

SVCC

NEWSLETTER

SACRAMENTO

SCENE

ATTENDANCE STILL STRONG!

If you haven't been to an SVCC meeting in awhile, you are missing out on meeting the many new members who have joined this year. Club spirit is high after a rousing Spring Show and the attendance at the meetings is showing it. The average attendance at the last four meetings is 50! So come on out and join the fun!



NUMISMATIC STUDY GROUP

The Numismatic Study Group (NSG) held its sixth meeting at the home of Bob Travis on March 17. The topic was the Liberty Seated design of Christian Gobrecht. Bob Travis created a large display of Liberty Seated dimes, quarters, and half dollars by type.

The next NSG meeting will be held on April 21 at the home of John Gomer, where the subject will be U.S. Coinage Designs of John Reich.

New members. . . Join us!

EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS

At the March 25 meeting, President Ben Gay gave SVCC members and guests a lesson in dating Japanese coins. Ben gave everyone a chance to participate, providing numerous Japanese coins in holders which gave you the correct date when turned over! Great idea, Ben.

At the April 22 SVCC meeting, Ron Miller will give a presentation entitled "U.S. Coins: Quality and Rarity".

Ron began collecting coins in 1971 and became a dealer in 1974. In the past 13 years he has attended about 450 coin shows. Ron is a collector of California merchant tokens and owns a full service coin shop in Fremont. In addition to coins, he deals in stamps, bullion, and jewelry.

Ron is a member of 11 coin clubs and 10 specialty groups, including TAMS, ATCO, LSCC and EAC. He is a life member of ANA, CSNA, NASC, and FUN. In addition to being the founder of the Fremont Coin Club, Ron has been on the board of directors of the San Jose Coin Club for 12 years.

Ron Miller describes himself as "a coin dealer who is having a love affair with his business, and a collector who is fortunate enough to make a living at his hobby!"

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS:

May 27:	Gerald Carsman:	<u>The Grading Controversy</u>
June 24:	Steve Showers:	<u>Ancient Symbols / Modern Coins</u>
July 22:	Charles Blim:	<u>Washington Colonial Pieces</u>
August 26:	David Showers:	<u>Colonial State Issues: 1785-1788</u>

NATIONAL COIN WEEK

National Coin Week is April 19-25, 1987. Gee Albietz has submitted the draft of a proclamation for National Coin Week to the office of Mayor Anne Rudin. The proclamation includes congratulations to SVCC on its 30th anniversary year, and states that SVCC will be donating U.S. and foreign coin books to the libraries of all middle schools and junior high schools in Sacramento and the surrounding counties to promote interest in coin collecting among youngsters.

We are planning to get some media coverage of the Mayor's proclamation.

Here are some suggestions as to how you can celebrate National Coin Week:

- 1) Attend an SVCC meeting
- 2) Bring a friend to an SVCC meeting
- 3) Offer to display your collection or give a presentation at an SVCC meeting
- 4) Patronize your local coin shop
- 5) Write an article for this Newsletter

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NOT SINCE GARRETT: The legendary Norweb collection will be sold by Bowers and Merena in a series of auctions ending in Autumn 1988. Bowers and Merena is offering a package which includes an illustrated hardbound reference describing the history and holdings of the Norweb family, and softbound and hardbound copies of the three catalogues, for \$149. Write: Auctions by Bowers and Merena, Inc., Box 1224, Wolfeboro, New Hampshire 03894.



COLLECTING MIDDLE- AND
LATE-DATE LARGE CENTS



by Bob Travis

Coin collectors are a strange lot. At least those that I associate with are, if not strange, then perhaps a bit eccentric. I guess "likes" do attract. Anyone who would collect the second ugliest (ask John Gomer about the first) of all U.S. coins, beyond a specimen or two for a type set, certainly fits in this category. So why collect 'em? I'm not sure, but it is fun and it can be quite a challenge. I started my collection back in 1967. My primary interest at the time was Indian cents. When I couldn't find one that I needed, I would often pick up a large cent. After all, who ever heard of going to a coin show and not picking up at least one souvenir? I'll discuss more on collecting large cents later. First, let's discuss middle- and late-dates in general.

The term "middle-date" usually refers to the Matron Head cents of 1816-1835. The design is attributed to Robert Scot. Scot, the second Chief Engraver of the mint, has been referred to as more of a bureaucrat than an artist. His Matron Head cent is considered one of our least artistic numismatic creations. It came about simply because Scot was the man in charge at the time. The earlier Classic Head design by John Reich (1808-1814) was clearly a superior design. However, Reich was only an assistant to Scot and when he left the mint, Scot redesigned the cent. It should be noted that Scot is also credited with the widely acclaimed Draped Bust design of 1796-1807. However, that design was adapted from drawings by Gilbert Stuart. The Matron Head cent was completely Scot's product.

William Kneass was named Chief Engraver following Scot's death in 1823. Kneass immediately began redesigning our coinage, but major changes in the cent did not occur until the mid-1830's. Large stars were replaced with small stars in 1834 and the profile was redesigned in 1835. Kneass was also apparently responsible for the "Silly" and "Booby" Heads of 1839. Check the Red Book if you are unfamiliar with these terms. Christian Gobrecht, assistant to Kneass at the time, may have contributed to some of these alterations. The cents of 1835-1839 have long been the misfits of the series. They were not included with the middle-dates as they were obviously different. Similarly, they were different enough from the late-dates to be omitted from that group. Most modern collectors now group them with the middle-dates.

Gobrecht designed the late-date cents. These include the Petite Heads (1839-1843) and the Mature Heads (1843-1857) Enough about designs. Let's discuss how one goes about

collecting middle- and late-date large cents. One way to begin is with a type set. This would consist of 7 pieces: The Matron Head (1816-1835), Head of 1836 (1835-1836), Head of 1838 (1837-1838), Silly Head (1839), Booby Head (1839), Petite Head (1839-1843), and Mature Head (1843-1857). If you insist on quality, this is one way to put together an impressive set of large cents. A second approach is by date. A date set contains 42 pieces, one each from 1816-1857. There are no major rarities in this set, although the 1821 and 1823 can be somewhat expensive. A collector of average means can put together a nice F to VF date set for a few hundred dollars.

Once you have completed a date set, the next logical step is to expand into a Red Book variety set. The Red Book lists 80 varieties (not including the 1823 restrike). Some are difficult to come by, but if you can be satisfied with lower grade pieces, all are within reason. The 1823 will range from \$35 in Good to \$200 in Fine. More difficult to locate will be the 1826/5, 1829 and 1830 small letters, 1834 large 8 and large stars varieties, and the 1839/6. If you hold out for EF or better, these will cost you a bundle, and it will take you quite a while to finish your set. A nice F to VF set is a reasonable compromise and should be an excellent investment.

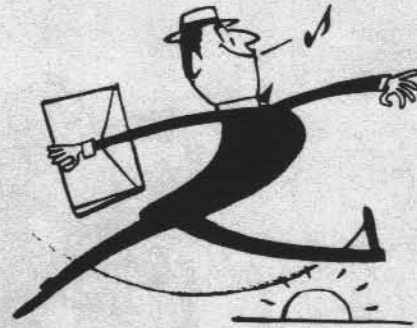
Now if you are a real nut, you are ready to embark on a variety collection. "Newcomb" (see next paragraph) is the variety collector's guidebook. I haven't counted the total number of Newcomb varieties, but there must be 300 or more. This approach will be difficult and expensive. Some Newcomb varieties are exceedingly rare and you will have to accept some mighty pitiful coins. For example, when an AG-3 is among the top 20 specimens known, you know you are in trouble. I'm told though that this approach can be quite rewarding if you have the patience and funds to pursue it. I don't.

If you decide to collect middle- and late-date large cents, you should acquire a copy of Howard Newcomb's book. Although Newcomb lists cents by variety, the book will be quite valuable to the beginning collector. For example, several Red Book varieties are represented by single Newcomb varieties. As dealers often list middle-dates only by Newcomb number (rather than by Red Book variety), it is essential that the collector be familiar with Newcomb's system. The late-dates have been updated in a series of two books by J. Robert Grellman. These are excellent references for the advanced collector; however, the beginner will get along fine with Newcomb. You should also consider joining the Early American Coppers club. EAC is an outstanding organization and their publication, Penny-Wise, is worth the price of membership. It contains only articles on early copper and is published six times per year.

So that's it. . . large cents in a nutshell. Consider collecting them!

S H O W

M E M O



I picked Dave Showers up in Davis (found it this time!) at 8:00 A.M. on Friday, April 3 and we began our trip to San Rafael to attend the Marin Show. Dave soon decided he needed coffee. I agreed, so we zipped through McDonald's and were on our way again. Suddenly we hit a divot in the freeway and instead of drinking his coffee, Dave was wearing it! Fortunately, he did not burn himself. Although it dried quickly, the huge stain on his right leg convinced Dave that it was time to make an addition to his wardrobe. After some searching, we found a Macy's and Dave used some of his coin money for a new pair of pants. (No bag, thank you, I'll wear them out!)

Even with this detour, we still arrived at the show right at opening time. Some dealers had not arrived yet and others were just beginning to set up. The bourse area featured 125 tables. There were also dealers in stamps, baseball cards, and other collectibles, but we found the coins with no trouble.

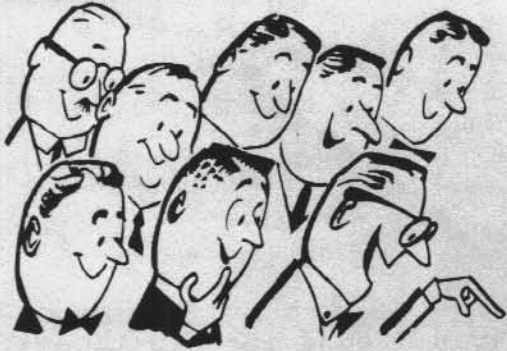
Lunch was the highlight of the day. . . not the food, the people. Dave and I shared a table with two members of Early American Coppers and two members of the Bust Half Nut Club. One of the EAC members, a Colonial specialist, had attended the Bowers and Merena auction of the Taylor collection and had purchased three coins in the sale. He showed us his copy of the catalog with his handwritten prices realized. Anyone with an interest in Colonials should make an effort to get this catalog, which will become a standard reference for early State issues. There was much discussion and laughter as attempts were made to attribute a Massachusetts cent. We finally separated to begin another tour of the bourse.

We were both successful in adding to our collections. I picked up three more varieties of Bust half dollars, while Dave's acquisitions included a piece of California fractional gold and a Hibernia farthing.

Our 3:00 departure was timely, as we avoided both Bay Area and Sacramento Friday afternoon traffic.

Thanks, Dave, for a great time. But remember, if this coin show cost you your pants, they may take the shirt off your back next time!





CLASSIFIED

AD

SECTION

OPEN NOW: River City Coin Shop. Coins, bullion, supplies. All SVCC members receive 30% off on all supplies. 10487-A Folsom Blvd., Rancho Cordova, CA 95670, (916) 361-9570.

WANTED: 1937 gold coin of any country. Also, Arkansas Commemorative in XF condition. Call Art Shattuck at (916) 924-5998.

WANTED: Someone to show me, before or after our meeting, how to identify large and small date Lincoln cents. Al Albietz: 428-9497.

WANTED: United States Marine Corps items, such as tokens, medals and postcards relating to same. Will buy, sell or trade. Dan Jacobson, P.O. Box 7101, Sacramento, CA 95826-0801.

UNSURE whether your California Fractional Gold Tokens are original or imitations? I appraise and buy both fractional gold coins and original gold tokens. Also want U.S. large cents in EF or better condition. Ship to: D. Showers, P.O. Box 2420, Woodland, CA 95695.

MILITARY PAYMENT CERTIFICATES - U.S. military currency used overseas from 1946 (Series 461) to 1973 (Series 692). Denominations are 5¢ to \$20. Write/call/bring to SVCC meeting. Nick, Box 60104, Sacramento, CA 95860, (916) 486-8720.

WANTED: Coins of Japan. Call Ben Gay at (916) 726-5334.

BUYING: Complete year sets of The Numismatist: 1888-1913, 1915-1936, 1938, 1940-1946. John L. Gomer, 3445 American River Drive, Suite D, Sacramento, CA 95864 / (916) 486-8755 days / (916) 487-9667 eves.

WOULDN'T YOUR AD look good in this space? If you are a paid SVCC member, send in your ad and it will appear in this Newsletter, which is distributed to 100 SVCC members and 35 coin clubs and organizations in Northern California and Nevada. Sacramento Valley Coin Club, P.O. Box 160122, Sacramento, CA 95816.

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N O R T H E R N C A L I F O R N I A
S H O W C A L E N D A R



- 26: Vallejo Numismatic Society 15th Annual Coin Show - Dan Foley Cultural Center, Dan Foley Park, Tuolumne Street, VALLEJO
- 26: Reno Coin Club Third Annual Coin Show - McKinley Park Recreation Center, Riverside Drive and Keystone Avenue, RENO
INFO: Douglas McDonald, RCC, P.O. Box 10791, Reno, Nevada 89510



- 1-3: California State Numismatic Association 80th Semi-Annual Convention - Cathedral Hill Hotel, Van Ness Avenue and Geary Street, SAN FRANCISCO
BOURSE: W. J. Grant, P.O. Box 295, Patton, CA 92369

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REVIEW: A new numismatic publication made its debut last summer. The New England Journal of Numismatics is published quarterly and covers all numismatic subjects, including U.S. and foreign coins, currency, tokens and medals. The first two issues featured articles by many numismatic luminaries, including Walter Breen, Robert W. Julian, Douglas Ball, Elvira Clain-Stefanelli, Arlie Slabaugh, Richard Doty, and many others. It is done in a large (8½" X 11") magazine format on quality paper, and is filled with photographs and illustrations. The absence of paid advertising is refreshing. It is highly recommended to serious students of numismatics. Subscriptions are \$25.00 per year. For information, write:

New England Journal of Numismatics
89 Devonshire Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02109

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SVCC meets at 7:30 P.M. on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month at:

SMUD Service Center
5026 Don Julio Blvd.
North Highlands, CA