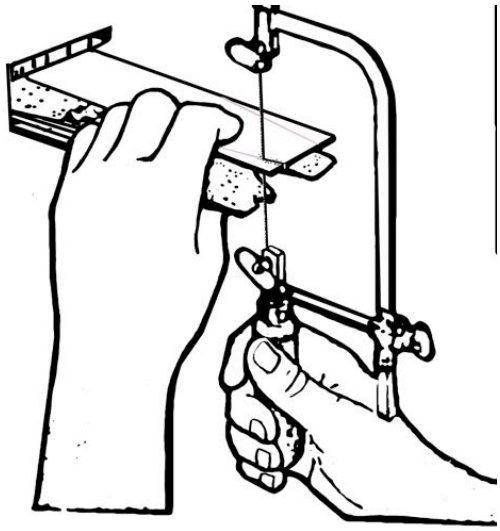
## How I Create Your Rings

I would like to introduce you to the creative process beyond the sketching and designing of your rings at this stage.
There are quite a few processes from start to finish. The first is the precious metal you choose. All precious metals are quite hard to work with and here are the majority of tools I use and the sequence of events that transpire during this creative process.
First I order sheets of refined metal, (gold or platinum) **Diagram 1(c)** directly from a top-notch company that I've dealt with since my career began – Harry Sarber's Manufacturing in Vancouver. They are the best in quality products and service. I like to let everyone specialize in what they do best, that way I can bring the best quality product to my clients (you) and focus more on what I do best. I custom order a flat sheet of metal, and then I trim it to the proper size and length. **Diagram2**

Diagram 1-c



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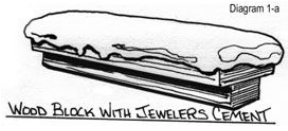
Then I put it on a block of wood that has tree pitch molding compound (jewelers cement) on it. **Diagram 1(a)**


It then gets clamped into what is called a 'jeweler's vice block'. This wonderful heavy metal ball, has a vice clamp on top of it that holds the wood block in place, while the engraver grips it with one hand, and engraves with the other hand. It also has a ball bearing system in the base (for easy rotation and control), which is cushioned by a leather or felt pad.

It has to be heated so that it will stick to the block. Once cooled, it hardens and the piece of metal is then solidly held down so that I can engrave it without it falling off or moving around. **Diagram 4**

The intensity of the engraving process is controlled by pressure using both hands, fingers to thumbs, shoulders and elbows. Having good posture and good lighting is essential. Now that the metal is braced for action let's apply the special design. Sometimes when I have artistic license, I just start applying the design from my head (imagination) to the

metal with a fine permanent felt pen or pencil (on a roughed surface). With the sketch, I copy it in a similar manner to best fit the varied lengths of the ring sizes. **Diagram 5**

Sometimes additional designing is added to the man's ring because of extra length, but the main design remains the same. After the designs are applied, it's time to grab my engraving tools which are always pre-sharpened for maximum cutting edge (no slipping allowed) Here are a variety of the engraving tools I use in the process, each one cuts a different path into the metal. **Diagram 7**

It took me about 2 years to confidently handle these tools. Nowadays there are different kinds of power engravers that make the process somewhat easier (intense vibrations make them detrimental to physical comfort, always a price to pay for modern conveniences). Like any original creative process, it's how the finished product turns out, not how it got there. The production process is usually of little concern to the customer so long as the product turns out great. Now, we take the line engraver (v-cutter) and outline the complete design. **Diagram 6**

Once this is complete then I will cut down the background areas as smooth as possible. This makes it easier to engrave fine details. This technique takes a little more time and effort but it not only looks and feels good (to run your fingers over) but it, most importantly, protects the fine background details from abrasive wear so the details last longer.

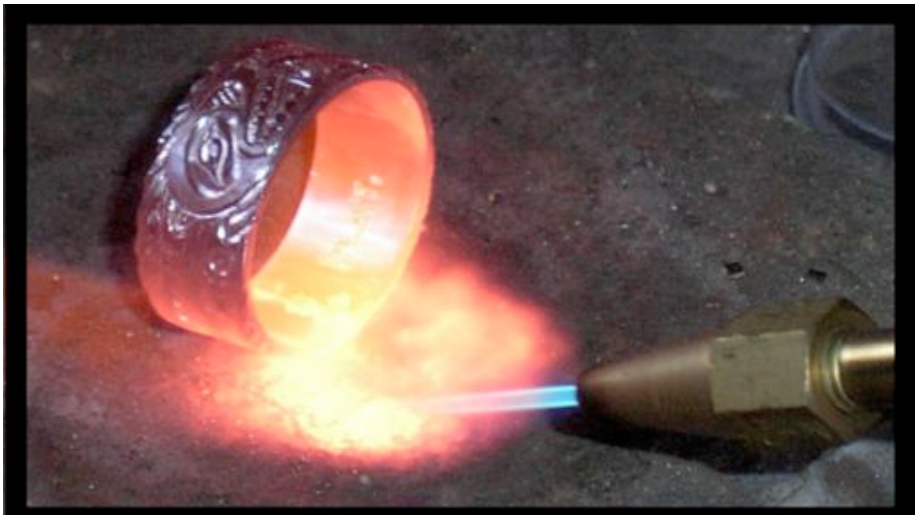
With the depth that I engrave, you don't have to worry about your designs wearing off. They are there for life; another reason we can call them 'Life Crests'.

Okay, now we have our engraved metal plates (just a minute while I ice my elbows).


We reheat the metal to take it off the cement.

I use a pair of tweezers (Hot, hot!) and clean off the residue of the cement cautiously using a methyl hydrate liquid once the metal has cooled. **Diagram 8**

From there I hammer the metal into an oval shape, lining up each end of the ring plate perfectly. The tools I am using are a ring mandrel – to brace and shape, and a rawhide hammer that won't mark the metal, and a shaped wood block for extra shaping support that also presents no hazard to the engraved metal. **Diagram 9** Let's get onto the soldering block now and braze the two ends together with some small pieces of hard solder (lower melting matching metal) then once joined by intense heat (approx. 1700 degrees) then the ring is placed in an acid bath that removes any fire scale (polluted surface caused by soldering
substances and hot flame). **Diagram 10**



Your ring is now a completely connected band. We then again hammer the ring, this time down onto the ring mandrel to get its round shape and check for accuracy of size.

**Diagram 11**

Next, come the numerous filing and sanding stages to get it to feel comfortable for your many years of wear. (No sharp edges please.) **Diagram**

**12**

Also, there is some extra engraving required to the connected ends and a need to touch up the complete ring. This is quite a difficult process in comparison to carving a flat piece of metal. The rounded surface of the ring is a lot harder as far as controlling the engraving tool is concerned (gotta be real careful). **Diagram**

**13**

Now comes the fun part, polishing to finish. I use a large polishing machine and take it Through a prepping polish, using a substance called Tripoli. **Diagram 14**

Then after it's cleaned, I use another substance called 'red rouge'. Rouge gives your rings the super high polished look that makes it glisten like the sun. It is when a precious metal is polished that it becomes the visually valued 'Precious Metal' that we all love to wear and share.

Hand-engraved jewelry is an ancient technique treasured by many civilizations from all over the world. It was introduced to my ancestors, on the Northwest Coast, in the late 1700's by European settlers. I will offer more details in my jewelry art book, online or

hardcopy in the not too distant future. You have just experienced a condensed portion of what's to come.
You can now observe any traditional designs to judge quality and originality, especially in jewelry. Look for nice finished lines and surfaces or edges of the metal. Are the crosshatched lines even and long lines clean and crisp, or deeply engraved.
Compare the jewelry to painted designs to better understand how they are similar and consistent.
You get what you pay for right? You work hard and you deserve the best quality for your investment and yes, it is an investment. It's art and a precious metal. This is an investment in your future; a future you are sharing with someone you love.
If you have any questions or suggestions, please email me or phone me. Thank you kindly for your interest in my artwork and for taking the time to visit with me on my website.
Creatively,
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