



Worcester County Numismatic Society

Founded 1946

Meets 2nd Friday of the month except July and August

WCNS
Monthly
Newsletter

June
2017

Club Address: WCNS, P.O. Box 1079, Douglas MA 01516
Club Website: www.worcestercoinclub.org

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Next Meeting: Friday June 9

St. Josephs Parish Center
68 Central Street, Auburn MA

Doors open at 6:00 p.m.
Young Numismatists Meeting 6:15 p.m.
Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

Educational Program:

Expanded Show and Tell
Bring something to share!

YN program:

Summer Adventure!

WCNS Leadership

Officers

Co-Presidents: Mike Simpson & John Frost
Vice President: Jim Turner
Secretary: Bob Hess
Treasurer: Stanley Sobiech
Director at Large: Open

Programs

Speaker Bureau: Bob Moffatt
YN Coordinator: Mark Matys

Hi everyone,

It's hard to believe another club year is coming to a close. Was it really a whole year ago that we were celebrating our 70th anniversary with the banquet? It's been a great year with lots of interesting educational programs. And we'll wrap up the year with an expanded Show & Tell session at this month's meeting. So please bring something that you have found this past year, or some other item that you wish to share with the club.

And for this meeting, we'll be having our annual Hot Dog Feast, with Chef Mike filling us up again as usual. Desserts are pot luck, so please remember to bring something. Everything else will be provided.

As we begin summer (of course, as I am writing this, it is gloomy, rainy and 55 degrees!), we look forward both to our local shows, and some national events, such as the ANA Summer Seminar in Colorado Springs and the ANA's World's Fair of Money in Denver.

Plus, personally, I'll be going to Oregon for the August 21st total solar eclipse, which will be seen in a 70-mile wide path from Oregon to South Carolina. Get to the path of the eclipse, and visit some coin shops along the way!

Thanks for another great year, and we all hope you have a great summer!

Hope to see you all on the 9th!

- John and Mike

Upcoming Events

- **Greater Worcester/Auburn Coin Show**, Elks Club, Auburn MA. Sunday June 11, 9:30 a.m.
- **Nashua 3rd Sunday Show**, Holiday Inn, Nashua NH, Sunday June 18, 8:00 a.m.
- **Blackstone Valley 3rd Wednesday Show**, VFW Post #1385, Uxbridge MA, Wednesday June 21
- **Devens Coin Show**, Devens Common Center, 31 Andrews Pkwy, Devens MA, June 25, 9:00 a.m.
- **ANA Summer Seminar**, Colorado Springs CO, June 18 through June 29 (2 sessions)
- **No Auburn or Devens shows in July. They resume in August.**
- **ANA's World's Fair of Money**, Denver CO, August 1-5, Colorado Convention Center.



Reminders for our June 9th meeting:

- Bring a pot luck dessert
- Bring something for Show & Tell

YN Program

To follow the YN's Program's activities, you can read the monthly eLetter that is sent out each month!

Check the YN page on the WCNS website

Coin in the Spotlight: 1861 Confederate Half

At the U.S. Branch Mint in New Orleans, 1861 began like any other year. The U.S.A. operated the mint, producing a number of denominations, including the half dollar. Then, Louisiana seceded from the Union, and the State of Louisiana took control of the New Orleans Branch Mint, continuing to strike coins with the United States designs.

In February, the C.S.A. (Confederate States of America) is formed, and on the 28th, the C.S.A. takes control of the New Orleans Mint, continuing to strike coins of Union design.

In April, a reverse die was prepared for the Confederate States of America, to be used with the half dollar denomination. Four proofs were struck as patterns. The die itself was too large to fit in the steam presses utilized for production, so an old screw press was used to strike the Confederate half dollars. These coins were distributed for review, with the future intention of striking C.S.A. money. The Civil War began with the assault on Fort Sumter, and instead, the Mint was closed on April 30th. It would remain closed until 1879.

The four original half dollars were distributed as follows:

1. CSA Treasury Secretary to Jefferson Davis, CSA President. This coin sold in 2003 in the Stacks John J. Ford sale for \$632,500 and again in January 2015 (Heritage) for \$881,250.
2. Professor Riddell of the University of Louisiana. Last sold in the Henry P. Kendall Collection sale (Stacks) in 2015 for \$646,250.
3. Dr. E. Ames, New Orleans physician. This example was found in circulation in 1912, and has been in the Eric P. Newman collection since about 1940. Mr. Newman celebrated his 106th birthday in May.
4. Dr. B.F. Taylor, Chief Coin of the New Orleans Branch Mint. This coin was presented to the American Numismatic Society in New York in 1918.

The Taylor/ANS specimen is the only one of the four examples that remains in original proof condition. All of the others show circulation wear, probably mostly as pocket pieces.

The reverse die was sold in 1879 (probably when the Mint reopened) to New York coin dealer J.W. Scott. Scott made 500 "restrikes" using the reverse die. For planchets, Scott used five hundred 1861-O half dollars with their reverses planed off. In addition, 500 tokens were struck in soft white metal. After the tokens and restrikes were made, the CSA reverse die was defaced so it could no longer be used. Its whereabouts today is unknown.



Have a great summer! Deadline for next issue: August 25th