



# Worcester County Numismatic Society

Founded 1946

Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month except July and August

December  
2020

WCNS  
Monthly  
Newsletter

**Club Address:** WCNS, P.O. Box 1079, Douglas MA 01516

**Club Website:** [www.worcestercoinclub.org](http://www.worcestercoinclub.org)

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## Next Meeting: Unknown presently

We will have to see. There will be an update in the January newsletter, and on the WCNS website as soon as we know more.

## WCNS Leadership

### Officers

Co-Presidents: Mike Simpson & John Frost

Vice President: Jim Turner

Secretary: Maria Matys

Treasurer: Stanley Sobiech

Director at Large: Bob Moffatt

### Programs

Speaker Bureau: Bob Moffatt

YN Coordinator: Mark Matys

Newsletter Editor: John Frost

Hi everyone,

COVID-19 continues to rage, and Massachusetts has size restrictions on indoor gatherings anyway. Regardless, as we all know, we cannot gather safely, so **our December meeting is CANCELLED.**

We will resume in-person meetings when the numbers go down and we can once again hold well-spread-out get-togethers and educational programs. We're not sure how long it will be, but best guess will be several months.

Even the FUN show has been cancelled, so things are tough everywhere.

We hope that our members understand, and wish for things to improve here quickly.

Stay safe everyone!

- John and Mike

## Coin in the Spotlight: 1904-S Barber Half Dollar

The 1904-S half dollar doesn't seem like it should be special. A decent mintage of over 550,000, it is easy to find lower grades. For those building a set of Barber halves in AG-VG, the key dates are 1892-O and 1892-S, along with 1897-O and 1897-S.

However, this changes rather dramatically in higher grades. In grades Fine and above, the 1904-S becomes the key date of the entire series. The coin becomes very scarce in XF and AU, and is actually rare in true mint state.

As for 3<sup>rd</sup>-party grading, this issue is often grossly over-graded, especially those in mint state holders. Many, if not most, of the coins in MS60 to MS63 are actually AU coins, many of them cleaned. With only 2-3 dozen truly mint state, there would not be enough to go around, thus the over-grading.

There are even more mint state 1901-S Barber quarters known than 1904-S halves. Therefore, it is imperative to grade the coins yourself rather than solely relying on 3<sup>rd</sup>-party grading firms.

The rarity of high-grade coins has an unfortunate effect on the price of low-grade pieces. Despite the fact that they are common, coins up to VG cost much more than they should based purely on scarcity. People either cannot find or afford those higher-grade coins, so they pay a premium price for nice low-grade pieces, just to obtain them at all.



1904-S Barber Half in AU