carats 10 to 50 US\$ per carat

5.0 carats + 30 to 100 US\$ per carat (golden stars may reach US\$ 200 per carat).

The Black Star of Queensland is the only large Black Star Sapphire in the World, it is the only one of its kind in the world. There are numerous large star rubies and large star blue sapphires in many museums and private collections of the world.

The usual sizes of black star sapphires is less than 5 carats, making the black star of Queensland an extremely rare gemstone. It is highly unlikely that another one of this size will be found even in the future.

In my opinion it is difficult to estimate the present value, being an extraordinary stone it can't be compared to market value, because black sapphire stones of such enormous size and quality are not available in the market. The price will be determined by the highest bidder (auction) for the gemstone.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions/comments on this gemstone or any other gemstones/diamonds.

Tel: +94724843040

Internet Stones.com

No184

Millennium City

Sri Lanka

SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 29, 1949

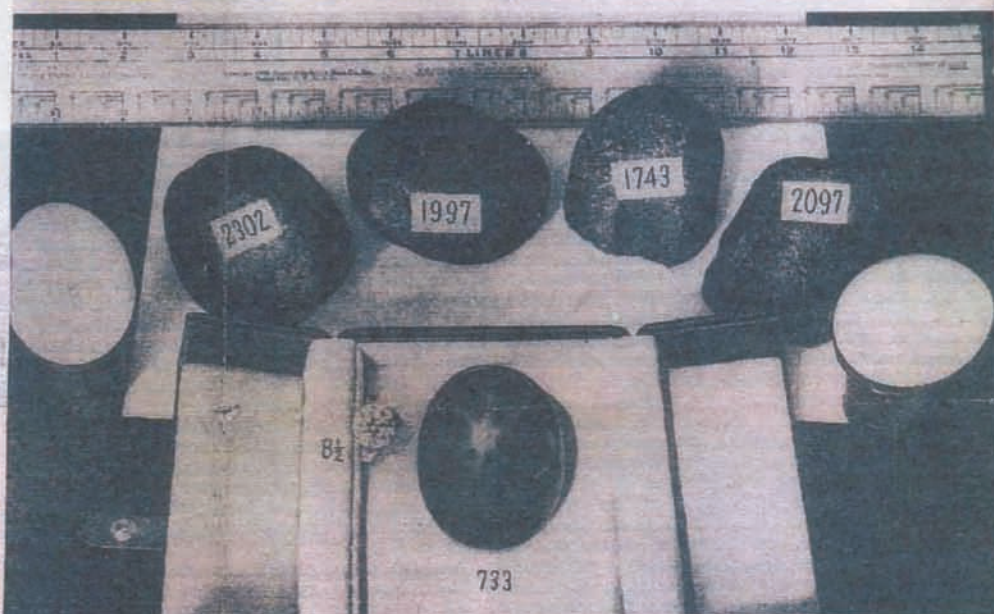
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THE BLACK STAR
OF QUEENSLAND

Known to be the largest star sapphire in the world, it has been displayed across the American continent in fine jewelry houses and museums. Harry Kazanjian and William Rudnick cut the stone which was completed on 13 March 1948. Weighing 733 carats, it is 170 carats larger than the 563.35 carat Star of India in the J. P. Morgan collection in New York's Museum of Natural History.



FORTUNE IN GEMS—Above are the five largest sapphires in the world. They weigh a total of more than 9000 carats. For comparison, diamond in the ring along-

side polished 733-carat Black Star of Queensland, foreground, is 8½ carats. All the stones are larger than a hen's egg. Sapphires are now in Los Angeles.

Times photo

STAR OF QUEENSLAND

City Is Now the Home of Five Largest Sapphires

BY ED AINSWORTH

A sequel to the Arabian Nights is being unfolded in Los Angeles. Suddenly, as though served by Magic Carpet, this city has become Bagdad, Mecca and Kashmir all rolled into one in regard to precious stones.

The five largest sapphires ever found—valued at more than \$1,000,000—have come here to stay in a fabulous treasure that outdoes anything which could be produced by the Maharajahs of India or the Sultans of Persia.

Almost 9000 carats are involved in the five mammoth gems, which would equal in weight whole stacks of rubies, pearls, emeralds and diamonds from Oriental palaces.

All From Australia

Arrival of the precious stones makes this city the new "big gem" capital of the earth.

Mystery surrounds even the original ownership of some of the gigantic sapphires. But they all are from the famous Anakie sapphire fields in Central Queensland, Australia.

They have been acquired and brought here by Harry and James Kazanjian of 220 W 5th St. for a very particular purpose.

This purpose is to confirm the title of the only one of the five stones which has been cut, as "the largest star sapphire in the world."

Physically Larger

The claim of the Black Star of Queensland which weighed 1155 carats when rough and now is 733 carats in its finished form has not been challenged since the pub-

licing of the stone was completed here March 13, 1948, by Harry Kazanjian. It is, for instance, 200 carats larger than the Star of India in the J. P. Morgan collection.

But the Kazanjians learned that in private hands in Australia were some sapphires which actually were physically larger. The question was: Did these other sapphires contain the rare chemical formation which would make of them true "star sapphires?"

Long Quest

They did not want to take the chance of having their magnificent creation, Star of Queensland, challenged, although there was only one chance in a thousand that another rough gem of similar size would contain a star.

They therefore set out quietly to acquire all of the known existing black or blue corundum stones exceeding the original size of the Black Star of Queensland.

It was a long and tedious quest.

Desert Country

In the first place, the Anakie fields are 200 miles inland across desert country from the little town of Rockhampton in Queensland. They were dealing through a trusted agent, but communication was slow and the process of acquiring the gems a delicate and diplomatic job.

The quest narrowed eventually to four stones after an accidental circumstance brought world-wide attention to the subject of star sapphires.

Mrs. Roy McKinney of central Queensland went on a picnic Sunday Sept. 26, 1948, and stubbed her toe.

Gigantic Rock

What she stubbed her toe on was a gigantic sapphire weighing about a pound and as big as a Rhode Island red's egg.

When cable dispatches about this discovery were seen by the Kazanjians in Los Angeles they immediately put their agent to work to try to acquire the gem. The discovery, incidentally, was made only 300 yards from the site where the Black Star of Queensland was found.

They got the stone all right and it turned out to weigh 1896.5 carats.

From Roy Spencer, the son of their agent, Harry Spencer, they acquired another weighing 2097 carats.

Mysterious Source

Then, after months of ticklish negotiations, they talked a rancher into selling the champion of all the sapphires, a splendid specimen weighing 2302 carats.

From a mysterious source which their agent did not identify they obtained still another which, although smaller, may be the most valuable of the group aside from the polished Black Star itself. This is a 1743-carat dark blue gem. Two of the others are dark blue and one is black.

One by one, the stones were flown from Australia to Los Angeles, all except the 2302-carat monster which was too heavy for

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Los Angeles Times

On The Internet: WWW.LATIMES.COM

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2002

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Liz Smith

\$50-million sapphire is on market

NEW YORK — The world's **biggest, most valuable sapphire** is in private hands after 50 years, and the rare, 733-carat "Black Star of Queensland" is for sale from antiques curator Jack Armstrong in Beverly Hills.

It's said to be worth \$50 million as the only one of its kind. The Smithsonian exhibited it for

17 years after it was discovered in Australia by Mrs. Roy McKinney, who, in the '30s, stubbed her toe on the stone, which is larger than a hen's egg and is now circled by 35 cut diamonds.

The sale of the Black Star sapphire is a huge event in the gem market. To have a stone like this come on the market is tanta-

mount to having a Raphael painting suddenly emerge. It is one of a handful of precious gems like the Krupp Diamond, owned by Elizabeth Taylor.

It is larger than both the engagement ring of Princess Diana and Louis IV's 137-karat crown jewel. It will be exhibited before passing into private hands.

News Releases

The Black Star Sapphire of Queensland

New ROM exhibit will display the enormous six-point star sapphire for the first time in nearly three decades

Discover the science and fascinating story surrounding the stunning Black Star of Queensland with the Royal Ontario Museum's (ROM) new exhibit, ***The Black Star Sapphire of Queensland***. This brilliant six-point star sapphire, among the largest known black sapphires in the world, will be on display from **June 2 to December 2, 2007** in the Samuel European Galleries' new south link to the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal on Level 3.

As part of the Architectural Opening and Building Dedication of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal on June 2, 2007, the ROM will present the gemstone, known as the Black Star of Queensland, to the Canadian public for the very first time. The exhibit will also mark the first time the sapphire has been on public display anywhere in the world since 1969, when it was at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The exhibit complements the brilliant crystalline forms of the Lee-Chin Crystal as well as keeps public interest high as the Museum and visitors await the new Teck Cominco Suite of Earth Sciences Galleries, expected to open the winter of 2008/09.

"The Royal Ontario Museum is pleased to showcase the beautiful Black Star of Queensland, and tell its fascinating story," says the ROM's Director and CEO William Thorsell. "That this exquisite sapphire was once used as a doorstep is remarkable. After nearly three decades, the Black Star of Queensland will once again be on display for not only the Canadian public but for tourists from all over the world visiting the Museum."

The exhibit focuses exclusively on the Black Star of Queensland. Except for a band of 35 diamonds surrounding the sapphire, no other artefacts will accompany this exquisite gemstone. The chemistry and structure of sapphires, how sapphires are formed in nature, where and how they are mined, and their significance in various cultures will all be explained in the exhibit.

The original gem crystal, weighing 1156 carats, was found on the Reward Claim, in the Rubyvale area, in the State of Queensland, Australia. The Reward Claim lies within the Anakie Sapphire Fields, the largest of several sapphire mining areas in Australia, covering close to 900 square kilometres.

The dazzling sapphire was discovered by a young boy named Roy Spencer in the 1930s on the surface of the Reward Claim; he ran back to show his father Mr. Harry Spencer (one of the earliest miners in the Central Queensland Gemfields) who remarked, "Oh yes, a large black crystal" and threw it down by the back door. Some accounts claim the stone was used as a doorstep for many years. Neither realized the value of the sapphire until it was sold uncut in 1947 to jeweller Harry Kazanjian. It was later cut and polished, revealing a brilliant six-point star sapphire weighing 733 carats. In 2002, the gem was purchased by the present owners.

"The striking Black Star of Queensland exhibits an optical property known as *asterism*," says Kimberly Tait, the ROM's Associate Curator of Mineralogy. "This visual 'star effect' in the sapphire is captivating; it follows you as you move around the stone. It takes the talent of an experienced jeweller to cut a stone in such a way as to reveal the star."

Sapphires are found as loose crystals in gravel deposits that occur at surface, but have been mined to depths of 20 metres. Over the course of thousands to millions of years, sapphires were concentrated together with other heavy minerals in certain areas by the action of wind, gravity and water, which tended to carry away lighter minerals.

Star sapphires have been referred to by many cultures as a "stone of Destiny", as the three bands of the star were believed to represent faith, hope and destiny. The English explorer Sir Richard Francis Burton carried with him a large star sapphire, referring to it as his talisman, for it brought him influence and good luck in his travels. Star sapphires were also believed to help ward off ill omens and the Evil Eye.

Sapphire to star at ROM

May 17, 2007

Debra Black

The Black Star of Queensland will be placed on public display for the first time since 1969 when a new addition opens at the Royal Ontario Museum on June 2, 2007.

When Harry Spencer, a sapphire miner, first saw the black rock his young son Roy brought to their home in Queensland, Australia in the 1930s he is said to have remarked – "Oh yes, a large black crystal!" The story goes that he then threw it by the back door and used it as a doorstep.

But this was no ordinary large black crystal – this rock turned out to be one of the largest black star sapphires ever found, coveted by many and eventually worn by such celebrities as singer-actress Cher.

Valued in 2002 at more than \$100 million, the Black Star Sapphire of Queensland will be on display at the Royal Ontario Museum starting June 2 as part of the opening and building dedication of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal addition.

This is the first time the gem, the size of a hen's egg or a doorknob, has been on display since 1969. The black star sapphire, which is 733 carats and has 35 diamonds surrounding it, has only had a few owners.

The so-called "large black crystal," originally weighing 1,156 carats, was found on the Reward Claim in the Rubyvale area in Queensland – part of the Anakie Sapphire Fields, the largest of several sapphire mining areas in Australia.

The Spencer family held on to it uncut until 1947 when it was bought by Armenian-born jeweller Harry Kazanjian, who took it to his home in Los Angeles. Kazanjian studied the sapphire and two months later he cut it, revealing the brilliant six-pointed star. In 1949, its value was estimated at \$1 million. Today, many believe it is priceless.

"It's beautiful," said Kimberly Tait, a mineralogist and associate curator with the Royal Ontario Museum. "It takes a skilled cutter to know what to do. If you don't do the right thing you get a failed star."

The sapphire, said to have brought good luck to the Kazanjian family, was on loan to the Smithsonian Institution in the 1960s as part of a display with the Hope Diamond. That was the last time it was on public display. The Kazanjian family held on to the gem for a long time because it was so beautiful.

The breathtaking sapphire was eventually sold again but that buyer wished to remain anonymous, said Tait. The owner had seen the gem when he was a young man and had promised his mother that he would one day buy it for her. His childhood promise came true.

In 2002 the sapphire was again sold to private owners who do not want their identity disclosed and they have loaned the gem to the ROM for the show, which runs until Dec. 2.

For centuries, sapphires have held an allure for both men and women. They are seen as the jewels of royalty from the maharajahs of India to the kings and queens of the British monarchy. They have also been perceived as gems of good luck. Star sapphires have been called the stone of destiny – with the three bands of the star representing faith, hope and destiny, said Tait.

The Black Star Sapphire of Queensland has an optical property known as "asterism" explained Tait. The six-pointed star in the gem "follows you as you move around the stone."

Sapphires are found as loose crystals in gravel deposits, but some have been mined to depths of 20 metres. "Iron oxide and iron titanium oxide have formed with the gem and given it its colour and star effect," she said. Star sapphires are not very common, said Tait. And one this size is really rare.

