

RNA News

The official journal of the Rochester Numismatic Association

May - June 2012

MUSINGS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

When I received a reminder from Ted Vaccarella to provide this material something really was driven home.... This will be my last opportunity as your 100th President to provide a letter in this manner. So here goes.

First off I would like to thank all of you who have helped and supported me during this past year. I could not have gotten this far without your help. Help is one of our strong points as a club. There is a strong tradition of helping others throughout our history and that is as strong now as ever. Every job that gets done is done out of the goodness of our membership. PLEASE as a group make sure that this spirit continues and grows.

It has been a bumpy year for me and I am glad that I could maintain the level of commitment to do a half way good job for the membership. I wish I could have done more, but that wish can come true through my continued support of club activities as the gavel is passed on in a few months. Special thanks to: John Lighthouse, John Vicaretti & Sharon Miller for making this year run smoothly. Again John you have my commitment to help if & when you need it next year.... just ask me. Let's, as a club, continue to reach out and show those around us what it is that we like about our hobby. There will be many opportunities to display, give a talk and just plain be involved deep in coins. Remember, just because of timing the gavel passes, but 2012 is not over; far from it. We will have many more activities. One large activity to start your planning for now is the Fall Coin Show and Sale. For one thing, we will need a lot of help with displays.

Thanks again to everyone for all the encouragement, support and Good Old FELLOWSHIP we shared during this past year.

Chip Scoppa

Am I Not a Man and a Brother Token

By Ken Traub, RNA President - 1988



Designed by William Hackwood, for Wedgwood, 1787

I recently purchased the above historical anti-slavery token known by its obverse plea shown above: “AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER”. These token are most frequently seen in quite worn condition and are scarce in AU and above. The one I purchased is one of the finest known. There are several varieties of this token; my NGC slab is labeled “approximately 1790s Great Britain D&H 1037B 1/2P Middlesex - Social Series Token MS 64 RB Edge Milled”. I have done a Google search and have extracted some of the fascinating history of the British and American abolitionist movements from the quoted sources listed below.

“This token was produced for the (British) Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, established by Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson in 1787. It shows the society's emblem of a chained African man, naked and kneeling, surrounded by the words 'Am I Not a Man and a Brother'. The reverse side shows two hands clasped in friendship. The pleading supplicant slave became an enduring image, reproduced and distributed through literature and decorative objects, including ceramic medallions produced by Josiah Wedgwood, himself a prominent abolitionist. Whilst it was intended to shame those who were involved in the slave trade, it also had the negative effect of representing the enslaved as essentially passive. In fact, enslaved people repeatedly resisted oppression with courage, ingenuity and determination. The Abolition of the Slave Trade Act finally became (English) law in 1807, although the institution of slavery was not officially abolished (in England and its colonies) until 1833.” [This information was provided by curators from the [People's History Museum](#).]

From: **American Anti-Slavery Society** (from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

“The **American Anti-Slavery Society** (1833–1870) was an [abolitionist](#) society founded by [William Lloyd Garrison](#) and [Arthur Tappan](#). [Frederick Douglass](#) was a key leader of this society and often spoke at its meetings. [William Wells Brown](#) was another freed slave who often spoke at meetings. By 1838, the society had 1,350 local chapters and around 250,000 members. The society's headquarters was in New York City. From 1840 to 1870 it published a weekly newspaper, the [National Anti-Slavery Standard](#).”

The society, while it promoted the greater good for slaves, was not met with welcome arms. According to Britannica, "The society's antislavery activities frequently met with violent public opposition, with mobs invading meetings, attacking speakers, and burning presses."^[2] The society however could not expect everyone to agree with the idea of getting rid of slavery. In the mid 1830s, slavery had become so economically involved in the U.S. that getting rid of it would cause a major blow to the economy, especially in the South.

From: **Collecting Hard Times Tokens** by Fred W.A. Smith

“A hotly contended issue during the Hard Time period [1832-1844] in the United States was slavery. A token issued by the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) is similar to the medallion distributed by the British Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. It shows on its obverse a slave woman in chains kneeling to the right with her shackled hands raised in supplication. The token's legend reads "Am I Not a Woman & a Sister." Its reverse is patterned upon the large American cent series, with "Liberty 1838" within a laurel wreath and the legend "United States of America." A few trial pieces were struck showing a male slave kneeling. That version is extremely rare, with an estimated auction price upwards of \$21,000. In its place, the AASS distributed the common British antislavery token referred to in the opening paragraph above, which it imported. Several varieties of this token were issued with differing incused edge inscriptions, and one with a milled edge. They are listed in the standard catalog by R. Dalton and S. H. Hamer, *The Provincial Token-Coinage of the 18th Century*, originally published in London and available in reprints.” *The Token Book - British Tokens of the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries and Their Values* (2010) by Paul Withers is another good source for early English token coinage.

“A Consistent Theme of Integrity”



Francisco Perez & Michael Wells accept delivery from USPS carrier Brian

17 January 2012

To *Coin World* Readers:

I, like many people, have observed and noted Mr. Nachbar's many interesting testimonials in full page ads in *Coin World*. When I decided to sell my collection of over 40 years, I went back and reviewed the last dozen years of *Coin World*. I realized I 'dog-eared' Richard Nachbar's ads consistently. Why? I took away a consistent theme of integrity. In addition to the testimonials, his contrary-to-mainstream advice on gold & silver and his coin market analysis also stood out. When it came time to trust a total stranger with my collection – which valued well into six figures and approached 5,000 coins – I called Richard Nachbar. I was still somewhat nervous. Yet, Richard handled those long calls as a professional: explaining the time he expected the process to take; what he expected to get given current market conditions; how to maximize the value if I wasn't in a rush to sell; and he gave an excellent overview of the current market. So, I shipped all the coins to Richard in December. He paid me the full agreed to amount, then two additional \$10,000 checks due to receiving better than expected prices on some items. Just as in the ads I had read for many years, Richard didn't keep the upside for himself, but gave me the larger payout instead. I would definitely recommend Richard Nachbar when it comes time to part with your collection.

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What Coin Type is on the Reverse of the RNA Presidential Medal?

Reported by Gerard Muhl, RNA Historian

- The coin is a silver *tetradrachm* of the Greek city state of Athens. It dates between 196 and 87 BC. In 86 BC the Roman General Sulla captured Athens and closed the mint. That was the last silver coin type struck in Athens.
- Later, Rome allowed the mint to reopen but coinage was limited to pieces of copper and bronze.
- The obverse depicts Athens (Minerva in Rome). She was surnamed Pallas and was sometimes known by that name alone. Athena was the goddess of wisdom, patroness of agriculture, industry and the arts. She guided men through the dangers of war, where victory was gained by prudence, courage and perseverance. She is sometimes shown hurling a thunderbolt.
- Sacred to Athena were the owl, serpent, cock and olive, and these attributes often appear with her on coins.
- The reverse portrays the Owl on an amphora. Standing nearby on the ancient coin is the nude figure of Ares (the Roman Mars). Ares was the god of war, son of Zeus and Hera. He loved war for its own sake and often changed sides in assisting one or the other combatant parties, but he could be worsted in battle and even wounded by mortals. He is sometimes shown with his lover Aphrodite.

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96th Annual Banquet

The RNA annual banquet honoring 99th President Peter Blaisdell will begin at 6:00 pm on May 18, 2012. This year's new location is Rick's Prime Rib House, 898 Buffalo Road, Rochester New York. Those living in the Rochester area will be familiar with Rick's which has provided fine dining for many in the Rochester area for decades. Rick's is located in a beautiful art deco building opened first in 1940, honoring WWI Gates resident William Doud who died in 1918 in France. The

menu will feature salad, vegetable, pasta, roasted chicken and their famous prime rib. There will be other accompaniments and a dessert to round out a fine dining experience.

The \$30 tickets can be obtained at any regular meeting through May 3rd or by mailing your check to: RNA Treasurer, PO Box 10056, Rochester, NY 14610-0056. *Your reservation must be received no later than May 11.*

Rick's is handicapped accessible.

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|---|---|
|  | <p style="text-align: center;">RIDGE COIN & STAMP LIFE MEMBER ANA – RNA – FUN ridgecns@aol.com FULL SERVICE DEALERSHIP SPECIALIZING IN RARE COINS – BANK APPRAISALS – GOLD/SILVER ESTATE LIQUIDATIONS – CONSULTATION 585-342-8206 –2064 East Ridge Rd., Rochester, NY 14622 MICHAEL OMELUCH, Professional Numismatist</p> |
|---|---|

Money-makers: A book review by Gerard Muhl, RNA Historian

Money-makers, by Ben Tarnoff, chronicles the lives of three colorful counterfeiters who flourished in early America. It sheds fresh light on the country's financial coming of age.

Few nations have as rich a counterfeiting history as the United States. Since the colonies suffered from a chronic shortage of precious metal, they were the first place in the Western world to use easily forged paper bills. Until the national government reclaimed its monopoly at printing money in the last half of the 19th Century, the United States was a counterfeiter's paradise.

Author Tarnoff's *Moneymakers* (2011 Penguin Press, NY) offers the reader a popular and easy to read account of the developing American economy from colonial times through the period just after the Civil War. (Price: \$27.95; 369 pages).

* * * * *

Dateless Quarter May be Worth Hundreds

Reported by Gerard Muhl, RNA Historian

Can you tell a dateless 1916 Liberty Standing Quarter from a dateless 1917 type quarter? Be careful, you may be consigning a coin worth over \$100 to the melting pot.

According to Michael Fahey, there are at least four diagnostics to look for in distinguishing the 1916 from the type one 1917.

* On the 1916 the curl of hair behind Liberty's head appears to be a single curl. There are two curls on the 1917.

* On the 1916 the drapery above "GOD" is flush with the top of the wall. It sags below the top surface on the 1917.

* On the 1916 Liberty's big toe above the "6" in the date is huge.

* On the 1916 the drapery above "1" in the date is flattened and the bottom of the drapery contacts Liberty's foot.

Good luck in your search for treasure (unless you already sent it off to be melted).

RNA News

Established January 1912

One of America's oldest local
coin clubs
American Numismatic
Association,
Branch #2,
Life Club #8

Member: American Numismatic
Society, Empire State Numismatic
Association, Canadian Numismatic
Association, Token and Medal
Society, Rochester Museum &
Science Center

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Pittman's Auction Catalogue Turns Up

Reported by Gerard Muhl, RNA Historian

Old auction catalogs are fun to flip through - such as the 1999 David Akers, "John J. Pittman Collection" of foreign coins. But it's even more fun to find where collector John Jay Pittman (RNA President - 1950) got some of those coins and what he paid for the treasures.

Recently a group of RNA members were organizing the club's extensive library when a small (6x9 inch) 72 page auction catalogue came to light. It was the Canadian Numismatic Association's 1961 auction at its 8th Annual Convention. It was held at the Royal Connaught Hotel, Hamilton, Ontario.

Pittman was busy the first day of the auction, Thursday, August 31, and thus appointed Carl E. Dunker of Kitchener, Ontario, to execute 14 bids for him. The catalogue is annotated by Dunker and shows the coins

hammered down for Pittman by auctioneer J. E. Charlton of *Charlton Press* fame. Most of the following coins showed up 38 years later in Akers' huge \$32 million "Pittman Collection" auction.

The following list of Canadian coins describes the coin, shows what Pittman paid in 1961 and gives the 2011 book value of the same items:

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>1961</u> | <u>2011</u> |
|-------------|--|-------------|-------------|
| 1861 | Brilliant Uncirculated Large Cent of New Brunswick | \$20 | \$3,500 |
| 1870 | Raised border proof | \$205 | \$8,000 |
| 1881 | Ex Fine 50 cents | \$67 | \$850 |
| 1947 | ML Silver dollar Proof | \$105 | \$6,000 |
| 1947 | ML 50 cents curved right 7 proof | \$900 | \$4,500 |
| 1947 | ML 25 cents proof | \$33 | \$1,500 |
| 1947 | ML 10 cents proof | \$47 | \$400 |
| 1947 | ML 5 cents proof | \$40 | \$325 |
| 1947 | ML 1 cent proof | \$16 | \$350 |
| 1873 | VF 10 cents Newfoundland | \$19 | \$300 |
| 1921 | VG 5 cents silver | \$375 | \$5,500 |
| 1870 | Uncirculated 25 cents | \$60 | \$4,500 |
| 1947 | ML proof 50 cents curved right 7 | \$1,550 | \$4,500 |
| 1936 | "dot" cent Brilliant Uncirculated | \$3.400 | \$402,500 |

The 1936 Dot cent was for sure the best deal. In a 2010 Heritage auction that coin set all records for a Canadian cent. John kept it locked in his living room closet in Greece, New York. Three years after purchasing it thieves entered John's house through a wall milk box and stole the penny. Remarkably, a few years later thieves returned that coin with a few others tossed in a paper business envelope.

With this and other Canadian auctions John Jay Pittman was able to collect a set including one of every coin issued by Canada up to the time of his death in 1996. This was a truly remarkable feat. And part of that feat is recorded in this humble auction catalogue.

Editors' Note: *RNA News* needs your article about Canadian coins. It can be about one coin or a whole series. We are looking to get more Canadian articles for 2012-2013.

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We need your Article for upcoming newsletters. Earn Fame; win a writers medal. Tell us a numismatic experience; write about a favorite coin or series. How about a biography of a worthy numismatist? Send articles to Gerry (and email them to Ted).

* * * * *

Club News and Notes

Since the **March - April** issue of *RNA News*, the following people have joined RNA: We welcome Niels & Cynthia Hansen, Fairport, NY.

RNA member John Bailey is show chairman for the Early American Coppers (EAC) national Convention opening to the public from May 4-6 in Buffalo, NY. Times are 10am to 5pm Friday & Saturday, 10-3 on Sunday for the bourse. The location is the Adams Mark Hotel, 120 Church Street, Buffalo.

RNA Historian Gerry Muhl reports finding most of the RNA minutes from 1912 through the present. Some gaps, however, still exist. We would appreciate copies of any club memorabilia you may have.

William Waychison, president of the Royal Canadian Numismatic Association, is planning to attend our annual banquet on May 18 to present an award to the club on its 100th anniversary. The club joined CNA in the early 1960's.

Winners of the March coin scavenger hunt were Darlene Corio, Mark Holmes and Gerry Muhl.

The John Jay Pittman Memorial Library is available at every regular meeting. There are over one thousand titles to pick from. See the RNA Librarian to sign out materials you wish to borrow.

We will publish information for ordering "Best of the RNA Collection" as soon as we obtain the particulars.

Would you like to meet with other RNA members for lunch once a month? Bring your thoughts to a meeting.

If we are to sponsor a meeting of Western NY coin clubs in May/June we will need a coordinator. Please let President Chip Scoppa know if you are willing to take on this project.

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* * * 96th Annual Banquet * * *

Honoree: 99th President Peter Blaisdell

When: May 18, 2012, 6:00 pm

Where: Rick's Prime Rib House, 898 Buffalo Road

Tickets: \$30 tickets

Mail check to: RNA Treasurer, PO Box 10056
Rochester, NY 14610-0056

Reservation Deadline: May 11, 2012

Rick's is handicapped accessible.

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* * * * *

What a Great Resource!

* The John Jay Pittman Memorial Library *

In recent sessions at Eisenhart, some of our fellow members have been cleaning and organizing our Library so as to make our holdings more accessible and orderly. Included in this will be an update of the catalog of books and publications originally completed by Jason Childers (RNA President - 2003). Many books have been added and older editions have been replaced by new editions. Among the holdings are the Krause catalogs of world coins; both older and newer coin pricing guides from different countries; fifty publications covering ancient Greek, Roman and Jewish coins;

several dozen books covering medals and tokens the world over; and sixty-odd books about currency from nearly every corner of the globe. Additionally, there are numerous volumes of scholarly research published by ANS, many books on numismatic collecting, history and general coin collecting. In future issues of *RNA News*, we will highlight the contents of our library as we obtain a better picture of just what's there.

We want more of our members to write for *RNA News* or **give a talk** on a favorite subject at a future meeting, and right here at every meeting we have one of the finest local resources for numismatic materials: *Editors*.

* * * * *

Regular RNA meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays of every month, except July and August, at the Eisenhart Auditorium of the Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Avenue. The auditorium is the glass front building behind the Museum. Enter through the Eisenhart or Gannett School doors and follow the signs downstairs to the lower-level meeting room. All are welcome! If you have difficulty with stairs ask the receptionist in the auditorium for elevator directions.

Rochester Junior Numismatic Association (RJNA) meetings are also held in the lower level meeting room at Eisenhart Auditorium; for more information, call RJNA advisor Joe Lanzafame at 585-314-1240 for more information.

The Calendar May - June 2012

- **Thursday, May 3:** 8 PM - RNA Meeting: **Jason Childers** - Euro Coins III
- **Thursday, May 17:** 8 PM - RNA Meeting: **Meinhart Speaking Contest**; pizza will be available
- **Friday, May 18:** RJNA Meeting
- **Friday, May 18:** **RNA Annual Banquet**: honoring past President **Peter Blaisdell** at Rick's Prime Rib House, 6 pm
- **Thursday, June 7:** 8 PM - *RNA Annual Meeting*: **Eric Miller** - Liberty Caps
- **Friday, June 15:** RJNA Meeting
- **Thursday, June 21:** Annual Year-end **Auction**
- **Sunday, August 26:** RNA **Annual Picnic**: Save the date - White Brook Nature Area Park (Perinton); there will be a *Board meeting* before the picnic
- **Thursday, September 6:** 8 PM - RNA Meeting: What I did this summer in numismatics

- * Rochester Area Coin Expo: next show is June 10, 10-3, at the Double Tree Hotel, 1111 Jefferson Road.
- * The Ontario County Coin Club meets at 2 pm on the first Sunday of every month at the Canandaigua Elks Club, 19 Niagara Street. Doors open at 1 pm.

The Calendar welcomes meeting notices from other area clubs. Send to Gerry Muhl or email Ted at tedvacc@yahoo.com.

Rochester Numismatic Association
 PO Box 10056, Rochester NY 14610.