



Founded March 26, 1949

**Celebrating our 75th
Anniversary in 2024!**



5850 Commerce Blvd, Suite 100
Rohnert Park, Ca. 94928

Redwood Empire Coin Club

Volume 77, Issue 7, Meeting #884, July 10, 2024

Next Meeting August 14, 2024

STARS AND STRIPES

Merle started out the meeting with a cautionary tale. Don Kagin, the Tiburon dealer who specializes in Pioneer Gold coins (among other things), was in Spain for an international numismatic convention. While in the airport to return home, the roller bag he was carrying was snatched away. Inside were several very valuable and extremely rare pioneer gold coins. Security cameras did view those involved, known criminals from Colombia. Among the items lost: 1852 \$50 gold; Humbert \$50 'slug'; Moffett \$5; Bechtler \$1 gold; and more. It reminds us to be cautious when going to and from a coin show. Also to be mindful when purchasing coins to use a trusted source and beware of potential fraud. Don is OK, and hopeful that some coins will be recovered.

The theme for the **August** meeting is **SHOW and TELL!** Bring in your item(s), give a talk, and get four free raffle tickets. Anything numismatic is good for the topic, so every one of you should have something to talk about! As always, if you have photos of your item, please e-mail to newsletter@redwoodempirecoinclub.com so they can be put in a slide show for everyone to view up on the big screen- thanks!



Gary S wore a golden crown and spoke to the club. He had been collecting Redfield Dollars since 1987. Those are Morgan dollars found in a hoard of mint bags containing over 400,000 silver dollars; they were put in special slabs to identify the coins as coming from the hoard. Gary had 110 of them, and felt he was the King of Redfields. He decided to sell them all, and Helm J has been purchasing them over the last couple years- 109 of them. Gary brought the 110th (and last) one in for Helm and relinquished his crown to Helm as well. Of course, this last dollar still needed to be paid for, but we presume Helm was good for it.

Ember S talked about her son David being not only an Eagle Scout and coin collector, but also a sculptor. He will have one of his sculptures at the upcoming Sonoma County Fair.

A few days after the meeting was Charlie's birthday. There was a big cake to share with everybody, and Merle led the club in singing a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday!



STARS AND STRIPES

- Phil A began the topic with his Harriet Tubman \$1 coin. The reverse features the Big Dipper constellation, including the North Star which was used by Tubman on her trek to freedom in Pennsylvania. He talked a bit about the history of Tubman.
- Dale C brought in a sheet of sixteen uncut \$2 notes, which were all *star* notes. Merle noted that the uncut sheet numbers did *not* start with 99, which is usually the case. Nobody had a good explanation for it.



- Mike C has been carrying an Eisenhower dollar in his pocket for over 20 years. He was born in 1970, they came out in 1971. And it has thirteen stars on the reverse. He even remembers a dream as a young kid of finding an Eisenhower dollar! This photo is from the internet so you can see all the details. Mike's proof example is quite worn after 20 years in his pocket!

- Ember is her family genealogist. She is fond of the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island set, in part because some of her family arrived in the U.S. through Ellis Island. When looking at the set for stars and stripes, she noted the Emma Lazarus poem on the reverse of the dollar "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" along with Liberty's torch with thirteen rays emanating from it. The 50¢ piece features a family on the dock at Ellis Island, while the obverse features the Statue of Liberty from behind, and a sun with thirteen rays in the background.



- Gary C joined us on Zoom from New Mexico. Merle mentioned that there is a famous person in Gary's coin club: Rod Frechette, the ANA 2022 Numismatist of the Year. Gary had two coins with stars to show. One was the 2024 US dollar commemorative featuring Harriet Tubman, which Phil opened the topics discussion with. Gary also showed the 2022 Canadian commemorative \$20 featuring the underground railroad. It has a different perspective of the Big Dipper (or 'the drinking gourd') from the ground up. It is about the same size as the US \$1 but is 0.9999 fine compared to the US 0.999 fine. Gary's is #4509 out of 5500 minted and is still available at the Canadian Mint. 400,000 US Tubman dollars were authorized, but only 19,000 have been sold so far. Canada had abolished slavery on August 1, 1834. It just goes to show that the Canadians are progressive and ahead of us all the time. Canada started a provincial quarters program seven years prior to the US statehood quarters. Canada made small brass dollars long prior to when the Sacagawea dollars first came along. And the Canadian loon design preceded the loon design of the Minnesota state quarter. So what do you think of Canadian coins now, eh?

- Merle had four items to show, all pictured here. First is the Centennial of Colonial Independence So-Called Dollar featuring the Declaration of Independence. It is the finest known, graded MS 66. It was produced on-site at the U.S. Centennial Expo in 1876. There are approximately 25 known.
- The next is also a Declaration of Independence So-Called Dollar, this time from the 1892-1893 World's Columbian Expo in Chicago- and it was also minted there on-site. The reverse of this one features the Discovery of America and Landing of the Pilgrims.
- Next is a 1939 Golden Gate Expo So-Called Dollar featuring the Pledge of Allegiance. It does not include the phrase "Under God" on it, which was added after World War II. Phil A remembers going to that expo by boat- when he was four years old!
- Finally he showed an award medal from the 1915 Panama Pacific Expo, engraved to winner Harry L. Day of Wallace, Idaho. He found it in a 'junk box' at Witter Coin! It is in very high relief. He sent it in for grading to NGC, and it came back MS-64.



Lastly, Charlie C (that's me!) talked about this large cent with stars on it. The year is 1794. The U.S. Mint had produced the first large cent one year earlier, and there were three different varieties produced to try to get the design right. The 1794 large cents kept to one design, with the US Mint at Philadelphia using 39 obverse dies and 38 reverse dies to produce some 918,521. So, after 20,000-25,000 strikes a die would break down and need to be replaced.

In 1949 William Sheldon (who devised the numbering system for coin grades that we use today) published a book called Penny Whimsy, which documented all die combinations from 1793 to 1814 large cents, numbering them chronologically from the beginning. 1794 cents featured 56 die combination- numbers 17-72. Combination 48 (or S-48), features this Starred Reverse- the most famous of all the 1794's. This die was discovered by Henry Chapman in 1877. Dr. Maris, the first man to make a study of the series, was standing with Chapman examining a pile of 1794 Cents, when H.C., picking up the specimen and examining it, exclaimed, 'Here is a die with minute stars around the reverse.' Dr. Maris confirmed the discovery and said, 'It was previously unknown.' " It went on to become the most famous of the 1794 large cents. Over 70 are now known, and

occasionally a new one is discovered. Due to rarity and popularity, they cost \$50,000-\$150,00 or more. No, I do not own one.....

There are a few examples grading XF or AU, though most are much more worn. Sheldon noted in his book that a couple specimens grading only about VG-10 had been often sold in recent decades as "finest known". He stated: "Each time this happens there is a fine tremor in the earth as all the great cent collectors turn over in their graves with angry grunts. Collectors mention [the variety] with religious awe". This is ironic coming from Sheldon. It was discovered some time after he published his book that when he would visit large collections to make his die studies, if he found a really nice example in one of the collections, he would take it for himself and replace it with one of his crummy examples. He eventually did get caught.

So how and why did this variety come about? We really do not know why, though there are theories. In the early days at the Mint the dies were all cut by hand, and a good deal of the personality of the diecutter was likely to find its way into the new die. There are 83 denticles and 94 stars on this reverse. Were the stars added by someone a bit bored on the job? More likely they were just a mint experiment with border ornamentation, as seen on other early patterns. But being made in 1794, there was perhaps more reason to add 94 stars.

One thing I noticed while researching for this is the following. The denticles are very evenly spaced apart. Apparently denticles were added to a die by drawing two circles around the perimeter of the die. Within these two circles, a two-denticle punch was applied. Each additional denticle was added by placing the first leg of the two-denticle punch into the previous slot and it was punched again- adding another denticle. Yet when you look at the stars, they were clearly added one at a time as the points of the stars are rotated. It appears the stars were punched first, and the denticles added later as they obliterate some of the stars.

Early in its life, this reverse die buckled in a straight line from 10:00 to 4:00, accounting for the scarcity of the variety. Because of the buckle, the upper right reverse wears away quickly and the lower left lingers. Low-grade examples are known showing only a few stars at 7:00. And it seems every few years another example is discovered when a few tiny stars are spotted.

Well, Show and Tell is the topic for August. Since there is some extra space left in the newsletter, here are some items to look at. I hope you all bring something to help fill in the pages next month.

The National War Memorial in Ottawa serves as a striking expression of the hope and heroism exhibited by generations of Canadians who fought, and continue to fight, for the freedoms they hold so dear. Its representation of Freedom inspired this 2024 'Allegory of Freedom' coin. It is 5 ounces of 0.9999 silver, with gold plating on the center. 1400 were struck, and it has sold out. Here are also two views showing the relief of this coin when viewed from an angle. It is the second in a series and followed "The Allegory of Peace" coin of 2023. Is this a coin? A medal? A sculpture? It is part of the Canadian Mint Research and Development showcase program. Like Gary C said, Canada appears to be ahead of us in several ways.





These three pioneer gold coins are examples of what Don Kagin had stolen: a Humbert \$50 'slug', Moffat & Co. \$5, and Bechtler \$1. He wrote probably the most current and authoritative book on these- America's Golden Age: Private & Pioneer Gold Coins of the United States 1786-1862 and has given talks to numerous clubs about the series. Let's hope the items are recovered intact.

And finally, I checked the U.S. Mint website to see if there were any other 'stars' to show. Lo and behold, DC comic book 'stars' are going to be featured in a 2025 coin and medal series. It will start with Superman, Wonder Woman, and Batman, with the photo here taken from the U.S. Mint website. But wait- there is more! *You* can choose your hero too! The mint is taking a survey to determine six more superheroes to portray. You can participate on the U.S. Mint website. Participation is strictly voluntary and should take three minutes. There are a number of choices they present to you for rating on a scale of 1-10. Some I have never heard of (but then I am an old guy and don't keep up with new characters, I guess). Also, Marvel is not included, which eliminates some I would want to see. Dead Pool wasn't on the survey list. Neither was Cat Woman- who wasn't a superhero but sure would kick the b**t of some of the characters they did list. I think I will stick to ancient coins....



ZOOM info for August:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84351049718?pwd=Or0Z5txlahyA1ct75SdeFPnT9NQ5jG.1>

Meeting ID: 843 5104 9718

Passcode: 082024

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1884 \$1 Morgan Dollar
CACG MS67 \$6,800



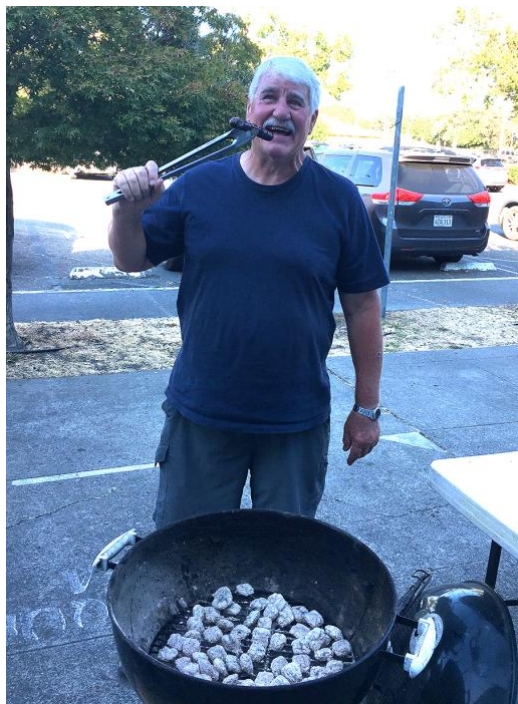
1917 25¢ Standing Liberty Quarter
Type I CACG/CAC MS66FH \$2,950



1911-S \$20 St. Gaudens Double Eagle
PCGS/CACMS65+ \$13,000

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Our hot dog
grilling chef
de jour- Jerry
St. G!
Thanks to all
who helped
with the
dinner.



DRAWING WINNERS

Membership: Helm J, Riley R, James A, Bill S, and Allen B

50:50 pot of \$74 was split with someone

Raffle: Mike c (twice), Glenn M (six times or so), Ember S, George C, Tiffany S, Bill S

Gold Coin Raffle, for a Mexico 2-1/2 peso coin: David Young!

July Attendance: 54+

New Member: Martin F, #1045- WELCOME!

Guests: yes

Auction: 24 exciting items.

Adjournment was at 8:48 p.m. sharp!



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UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS

August 11, 2024. Fairfield Coin & Collectible Show. Elks Lodge #2638, 302 Parker Street, Vacaville

October 11-13, 2024. Diablo Numismatic Society's Contra Costa Coin & Collectibles Show. Walnut Creek Elk's Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive, Walnut Creek

The Redwood Empire Coin Club meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The Club's meeting location is the **Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa** (opposite the County Fairgrounds across from Highway 12), in the **"Dinner Room"** on the east side of the building, at 7:00 p.m. sharp.

Check out our newsletter at: **Redwoodempirecoinclub.com**

Thanks for reading. Corrections? Additions? Questions? E-mail us at: newsletter@Redwoodempirecoinclub.com.
See you at the Vets Building "Dinner Room" August 14, 2024— Charlie