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Rohnert Park, Ca. 94928

Redwood Empire Coin Club

Volume 76, Issue 4, Meeting #869, March 8, 2023

Next Meeting: May 10, 2023

APRIL NEWS

For a meeting with a simple topic and relatively few speakers, the April meeting was really quite busy! VP Mike M started out with selling Red Books he obtained at a discount, only \$10.88 each. There are still four more available at the May meeting- first come, first served. Mike also mentioned that Glenn Mason donated a beautiful 1881 New Orleans Morgan to the Red Raffle- thanks Glenn!

Rich H is a veteran and talked about Honor Flight. He was wearing a jacket commemorating the 29th Honor Flight from the Bay Area. It is a national organization with a mission to celebrate America's veterans by inviting them to share in a day of honor at our nation's memorials. Open to any veteran with an honorable discharge and free of charge, there are 3-5 flights a year (for ~25 vets each time), taking them on a three-day trip to Washington DC to view important monuments and museums. Wheelchairs are OK, since there is a lot get out to see. Rich is proud to have served our country, and highly recommends this to fellow veterans. If interested, check out honorflightbayarea.org.



Merle talked about a special coin. He had been looking for the 1915 \$2.5 gold Panama Pacific Exposition coin- for ten years! Almost 19 million people attended the expo. There were 10,017 pieces minted. They sold for \$4. There were also \$50 gold pieces (round and octagonal) selling for \$100. Full sets of half, dollar, \$2.5 and the two \$50s sold for \$200. 6749 of the \$2.5 pieces sold, the other 3268 were melted. They are hard to find in nice shape, but Merle did see one at a recent token show and talked a dealer out of it. MS 65, CAC! The obverse was designed by Charles Barber- who designed the various Barber coin series. It features a mythical beast called a hippocampus- head of a horse, body of a sea serpent, also seen on ancient coin designs. The person riding on the back of the hippocampus was holding a caduceus.



Here is where Charlie (that's me!) chimed in on the history of the caduceus, a rod with two entwined snakes. It originally was *not* a medical symbol. It dates to ancient times and is a symbol for commerce, used frequently on ancient Greek and Roman coins. It was also a magic wand carried around by the god Mercury. The Staff of Asclepius is a rod with a *single* snake around it and was an ancient symbol of medicine and healing- and is the symbol of the American Medical Association since 1910. The use of a caduceus as a medical symbol is much more recent. I was off a bit, thinking it started in Canada. But in 1902 the US Army Medical Corps adopted the symbol, and its popularity grew. Merle corrected me in that the caduceus pictured on this coin represented the medical triumph over yellow fever while building the canal. And interestingly the So-Called dollar for the Panama Pacific Expo does show Mercury, holding his caduceus, opening the canal gates to let a trade ship (the Argo) go through.



The reverse of Merle's \$2.5 piece featured an eagle designed by George Morgan, famous for his dollar design. Apparently, there wasn't enough time for Barber to design a reverse, so Morgan got the nod. Merle is very happy with his coin- hopefully some of you got a close look at its impressive design.

MAY THEME

It was tough coming up with a theme for May. We have Mother's Day, and Memorial Day. So, what will be the topic? **SHOW AND TELL!** This way you can bring anything numismatic to talk about. Mothers and memorials are good, but *anything* goes. Bring in an item, talk about it, and get four free raffle tickets. And if you want photos of your object shown up on the screen, please e-mail pictures ahead of time to the club at redwoodempirecoinclub.com. All e-mail gets forwarded to me so I will be sure to get it.

We did not get volunteers for goodies for May, so feel free to bring something if you would like to share.

The meeting in June tentatively will be our Barbeque night. More details to come at the next meeting.

The August meeting will be held a week later than usual due to the fair. We will give you more notice as the date approaches.

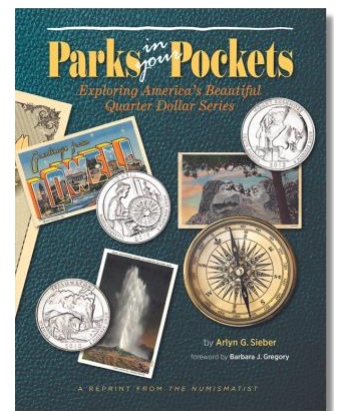
NICKELS AND DIMES

Did anyone who got the electronic reminder for the April meeting notice the plug nickel? It is an old term that some of us recall, and here is an interesting photo of one I found. Plugs are the holes made in coins, which are then filled with a cheaper metal. Those coins are no longer legal tender and are thus worthless if spotted. The phrase is, of course, American. Before 'plugged nickels' there were 'plugged quarters' and 'plugged dimes'. The various versions of the phrase appear in the 1880s. The nickel, being a lower denomination coin, lends itself better than quarters and dimes to a phrase expressing worthlessness. Oddly though, the lowest denomination coin is the cent and the phrase 'not worth a plugged cent' just doesn't sound as good.

- Dale C got a bunch of coins from his uncle, mostly worn Buffalo nickels. But there was one very nice one, a 1913-S type 2. He sent it in to be graded, and it came back AU-58!
- When Rich W started collecting Buffalo nickels, he obtained a Capital Plastics holder for the full set. Having the full set together is a really nice way to display it, so you can see all the obverses or the reverses together. Regarding Junior Members- most of them like Mercury dimes. But the cheapest you can get one is for ~\$2. On the other hand, post-1964 Roosevelt dimes cost a dime, and that is a set you can put together easily- a good way to start as a Junior.
- Mike M Googled 'nickels and dimes', and found Nickels and Dimes Inc. It is a Texas-based entertainment company. At one time it had hundreds of mall arcades across the country, though it has dwindled in size considerably. So, Mike went to eBay and found one of their tokens. On the obverse, around the outer edge, is a motto NICKELS AND DIMES INCORPORATED. Inside that is the motto GOLD MINE/ELECTRONIC AMERICA/NAUTILUS/FUN TOKEN, one of many produced for the company.



- Helm talked about this 1938 D/D Buffalo nickel, graded MS66 by ANACS
- Phil A bought a book from the ANA entitled "Parks In Your Pockets: Exploring America's Beautiful Quarter Dollar Series". It explores the entire America the Beautiful quarters series minted from 2010-2021. He says it is a phenomenal book, still available from the ANA.



- Nickels and dimes are one favorite of Guy S. This is a photo of a Capital Plastics type set, mostly filled. He noted that early half dime production stopped after 1805 and restarted in 1829: the obverse changed from a draped bust to a capped bust, and the reverse eagle was also changed. It is a mystery why there was a gap in minting them. He thought perhaps because foreign coins were used for small change during that period. So, he brought a Mexican 1/2 real dated 1811. It conceivably could have circulated in the US at the time and been used for a half dime.



- David S talked about a two-year US nickel series from 2004-2005, the date of his birth. This was the Westward Journey series commemorating the Lewis and Clark expedition. The 2004 coins featured reverses with a Peace Medal and a keelboat design. 2005 featured a new obverse bust of Jefferson, along with reverses featuring an American Bison and "Ocean in View". This is a very short and easily collectible series- so check it out!



- Ember talked about "the mistaken nickel". Someone at her dentist's office found out she collected coins and showed her what seemed like a funny-looking nickel. Ember had to break the news that it was a 1943 steel cent, not a nickel. Way to go Ember!

- Kim S talked about a 1911 nickel he got a long time ago. It is in nice condition, and when checking it noted some minor variations that he thinks are because it is possibly a proof coin!

- Rich W talked about a half dime. At one time he owned the one pictured here, and eventually sold it. It was later on one of the Krause Publications calendars. The common narrative about its origin is that Martha Washington donated some silver to be melted and turned into these coins, and that they were minted in Washington's garage. Rich brought in an article and discussed it, presenting the case that it was all arranged by Thomas Jefferson instead. Records from the 1990s found that Jefferson took out of the bank \$100 in silver bullion to be used for producing 1500 half dimes sometime early in 1792. The denomination is based on using a decimal system he proposed for U.S. coinage. During a legislative break in 1792 he took a trip from Washington, DC back home to Monticello. During that trip, he paid his expenses with the half dimes- they all entered circulation. Evidence about this is from a circa 1792 book or ledger (discovered in the 1990s) which documented Jefferson's spending these coins- he was meticulous with his records. Looking closer into other known historic Jefferson books helped confirm this story. Jefferson had them minted in 1792 before there was an official US Mint building. And there were records of another 200-500 half dimes minted in October 1792. The same dies were apparently used, but many of this second batch were given away and not circulated. So, any high-grade specimens today are likely from that second minting, since coins from the first batch were all circulated. There are still some unanswered questions about this coin.



- Erik showed us the finest Buffalo nickel from the ones given to him by his grandfather, a 1938 D/D, RPM 2.

- Gary C talked about the relative numbers of modern nickels and dimes. There were 280 million 2008-P and 345 million 2008-D nickels made, for instance, but only 40 million 2009-P and 47 million 2009-D minted. That seems like a ho-hum deal for collectors now, compared to the frenzy to obtain the 1950-D nickels when they came out (2.6 million made). Roosevelt dimes of 2009 also had significantly fewer made- but there is no mad rush to get them. With very little premium over the larger mintage dated dimes and nickels, these are easy holes to fill in modern sets.



- Dan C picked up a 1949 Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine on the freebie table before the meeting. He rattled off prices for a few noted coins: an uncirculated half dime cost \$14-\$21.50; an 1856 proof cent was \$3.05, an 1857 proof cent was \$2.10. If only we could go back in time and buy a few.....

- Merle brought in his Dansco album with a complete set of early bust dimes 1796-1837. Some of them were very hard to get. In 2012 he decided to make a concerted effort to complete his U.S. coin collection. The first dime in this set has a barely legible date- but you *can* read it. People really used those early coins- which is why it is hard to find them in high grade condition. It took over five years to find a 1797 dime he liked enough for his set but did get a nice one. Merle now has at least one dime from each date and mint except the 1894-S Barber dime. And there were *two* of those brought into a club meeting in the 1950s and offered for sale- a bit before our time. Photos of Merle's 1796 and 1797 coins are on the next page.



- Charlie C: this is my favorite nickel. I don't really have a type set, but there are a few classic US type coins minted over the years that I felt were worth having. One was the 1883 no cents V nickel. At one of our coin shows 7 or 8 years ago I saw this in a dealer's pile of cheap slabs, and for \$45 couldn't resist buying it. What was even better was that it was from the Louis Eliasberg collection. He collected coins from 1925 to 1976 with a goal to have one of every single regular issue US coin by date, mint mark, and denomination. He is the only person to finish that complete set, which included a few unique coins and an amazing number of high-grade examples. His two sons inherited the collection when he died. The gold coins were auctioned off in 1982, and the copper, nickel, and silver coins auctioned in 1996 and 1997. The full set cost \$400,000 to obtain and sold for a combined total of \$44.5million! I initially thought that this V nickel was *the* one from his collection. But when the collection was auctioned off, there were three lots of 1883 no cents V nickels: two lots of a full roll, a third lot of 20 coins- all in MS 63-64 grade. So, all 100 of them were probably slabbed by PCGS, and I now had one of those. Unfortunately, the plastic was warped in the Tubbs fire (inside a fire-proof safe). I cracked it out of the warped plastic to make sure it was OK and resubmitted it to PCGS with the accompanying original tag. PCGS would not put the Eliasberg designation on the new slab, but the grade came out MS-64. I'll take it. If you look carefully at the edge in front of Liberty's nose, it is very weak, the same on the reverse side of that edge. The planchet for this coin probably came from the end of the roll of sheet nickel and had a slight taper. It just makes the coin more interesting to me.



May Zoom Info:

Time: May 10, 2023 07:00 PM Pacific Time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85659479319?pwd=WVNjbjUJSMjhsU05CK2RuRGUvT01QQT09>

Meeting ID: 856 5947 9319

Passcode: 052023

One tap mobile

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RECC Juniors News

Brandon and David attended in April and were able to add some wanted items to their collections- notably Mercury dime album, Kennedy half, and Eisenhower dollar.

The topic for May will be the same as the adults: Show and Tell.

See you May 10 at 6:15! Rich

DRAWING WINNERS

Membership: Charlie C, Ember S, John B, Bill Van V, and Guy S

50:50 pot of \$98 was split with Guy S

Raffle: Kim S (three times), Bill S, Andy O (twice), Paul C, David Y (twice), Chris H (twice), George C, and Glenn M

April Attendance: 46+

Guests: yes!


Auction: 57 exciting items.

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

Goodies: Did I mention goodies? Thanks for those who brought some to the April meeting. We welcome anyone to bring goodies for the May meeting if you want- thanks.



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UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS

April 28-30, 2023. Sacramento Valley Coin Club Spring Show. Four Points by Sheraton, 4900 Duckhorn Dr., Sacramento

June 9-10, 2023. NorCal-East Bay/Concord Coin Show. Concord Plaza Hotel, 45 John Glenn Dr., Concord.

July 29-30, 2023. Fremont Coin Club's Annual Coin Show. Elk's Lodge, 38991 Farwell Dr., Fremont

March 3, 2024. Livermore Valley Coin Club Show. Livermore Elks Lodge, 940 Larkspur Drive, Larkspur

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.

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 main auditorium**

May 10, 2023— Charlie