

Ray McAlister

WORKS AT: McAlister Jewellers

AGE: 77

YEARS IN TRADE: 62

TRAINING: Apprenticeship and self-taught

FIRST JOB: Apprentice diamond setter at Wartmans Diamond setters, 1953

Favourite gemstone: Diamonds. They are beautiful and last forever.

Favourite metal: 18-carat yellow gold because it's timeless, always looks good and never changes colour.

Favourite tool: Hammer. It shapes the metal in many different ways, and I've had the same one for 62 years.

Best new tool discovery: None. The old-fashioned tools are still the best.

Best part of job: Seeing the smile on the customer's face the first time they see their ring.

Worst part of job: Having to sometimes use castings.

Best tip from a jeweller: Handmade is always better.

Best tip to a jeweller: Handmade is always better!

Biggest health concern on the bench: Deteriorating eyesight.

Love jewellery because: There's always a challenge in hand-making.

What frustrates you most about the industry? The mistruths that exist.

My bench is always: Reasonably tidy. There's a place for everything.

Favourite sport: Fishing.

