

# SVCC



## — NEWSLETTER —

OCTOBER, 1987

VOL. II, NO. 10

SACRAMENTO

SCENE



### COIN-O-RAMA COVERAGE

The SVCC 30th Annual Coin-o-Rama was held at Cal-Expo the weekend of October 10-11. Attendance was down slightly, attributable to the new location as well as the general sluggishness of the coin market. Overall, the show was very successful, with almost all dealers and attendees applauding the larger room and wider aisles. Dealer evaluations of the show were, as usual, mixed. Some complained about slow sales, while many others said they did very well. One dealer told your editor that Saturday was the best single day he had ever had at a coin show.

The ANACS table, featuring representative J.P. Martin, was very popular as lines formed for free verbal grading and authentication opinions. J.P. detected a counterfeit Indian 5\$ gold piece and seven 1922-D Lincoln cents with D removed. J.P.'s programs included Grading U.S. Gold Coins on Saturday and Detecting Counterfeit U.S. Gold Coins on Sunday. Anyone who missed these slide presentations really missed out on some valuable information.

Bob Travis reports that eight people attended the regional meeting of EAC held on Saturday afternoon. Guest speaker John Peters led a discussion of collecting U.S. half cents by die state, with emphasis on the 1804 issues. John purchased two R-5 varieties of half cents on the bourse floor!

The name R. Reyes has come up frequently at our Fall Show raffles, but never as frequently as on Sunday, October 11. Mr. Reyes and his family walked off with EIGHT of the 12 raffle prizes!! SVCC certainly appreciates the financial support

given to the club by the Reyes family, which brings in their raffle tickets in a wheelbarrow!

Coordination of the show was the responsibility of Ben Gay, Dennis Pacheco, and John Gomer. Once again Tony Barajas was foreman of the setup and breakdown crews, as well as chief electrician, troubleshooter, and signmaker.

Two members who received special recognition for their efforts at the last show demonstrated again that they are among our top members: Madera de la Secoya provided the best coffee ever served at an SVCC show, sweated profusely during both setup and breakdown, and was there to help at every turn. Also giving mightily of his services was Bob DeCesaris, who helped out on setup, hospitality, breakdown and announcements.

Ray Tisser was there for setup and hospitality and also served as our token Cardinals fan! Junior members Neil Tigner (Ray's grandson) and Chris Bradeen worked hard during setup, as did Al Albietz and Norm Alexander.

Hospitality standouts included Jim Tyson, Gee Albietz, Glen and Vi Curry, Gil and Earline Gutenberger, Art and Kitty Trent, Loren Weste and many others.

Sign up now for the Spring Show!

#### SUCCESSFUL SUPER AUCTION

The educational meeting of September 23 was replaced by the SVCC Super Auction, which was enjoyed by all. 42 of the 78 lots consigned were sold, with prices realized totalling \$3,733.00!

Our own R. Jack Frost, attorney at law and Past President of SVCC, will team up with Richard B. Lynch, CPA to present a program entitled "Death and Taxes" at the educational meeting of October 28. Rick will discuss the tax aspects of coin collections and Jack will give some suggestions regarding proper arrangements for the disposition of your collection after you meet that great collector of souls.

#### ANOTHER NEW FACE AT NSG

The Numismatic Study Group welcomed Lynne Kreps to its ranks at the September 15 meeting at the home of John Gomer. John led the group in "A Guide to the Numismatic Library". Stacks of books were in evidence and there were British tokens and many ancient coins to view and enjoy. The group also welcomed back co-founder Bob Travis from a lengthy leave of absence.

The NSG will next meet at the home of Pete Prince on October 20, where the topic will be "Foreign Coins Which Influenced U.S. Coinage".

If you would enjoy an evening a month of fun, fellowship, and coins, please call John Gomer (Bus: 486-8755; Home: 487-9667).



CALIFORNIA

SMALL

DENOMINATION

by David Showers

GOLD



California, in the years before the gold discovery of 1848, was a region of ranchos and cattle, with few small towns (pueblos) and a small military presence. There was a small but regular foreign trade in hides and furs exchanged for manufactured goods from Europe and the Orient. It was strictly a barter economy with little need for hard money.

All of that changed with the discovery of gold and subsequent rush to California. Over 100,000 people arrived in California by the end of 1849. The influx of immigrants in those early years of the rush created a chronic shortage of hard currency. At the "diggings", where gold camps grew into towns overnight, and in the new city of San Francisco, commerce was hindered by the lack of money. Small amounts of U.S. and foreign coinage circulated at a premium or was hoarded. Gold dust was weighed and exchanged for goods and, by necessity, a barter economy flourished.

As early as 1849 several companies in San Francisco began to mint large denomination gold coins, up to 50 dollars in size, as a means of filling a need and to make a profit. Except for those authorized issues of Augustus Humbert of the U.S. Assay Office in San Francisco and in later years by those under contract with the federal government, most coins were issued without authorization. The need was great enough to have those private gold coins, which were light in weight, accepted by the public. Today many coins are found in worn condition, indicating wide circulation.

By 1852 smaller denominations were introduced in dollars and fractions (25¢ and 50¢) to take the place of small change.

Although these pieces are often called "Fractional Gold", the correct name is "Small Denomination Gold" since one dollar coins are included in addition to fractions. Most of the local manufacturers of these coins were San Francisco jewelers, who often placed their initials on their coins, including D, DN, DERI, FD, G, GG, and L. They were minted until 1856, when the U.S. mint in San Francisco produced significant amounts of silver coins, which probably drove them out of circulation. Thus ended Period I issues of the coins. Period I has been characterized by Walter Breen as a time when these coins circulated as small change.

After a two year lapse, Period II (according to Breen)



began in 1859. Production commenced that year for the purpose of producing souvenirs and "token coins", although denominations still appeared on the pieces and some may have circulated. Today many are found holed from being used as jewelry items. Whereas Period I coins were nearly copies of the Liberty head design on circulating U.S. gold dollars, Period II produced many new designs. In addition to various Liberty profiles, Indian Heads and George Washington were also popular styles. A number of varieties have been given colorful nicknames by collectors. These include the goofy head, arms of California, caricature head, the empty wreath, Aztec head, and others. The earlier Period I coins also carried the Eagle and Scroll reverse of the larger denominations. The new Period II designs, along with the traditional Liberty head, were manufactured until the 1880's. The Secret Service began enforcing the law against private coinage and most manufacturers ceased operations in 1882. Many later varieties are extremely rare today due to confiscation of coins and dies by the government.

At a later time some of these same minters tried to avoid the law by producing California gold tokens of similar design, but without stated denominations. These original gold tokens are also rare today, but are less collected than the denominated pieces and are considerably less expensive. Today many of those tokens have been imitated and made of base value with no numismatic value.

The original small denomination gold coins and gold tokens are sought after by a small group of dedicated collectors. Only 12,000 to 15,000 denominated pieces are known to exist today, with nearly 500 die varieties. Due to the extreme rarity of several varieties, a complete collection does not exist. The famous Lee collection recently sold for nearly \$400,000 and contained some coins which are the finest known for the variety. A collector of modest means can assemble a major type set at a reasonable cost and at about the same price per coin as MS-63 and MS-64 Morgan silver dollars.

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FOOTNOTE:

There is a proposal to organize a collector organization devoted to the study of private gold coinage of the United States, including California Small Denomination Gold. A planning meeting is scheduled during the February, 1988 Long Beach Numismatic & Philatelic Exposition. Interested persons should contact the author for further information:  
David Showers / (916) 323-6010.



MAKING A DREAM COME TRUE

by Steve Bardin

The recent NCNA show in San Francisco marked my second anniversary of re-entering the coin business. At the 1985 Fall Show, I decided that I would like to complete a silver dollar type set. Since I already owned a 1796, I had a good start.

Looking at the remainder of the series, most of the coins are obtainable for under \$500 each. If you don't count the Gobrechts (which I don't), the toughie is the 1795 Flowing Hair. This coin starts at about \$1,000 in Fine condition. Therefore, my excitement began to brew when I came across a VF-20 specimen in the auction catalog. I thought to myself, Could it be possible?

As the auction approached the lot in question, I noticed my heart beginning to pound. Lot after lot was hammered down. Finally, the moment arrived. The auctioneer asked for \$1,200. With that, my paddle went firmly into the air. A bid of \$1,250 was recognized. Then it was \$1,300 to me. Another bidder pushed it to \$1,350. The auctioneer looked to me for \$1,400 and my paddle was standing tall. My competition was then asked for \$1,450, but no go. Once again the auctioneer said "Looking for \$1,450." A brief pause, and. . . "Sold for \$1,400." I sank down in my seat and thought "Oh, my God!"

After a few more lots had crossed the block, I pulled myself together. I was feeling a little afraid, a little excited, and a lot of satisfaction. Wow, I actually pulled it off!

At this time in my life, I really had no business buying a coin like that. However, instead of having to say "I remember when I could have bought one," I can now say "I own one." The new sofa and all the other "have-to-have's" will just have to wait!



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DON'T BE PLAYING HOOKEY! OUR NEXT MEETINGS WILL BE:

\* \* \* \* \* OCTOBER 28 \* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \* NOVEMBER 11 \* \* \* \* \*



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



- 17-18: Delta Coin Club 23rd Annual Coin Show, Eagle's Hall, 1492 Bourbon Street, STOCKTON  
INFO: Loris Enzminger, P.O. Box 216, Victor, CA 95253
- 31-1: Fresno Numismatic Society 21st Annual Coin-a-Rama, Regency Room, Picadilly Inn, 2305 West Shaw Avenue, FRESNO



- 1: Santa Cruz Coin Club 22nd Annual Coin Show, CPDES Hall, 216 Evergreen Street (next to Harvey West Park), SANTA CRUZ
- 8: Peninsula Coin Club Annual Coin Show, Hyatt Hotel, PALO ALTO  
INFO: PCC, P.O. Box 915, Palo Alto, CA 94302
- 15: Chico Coin Club 6th Annual Coin Show, Chico Holiday Inn, Highway 99 at Cohasset Road, CHICO  
BOURSE: Albert Beck, 1040 Village Lane, Chico, CA 95926

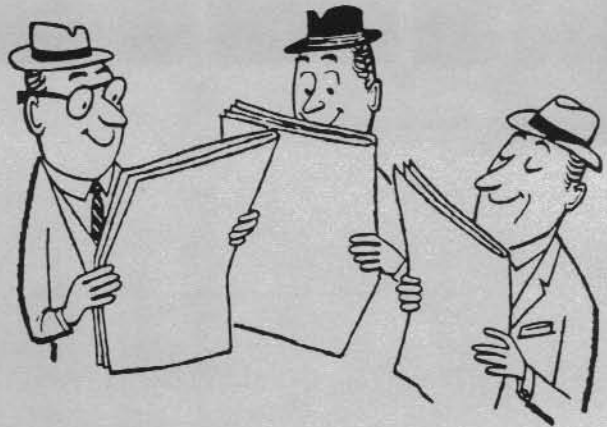


- 22-24: San Jose Coin Club Annual Show, San Jose Convention Center, Park Avenue and Market Street, SAN JOSE  
BOURSE: Rod Perrelli, P.O. Box 5621, San Jose, CA 95150

CLASSIFIED

AD

SECTION



WANTED: Pre-1940 Lincoln cents, EF or better. Call Mike after 5 P.M. at 421-7630.

WANTED: We buy coin collections and accumulations, U.S. and foreign, gold and silver. Especially need coins of Japan. Strictly confidential. FINDER FEES PAID. Call "Ben" Gay, (916) 726-5334.

WANTED: California Fractional gold coins and 19th century gold tokens. I will pay at least 45%-70% of current Red Book value (page 238) for problem-free coins. Also buying Colonial coins and U.S. half cents and large cents. David Showers, P.O. Box 2420, Woodland, CA 95695.

SELLING Seated Liberty quarters: VG-8 - \$9.00 each / 5 for \$40.00; VG-10 - \$11.00 each; F-12 - \$17.50 each. Steve Bardin: (916) 452-2840.

WANTED: Disney character coins, tokens, medals. Rachel McDilda: 361-9570. Ask for my dad. . . I'm 4!

FOR SALE: California trade tokens. Send large, self-addressed envelope with 39¢ postage on it for list. Dan Jacobson, P.O. Box 7101, Sacramento, CA 95826-0801.

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.

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As we go to publication of this issue of the newsletter, the first session of the most important auction of U.S. coins since the Garrett collection was taking place. The Norweb collection combines quality, rarity, and pedigree in a manner rarely seen. Sources indicate that buyers of early American copper with large pocketbooks would be present with paddles held high. The same will hold true for specialists in other U.S. series represented in the sale. Watch for record prices!!



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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