

Madison County Coin Club

of Huntsville, Alabama



Volume 8, Issue 10

November 2008

The President's Corner

Last month's meeting was well-attended with 13 members and 1 guest. By the end of the meeting the visiting guest became a new member. His name is A.C. Vernor and he lives in Madison, Alabama. AC, as he likes to be called, is an engineer working in Huntsville in the Defense Program. He collects Civil War currency and is interested in learning about other coins to collect. Please join me in welcoming AC to our Club.

We had an interesting program by Robert Patrick on "Daniel Boone Commemoratives". As usual with his programs, Robert brought some mint state examples from his beautiful commemorative collection.

We also had nominations for next year's Club officers. They are:

- President - Bob Jaques
- VP - Dennis DeLong
- Secretary - Richard Jozefiak
- Treasurer - Mike Campbell
- Board Member- Mark Larsen

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Gobrecht Dollars

By Mike Ford

Thomas Jefferson ended production of the bust dollar in 1803. For the next 32 years, the half dollar was the primary silver denomination. Production for halves during this time was always over a million coins each year (with the exception of 1807, 1815, and 1820).

With the shortage of dollars, demand rose for a new dollar coin. The average weekly salary for a workman was about four dollars for a work week of 76 to 80 hours of unremitting toil.

A hard economic time in the mid 1830's resulted in lost faith in paper money. President Andrew Jackson's faith in "hard money" silver and gold rather than shaky credit and worthless paper money" pressed for the new dollar. President Van Buren would be the one to press the new coin into mintage in 1836.

Several individuals were responsible for the design. The obverse of new coin was first conceived by Mint Director Robert Patterson in 1835 using the Liberty Seated design, based on coinage from England at the time and the figure of Britannia. However, the motif went back as far as designs on ancient Roman and Greek coins. Patterson asked his chief engraver William Kneass to furnish some specimens but he suffered a stroke only a few months later.

The task then went to the "Second Engraver" Christian Gobrecht who began the work. The obverse design work then went to Thomas Sully. Sully was paid \$50 for the work which he completed in only 4 days. Sully's obverse depicted figure of Liberty seated on a rock, draped in a loose-fitting gown-suggesting statuary from Hellenistic Greece. She is looking over her right shoulder, her right arm supporting the Union shield.

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Jersey 1989 Royal Visit Commemorative

By Harold Fears

This two pounds coin was struck to commemorate the visit to the Bailiwick by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh on the 25th of May 1989. The reverse has the Royal Mace of the Bailiwick of Jersey super imposed on map of the island. The Royal Mace of the Bailiff of Jersey, borne before the Bailiff at the sittings of the Royal Court and of the Assembly of the States of Jersey, was presented by King Charles II to Jersey on the 29th November 1663 in gratitude for the hospitality which he received from the Island on two occasions during his exile.

... it shall be carried before the Bailiffs, in perpetual remembrance of their fidelity...

The mace consists of eleven pieces, made of silver gilt, is 4 ft. 9 ½ inches long, weighs 237 ounces (14 pounds 13 ounces) and bears no hallmarks. Engraved on the foot knob is a Latin inscription, which translated reads, *"Not all doth he deem worthy of such a reward Charles II, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, as a proof of his royal affection towards the Isle of Jersey (in which he has been twice received in safety when he was excluded from the remainder of his dominions) has willed that this Royal Mace should be consecrated to posterity and has ordered that hereafter it shall be carried before the Bailiffs, in perpetual remembrance of their fidelity not only to his august father Charles I but to His Majesty during the fury of the civil wars, when the Island was maintained by the illustrious Philip and George de Carteret, Knights, Bailiffs and Governors of the said Island."*



The obverse depicts the Queen.



The reverse has the Royal Mace of the Bailiwick of Jersey super imposed on map of the island. Note that the names of all the parishes are also present on the map.

Her left arm holds a long pole with a Liberty cap on top. The entire central device stands alone on the obverse with no stars or lettered devices, only the date below.

The reverse was designed by Titian Peale a famed painter of animals. However, unlike Sulley, Peale's effort took several months. In his design, a naturalistic eagle in flight adorns the reverse, the bird rising "onward and upward" as Patterson ordered, a position intended to symbolize the unbounded optimism that Americans had for the nation's future. The eagle flies amid a field of 26 large and small stars, representing the thirteen original states and the thirteen admitted to the Union since 1789 (anticipating Michigan's entry).

By November, 1836 all was ready for trial striking in silver. A small number (presumably 18 pieces) of the new dollars were distributed in Philadelphia. Reaction was almost universally positive, with one exception. Patterson had ordered Gobrecht to place his name on the new coin. He did so by inscribing C. GOBRECHT F. in small letters in the field beneath the figure of Liberty-the 'F.' standing for FECIT, Latin for "He made it." Gobrecht was criticized as a "conceited German" and vilified in the local press. Patterson solved the problem by having Gobrecht move his name to the base of the figure of Liberty, visible only if one looks carefully at the coin. The eighteen or so pieces struck with his name below the base are considered patterns and are very rare.

The first "production" coins were produced in December 1836.

The first "production" coins were produced in December 1836. Only 1,000 were made with the old 1792 standard fineness of .8924. The same date was used for the 600 coins minted in March, 1837, but these pieces were produced from planchets .900 fine-as authorized by the Mint Act of 1837. So close in weight, the two issues are easily differentiated by alignment: the 1837 dollars have a medallion alignment-the obverse and reverse are aligned on a vertical axis, while the 1836 coins have a horizontal, or coin, alignment. All original dollars dated 1836 will show the eagle flying "onward and upward".

1836: Original Design



The stars were pulled from the reverse to the obverse in 1838. Coins from this years are considered patterns as only 25 were minted. In 1839 another 300 coins were struck with Gobrecht's design, and all were intended for circulation. These coins, like the 1838 patterns, have reeded edges.

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1838: Pattern Design



Inclement Weather Notice

If the Huntsville City Schools are closed due to inclement weather, then the Huntsville Senior Center is closed. There will be no club meeting if the Huntsville Senior Center is closed. Local TV and radio stations will give notice of any Huntsville school closure.

1839: Final Year



The public accepted the new dollars but the high relief eagle on the reverse created challenges in striking and stacking the coins. In the end, the flying eagle reverse was scraped and the eagle and shield design prepared by John Reich in 1807 was used. This was virtually the same reverse design as used on the quarter and half dollar. Robert Ball was hired to rework

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the obverse to lower relief.

The new design became what is now the Liberty Seated Dollar which was minted from 1840 to 1873. However, the Gobrecht design was not completely history. In the late 1850s, Mint Director James Ross Snowden, desirous of expanding the Mint's collection of coins during his tenure, decided to take advantage of demand for Gobrecht dollars (as well as other rare dates) and produced additional coins with the intent of them being sold to collectors to increase the Mint's ability to acquire rare dates for its collection. However, it appears much of this was for his own personal benefit. Under Snowden several rare coins were "restruck". Not only Gobrecht dollars, but the rare 1851 and 52 Seated Dollars and non-existent 1804 dollars, as well as "transitional" half dimes and dimes. These restrikes were made from 1858 through the summer of 1860 and again in 1867-68. Actual numbers made are unknown, but it is estimated that the total number of restrikes may exceed the original mintage.

Given their great rarity, few collectors can afford even a single Gobrecht Dollar, much less a collection of each date, variety, original and restrike. The follow-on Liberty Seated Dollar is much more affordable and provides coins which are possibly 5,000 scarcer than Morgan Dollars! ■

Sources:

CoinResource.com

Bowers, Q. David, Silver Dollars and Trade Dollars of the United States, Bowers and Merena Galleries, Wolfeboro, NH, 1993.

Bowers, Q. David, The History of United States Coinage As Illustrated by the Garrett Collection, Bowers and Merena Galleries, Wolfeboro, NH, 1979.

Breen, Walter, Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins, F.C.I./Doubleday, New York, 1988. Julian, Robert. W.,

"The Gobrecht Dollars of 1836-1838," Legacy Magazine, November-December, 1988. Pollock, Andrew W., United States Patterns and Related Issues, Bowers and Merena Galleries, Wolfeboro, NH, 1994.

Members' Notices

Rules for users of the member notice page: All notices are free and should be directed to the editor of the Madison County Coin Club newsletter (see back page for address). Notices will be limited to a maximum of 8 lines, including the name and contact information. The person entering the notice must answer all responses to notices. Preference will be given in the following order to notices when the page is oversubscribed in a single month:

1. Research Notices
2. Wanted Items
3. Trades Offered
4. For Sale Items

Looking for world coins or tokens with sailing ships, or dragons. Interested in crowns, and smaller denominations. Silver, Cupero-Nickel, bronze, Aluminum and the like. Contact Mark at TheLarsens@bellsouth.net

Looking for Alaskan Medals and Tokens. Contact: Richard at ANALMRJ@gmail.com or 256-337-5092

Looking for numismatic information concerning the Island of Jersey, Channel Islands. Especially interested in magazine or newspaper articles. Contact: Harold at hkfears@knology.net or 256-881-6268.

Why not bring a friend to the next meeting?

Some Scenes from the October Meeting



ANA Announces 2009 National Coin Week Theme Contest

The American Numismatic Association is calling on its members to provide the theme for the 86th annual National Coin Week, April 19-25, 2009. The coming year's weeklong event will celebrate the 200th birthday of Abraham Lincoln and his role in United States history and numismatics; all theme submissions should focus on the nation's 16th President.

The contest is open to all ANA members, with the winning theme announced in early January. Prizes including valuable coins and paper currency featuring Abraham Lincoln will be awarded to the individuals who submit the first, second and third-place themes. All submissions will be posted online and member input will be considered when choosing the winning theme.

Every year during the third full week of April, the ANA and its members celebrate National Coin Week with exhibits, educational resources, presentations and other activities at civic centers, libraries and schools to let the world know about the joys of collecting and studying coins and other forms of money. Each National Coin Week has a theme chosen to engage people in learning more about money's role in culture, art, science and history. The theme for 2008 – *Money Makes the World Go Round* – celebrated youth and world unity, and included a song which can be heard on the ANA website.

The deadline for submissions is Dec. 17. Please include your theme idea and a brief description of why your submission should be chosen. Also include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and member number.

Mail, fax or e-mail your idea for a theme to:
American Numismatic Association
National Coin Week Coordinator
818 North Cascade Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Fax: 719-634-4085
E-mail: ncw@money.org

Visit us on the web at <http://mccc.anacclubs.org/>

2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All meetings are held at the Senior Center in Huntsville in the Ceramics Room. We meet on the fourth Monday each month except for May and December. Meetings start at 6:30 and typically end around 8:30. The Thomas W. Davidson, Sr. Senior Center is located at 2200 Drake Ave. SW, Huntsville, AL 35803.

JANUARY 28

Speaker: Bob Jaques

FEBRUARY 25

Charles Cataldo presents "*The State of the Coin Market*"

MARCH 24

Speaker: Dennis Schafluetzel, President of Georgia Numismatic Association, presents "*Carpenter Promotes, Combines and Rebuilds AL & Chattanooga Railroad*"

APRIL 28

Speaker American Numismatic Association (ANA) Governor Radford Stearns presents "*The History of the Western World in 28 Coins*"

JUNE 23

Annual potluck and bourse night.

JULY 28

Speaker Richard Jozefiak presents "*The Modern Sovereign and Half-Sovereign: Gold Coins of the British Empire From 1817 to Today*"

AUGUST 25

Speaker Harold Fears presents "*The 1813 Jersey Tokens*"

SEPTEMBER 22

Speaker Mike Ford talk is "*Seated Dollars*"

OCTOBER 27

Speaker: Robert Patrick discusses the "*Daniel Boone Commemoratives*."

NOVEMBER 24

Annual Thanksgiving Celebration.

November is Our Annual Pot Luck and Bourse Month



The November meeting is our annual end of the year potluck supper. The club will provide drinks, paper products and utensils. Please bring a dish to share with your fellow club members. It is also our bourse night. Come see what treasure you can find! We will also vote for the 2009 officers.

President's Corner continued from page 1

This month's meeting is our annual Thanksgiving carry-in dinner and bourse night. Bring some food, and your extra coins and supplies to sell or trade with other members.

See you on November 24th.

Sincerely,

Bob Jaques

CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: [Bob Jaques](mailto:rjapilot@charter.net) (rjapilot@charter.net)

VICE PRESIDENT: [Harold Fears](mailto:hkfears@knology.net) (hkfears@knology.net)

SECRETARY: [Richard Jozefiak](mailto:analmrj@gmail.com) (analmrj@gmail.com)

TREASURER: [Mike Campbell](mailto:mcampbell7@juno.com) (mcampbell7@juno.com)

BOARD MEMBER: [Mark Larson](mailto:thelarsens@bellsouth.net) (thelarsens@bellsouth.net)

Madison County Coin Club
14047 Camden Circle
Huntsville, AL 35803

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