



Founded March 26, 1949

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Redwood Empire Coin Club

Volume 73, Issue 10, Meeting #839, October 14, 2020

Next Meeting: November 11, 2020

SOCIAL DISTANCING, MEETING #7

I hope this newsletter still finds you in good health, one and all. There was a little bit of business to start the October meeting, then we got right into the topic: **MOST BEAUTIFUL/UGLIEST COINS**

- o Rick W was the first to send photos with this beauty. It is a 20 gram (2/3 ounce) sterling silver Cameroon 1000 Francs coin from 2011. A year after the release of a holographic "Butterflies of Love" coin, this "L'Amour toujours" ("love forever") holographic proof coin was released with a mintage of 999. His ugly coin is this otherwise beautiful 1880 CC Morgan Dollar with scratches, and an initial R scratched at the base of her neck. He didn't see the fine print on the EBay ad mentioning graffiti, but still likes the coin.



- o Rich W sent in a photo of a Wall Street Journal article: Diamond Standard will sell 5000 'coins' containing selected diamond stones on 9/28/20. The Coin is the world's first regulator approved, exchange traded, fungible diamond commodity offering. Each transparent Coin has the same value and contains a set of statistically calibrated diamonds and a military-grade wireless encryption chip, allowing owners to authenticate, audit and trade this brilliant new asset electronically, using blockchain technology. The aim is to create a standard equivalent to a gold bar. The 5000 coins will be offered at \$5000 each. Each coin will contain 11 or 12 selected stones. Diamonds are beautiful; in this coin setting they become ugly (per Rich)



- o Dan C forwarded this photo of his most beautiful coin.....ever won! It was a 1903-S \$5 gold piece from the gold coin drawing at our Coin Show. And he also shared these photos of his ugliest coin, an 1815 Irish St. Patrick's halfpenny(?). It was struck over another type of coin, and you can clearly see the 'undertype' under some of the motto.



- o Mike C thinks the Walking Liberty Half Dollar is the most beautiful coin, with the St. Gaudens \$20 gold piece a close second. As far as ugly: the 1792 half disme. Nobody knew how to properly pronounce the word. The consensus on the internet is the way we pronounce 'dime', though some others still call it a 'deem'. Either way, the obverse portrait really is ugly, and so is the bird on the back. But just about everyone would probably love to actually own one!



- o Bob K's most beautiful coin is his 1864 Seated Liberty dollar in P-61 condition. He gives ugly coins away and doesn't have any to show.



- o Larry C shared his ugliest coin, a 1945 war nickel in a PCGS sample slab. Usually they would put pretty nice coins in those, but this nickel is just worn, oxidized, and plain ugly. There are people who collect these sample slabs, which were often used to show new features.

His most beautiful coin is a 1995 MS 67 Silver Eagle (shown here without the slab). It has beautiful rainbow toning all around the obverse, and nice light toning on the reverse as well. The coin is much nicer than what you see here



- o Bill R's most beautiful coin is the 1908 No Motto St. Gaudens \$20 gold piece he owns. It is hard to argue with his choice. The majestic eagle on the reverse is particularly nice. As far as ugly, he mentioned some of the emperors on his Roman coins. But to some, those may be beautiful....

- o Ron S collects Lincoln Cents, the longest series of American coins. He is fond of the wheat ears in particular.
- o Roman S showed his ugliest coin in the Zoom meeting. It was a very corroded 1973 encased cent, with the aluminum case all bent up. It was found metal detecting. His favorite coin was this 1806 Large Cent from his collection. This is a picture taken from my computer screen during the Zoom meeting. He likes old coins, especially ones like this with nice patina and detail



- o Eric S showed a recent acquisition which is his current most beautiful: a 2018 American Liberty high relief 1/10 ounce 24k gold coin, minted in West Point. Both the beautiful Liberty on the obverse and the eagle on the reverse in high relief really appeal to him. Then there is his ugliest coin- this 1809 Classic Head Half Cent. He needed a UV light to even determine the date. He described it as in "terrible" condition, "and the back is even worse".



- o Riley R likes the \$3 gold piece, which is a rather unique coin. He thinks many of the commemorative coins are beautiful often more for their history than for their design. He does have some mighty ugly counterfeit coins too.
- o Mike M shared this ugly coin, the 1923-S Monroe Doctrine Centennial half dollar. He was helping a friend search through a trunk full of coins and found this- and decided to do some research. The 1823 Monroe Doctrine basically was a policy to keep the Old World and New World separated: European countries were to keep their hands off all of the Western Hemisphere, and America would not interfere with European issues or *existing* European colonies in the New World (at a time most



of them were becoming independent). Interestingly, England supported this policy and the English army helped protect it. Fast forward 100 years to 1923, when the Hollywood movie industry was faced with scandals, like that of Fatty Arbuckle (accused of murder, acquitted but career ruined). To help clean up the industry and make LA look good, the Monroe Doctrine Centennial was held in Los Angeles in 1923. 274,000 half dollars were minted, but the expo was a bust and only 27,000 sold for \$1 each. So, the rest were released into circulation!

- o Gary C feels the 1965 Churchill Crown is the ugliest, and with good reason. The portrait of Churchill does not show him wearing his trademark top hat or smoking a cigar, and it is not flattering. Many people agree- it is sometimes hard to even give away. Gary said that Walt Ostremecki had a virtual presentation at his Albuquerque club last month talking about dumb coins like this crown: it does not list the value or even the country it is from. Gary plans to use the crowns as coasters for his British-style rec room at home.

- o Merle feels that this 1915 Panama Pacific Expo octagonal \$50 gold coin is the most beautiful. And he doesn't even own one- yet. The \$50 round coin looks just like the round image on the octagonal coin, with the motto on the outside. The difference in the octagonal coin design is the addition of dolphins in each of the eight corners on both sides. Ironically they broke ground for the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition on the date of our meeting, October 14, 1911 (109 years ago). It was built on 635 acres and was 2-1/2 miles long! The Palace of Fine Arts, which has been moved but still exists, was the *only* permanent structure. It opened February 20, 1915 and closed December 4, 1915. In the 9-1/2 months it was open, the attendance was over 18 million people. Paid attendance was 13 million. Only 645 of these pieces were sold; 483 \$50 round pieces were also sold. The entire set, consisting of the two different \$50 pieces, a \$2.50, \$1, and 50 cent piece, cost \$200 at the time. Mike C then mentioned that a woman brought an entire set into Bill's Coins in Petaluma several years ago, which had been purchased by her grandfather at the expo. The two \$50 coins showed a little wear from handling and were probably in AU condition, but it still would be a fabulous set to own. In a conversation a couple days after the meeting, Merle could only remember one token that imitated the design of the Pan Pac \$50 coin. It was a token produced for the 1965 Coca Cola Bottling Company (the 50th anniversary of the Pan Pac). It is a big brass token 45mm in diameter. And what about the book the owl is reading? It says "What shall we drink? Drink Coca Cola 5¢".

- o Guy S could not join the Zoom meeting but sent in his contribution the next day. For his most beautiful coin: this five ounce silver coin of Lichtenstein. It features the castle at Schloss Vaduz (Vaduz Palace). For his ugliest, it is this Byzantine large bronze 40 nummia coin. It was probably struck around 600 AD. It has been overstruck at least three times, though there is still some very good detail. Guy said it would be a "good study coin for Stephen Album". Guy provided a drawing on what the image would have initially been.





o Charlie C (that's me!) gave two talks. First is this, a follow-up to last month's topic of Labor. These are coins produced with *slave* labor, the first coins minted in the Americas. There were two types- the early style and the late style, shown above. When Spain decided to start minting coins in the New World in 1532, it sent an assayer, dies, and die punches (to make more dies) to Mexico City (where Cortez had conquered the Aztecs). The very first of the early style coins had elaborate gothic letters, but the dies and die punches wore out quickly. The workers at the mint were all Aztec slaves (who were probably metal workers by trade). They made new die punches for lettering in more plain Latin lettering style. But they also made the rest of the coin dies. And since they did not know what a castle looked like, the early castles looked like skulls! And since they did not know what a lion looked like, the early lions looked like dogs with straight tails and dog faces. In 1542 the new style was introduced with better images, and you can see waves on the new obverse between the Pillars of Hercules. One other interesting fact is that these earliest coins of the Americas had much better detail than the later "cobs" or "pieces of eight". This is because the earliest coins were produced from planchets cut or punched from rolled silver sheets. All the cobs were chunks cut from rods of silver and then hammered into coins.



o My most beautiful coin (probably shown at a meeting before) is this tiny coin from Samaria in the Holy Land, minted 375-333 BC. The Samaritans were not very original in their coin designs, and often imitated coins from other regions. The three-headed obverse was an imitation of a coin from Cilicia (southern Turkey) which itself is rare and was a hard coin to obtain- but I found one. The reverse features *five* tetradrachm owls from Athens, which were also beautiful coins. Athens had plentiful silver sources and minted their coins in a uniform degree for a couple hundred years.

Many regions in the ancient Greek world used imitations of either the obverse (Athena) or reverse (owl) for their own coins to imply their own coins maintained legitimate standards of silver. Part of what makes this such a beautiful coin is that it is 8mm in diameter, half the size of a dime (shown life-sized below). That means each of the five owls on the reverse were under 1/10". It is amazing to see such detail on a coin 2400 years old.



NOVEMBER MEETING

The theme for the November meeting is related to Thanksgiving: **What Numismatic item are you most thankful for, and why?**

And since the meeting will be held on Veterans Day, you may also include a numismatic item dedicated to our veterans, whom we all thank for their service.

As a bonus, every club member who attends the Zoom meeting will be entered in a drawing for this 1982 George Washington 250th Anniversary Half Dollar, generously donated by Mike M. We will pick the winner during the meeting, and Mike will deliver it to you. Here are the details:

Topic: RECC November Zoom Meeting

Time: Nov 11, 2020 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84576551216?pwd=c1FqTE1qZEthSWRzdElxNkRDcC95Zz09>

Meeting ID: 845 7655 1216

Passcode: 112020

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WILSON DOLLAR ANNIVERSARY MEDALS

This year, to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the Manila Mint, restrikes of the Wilson Dollar are being offered for sale, struck using the **original Wilson Dollar obverse die** engraved by George Morgan. The Wilson Dollar was originally struck on newly installed minting equipment in the Philippines, the only overseas U.S. Branch Mint, to commemorate the 1920 Manila Mint opening. They were struck in gold, silver, and bronze. The Manila Mint was destroyed during the Japanese invasion of World War II.

Jeff Shevlin, the So-Called Guy, is offering the restrikes in gold, silver, copper, brass, aluminum, and select gold-plated. They will be minted by Daniel Carr of the Moonlight Mint. The restrikes are 38mm, the same size as the original. The obverse die is the original Wilson Dollar die engraved by George Morgan. The reverse die commemorates the 100th Anniversary of the Manila Mint. It will be nearly identical to the original reverse die, except the legend "ANNIVERSARY" replaces the original "OPENING", and the date will be 2020. The gold will be 1.6oz/50gm and edge marked "50 GRAMS 999+ GOLD" and costs \$5000. The silver is edge marked "ONE TROY OUNCE .999 SILVER" and is \$100. The copper is \$50, and the brass, aluminum, and nickel are \$35. Silver with select gold-plate is \$125. Visit the website www.WilsonDollar.com to place your order or contact Jeff Shevlin at SoCalledGuy@hotmail.com or 916-955-2569.



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UPCOMING SHOWS & EVENTS

Check out our newsletter at: **Redwoodempirecoinclub.com**

Thanks for reading. Corrections? Additions? Questions? E-mail us at:
newsletter@Redwoodempirecoinclub.com. See you (hopefully!) November 11, 2020— Charlie



The Redwood Empire Coin Club meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The Club's meeting location is the **Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa** (opposite the County Fairgrounds across from Highway 12), in the **"Dinner Room"** on the east side of the building, at 7:00 p.m. sharp.