

RNA News

September - October 2015



2015 Annual Picnic, photo courtesy of Chip Scoppa (see page 3)

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Visit our website at <http://www.the-rna.com>

The *John Jay Pittman Memorial Library* is available at every regular meeting.

Members may select from more than 1000 titles.

See the RNA Librarian to sign for and borrow materials.



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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(2013-2016)

Dennis DeYoung, (Open position)

(2014-2017)

Jason Childers, John Lighthouse

(2015-2018)

Visit us at : www.the-rna.com

Rochester Numismatic Association

P.O. Box 10056

Rochester NY 14610-0056

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Regular **Rochester Numismatic Association** meetings are held from September to June at 7:30 pm on the second and fourth Wednesdays at **Eisenhart Auditorium** of the **Rochester Museum & Science Center**, 657 East Avenue. The auditorium is the glass front building behind the Museum. Enter and exit through the right-side door and go down the stairs to the lower level meeting room. For elevator service to the lower level call 271-4552 X 601 to speak with the Eisenhart security desk attendant. Entry for the elevator is through the **Genesee Community Charter School** door.

Rochester Junior Numismatic Association (RJNA) meetings will be held during 2015 at 7:30 pm on the 4th Wednesday of each month at Eisenhart Auditorium on the lower level; for more information, call RJNA advisor Joe Lanzafame at 585-314-1240.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

We had a great summer culminating with two traditional events. It started with establishment of our Endowment Fund. We presented \$25,000 to the Rochester Community Foundation. We hope that is a start toward producing enough income during the next few years to sustain our room rental fees at the museum. We are still short of having the funds necessary to produce the required income. On our web site there is a way to anonymously or otherwise contribute to the Endowment Fund. If you have a few extra dollars at the end of the month think RNA Endowment Fund. Let's make it grow! Thanks to everyone to date for your efforts and contributions. We want to gain our independence, so to speak, through the endowment fund. I would like to thank John Zabel and the endowment committee for the work it took to put us on our way. I would like to offer kudos to Earl Gurell for pointing us toward the Rochester Community Foundation which is the place where non-profit organizations can invest their funds safely.

The 124th American Numismatic Association annual World's Fair of Money took place in Chicago from August 9-15. I attended this convention and enjoyed my first national convention after an eventful Amtrak train ride with Gerry Muhl and Lyle Young. I had the privilege of presiding over our 2,175th RNA meeting held at the Stephens Convention Center. Gerry Muhl gave an excellent presentation on RNA Presidential Medals. We all learned a great deal and met many people who are involved in our hobby. I had the privilege of meeting Charles Ricard, RNA member #1, who shared interesting comments about his collection and his quest for the one rare Napoleonic medal he doesn't have yet. Our curator, John Zabel, had some interesting coins to display at the meeting.

The noteworthy summer event for RNA was our annual picnic held again at White Brook Nature Park lodge in Perinton, NY. RNA members enjoyed the comradery that is apparent in this great organization. We had a good turnout of almost 40 people who enjoyed the food brought by members and the grilling by Scott Annechino with, among others, Danny Wegman's help. A cake with the Rochester Numismatic Association name and celebration of the coming year was delicious. The white elephant auction of mysterious objects was laced with fun and humor. A board meeting preceded the picnic and Steve Eisinger finished the event with an opportunity to walk off all the great food we consumed with a hike on a nearby nature trail. The delicious cake marks the delicious year we're going to have in 2015-2016! Let's enjoy the ride.

Gerald Vaccarella

Cover photo, l to r: Rick Kase, George Fekete, Ted Vaccarella, Donovan Shilling, Yolanda Shilling, Bonnie Vaccarella, Bill Coe, Sharon Miller, Edie Coe, Kerri Klajbor, Wayne Scheible, Pat Scheible, Alice Eddy, Julia Eisinger Garland, Scott Annechino, David Gottfried, Simon Garland, Janice Nash, Jason Childers, Melanie Childers, Darlene Corio, Scott Corio, Eli Fybush, Ariel Fybush, Scott Fybush, Sue Eisinger, Will Garland, Steve Eisinger, Mike Wexler, Lisa Fybush, Jeanne Muhl, Gerry Muhl, Ralph Dintruff, Jane Dintruff, Roberta Childers and Gerald Vaccarella



Photo at right courtesy of Gerald Vaccarella

C. Ricard, G. Vaccarella & G. Muhl at the ANA World's Fair of Money, August 14

Forty-third Annual COIN

Show and Sale

Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, 2015
Saturday: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

< FEATURING >

EXQUISITE EXHIBIT

Educational Forums
Rochester Museum &
Science Center —

Eisenhart Auditorium

657 East Avenue

Rochester, NY 14607

FREE ADMISSION

FREE PARKING

Obviously, it is hoped by the Coin Show Committee 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 back and forth in the mails. Likewise, if you have items to dispose of, the transaction can take place right there without complications.



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 during our September and October meetings 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.

SPECIALIST ACTIVITIES

PLEASE VISIT AND

HELP US WELCOME;

Eddie Blowers - ANACS Coin Grading Service. If you wish to have coins professionally graded, bring them to the show and discuss them with Eddie. He can help you schedule the service right on the spot. Eddie is also the President of the Buffalo Numismatic Association.

**THE BEST REGISTRY SET OF
LIBERTY SEATED DIMES
WILL BE ON DISPLAY !!**

SPECIALIST COLLECTORS

Three numismatists are visiting us from New England to promote their dedicated activities.

Be sure to visit **Jerry Fortin's** display of the best registry set of **Liberty Seated Dimes**.

Dennis Fortier, Liberty Seated Collectors Club (LSCC), and **John Frost**, Barber Coin Collectors Society (BCCS), will exhibit other areas of coin collecting that may interest you. They can give you the information needed to join their specialties.

EDUCATIONAL FORUM

All three of our specialists will make presentations at the Show's Educational Forum in the Ballroom on **Saturday, Oct. 31** on the following schedule:

11:00 AM **Dennis Fortier**, "Overrated and Underrated Liberty Seated Coins"

1:00 PM **John Frost**, "Barber Coins"

2:00 PM **Jerry Fortin**, "The Best Registry Set of Liberty Seated Dimes"

Please take the time to learn of another facet of numismatics. You will not be disappointed.

See you there!

Primer on Identifying Byzantine Coins – Part 1

(Or “Why there isn’t a Red Book for Ancient Coins”)

By **John C. Lighthouse**, RNA President, 2013

Early in 2014, Steve Eisinger and I (aka E&L Coins) had an opportunity to purchase a lot of approximately 100 ancient coins. We initially thought they were all Roman bronze coins with a few silver coins mixed in. I decided to take on the task of identifying the coins. What I didn’t realize was the journey through history I embarked on.

I soon found out that they were NOT all Roman coins, but a mix of Roman, Greek (just to make it more difficult) and Byzantine coins. I do not claim to be an expert by any means but I have learned a lot and I hope to present an accurate portrayal of the world of Byzantine coins and the journey to identify them.



The Byzantine Empire, also known as the Eastern Roman Empire, was the continuation of the eastern half of the Roman Empire during the Late Antiquity and the Middle-Ages. The map shows the extent of the empire around 1025 AD. The prominent language was Greek. The capital city was Constantinople (Istanbul), originally founded as Byzantium. It survived the 5th century fragmentation and fall of the Western Roman Empire and continued to survive for an additional thousand years until it fell in 1453, to the Ottoman Turks. That is quite a span of years which saw the minting of a lot of coins, which we will now try to identify.



(Continued on page 6)

Endowment Committee Report: The board of directors agreed to invest the \$16,000 dollars raised by the endowment campaign plus \$9,000 from the money market to make an initial investment of \$25,000. We have opened an investment account with the Rochester Community Foundation to handle the funds and have set the account so the board can, after proper vote, spend the principal, if needed. We felt that we wanted this option, just in case. We will be receiving periodic reports of our account that will be reported to the club when available. Several members have looked at the investment philosophy of the Foundation and are happy with their research that our money is properly invested. In the coming months the committee, with board approval, will be working on the procedures for using the generated funds and the steps that need to be taken if the principal is to be used. Our account will be accessible through the internet by the treasurer. The Community Foundation website will list our account and allow members or anyone to contribute to our account. Remember, all donations are tax deductible to the contributor. Your committee will also accept numismatic items to be sold for the purpose of building the account, again tax deductible: *John Zabel*

Primer on Identifying Byzantine Coins – Part 1

(Continued from page 5)

The first step is to eliminate the Roman and Greek coins so what I first wanted to determine if there was an easy way to quickly identify a Byzantine coin. To my relief, there was. Some can be quickly identified by a large “M” on the reverse. This is a “Follis” which was the most common coin minted across the centuries. There are roughly 5,000 different Byzantine coins with large M’s, so we have to look at other devices to begin the process of elimination.

The reverse has several devices which aids in identifying more about the coin, including the left field, right field, areas above and below the M as well as the mintmark. Thus, you can start with the reverse for all coins of this era. This particular coin has a star in the left and right fields which are devices used under Anastasius I, Justin I and Justinian I. Next, check out the mintmark at the bottom; NIKM. This mintmark identifies Nicomedia as the mint location, which was a prominent city in what is now northwestern Turkey. This pretty much identifies the coin as one minted under the reign of Justin I. To further refine the identification, we note that there is a cross above the M and a modified Greek alpha beneath. Justin I ruled from 518-527 AD. The obverse, with a bust facing right, has an inscription of “DN IVSTINVS PP AVG”; not very useful in identification simply because it was used under different emperors.

I know there are some books on this topic in the marketplace, but I have found them difficult to follow and lacking as easy-to-follow tools. My comfort zone is the internet and auction sites where I was able to glean important information to produce my own data set of information.

Later articles will cover emperors, denominations, obverse portraits and inscriptions and reverse devices and mint locations. These are all critical to Byzantine coin identification.

The May-June 2015 *RNA News* contained information about a room rent drawing to benefit RNA for 2016. The drawing was held at the Annual Picnic, and the winner (anonymous) donated the prize back to RNA.



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RNA COIN SHOW AND SALE

It's time to start planning your RNA Coin Show

Exhibit for October 31 & November 1, 2015.

Use more than one display case, if necessary.

Each case size is 32 X 20 X 1.75 inches.

Let's see some great displays!

Club News and Notes

2015 - 2016 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOW DUE!

Dues: Family or individual (life member none)	\$ <u> 25</u>
Please mail my Presidential Medal (add \$3)	_____
Donation (RNA is tax exempt under Section 501(c) (3) of the IRS Code) . . .	_____
Total amount enclosed	\$ _____

-- Pay the Treasurer at any meeting in September --

Please make checks payable to RNA; mail to **RNA, PO Box 10056, Rochester, NY 14610-0056**

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RNA at Rundel Library: Now through the end of September you will find a display of foreign coins in the 3rd floor History Department of the Bausch & Lomb Library. Turn right from the elevators to find two large cases displaying primarily proof, specimen and uncirculated sets of many different countries. On **September 19th** at 2 p.m. John Zabel will give a talk there at the display cases about 19th century coins from the RNA collection.

Due to space limitations, a partial listing of key **J. J. Pittman Memorial Library** titles cannot be included in this edition of **RNA News**. We will begin carrying those listings in a future newsletter.

At our regular meeting on **September 9, 2015**, the following **amendment** to the By Laws of the Association will be voted upon. This establishes our permanent Endowment Committee.

(New) Article VI, Committees, Section 1 (f) Endowment Committee

(New) Article VI, Section 4. Endowment Committee. The primary purpose of the RNA Endowment is to generate revenue to be used to provide for the rental costs associated with regular meetings of the Association, and for such other costs as may be approved by the Board of Directors.

The Endowment Committee shall consist of the Curator and six other members of the Association appointed by the President with the approval of the Board, and who are in good standing as described in Article VII (Elections), Section 3. Upon initial establishment of the committee, the term of office of two members shall be for one year; two members for two years; and two members for three years. Thereafter, the term of office shall be three years for all members, so that the term of office of two members shall expire each year. Whenever any vacancy occurs in the committee, the Board of Directors shall fill such vacancy with a member in good standing for the period of the unexpired term. The RNA President and Treasurer shall both be an Ex-Officio member of the committee.

The Endowment committee shall meet at least annually to review and determine the status of the Endowment, and to recommend changes, if any, to the Board of Directors. The Committee shall report the results to the Board of Directors and to the general membership both at the Annual Meeting of the Association and through the newsletter of the Association. The Committee shall maintain general oversight of special fund-raising undertaken in support of the Endowment and the costs associated with its purposes. The Committee shall act in an advisory capacity to the Curator with respect to the management of the RNA Collection.

The RNA Meeting and Events Calendar September - October 2015

Wednesday, September 9: 7:30 PM - RNA Meeting: What I did this summer in Numismatics

Wednesday, September 23: 7:30 PM - RNA Meeting: **Lisa Fybush** - Collecting with Kids

Wednesday, September 23: 7:30 PM - RJNA Meeting

Wednesday, October 14: 7:30 PM - RNA Meeting: **George Fekete** - topic to be announced

Wednesday, October 28: 7:30 PM - RNA Meeting: **Gerry Muhl** - Coinage of Nazi-dominated Slovakia

Wednesday, October 28: 7:30 PM - RJNA Meeting

Saturday & Sunday, October 31 & November 1: 43rd Annual RNA Coin Show and Sale

Wednesday, November 11: 7:30 PM - RNA Meeting: **Steve Eisinger** - Obscure, Bizarre and Defunct Countries; Their Coins and Stamps; *Board meeting at 6:45*

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.

Future RNA News publication deadlines: October 26 for November-December 2015; December 27 for January-February 2016; and February 22, 2016 for March-April 2016.

Rochester Numismatic Association

PO Box 10056, Rochester NY 14610-0056