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Redwood Empire Coin Club

Volume 75, Issue 2, Meeting #857, April 13, 2022

Next Meeting: May 11, 2022

FAKES, FORGERIES, & FOUREES- COINS THAT FOOLED US

Wow, what a meeting we had in April! Besides the forty-nine members and multiple guests, there was pizza for everybody for our membership appreciation night. Thanks to Vice-President Mike M for getting the pizzas- there were "108 slices" of pizza eaten- and those were **big** slices! There were even five leftover pizzas, which five members donated money to each bring one home.

Bill G talked about the Sunnyvale show he held last month. It was quite a success, with the numismatic public eager to attend live shows and acquire new coins. His normal attendance for that two-day show is about 425, and he had 537 attendees! He has a Concord show coming up (see the calendar) and is working on setting up a show in Reno July 15-16, with special room rates for those willing to travel to it.

Mike M talked about ordering **Red Books** and started taking orders for the small hard-bound, the spiral-bound, and large print editions. The Mega Red Book will possibly be printed later in the year, so he cannot take orders for those. You can call him on his cell phone (707) 318-7096 and leave a message letting him know what type of Red Book you want (small or large print). He is sending in the order on Monday 4/25, so you will have to call before that.

Merle gave a short talk prior to the main topic, about searching for a replacement coin for his type set. It seems the mint-state Flying Eagle cent he bought over 10 years ago had some unwanted discoloration. While at the Sunnyvale show last month, he looked for an 1857 or 1858 cent, and saw only one he liked for his type set. The dealer wanted \$900 over Grey Sheet and would not go down- so Merle left the show empty handed. But looking on eBay shortly after, he found an 1858 Flying Eagle cent in MS 62, at under Grey Sheet (even after mailing costs)! It is a very nice coin, which was happy to be broken out of it's slab and put in Merle's type set album.



MAY TOPIC

In May, Vice President Mike M is going to talk about Mercury Dimes, with an emphasis on split bands. Please bring any questions about that to the meeting to discuss. The TOPIC for the meeting: **Any Numismatic Item related to MOTHER'S DAY**. This may be a difficult topic to think of a coin in your collection. But there were a number of women who were considered the mothers of our country. Or what if you have the MOAC- the Mother Of All Coins- that big momma huge coin or medal in your collection? It is all fair game, as well as anything else interesting if there are no mom coins in your vast collections. Bring it in, talk about it, and get four free raffle tickets.

We did not ask for volunteers for goodies, so if you would like to bring a treat to share with the club, it will be welcomed- thanks!

FAKES, FRAUDS, AND COINS THAT FOOLED US

- Kim S started out the topic with six “silver dollars” he was fooled on. They were rarities such as a 1798 dollar in high grade condition. All of them looked silver but turned out to be magnetic- fakes.
- Guy S had several coins in a display sheet. One was an original Roman coin next to a **fourer**- a bronze coin plated in silver to pass off as a real silver coin. He also had an original colonial Fugio cent and New Jersey cent, next to modern copies from the Gallery Mint. And finally, he had Frank V’s 1796 quarter reproduction which served as a business card. None of the copies were meant to fool anybody- they were just nice modern reproductions.
- Rich W talked about the two dollar coins shown here. One is an 1845 Seated Liberty Dollar, the other an 1876-S Trade Dollar. He saw them at a show where the dealer had them set aside, labelled counterfeit. Rich asked how much they would cost, and the dealer stated that he could not legally *sell* a known counterfeit coin. Rich did however buy another (genuine) coin from the dealer, who then *gave* Rich the two counterfeit examples. Even with a casual glance, up close you can tell they are fakes: they are *cast* copies of original coins, so the details are a bit muddled.



- Gary C: For every Young Numismatist in the late 1960s, the must-have was the hundred-dollar cent, the 1909-S VDB. Problem was, there weren't enough of them made back in 1909 to make every baby boomer's dream come true. So, a lot of skillful metal workers went to work soldering S's onto Philadelphia coins. Here is the one Dad bought for us, from a shop in Mar Vista, CA in 1969. Accompanying, same coin in ANACS body-bag certifying it was a fake.



- Phil A brought in his modern reproduction of a Confederate States of America fifty cent piece. Only four originals are known, but there are lots of modern reproductions of the 1861 coin.
- Matt A has a 1798 Liberty Dollar he found in his dad’s collection. At first, he was happy to find it. But after having it checked out, it was 2 grams underweight and turns out to be likely pewter with a silver coating. Even in G-VG condition, it was created nicely to show the fake “wear”.



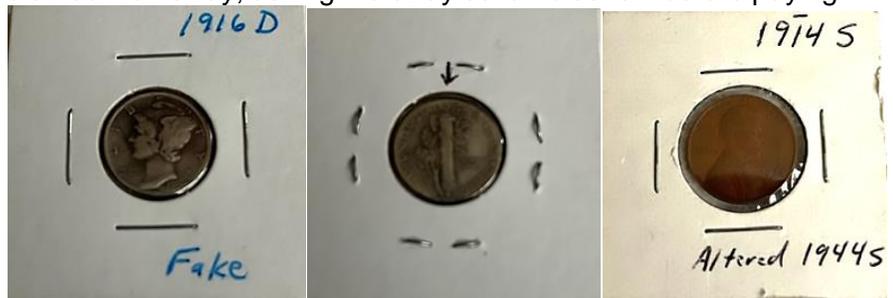
- Paul C had a tale of woe from eBay. He sold a 1/10-ounce gold eagle and shipped it to the buyer. The buyer then complained to eBay, claiming *it* was a fake. So, the buyer was to return the coin, and Paul refunded his money. The buyer instead returned a 1-ounce *fake* gold eagle to Paul, who was unable to get his money back for the real 1/10-ounce gold piece he initially sold and shipped. Ouch.
- Helm J brought in a bag of fake Morgan and Trade dollars he got at a flea market for \$10. All were a bit larger than real ones. They were initially being sold for \$20 each until enough people bugged the dealer about selling fakes; Helm bought the whole lot of them for counterfeit examples.
- Ember brought in a reproduction of the owl on the reverse of an ancient Athens tetradrachm. She bought it at the British Museum Gift Shop in 1980, and even kept the box.



- Joe McC knowingly bought a counterfeit Ohio obsolete currency note at a show years ago, and the dealer had even labeled it as counterfeit. He is still trying to determine the origin of the fake. He also went to an auction in Pennsylvania ~35 years ago that was only auctioning coins and currency at the time. A half dollar up for auction was labeled counterfeit. He bid on it anyway because it was a date he didn't have- and won the lot for ~\$50. Three days later he received a letter from the auction house to return the item immediately- the FBI wanted the coin! Finally, Joe told the story of a family that brought in a coin of a man who died in a car accident, and that 1913 Liberty Head nickel was felt to be a fake by the dealers who saw it. Years later it was determined that it was the fifth know authentic 1913 Liberty Head nickel!
- Bob L bought a 1922 No D Lincoln cent from a pawn dealer member of his club who thought it was fake. Sent it in to PCGS, came back confirmed to be counterfeit. He also had an 1887 CC dollar which was also counterfeit- they did not make Morgan dollars at Carson City that year! He sent it in to be slabbed, knowing it was counterfeit.



- Larry C: a former president of his club bought a raw 1914-D cent years ago, paid a couple hundred dollars. Several people saw it and all said it was a fake, and Larry bought it off him for \$25. He sent it to ICG, which will slab counterfeit coins with the label "For Educational Purposes Only". It was made from a 1944-D coin that had the date altered. This is but one of many coins Larry has that tell stories. He gave a talk on "Story Coins" at a seminar in the past, and will give the lecture again at the next Diablo Numismatic Society meeting April 21 at 7PM.
- Bill G is a Liberty Nickel collector. He purchased a fantasy coin produced by Dan Carr at the Moonlight Mint: a 1914 Liberty Nickel! Only Buffalo nickels were minted that year. Dan Carr strikes his fantasy nickels on authentic Liberty nickels and managed to impress the new date onto Bills specimen. Bill bought the coin June 14, 2016 from Jim C at our coin meeting!
- Bill H obtained a fake "filler" 1916-D Mercury dime for his coin album while at the Honolulu Coin Club meeting. The club member he got it from there had obtained it on eBay, asking the eBay seller to send it before paying anything (the seller stated it was *probably* real, the club member never paid or sent it back when it was an obvious fake, and never heard from the seller again). The coin was *given* to Bill only on the condition that it was not to be sold. Bill also had a 1914-S cent which had been altered from a 1944-S cent.



- David A showed his 1981 Kennedy Half two-headed coin. It was weighted on one side, so one side would always land first, though if it is two headed either way you would win. Sorry I didn't get more details about that distinction.
- Merle collects "Good For" tokens, among other things. He is proud of his complete set of tokens that were made for Angel Island when it was a military base. The photo here is of his Post Exchange Angel Island Depot of Recruits and Casuals token, good for 10 cents in trade. NGC graded and slabbed the token and listed it as a Fort Miley token! The token is real, the slab has an error in identification.

(C1908) GOOD FOR 5C
POST EXCHANGE
TOKEN XF 40
FORT MILEY, CALIFORNIA
3045763-015




- Charlie C was hoping someone would bring in a "Racketeer Nickel", an 1883 No-Cents V Nickel that was gold plated to pass off as a gold piece. Sure enough Bill G had one at the meeting, but just didn't talk about it. It ties in with the ancient coins shown- some gold and silver plated as forgeries. Ever since coins were first minted, forgeries began to appear. The very first coin to ever have an inscription was minted from 625-600 BC in Ionia (now in western Turkey) by a person named Phanes. We do not know who Phanes was, as there is no ruler known by that name. It could have been a very wealthy individual who minted his own coins. The coin featured a grazing stag with the inscription (in the ancient Lydian language) stating "I am the mark of Phanes". This signified that the coin was of legitimate value. The first coins were all made of electrum, which was a man-made alloy of gold and silver, so knowing its purity was important. As an aside, for centuries- up until two years ago- it was felt that electrum was a natural alloy found in the local rivers of Ionia. Definitive proof from two separate studies was published a couple years ago showed that the gold found in local rivers was pure gold (like it is in California, Alaska, Australia, and the rest of the world), and that the electrum was made of varying amounts of gold and silver from different sources, *not* from a natural occurrence.



The stater coin shown above is NOT in my collection, and costs \$50,000-100,000. But I do have two 1/12 stater coins from Phanes- each under 1/4" in size. They are too small to have the entire stag, so only the stag head fit on the coins. One is real electrum, and the other is a *fouree*: a silver coin that had gold plating to make it appear like the real thing. You can see where the gold plating has worn off the coin. Interestingly, the fouree was made with a known authentic obverse die, but the punch mark on the reverse is unknown. So, we do not know if it was made by the mint of Phanes or if someone got hold of a die and made a counterfeit. The stories the coins would tell if they could talk....



Another set of coins is an authentic Athens tetradrachm from 450-404 BC, with Athena on the obverse and an owl on the reverse (see Ember's owl picture above). One is the real coin, the other is a fouree imitation from a distant mint that has lost most of the silver plating of the bronze base coin. And below that is a drachm (1/4 of a tetradrachm) from the Philistine mint in Gaza, circa 425-330 BC. They minted lots of official coins imitating the Athens tetradrachm to lend value to their coins, but this one is also a fouree. One thing you may often see on ancient Greek coins are "test cuts", where a chisel is used to partially punch into the coins to make sure they were completely silver. Clearly some slipped through and fooled people. Finally, this being close to Easter, are a set of coins with biblical history. The story of Jesus and the coin in the fish's mouth tells of pulling out a coin which would pay the temple tax for two people. It was known that the only coin acceptable for that tax was a half shekel from the Phoenician city of Tyre, north of Jerusalem (in



Jesus and the coin in the fish's mouth tells of pulling out a coin which would pay the temple tax for two people. It was known that the only coin acceptable for that tax was a half shekel from the Phoenician city of Tyre, north of Jerusalem (in



modern Lebanon). A full shekel of Tyre would have been the coin in the tale. And the thirty pieces of silver paid to Judas were also likely the silver shekels of Tyre. These two Shekels of Tyre were minted during the lifetime of Christ, around 18 AD. The left one is real, the second is a fourer- you can see the silver wearing off the bottom of both the obverse and reverse when looking up close.

DRAWING WINNERS

Membership: Bob K, David S, Deanna J, Paul C, and James A

50:50 pot of \$74 was split with Guy S

Raffle: Glenn M (four times), Matt A, David A, Andy O, Bob K, Gary C, Kim S, and David Y.

Special Gold 1/10 ounce Drawing winner was Merle!

April Attendance: 49+

Guests: yes!

Auction: 34 exciting items.

Adjournment was at 9:00 p.m. sharp!



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We buy, sell, grade,
evaluate & educate
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ZOOM Info for the May meeting:

Time: May 11, 2022 06:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86125660518?pwd=bHVBUkVzVmNRd055V0xRREF5SWRDUT09>

Meeting ID: 861 2566 0518

Passcode: 052022

One tap mobile

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UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS

May 6-7, 2022. Sacramento Valley Coin Club Spring Show. Four Points Sheraton, 4900 Duckhorn Dr, Sacramento

May 21, 2022. San Francisco International Bourse. South San Francisco Conference Center, 255 S. Airport Blvd, South San Francisco

June 24-25, 2022. Concord Coin Show, Clarion Hotel, 1050 Burnett Avenue, Concord

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

Thanks for reading. Corrections? Additions? Questions? E-mail us at: newsletter@Redwoodempirecoinclub.com. See you **in person at the Vets Building** May 11, 2022—
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.