

# RNA News

The official journal of the Rochester Numismatic Association

September - October 2012

## ***RNA meets at the ANA World's Fair of Money in Philadelphia***

Reported by Gerard Muhl, RNA Historian

The **American Numismatic Association World's Fair of Money** was a success all around, especially for the Rochester Numismatic Association. On Thursday immediate past President Chip Scoppa was given the award for the best article about paper money in *The Numismatist* this year. You will remember that he wrote about experimental fibers used in our currency during World War II.

On Friday the RNA held an official club meeting at the convention. Twenty-five members and guests were there while Treasurer John Vicaretti attended via Skype. Guests at the meeting included Ed Reiter (Editor of *Coinage*), Barbara Gregory (Editor of *The Numismatist*), and Tom Hallenbeck, ANA President.

This, the 2110th meeting of the RNA, was John Lighthouse' first as president of the club. Scott Fybush gave an excellent presentation on the history of the RNA and what makes a coin club strong and enduring over the years.

On Friday evening at the grand dinner John Zabel accepted a beautiful 100 year plaque from the ANA to thunderous applause from all in attendance.

A good time was had by all. Come to our September 6 RNA meeting to find out more about the ANA convention.

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## **George Gillette, RNA President Eleven:** *another in the continuing saga of RNA Presidents*

Reported by Gerard Muhl, RNA Historian

From time to time I will be highlighting various aspects of our Association's long history. This article focuses on our eleventh president, George A. Gillette (1922).

Gillette was born in Otsego County near Cooperstown on January 14, 1862. He was the son of Sarah and the Rev. Charles Gillette. As a Presbyterian minister Charles was assigned to Rochester when George was fifteen. George had two sisters and a brother. Brother Willis K. Gillette eventually became a U. S. Supreme Court justice!

In 1878 George Gillette graduated from the Rochester Free Academy and won a school scholarship to the University of Rochester. He graduated in 1882 from the university and moved to California where he taught at Pacific Methodist College and also in Dr. Finley's College in Santa Rosa. In Santa Rosa he studied law with his uncle and was admitted to the State Bar of California in 1884. (Continued on page 3)

***Fall 2012 Highlight: Our 40th Annual Coin Show and Sale***  
***Also - This issue: George Gillette, RNA President Eleven; Reflections on RJNA and Edward F. Meinhart; and more....***

**(PLUS-Don't forget the picnic August 26, 1-5 pm; Board Meeting at noon; details in July-August issue.)**

- A • N • A •
- BOSTON - 1973
- MIAMI - 1974
- LOS ANGELES - 1975
- NEW YORK - 1976
- ATLANTA - 1977
- HOUSTON - 1978
- ST. LOUIS - 1979
- CINCINNATI - 1980
- NEW ORLEANS - 1981
- BOSTON - 1982
- SAN DIEGO - 1983
- DETROIT - 1984
- BALTIMORE - 1985
- MILWAUKEE - 1986
- ATLANTA - 1987
- CINCINNATI - 1988
- PITTSBURGH - 1989
- SEATTLE - 1990
- CHICAGO - 1991
- ORLANDO - 1992
- BALTIMORE - 1993

# My 40th ANA

## Table 642

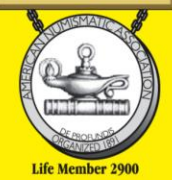


- DETROIT - 1994
- ANAHEIM - 1995
- DENVER - 1996
- NEW YORK - 1997
- PORTLAND - 1998
- CHICAGO - 1999
- PHILADELPHIA - 2000
- ATLANTA - 2001
- NEW YORK - 2002
- BALTIMORE - 2003
- PITTSBURGH - 2004
- SAN FRANCISCO - 2005
- DENVER - 2006
- MILWAUKEE - 2007
- BALTIMORE - 2008
- LOS ANGELES - 2009
- BOSTON - 2010
- CHICAGO - 2011
- PHILADELPHIA - 2012

### EXPERIENCE PAYS!

As many readers recall, I used to run full page buying ads in Coin World every week for more years than I can remember. It eventually resulted in more work than I wanted to handle (as if 60 hours per week was not enough). For the last two years, my buying ads have been about every six months or so, which seems to have finally struck a better balance. Readers see me at the biggest shows and know that I'm still a major, nationally competitive buyer - just a little bit harder to find, which suits me just fine. I'm personally focused with each deal sent or driven to my office, and I still fly to **NEW CLIENTS** to appraise & purchase larger collections. Just last week I spent several days in Alaska acquiring & shipping a 50 years-in-the-making collection that included all the early 20th century gold coin sets - several complete or nearly so.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Is summer almost over? With the RNA picnic on the horizon, we can't be too far away from our first September meeting. I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer and look forward to seeing you at the picnic or our first meeting in September.

As of this writing, I just returned from Philadelphia after attending the ANA World's Fair of Money. This was a special honor for me because I chaired my first RNA meeting (#2110) at the ANA with many of our RNA members in attendance. Scott Fybush did a great presentation on the history of the RNA for ANA dignitaries in attendance, including the ANA president, Tom Hallenbeck. This meeting was another celebratory event marking the RNA's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and we were allowed to preview a plaque marking our centennial on August 10<sup>th</sup>. John Zabel received the award as our club's representative that evening at the convention's banquet. In addition, Chip Scoppa was presented a literary award for his article published in "The Numismatist" on the BEP's experimental one dollar notes depicting a red "R" or a red "S", showing the usage of silk vs. rayon threads in the notes.

Another first for the club was a Skype video conference with our VP, John Vicaretti. He couldn't stay on for long – his patient came first.

In closing, there is always a special thrill attending a national show. Seeing the complete set of Stella pattern \$4 gold pieces, a Brasher Doubloon, an 1804 silver dollar and a 1913 Liberty Nickel in one place is quite a thrill. The exhibits are extraordinary; I would recommend that anyone that has not attended a national show, do so. Though not cheap, it is well worth the expense, especially if you are down to that last "must have" coin.

*John Lighthouse*

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### George Gillette, RNA President Eleven

(Continued from page 1)

George returned to Rochester in 1887 when he inherited his father's real estate development business. In this same year he was admitted to the NY Bar and opened a law office on the tenth floor of the Wilder Building.



Every year his development company built and sold over fifty houses. Before he retired, Gillette built more than 700 homes, most of which were at Belcoda Terrace and also east of Rock Beach Road in Irondequoit.

Gillette married in 1894 and had four children but must have seldom been home at 80 Kenwood Avenue: he was a joiner. The following is a partial list of some associations that had him as a member: A. F. and AM; Red Men; Odd Fellows; Modern Woodmen; Columbia Rifle Club; Rochester Athletic Club; Damascus Temple; Knights Templar; and the Rochester Numismatic Association.

On December 21, 1920, Gillette was elected vice president of the RNA. As a charter member of the club he knew its workings well. Along with George Bauer he presented a resolution to the club that it meet three times a month; twice at its regular time and once on a Sunday at the Museum's coin room so that members could interact with Museum visitors and help answer coin-related questions. This practice lasted one year.

In 1922 Gillette became club president. Formal club educational programs were not yet the order-of-the-day but what took their place was an hour or so of the members bringing coins to show and offering lengthy discussion of the coins. Nearly every meeting Gillette brought diverse parts of his collection from ancient gold, large bronze medals, U. S. colonials, or regular mint-issued coins.

A typical meeting (May 16, 1922) saw Gillette showing and discussing the following items: two quadruple German thalers; 3 bell thalers; Oliver Cromwell gold coins; 3 gold Roman solidi; 4 war decorations; an 1857 U. S. large cent in brilliant proof; and an 8 thaler Swedish plate money (42 lbs.). It would have been quite a lesson in numismatics.

During Gillette's tenure in office Alphonse A. Kolb was accepted as a member of the RNA. The Gillette medal was the second that Kolb did for the club while working for Bastian Brothers. Fifty bronze medals and an unknown number of silver medals were also produced. Comparing the medal with early photographs, the medal is an excellent likeness of George Gillette.

After leaving office the 61-year old Gillette continued his legal practice and real estate development business. He remained an active coin collector and member of the club until his death on May 3, 1941. His obituary proudly noted that he was a past president of the Rochester Numismatic Association.

We can determine what George Gillette collected by studying the catalogue by which his collection was liquidated. The RNA owns part one of the Gillette auction catalogue dated December 7, 1940 (we are looking for part 2). Held at the Hotel Seneca in Rochester, the auction was gaveled by long-time RNA member and past president George J. Bauer (#3 - 1914). Gillette was alive but very ill at the time.

Over 200 ancient Greek coins were offered including eleven silver Syracuse decadrachms. Ancient kings of Syria and North Africa were represented by 61 pieces. Ancient Rome had 92 items (30 in gold). Colonial and American coins had 166 lots (some with multiple pieces). Twenty-five one-dollar gold coins plus a complete set of commemoratives were hammered down. Silver crowns and multiples completed the auction with 255 from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Part one of the Gillette collection auctioned more than 1,000 items. Part two was held in March 1941 (after George Bauer caught his breath).

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	<p><b>RIDGE COIN &amp; STAMP</b>  <b>LIFE MEMBER ANA – RNA – FUN</b>  <b>ridgecns@aol.com</b>          FULL SERVICE DEALERSHIP SPECIALIZING IN          RARE COINS – BANK APPRAISALS – GOLD/SILVER          ESTATE LIQUIDATIONS – CONSULTATION  <b>585-342-8206</b> –2064 East Ridge Rd., Rochester, NY 14622  <b>MICHAEL OMELUCH, Professional Numismatist</b></p>
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## Reflections on RJNA and Edward F. Meinhart

By **Jerry Vaccarella**, RNA member

As my fourth grade pal, Alan, led me into his house on Custer St. in Rochester's 19th ward, he posed a question. "Would you like to see my Lincoln Cent collection?" Lincoln pennies I knew but a Lincoln Cent collection? I soon found out in spades what that meant. Alan said he looked at pennies in store change to build his collection. He explained there was a club at the Science Museum that got together every month to discuss trade, sell and talk about coins. The RJNA immediately became a 9 year Odyssey for me once I was guided through the doors of 657 East Avenue. Long before and after Alan moved away, I became a very enthusiastic numismatist. Through those early years in the fifties I worked on all aspects of the club. I remember preparing donuts, cider and other refreshments for the club and cleaning up at the end of the meeting. Within a year or so I became an officer of the RJNA and held every office (some twice) before I graduated from West High School.

The club was led by a jolly fellow with a round face and ruddy cheeks. If you put a ton of long, white hair on his head you would think he was St. Nick! He was round with a Rhett Butler/Gable mustache and Santa like in stature I was privileged to get to know one of the most generous, kindest, humorous people I've ever encountered, Edward Meinhart. I determined early into the club activities I would like to serve and help the club

by being an officer. I also realized I'd be interacting with a wise, insightful man (who had a great sense of humor) and, additionally, with a great bunch of kids. I felt a kinship to Mr. Meinhart. He became a very special adult person in my life. Most of the time, we met at his house for officer's meetings on Mount Vernon Avenue in the South Wedge of Rochester. Occasionally, we would meet at some of the RJNA officer's houses, as well, but mainly the officers meetings were at Mr. Meinhart's house. Mr. Meinhart was a banker but he certainly didn't fit the fifties stereotype of a banker. He was decidedly not cold and businesslike. This banker would laugh and arch his eyebrows and contort his face in the most expressive ways. I'm smiling now thinking about it. You could tell by the expression on his face if he was serious about an idea but the words were always kind. I was very enthusiastic about numismatics. I brought friends and eventually my older brother Ted to the meetings. At some point Ted and I worked on our Eagle Scout badges and both of us attained coin collecting merit badge. We became Eagle Scouts in June, 1957 just before Ted's graduation from high school. Ted had spent a couple years in the club and then left for college in September, 1957.

Mr. Meinhart had a warmth and charisma that was infectious. This RJNA club advisor became one of the important role models for me in my young life. One time I was asked by Mr. Meinhart to participate in a radio program that would promote numismatics in general and our RJNA club. He arranged for a few of the RJNA members to be on the airwaves with me. In the fifties, radio was losing momentum to TV but it still was the home of the Lone Ranger, The Shadow, Gangbusters and many characters that piqued our imagination of that day. I was experiencing butterflies waiting in the radio studio catacombs. As the program unfolded I became more relaxed and enthusiastically participated. Edward Meinhart taught us poise and got us to perform on a large stage of the day. At other times he even performed himself doing a slight of hand trick with a coin! When the coin reappeared he would give it to me or others within his grasp.... His generosity extended to coins as door prizes etc. One time Mr. Meinhart gave me a special award of the Billy Sunday, RNA presidential medal. I remember being impressed that Mr. Sunday was dressed in a WWI service uniform. I still have that outstanding medal. I was stunned in 1960 when I was informed Mr. Meinhart had suddenly passed away. I went to the funeral home and paid my respects. It was hard to believe such a vibrant, humorous, wonderful, individual was quietly in repose before me.

Besides Mr. Meinhart's great influence and role of club advisor, many other RNA members came to the junior meetings to help out and present programs. William Elston was always there at the meetings to sell coins, teach us about them and their condition. Many RNA members frequented the halls of the RJNA. Herbert Vandenbrul seemed to attend often and give presentations to the coin club. He had curly auburn hair and a pleasant face that would suddenly erupt into a smile that broke across his face. Sometimes a short, rather stout, man, with a heavy German accent would come to the club. With a cane in hand and slicked back, wavy dark hair, Alphonse Kolb would tell us about medals and how he made them. I believe it was John J. Pittman who put on a slide show of Egypt where he had just visited. He discussed the coinage, culture and landscape of that country... The relationship of coins to history was always a huge attraction to me. I was a young history enthusiast as my mother frequently expressed to me, the "family historian."

The world of coins swirled around us in Rochester. Downtown Rochester was alive with wonderful department stores like Sibleys, the RKO Palace Theater, Loews Theater and an atmosphere where young brothers like Ted and I could take the bus downtown. We could go anywhere, safely, by ourselves. Eddie Bauer's coin shop at 71 Main St. East was a frequent place where I ended up. It was pleasant, well lit, and professionally run by Mr. Bauer. Then there was the cave. Mr. Leonard Babin had a coin shop on Chestnut Street. You had to go down steps underneath a building to get in this dimly lit, cave like place. He had tons of swords and guns hanging ominously from the ceiling. You kind of brushed by them, shivering as you walked. Did Mr. Babin even heat this palace of swords? Today, I wonder whether he did or didn't turn on the heat. Maybe it was just the atmosphere that made me shiver! Mr. Babin himself was a bear of a guy with a Rasputin type beard and a kind of gruff manner. We liked his coins but we shuddered sometimes at the atmosphere of his shop. He was respectful of me but I thought I was in another world when I was in his coin cave!

The boys who attended the RJNA were fun and friendly. In the 1956-57 year I succeeded, as RJNA Treasurer, a tall (I was shorter then) black haired fellow who was one of the more mature, serious guys in the club. You could tell he was more grown up than the rest of us because he had this dark, stubble, shaved face

among other qualities. Yes, Art Cohen had a dignified way about him that garnered respect in the RJNA crowd. Another outstanding member was Don Langlois. He was a humorous fellow, with a quick wit and good leadership qualities. I could go on with the wonderful fellowship and camaraderie we had as junior numismatists. After all it was the fifties; carefree, let the good times and good people roll!

In 1961, I graduated from West high School and embarked on a career in education and business. Since that time I wandered into other hobbies and areas of interest but found my way back to my first hobby, numismatics. It took me 50 years to return to the wonderful fellowship of numismatics, the RNA.

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# RNA News

Established January 1912

One of America's oldest local coin clubs  
 American Numismatic Association,  
 Branch #2, Life Club #8  
 Meetings:  
 Rochester Museum & Science Center  
 Member:  
 American Numismatic Society  
 Royal Canadian Numismatic Association  
 Token and Medal Society

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Donation* .....	_____	
Total amount enclosed .....	\$ _____	

\* RNA is a tax exempt organization under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code  
 -- Pay the Treasurer at any meeting --  
 Please make checks payable to RNA; mail to PO Box 10056, Rochester, NY 14610-0056

## Fortieth Annual COIN SHOW AND SALE

November 3 & 4, 2012  
 Saturday: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
 Sunday: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**FEATURING the U.S. Post Office  
 SATURDAY ONLY!**  
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# FREE ADMISSION FREE PARKING

The Coin Show Committee hopes that every R.N.A. member will take advantage of this opportunity to visit several coin dealers at one location. It is a very efficient way to find just that right item you are looking for. You can actually hold and see each item to evaluate it without the need to send it mails. Likewise, dispose of, the place right there complications.



back and forth in the if you have items to transaction can take without

The U.S. Post Office will be onsite on Saturday only with a special commemorative cancellation for the RNA's 100th Anniversary. Be sure to bring an envelope, or whatever, to have cancelled.



In addition, and elongated sure to get commemorating the RNA's 100th Anniversary.

there will be lapel pins nickels for sale plus be your free wooden nickel

## Help Your Club

Since the show is a club project, it is expected that as many members as possible will participate in its presentation. Actually, you will find that it is a very rewarding experience. You will have the opportunity to rub elbows with the dealers and expand your knowledge in many numismatic areas. Also, it will give you a chance to work with and get to know the other club members better.

Sign-up sheets will be sent around for the various activities for which we need help. Please show up at the Show and be as generous with your time as you can. Several types of activity and many time frames are available. Over the years, the R.N.A. has thrived because of this type of fellowship.

## Present a Display

You are encouraged to develop a display to enter in the Exhibit Contest. At stake is the prestigious Alphonse Kolb "Best of Show" award. It is a beautiful plaque that you can be proud to display. Please see **Gerry Muhl** or **John Zabel** to arrange for the cases you will need. Also, check with them if you want some pointers on how to present your exhibit.

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Q What former RNA charter member once owned every 1935-S Arkansas Centennial Half Dollar?

A B. Max Mehl

Q What proof coins exist from US branch mints of the 19th Century?

A 1838-O half dollars (20) - the die broke after twenty strikes were made.

1879-O dollar (12) - struck upon re-opening the New Orleans Mint after the Civil War.

1883-O dollar (12) - struck on hydraulic press.

1855-S quarter eagle

1854-S \$20 gold (1)

Q What was the first US commemorative half dollar struck in proof?

A Columbian Half of 1892 - 100 proof strikes



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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.

## The Calendar **September - October 2012**

- **Sunday, August 26:** RNA **Annual Picnic:** 1 PM to 4 PM; White Brook Nature Area Park (Perinton); **Board meeting** at noon.
- **Thursday, September 6:** 8 PM - RNA Meeting: What I did this summer in Numismatics
- **Thursday, September 20:** 8 PM - RNA Meeting: to be announced
- **Friday, September 21:** 7:30 PM - RJNA Meeting: What I did this summer in Numismatics; the RJNA is completing design on their 65th anniversary medal-hope to have it available at the November RNA Coin Show.
- **Thursday, October 4:** 8 PM – RNA Meeting: to be announced
- **Thursday, October 18:** 8 PM – RNA Meeting: to be announced
- **Friday, October 19:** 7:30 PM – RJNA Meeting: election of officers
- **Saturday-Sunday, November 3, 4:** 40th RNA **Annual Coin Show & Sale**, Saturday 10-5; Sunday 10-4; US Post Office staff will be selling stamps with a special **RNA 100th Anniversary cancellation** on **Saturday only**.

- \* Rochester Area Coin Expo: next show is September 23, 10-3, 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.

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.

**Rochester Numismatic Association**  
PO Box 10056, Rochester NY 14610-0056