

Madison County Coin Club

of Huntsville, Alabama



Volume 9, Issue 10

November / December 2009

The President's Corner

Last month's meeting was very informative as member Arthur Patrick talked about *Large Cents*, and brought some fine and rare examples from his collection.

This month's meeting does not have a program, but is intended for our annual Thanksgiving meal and bourse. Please bring something for our meal, and please bring some coins to sell or trade for our bourse.

We had nominations for next year's officers at the last meeting. However, we will re-open them to make sure all who want to serve are heard. Then we will vote. Plan to attend because your vote and input are very important.

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The Mint's First Steam Press

By Bob Jaques

In the summer of 2006 I made my first trip to attend a seminar offered by the American Numismatic Association (ANA) in Colorado Springs, Colorado. I was excited to begin the week-long classes on "Coin Grading". As I progressed in the field of coin-collecting, I realized that being able to know how to grade coins was an invaluable tool.

Since I arrived for class a day early, I decided to visit the famous Numismatic Museum at ANA Headquarters. As I walked the four blocks from my sleeping quarters to the Museum, I noticed a large item sitting to the right of the Museum entrance. According to the placard this large item was the "U.S. Mint's First Steam Press" and it had been given to the ANA Museum.

Fascinated by seeing this unique piece of numismatic antiquity, I began researching its history.

This steam press had been invented by a French inventor named Thonnelier in France in 1833. This was a big improvement over other presses of the day, which were operated by hand. Thonnelier's press was imported to the Philadelphia Mint in 1836, and after a few small improvements, began making coins on March 23, 1836.

In a letter to President Andrew Jackson in 1837, Mint Director Robert Patterson wrote "On the 23rd of March last (1836), the first steam coinage in America was executed at this mint ... all copper coins have been struck by this press, and it has been lately used with success for coining half dollars ..."

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A Coronation Commemorative from Jersey

By Harold Fears



This 50 pence coin was issued in 2003 by Jersey to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Designed in conjunction with the Royal Mint engraving department, the coin features the famous Ian Rank-Broadley portrait of the Queen on the obverse. The reverse dramatically depicts the actual moment in 1953 when the Queen was crowned. The Queen, as tradition dictates, was the last to arrive at Westminster Abbey, venue for the Coronation, her procession having been roundly cheered by the vast crowds who lined the route from Buckingham Palace. In the abbey, the Queen removed her diamond diadem and crimson velvet robes trimmed with ermine and gold lace, until she stood in a simple linen overdress, ready for the central act of ceremony. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, anointed the Queen with holy oil made to a formula devised by Charles I, and proclaimed her dedication "as kings, priests and prophets were anointed." She was dressed in golden robes and seated on King Edward's chair, above the Stone of Scone, to be given the symbols of her authority: the orb, scepter, rod of mercy, and royal ring of sapphire and rubies. Finally, in absolute silence, the archbishop held St. Edward's crown high in the air, then lowered it slowly onto her head. The shout rang out, "God save the Queen!" Bells pealed and trumpeters blared ... Britain's new Queen was crowned. ■

This steam press could make coins at the rate of 100 coins a minute, which was a great improvement over the slower hand-operated presses. The press was remodeled in 1858 and finally removed from service in 1875.



Obverse and reverse of original medals struck in 1836

The press was sold to shop keeper in Philadelphia named George B. Soley. For the next 30 years, he operated the press at various historical functions. He displayed it at the Centennial Exposition in 1876 and struck souvenir medals. It was shown and used at the Columbian Exposition in 1892 and at the St. Louis' Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904.

At each of these events he struck a 13mm medal with an official logo on one side and the Lord's Prayer on the other side. These medals were sold for 25 cents each.



The steam press today can be seen at the ANA headquarters.

The Franklin Institute acquired this press in 1927

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when it was reconditioned and motorized. On March 23, 2000, the Franklin Institute celebrated the 164th anniversary of this historic press by moving the press to ANA Headquarters and striking commemorative medals to celebrate the event. The press is still at ANA Headquarters today.



The obverse and reverse of commemorative medal struck in 2000. Note the same design but dates are different and the initials ANA are on the commemorative medal.

So when visiting Colorado Springs, it is worthwhile to visit the ANA Museum and see this historic steam press as it sits in the rotunda guarding the Museum's entrance. ■

We continue to have guests at our meetings and that is how we will grow. Thanks for making them feel welcome.

See you at the next meeting on November 23rd.

Sincerely,

Bob Jaques

Members Attend the Rocket City Coin Show



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. ■

Some Scenes from the Last Meeting



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

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.



2 Dollar Coin
"Toonie"

Looking for circulated contemporary Canadian coins. Also have a few available, including some older items. Contact: Mike at mcampbell7@juno.com

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.

Please bring a coin,
medal, note, or
something for Show-
and-Tell.



RARE BANKNOTE FOUND IN TENNESSEE ESTATE

By Bob Jaques

One of the rarest "brown back" National Currency notes of the 1890 Series has been found in Middle Tennessee while heirs were working on the estate of their father. The father, who died recently, had been known to collect some coins and currency, but the children were unaware exactly what he had collected over the years.

The story came to me by my son Jon, who is a CPA in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and the heirs are his clients. It is an exciting story.



It was while the heirs were going thru some items in a chest of drawers that they came across an envelope with a banknote inside. They opened the envelope and to their surprise was an extremely fine \$5 National Currency note from the *Merchants National Bank* of Jacksonville, Florida, Series 1890. A very rare find because this note is the only known example from this particular bank.

The *Merchants National Bank* was chartered June 2, 1890 and was given charter number 4332, which had to appear on all pieces of currency. The *Bank* did not last long and was placed in receivership on March 17, 1897. The total amount of money issued was \$64,240. By 1915 the amount not turned in was \$335 or 67 notes. It is hard to tell what happened to the few notes not redeemed, but amazingly, 117 years after the bank was chartered one lone piece surfaces in Middle Tennessee.

Upon my son's advice, the heirs, who wish to remain anonymous, sent a picture of the note to several currency dealers. Within a few days, one dealer made an offer, which the heirs accepted. The proud new owner flew into Nashville and took possession after handing over a cashiers check for an undisclosed amount.

This story ends with the buy/sell arrangement, but who knows what other rarities are yet to be discovered somewhere in an obscure place.

2009 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 26

PHOTOGRAPHING COINS BY JOHN LINDBERG

FEBRUARY 23

COINS ON GLASS BY RICHARD JOZEFIAK

MARCH 23

STATE OF THE COIN MARKET BY CHARLES CATALDO

APRIL 27

EARLY DOLLARS BY MIKE FORD

JUNE 22

ANNUAL POTLUCK AND BOURSE NIGHT

JULY 27

TRADE DOLLARS BY DENNIS DELONG

AUGUST 24

THE GOOD OLD DAYS BY FRANK DUVALL

SEPTEMBER 28

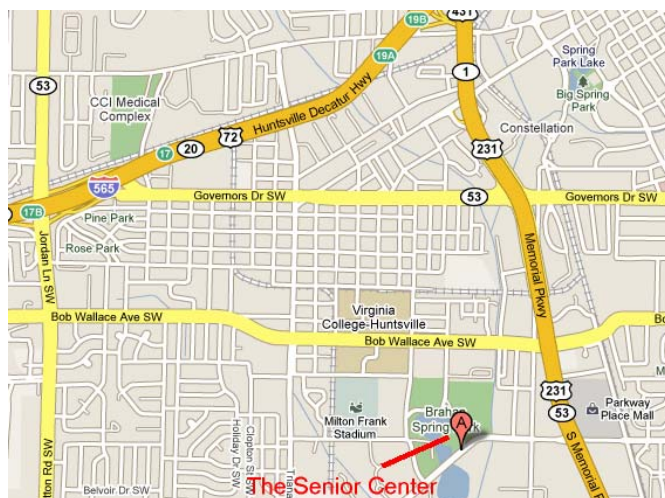
GUERNSEY COINS BY HAROLD FEARS

OCTOBER 26

LARGE CENTS BY ROBERT PATRICK

NOVEMBER 23

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION AND BOURSE NIGHT



CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: [BOB JAQUES](mailto:rjapilot@charter.net) (rjapilot@charter.net)

VICE PRESIDENT: [Dennis DeLong](mailto:fastfords1@bellsouth.net) (fastfords1@bellsouth.net)

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

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



Can You Identify this Coin?



This is a one cent size copper-nickel coin, with a Plateless Turtle on the reverse. Can you identify it? The solution will be published next month in the newsletter.

Solution to last month's quiz: A \$5 dollar coin from New Zealand issued for the Olympics.