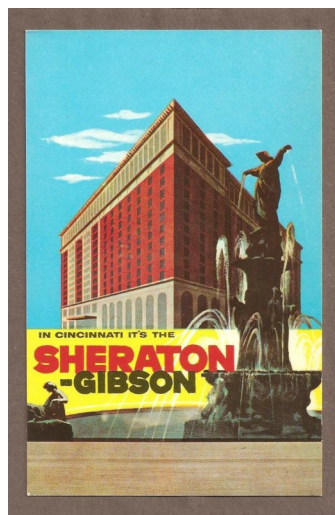


The Cincinnati Numismatist

Volume XC, Issue IX

September 2020



This edition of the newsletter was printed after the last meeting. That meeting was held on September 11th with 12 members attending via Zoom. The next meeting of the Cincinnati Numismatic Association will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, October 9th. You will be able to attend this meeting from the comfort of your home through the Zoom application. Members will receive an email invitation and meeting password.

Inside this issue:

Infrared Inks on Federal Reserve Notes	3
Club News	5
Membership Form	6
Redbook Order Form	7
Numystery	8
Coin Show Schedule	8

Half Dimes, Nickels, and the Feuchtwanger Cent

By Mark Benvenuto

Collectors could have quite the field day trying to determine just which series of United States coins have been the least collected. Certainly, the twenty-cent pieces might enter into such a discussion. The two-cent and three-cent denominations could easily ring in as well. But one coin that had to have been not all that common even back in its own day, as it were, one that seems to be very much in the “under collected” category right now, if there is such a thing, is the half dime.

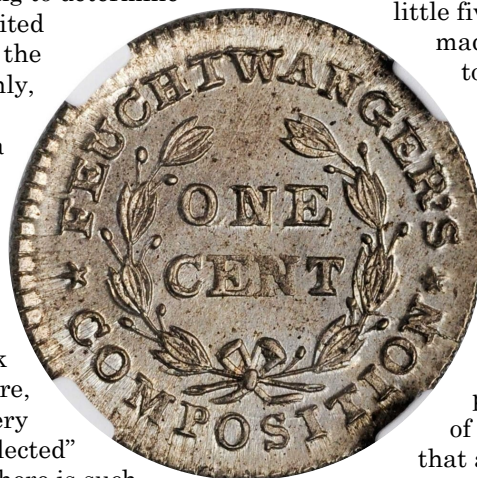
It may strike a person as odd that the half dime is rather underappreciated today, since it was one of the original denominations among United States coinage, and since it had such a long run before its ultimate demise. Plenty of ink has

been spilled about our very first coins, the now-famous “half dismes” of 1792, produced before the nation even had a Mint. But the ones that might be fun to focus on are the Seated Liberty half dimes. These

little five-cent pieces were made from 1837 all the way to the denomination’s demise in 1873, which means that at least in theory there is a collection to be built.

Curiously, just prior to the start of the Seated Liberty design, one Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger approached some members of Congress and suggested that an alloy he had made be utilized in our smaller coins.

Today it gets known as German silver (perhaps because Feuchtwanger had emigrated from there), but it is the following: copper, nickel, zinc, and sometimes tin. One common composition is: 60% copper, 20% nickel, 20% tin. Why this is important will become obvious in a moment.



2020 Meetings

Date	Presenter	Date	Presenter
June 12th Friday	Stephen Petty	November 13th Friday	Open
July 17th Friday	John Roberts	December 11th Friday	Open
August 14th Friday	Isaiah Hageman	January 8th Friday	Open
September 11th Friday	Extended Show & Tell	February 12th Friday	Open
October 9th Friday	Extended Show & Tell	March 12th Friday	Open

A good deal has also been written about how the Civil War drove good coins out of the channels of commerce. Yet if we look at the official Mint tallies for half dimes, there had been enough output prior to the war that there must have been an enormous amount of hoarding going on for these all to have disappeared. Admittedly, production during the war was pretty low. But the multi-million mintages per year for much of the 1850's meant these little, silver disks could not have been super rare, at least in the East Coast cities.

Still, by 1865 the United States Mint put out a 3-cent piece made with nickel, and in 1866 unveiled the



1865 nickel 3-cent coin

first of its new 5-cent coins, the Shield nickels, again made with nickel in its alloy. The compositions were not German silver, but were not all that far off. Rather, they were 75% copper and only 25% nickel. It does seem like Dr. Feuchtwanger had been a man ahead of his time.

As mentioned, the half dime denomination saw some kind of output all the way to 1873. That's a long time to co-exist with these new nickel coins. In actuality, the nickels couldn't have been too new at all by the time

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they finally kicked the half dimes off whatever pedestal they had been on. So, in what we might call this span of co-existence, are there half dimes that we might still consider common today?

The short answer to that is: yes. The long answer gives us more to chew on, though. Getting a grasp on what we in the modern collector community term “common,” and what was common when a coin was released, are actually not the same thing. For example, one million of just about any coin makes it common for us today. There really aren't so many collectors that a million of any coin will be gobbled up. But the 1860 United States Census, conducted to determine how the House of Representatives needed to be adjusted, recorded that there were 31,443,322 people living in the country that year. So, the massive half dime mintage of 1853 for example, a total of 13.2 million of these little guys could not have made them particularly common even then. They might have seen their major use in and around Philadelphia and New York.

But as we said, just one million of a coin makes it pretty easy to collect today. For an under-collected series, even half a million means we can probably land one. And when it comes to the half dimes of 1866 to 1873, this eight-year span (which does include coins from the San Francisco branch Mint), there are five that qualify. Of the remainder, there are two that are quite rare, the 1868 with only 88K and the 1867 with a mere 8K to their totals. So based on the budgets of most of us, these two are probably off the menu.

The real test in making some collection of half dimes and nickels for the years when both were in use though is figuring out how much we'd like to shell out for these small bits of money. The love affair the collecting community currently seems to have with mint state pieces means that even the common half dimes will cost a few hundred dollars. That's a bit steep for the amount of silver, at least in some of our views. A step down, to something like AU-50, or even to EF-40, usually makes for a transaction that is far sweeter.

We haven't yet mentioned the prices that are attached to the earliest Shield nickels. In what might be a disappointing surprise, they too tend to go for a couple of hundred dollars when in the lower grades of mint state. This is most likely because they were definitely working coins right when they left the Mint, and despite high mintages, many of them were well used.

A set of five-cent coins from this time at the end of the half dime age may not be the cheapest endeavor we could undertake, but it can be a fascinating one. There are some common half dimes. There are plenty of common Shield nickels. And there is the thought that, yes, it might just be worth adding a Feuchtwanger cent to this assemblage, as it was basically the forerunner to an alloy that we still use in our nickels today.

Infrared Inks on Federal Reserve Notes

By Joseph E. Boling

Long ago Beth Deisher wrote that currency readers for the blind then being distributed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing were using infrared (IR) patterns on the backs of the notes as denomination keys. I could think of no way to reveal those patterns.

Eventually, it occurred to me that some night vision goggles use IR (as distinguished from low-light amplification) as a way of allowing mere humans to see at night. Our son was still on active duty; I asked him to look at some notes from his wallet the next time he was out on night maneuvers. He said he could do better than that—he had a camcorder that could record in the dark, using IR to create its images. He could also take single-frame photos with it, and he sent me some. Lo, I had been one-upped by technology I did not know existed.

Not long after I was out his way (Colorado) and took a stack of notes to examine in one of his closets with his IR-capable camcorder. I learned a lot, and as soon as I got home, I bought a used version of such a camcorder on eBay.

Surprise—no small-head notes had IR markings, and neither did \$1 and \$2 notes of any series. It was not until late in series 1996 that use of IR-related inks for denomination markers was introduced. I have found no 1996 \$100 or \$50 notes with the IR inks (and since there were no 1999 \$50s, that means that they don't start until series 2001). The only 1996 notes I have found with IR inks are the \$20s—the last denomination issued in that series. The \$20 note is seemingly the “base” case, with each of the other denominations that followed using a pattern that builds on the \$20 note's single vertical stripe. See figure 1.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the \$100, which simply repeats the \$20 note's single stripe, leaving it stationary and adding an identical stripe to the right. On the \$50 note (figure 3), the second stripe is pushed even farther



Figure 3

to the right. When colorized notes were introduced, some stripes grew a millimeter or two in width, but they stayed in the same positions relative to each other and to the note's dimensions. Figure 3 shows the original and a colorized \$50 (the colorized piece at the bottom). Finally, the \$5 and \$10 notes (figures 4,5) bring in a double-wide stripe, and place it near or a bit farther from the \$20 note's base stripe.

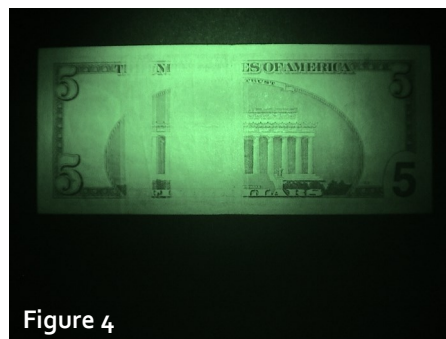


Figure 4

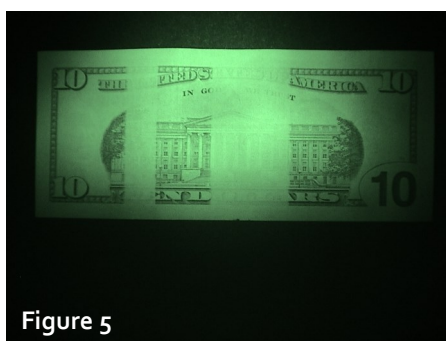
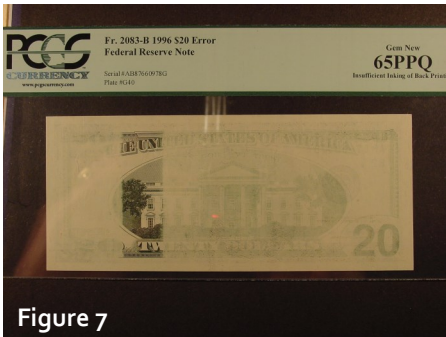
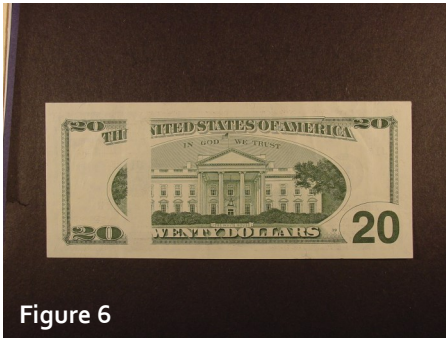


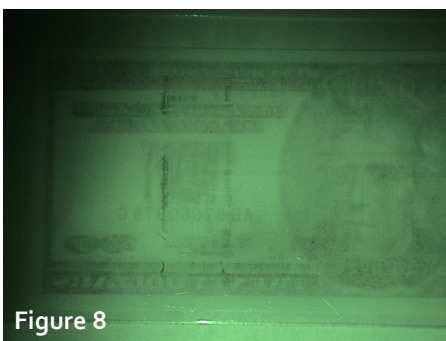
Figure 5

So what are we seeing here? Two green intaglio inks are in use on the backs of the notes. The principal one (composing the bulk of the back image) is opaque to IR radiation—the IR bounces back and is recorded by the camera. The subsidiary one (the ink composing the striped patterns) is transparent to IR radiation—illumination in IR passes through it and all we see is the paper that it was printed on. We do not see this ink at all under IR.

Now I could understand some error notes I had seen in the market. They look like obstruction errors—caused by something sitting on the paper as it is printed and accepting the ink, then falling away as the sheet is handled. But now that we see their dimensions and placement, it is clear that they are really ink starvation errors—the IR-transparent ink failed to print, leaving a vertical white stripe where it should have been. See figure 6. (*next page*) In this circumstance, the IR pattern can be seen in white light.



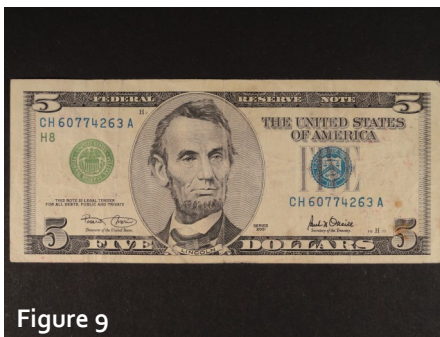
The converse case is also known—see figure 7. The IR-transparent ink printed, and the opaque ink did not. So what happens if we put the note in figure 7 under IR illumination and photograph it? See figure 8—all that can be seen are two very narrow lines where the opaque and transparent inks were mixing at their boundaries, and a tiny bit of the opaque ink was still



present on the plate mixed with the transparent ink—we are able to see it under IR. The IR-transparent ink, visible in white light, disappears under IR, and the rest of the design, intended to be printed in IR-opaque ink, also disappears because that ink fountain was not delivering ink to the plate.

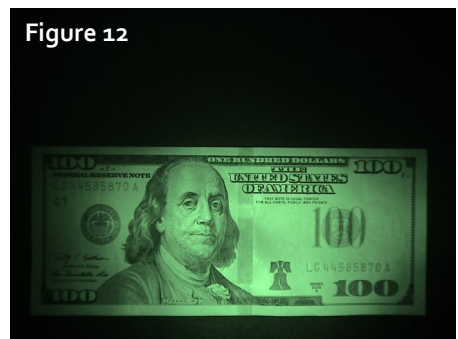
I have not seen any of these ink-starvation errors dated later than series 1996, and in only four serial ranges (the longest one being 22 sheets), all on \$20 notes. There are still many error notes that I have not recorded, so I can't say how scarce they may be. The point is that since electro-optical inspection of sheets as they are printed has been in use, such errors no longer enter into circulation.

I have looked for a long time for other denominations showing IR-related ink starvation errors, and have found none. The closest is a doctored \$5 note that was treated with chemicals to make its seal and serial colors change—the doctoring made the IR pattern on the back become visible in white light (figures 9 and 10).

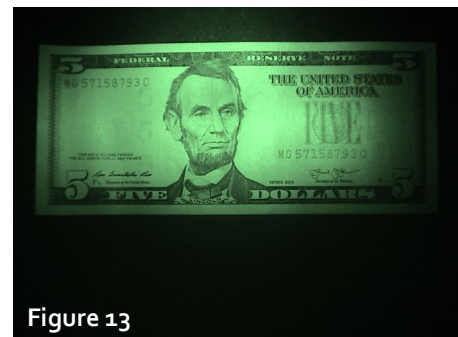


Another interesting element appears on the colorized notes. That huge purple 5 on the back of the \$5, and the big gold 100 on the back of the \$100 note, are both IR-transparent; they disappear under IR. Most of the colorized surface-printed inks on the faces of the new

notes also drop out—on the \$100 note, the “bell in the inkwell” loses its inkwell under IR. See figures 11 and 12. Strangely, on the \$5 note, the Federal Reserve seal also drops



out (and the black district numbers on the face). That is the only note in the colorized set that shows that behavior (figure 13).



And a final point—the Giori press does not create a razor-sharp boundary between the two inks. The Super Orloff press does that much better. See figures 14 and 15. Notice the ghosting along the edges of the Giori stripe, and the crisp edges on the Super Orloff-printed note.

The other ink-starvation error that is no longer seen is the patterns on the note faces created by missing magnetic or non-magnetic ink. That will be a story for another time.

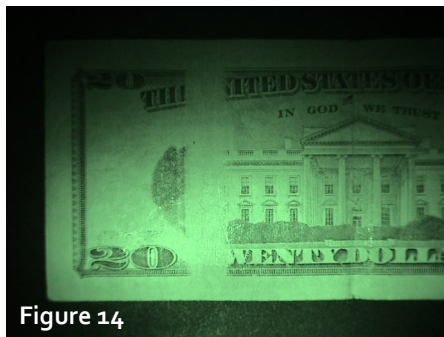


Figure 14



Figure 15

Club News

Here are the artist's renderings of what our 90th-anniversary medal will look like. The design is based on the original medals from 1930. A limited number of two medal sets containing one .999 silver one ounce medal and a matching copper medal will be available for \$80 a set. Right now that number is limited to 25 sets and may be increased based on demand before striking. Once the medals are struck no more will be made. During the September Zoom meeting ten members asked to have a set reserved for them. If you are interested in a set for yourself, please use the order form included with this newsletter and send it with your check to the club. Arrangements will be made for you to pick up your sets in person at one of the Coins+ locations. Sets can also be shipped by Priority Mail at an additional cost of \$8.30.

There is the option to have the back of the silver medal individually engraved with your name and membership number at an additional cost of \$20 per medal. You do not need to know



your member number, all member numbers are kept in the club records. The engraving will be done in a style similar to the original 1930 charter member medals but will be machine engraved.

The next meeting via Zoom will be on October 9th. Look for the meeting link in the meeting reminder in the days before the meeting.

Additional copies of the 90th-anniversary issue of the newsletter are available for \$7.50 postage paid. Email president Heinrich at cincycoins@gmail.com for details.

There are still a few Redbooks available to members through the annual Redbook Fundraiser. The seal on the personalized bookplate for this year's Redbook is made of solid copper to help celebrate our 90th anniversary. Look for the order form on page seven. Hurry, there are only three left.

If you accepted the challenge of writing an article for the newsletter by taking a challenge envelope and are having difficulty identifying the item or researching it, don't hesitate to ask for some help. Send an email to the editor, David Heinrich, and he will assist you.

There are still challenge coins available and one can be mailed to you, all you need to do is ask.

If you are not receiving the monthly email meeting reminders and would like to, send your updated email address to cincycoins@gmail.com.

Membership Application

Pass this Membership Application on to a friend!

Since 1930, the Cincinnati Numismatic Association has been the gathering organization for coin collectors and other numismatic related specialists in the Cincinnati area. Its purpose has remained the same, to foster knowledge of numismatics and a fraternal spirit among those who pursue the study of coins, currency, tokens, medals, and exnumia.

The organization meets once a month, on the second Friday at 7:30 pm. The meeting location is at Coins +, 225 East 6th Street, in downtown Cincinnati on an upper floor of the building.

Our meetings consist of numismatic presentations given by numismatists from among our membership and from other experts in their fields from around the country. Show and tell and light refreshments are also part of our meetings.

We have a group dinner held at a local restaurant every April. December marks our annual Christmas dinner meeting and charity auction benefiting local children's charities.

Club dues for adults are \$10 annually. Dues for Juniors are just \$3 a year. This is certainly one of

the best values in numismatics.

Membership in the Cincinnati Numismatic Association includes a subscription to its monthly publication, The Cincinnati Numismatist. In 2006, 2007, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 the publication received first place in the ANA's competition for Outstanding Local Numismatic Publication.

The Cincinnati Numismatic Association has its roots in its long history, but strives to serve the needs of the collectors of the future. Give us a try!

I hereby make application for membership in the CNA and agree to abide by the constitution and bylaws of the said association.

☐ 3 year membership (\$29)

☐ Life membership (\$175)

☐ 1 year membership (\$10)

☐ 1 year Junior member (\$3)

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ (home)

_____ (work/cell)

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Sponsor (optional): _____

Signature: _____

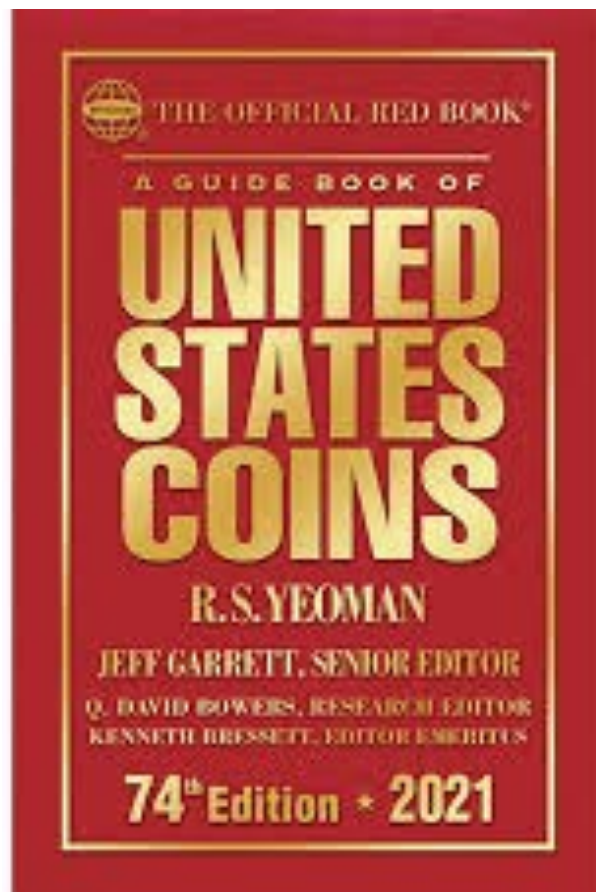
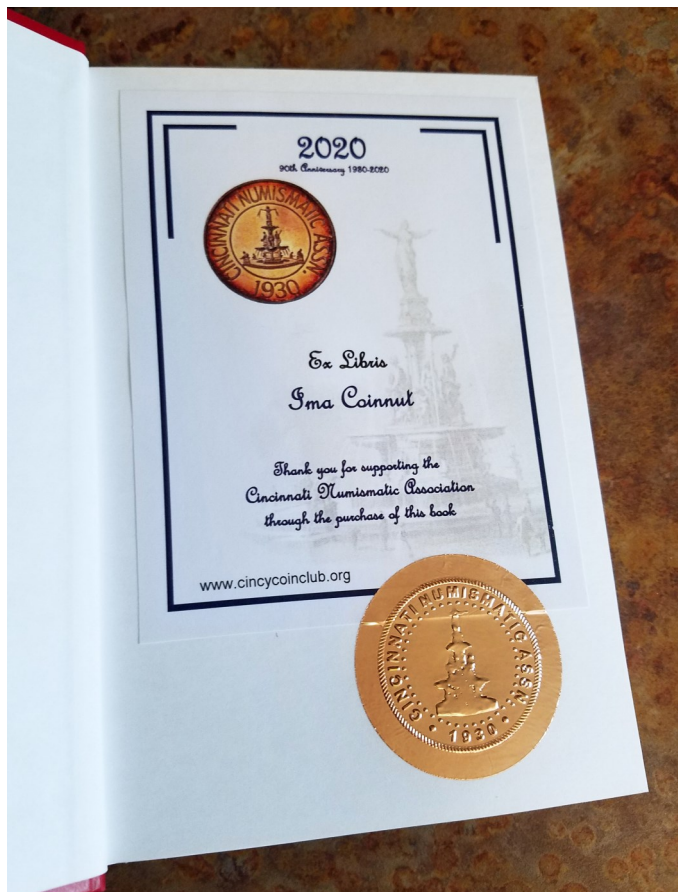
(DO NOT FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING LINES)

Member Number: _____ Date Paid: _____

BOG Approval: _____ BOG Approval: _____

Make checks payable to the Cincinnati Numismatic Association.

Mail application and payment to: CNA, PO Box 446, Miamitown, OH 45041



Purchase the new 2021 Redbook ([and or Bluebook](#)) through the Cincinnati Numismatic Association with a personalized bookplate and copper seal to help support the club's educational programs. The cost is the same as last year, only \$15 and you can pick up your copy at a club meeting or have it delivered for just \$3 more. The Redbooks are in stock now. If you would like to pick up your copy at a club meeting, send an email to cincycoins@gmail.com and give us the exact spelling of your name, as you want it to appear on the bookplate, and bring your \$15 payment to the meeting. Or you can use the form below and mail it in. Why not order copies as gifts for friends or relatives!

PERSONALIZED REDBOOK ORDER FORM

Please Print Clearly

Name as you want it to appear on the bookplate _____

Shipping Address if Applicable: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

☐ Picked up at meeting \$15

☐ Delivery by U.S. Mail \$18

Make checks payable to the Cincinnati Numismatic Association

Mail order form and payment to:

C.N.A.
P.O. Box 446
Miamitown, OH 45041

CINCINNATI NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

President/Editor: David G. Heinrich
Vice President: Bill Bennett
Recording Secretary: Deborah Lewis
Assistant Editor: Isaiah Hageman
Treasurer: David G. Heinrich
Webmaster: Tom Lanter



ANA
Member
Club

Newsletter contact:

David G. Heinrich
PO Box 446
Miamitown, OH, 45041
cincycoins@gmail.com

Dues & Membership Contact:

David G. Heinrich
PO Box 446
Miamitown, OH 45041
cincycoins@gmail.com

The Cincinnati Numismatic Association was founded in August of 1930 and consisted of thirty-five members including numismatic notables such as B. Max Mehl and Farran Zerbe. The first CNA President was Herbert A. Brand. The CNA was founded for the purpose of hosting the 1931 American Numismatic Association convention. Since then, the CNA has hosted the ANA convention three times, in 1942, 1980, and 1988. The CNA also hosted the 1998 ANA Spring show.



The Cincinnati Numismatist
is an ANA award-winning publication

Numystery

By: Colonel Green

This month's Numystery:

A female artist created the design for two coins minted in 1922. Who was the artist and what coins share her design?

Numystery answer:

Laura Gardin Fraser designed the Grant Memorial Gold Dollar and Half Dollar.

Coin Show Schedule

Monthly

Cincinnati Greenhills Classic Coin, Currency, Stamp, Jewelry & Watch Show, American Legion Hall, 11100 Winton Rd, Cinti, OH
Last Sunday, 10:00 am - 3:30 pm
numismaniaofohio@gmail.com

Monthly

Columbus Coin, Stamp & Card Show, Makoy Center, 5462 Center St., Hilliard, OH 10 am - 4 pm
Third Sunday, over 18 \$2 admission
drich@columbus.rr.com
RE-OPENED IN JUNE

Editor's Note

This schedule was accurate at the time of printing but as you know things are changing on a daily basis.

November 8th

Clark County Coin Club
Semi-Annual Coin Show.
MASKS REQUIRED

Location: Windy Knoll Golf Center in the Derby Banquet Center, 500 Roscommon Drive Springfield, Ohio.
Directions - At I-70, Exit 52. turn North on U.S. 68 go to St Rte 41, exit East to Bechtel Ave, turn left (North) on Bechtel go to 500 Roscommon Dr. on your right, go to Windy Knoll Golf course and Derby Banquet Center on left. Hours: Sunday 10AM-3:00PM.
Bourse Dr. Gary Lau.
Phone: 937-206-4943

December 4th & 5th

The 62nd Annual I.S.N.A. Coin Show Indianapolis Marriott East Hotel & Convention Center, Liberty Hall 7202 East 21st Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46219
FREE admission, parking, and youth auction, Door prize drawing
Raffle prize drawings
Public hours:
Friday 10:00AM – 6:00PM Saturday 10:00AM – 5:00PM, Youth Scavenger Hunt starts at 10AM
Youth auction: Saturday – 12PM

January 7th-10th

The 66th annual FUN Convention will be at the Orange County Convention Center. 9800 International Dr., Orlando FL 32819. North/South Bldg Hall SB, Orlando, Florida. The show in January is renowned for being the bellwether event on the numismatic calendar. With over 1500 dealers, Heritage Auctions, exhibitors and over 10,000+ of the most avid collectors, the FUN show kicks off the year on a high note. Make your plans early to attend this monumental numismatic event! More information at www.funtopics.com.

Want To Be Published?

If you have an article that you would like to have published in the newsletter, **PLEASE** mail it to; C.N.A., PO Box 446, Miamitown OH, 45041 or email to cincycoins@gmail.com