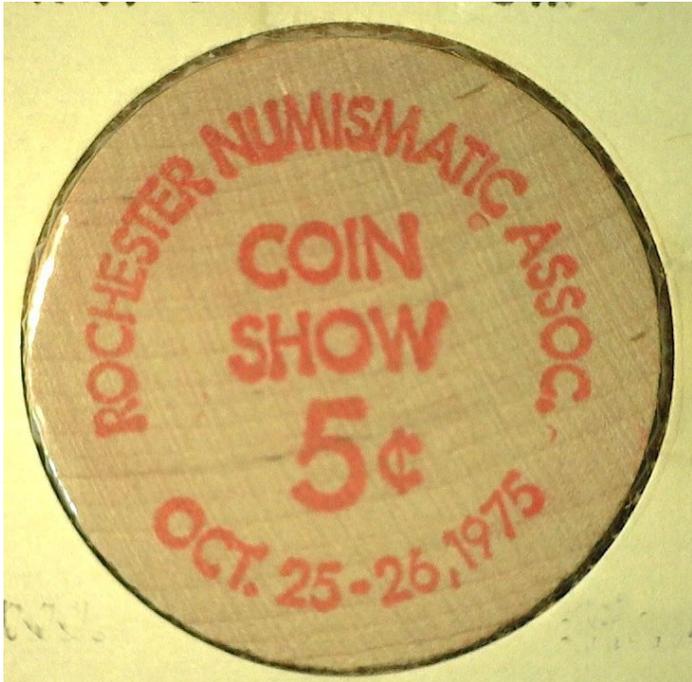


RNA News

The Official Journal of the Rochester Numismatic Association

January—February 2026



Wooden Nickel
Rochester Numismatic Association Coin Show
October 25-26 1975



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 The John Jay Pittman Memorial Library is available at every regular meeting. Members can select from 600 titles with new ones added regularly. See the RNA Librarian to sign for and borrow material. A complete, searchable library inventory is available on the RNA website. 

RNA

One of America's Oldest Local
Coin Clubs

Established January 1912

Memberships

American Numismatic Association
Branch #2, Life Club #8

American Numismatic Society

Royal Canadian Numismatic As-
sociation

Token and Medal Society

Meetings

Rochester Museum & Sci-
ence Center

- Eisenhart Auditorium -

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Auditing

Dennis DeYoung
John Lighthouse
Chip Scoppa
John Vicaretti

RNA Committees

RNA Bylaws designate several committees appointed by the President and Board of Directors.
Above are the current active committees:

Email Addresses

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Regular RNA meetings are held from September to June at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month (see Calendar for possible schedule exceptions at Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays) at **Eisenhart Auditorium** of the **Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607**. The auditorium is the glass front building behind the Museum. **Enter and exit through the main entrance, and turn left to go up the ramp to the ballroom. We will continue to have these meetings on Zoom for members who cannot attend in person.**

From Our President

RNA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE –

Here's a question: as a collector, do you anxiously anticipate getting your first coin with the new data—2026? From my childhood collecting day and even now, that first new coin won't be a penny. So what will it be? A nickel, a dime, a quarter? Probably many of us the last few years have purchased a one ounce American Eagle bullion coin—easily affordable enough with silver under \$25 an ounce for most of the last 25 years and even under \$10 an ounce for the first five years of the new millennium. Also the silver Eagles are usually available in the latter half of January. In this regard, the soaring silver price at the end of 2025 will make it an \$80 purchase to get the early first 2026 coin!

I'm especially looking forward to our first 2026 meeting on January 14th, seeing I was in Florida for our last 2025 meeting on December 10th, making my last meeting November 12th—quite a while ago, During this time I heard that we lost one of our senior members, Clark King. We will miss seeing him, but it will be good to get back in touch with everyone in a couple of weeks.

I'll have a questionnaire (not too lengthy or personal) that I hope you'll enjoy talking at our next meeting—see you then!

Cary Conrow

P.S. It will be a numismatic questionnaire.

High Relief Coins –

an examination of practicality intersecting art

by Dennis DeYoung



The title of this article should probably have the term "steamroller" in it somewhere... Art is amazing, but when it encounters the real world, the table always tilts in favor of practicality...

At the 51st RNA Coin Show, I was flipping through a binder with pages full of Peace Dollars when one of them suddenly screamed, "Buy me!" I thought at first it was the satiny, gunmetal gray toning that seemed to enhance the design – especially in contrast to the uniform, blast white examples that surrounded it. The coloring seemed to make the details come right out of the coin like nothing I had seen before. On closer examination, both sides of the coin had features with a boldness that threatened to pop right out through the cellophane of the staple-type 2x2 cardboard coin flip. Combined with the patina, the effect was startling. It was while negotiating the price, that I learned it was a "high-relief" Peace Dollar.

The Peace dollar debuted in high relief as the artist intended. The 1921 high-relief issue, struck over just four days between December 28 and December 31, totals 1,006,473 pieces. Specialists also record a limited 1922 high-relief run of roughly 35,401 pieces, usually catalogued separately by collectors. To speed mass production and reduce problems with short die life, artist Anthony de Francisci's design was flattened for the regular production that followed in 1922 and beyond. Production of the reduced-relief design exploded in scale (Philadelphia alone struck over 51 million in 1922) eventually totaling over 190 million through the end of the type in 1935 (and despite a break halt of production 1929 – 1933)!

Peace Dollar Fun Facts:

1. The original reverse concept included a broken sword to signify the end of war, but public reaction saw it as a symbol of defeat, so the sword was removed and the resting eagle/olive branch reverse was finalized.
2. "IN GOD WE TRVST" – designer Anthony de Francisci used a classicizing, Roman style inscription that replaces the modern U with V (rendered as TRVST) as an artistic, monumental touch. Some still assume it is a minting error...
3. The artist modeled Liberty's portrait on his wife, Mary Teresa de Francisci. Many consider her the most beautiful Liberty on American coinage.

But this wasn't the first US high-relief attempt...

Around the turn of the 20th century, President Theodore Roosevelt agreed that U.S. coinage

RNA Online Resources



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was somewhat dull and uninspired and so he pushed for a complete redesign. World-renowned sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens was commissioned to create a new \$20 gold piece. His vision created a stunning high-relief version of Lady Liberty striding forward with a torch and olive branch on the obverse and a flying eagle against a rising sun on the reverse. Initially issued in high-relief to mimic ancient Greek coins, it was too high for practical commercial use due to stacking and striking issues, and so it was modified somewhat prior to mass production. In 1907, the design was flattened a second time to create the standard Saint-Gaudens double eagle, which continued through 1933. This resulted in a one-year type — the legendary High Relief.

From the very first day they were struck, these High Reliefs have been recognized as important and highly desirable collector coins — a status that continues today. They are most commonly traded in the Choice MS64 range with coins in higher grades being extraordinarily difficult to find. (Heritage recently noted that in 39 years, PCGS has graded roughly 5,400 High Reliefs — with the vast majority having been awarded a grade below MS65. In those same 39 years, PCGS has graded only 150 examples at MS66 — just two or three per year!)

Saint-Gaudens \$20 Fun Facts:

1. Behind Columbia is the U.S. Capitol building, with rays of the sun bursting forth to symbolize a new day for America.
2. The 46 stars around the front of the coin represent the 46 states that existed in 1907.
3. The earliest versions of the coin used Roman numerals for the year.
4. "In God We Trust" — this motto was not included on the 1907 & 1908 versions due to the objections of the President but was added later by Congress. (It appears on all coins struck after 1 July 1908.)
5. "E Pluribus Unum" - the motto is inscribed on the coin's edge because the artist felt there wasn't "enough room" on the reverse (i.e., "on his design").

In 2009, the U.S. Mint recreated the 1907 St. Gaudens high-relief double eagle. It was struck as an "Ultra High Relief" commemorative recreation using modern coining techniques; the modern pieces were produced to show much of the same dramatic modeling and in some respects an even stronger medallion effect than the original

1907 patterns because modern presses and striking methods can deliver deeper, more consistent relief without destroying dies. (You might get to see one at an RNA meeting!)

Similarly, the 1916 Standing Liberty Quarter (and early 1917 strikes) displays very strong modeling that led to minting problems. In 1917 the design was altered from Type I to Type II to famously cover Liberty's exposed breast, but also to make the design easier to strike at scale. Although this change was a redesign rather than a simple lowering of relief, it illustrates the same tension between artistic intent and practical production.

Gerry Muhl's 1979 **RNA** Presidential Medal is perhaps the club's best-known high-relief piece. With an unusually deep field in support of a full-face portrait that culminates in Ger-



ry's prominent nose, the medal's extreme relief makes it a challenge for conventional holders and encapsulation! At the RNA Coin Show recently, there was a discussion among members on how best to "alter" the nose on one example such that it might take its place in a uniformly holdered collection...

From the Club Collection

The following coin in the club collection is an ancient gold coin. The details are:

Gold Solidus

Minted in the city of Antioch

Issued around 363 CE

Emperor: Jovian



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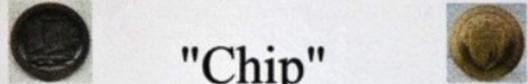
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For the LOVE of Coins



RNA Events

RNA Meeting.....	January 14
RNA Meeting.....	January 28
RNA Meeting.....	February 11
RNA Meeting.....	February 25

Members are welcome to attend RNA Board meetings.

☛ ☛ ☛ *See the RNA Website for Additional Event Details* ☛ ☛ ☛