

The SJ CSRA CC now meets at the MieStelle Bakery in Aiken on the first Thursday of the month

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V.P. Garry Naples
Sec. Jim Mullaney
Treas. Chuck Goergen
Sgt. in Arms: Jim Sproull



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Volume 23, No. 12

the Stephen James CSRA Coin Club, Founded in 2001
Monthly Newsletter

December, 2024

Our pre-Christmas dinner will be held on Dec. 5th at the Columbus Club on Spaulding Road in Aiken

Collecting U.S. Coins you never thought you could obtain

2024 Club Meeting Schedule

Jan. 4 Apr. 4 July 11 Oct. 3
Feb. 1 May 2 Aug. 1 Nov. 7
Mar. 7 June 6 Sept. 5 Dec. 5

Collecting U.S. Coins You Never Thought You Could Obtain
Part One – Early dated U.S. coinage
by Arno Safran

Coins You Never Thought You Could Obtain

By Arno Safran



An 1831 Classic Head Half-cent? Electrotype

[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 150% to see details more clearly.]

If the reader is able to enlarge the page to 150% the lovely 1831 half-cent shown above will appear magnificent to the eye and if it weren't an electrotype it would have cost the writer \$125,000 instead of just \$250.00 back in June, 1991 when he acquired it from a reliable dealer named Dave Wilson. The late numismatist and dealer was among the most sincere and honest as any he had come across back then and sold the coin as it was; "a fake"! In reality, the genuine 1831 half cent with an original mintage of just 2,200 with restrikes of five thousand with large berries on the reverse and \$7,000 with small berries on the reverse were later recreated by what is referred to as an electrotype. It involves a very complex series of applications to create the counterfeit which when completed the obverse and reverse are actually pasted together in such a manner that looks like the original coin.



An Electrotype 1852 Braided Hair Half-cent

A real 1852 would cost him \$600,000. Nevertheless, this electrotype displayed the attractiveness of real one and is sort after by collectors; the sale price, just \$300. It was acquired from an early U.S. coppers dealer at a major show held in northern New Jersey in 1996.



An 1814 Crosslet 4 Classic Head Large Cent graded AU-50

[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 150% to see details more clearly.]

In 1982, before the age of slabbing which began around 1986 and '87, the author acquired this beautiful specimen of an 1814 Classic Head Large cent graded AU-50 from a major dealer and it cost plenty even back then. Today the 2025 Red Book lists it at a value at three times higher in the same grade shown above.

The 1814 Classic Head large cent was created by Asst. Chief Engraver, John Reich and was struck from 1808 thru 1814. But, due to the War of 1812 between Great Britain and the United States now into its third year of action, Mint Director, Robert Patterson had barely enough copper planchets to make large cents with which to pay the Mint employees, let alone the public since he got the planchets to make cents from Mathew Boulton in England.

As a result, only 357,830 were reported issued by the Philadelphia Mint in 1814 with two varieties, one with a **crosslet 4**, shown above and the other with a **plain 4** which is scarcer. A lot of them were actually used to pay the workers at the Mint due to their needs as the cent was the work-horse of our economy back then. Despite the smaller mintage the date is not considered rare but is still expensive in the higher circulated grades such as AU-50 and the coin shown above was no exception.

One of the early four things a collector learns about numismatics is to 1) save up a specific amount of money before each major show; 2) be knowledgeable about the coin's rarity scale, 3) also it's potential value when first seen and 4) be prepared to pay a reasonable price if the coin has eye appeal without over bugging the dealer. The acquisition of the coin shown above fits all three categories.

(Continued on page 2, column 1)

Collecting U.S. Coins You Never Thought You Could Obtain

(Continued from page 1, column 2)



An 1815 Draped Bust half-dime LM-1, R4 graded XF-40 by NGC

[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 200% to see details more clearly.]

The reader will have to magnify this page to 200% to better view the qualities of the 1805 Draped Bust half-cent show directly above since it was only 15.5 mm in diameter during the period this denomination was struck. Upon doing so, one might wonder why it was graded as high as XF-40 because there are empty spots on different portions of the coin when enlarged. The reason for this is due to the strike which was strong in some places and weak in others. Our early silver half-dimes were incredibly thin and bendable.

The Draped Bust half dime was struck in 1796 and 1797 with a small eagle reverse but starting in 1800 thru 1805 the heraldic eagle replaced the small one. No half-dimes were coined in 1804. The tiny coin was just 16.5mm in width and quite thin which resulted in some examples being bent. That said, the coin is problem-free except for the uneven appearance of the design, especially on the reverse. Nevertheless, it appears absolutely original and worthy of its value which was still somewhat costly when the author acquired the piece at American Numismatic Association's summer Convention held at the Baltimore Convention Center back in August, 2003.

The reported mintage of the coin was just 15,600, the second smallest of the Heraldic Eagle group. Prior to the show, the author had saved up a considerable amount of money. Today the value has skyrocketed from the time the author acquired the piece.



An 1822 Capped Bust dime, JR-1, R5 graded XF-40

[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 200% to see details more clearly.]

In 1822, only 100,000 *dismes* were struck at the Philadelphia Mint and apparently most circulated with the result that the date is considered considerably rare today and seldom appears at major shows or even auctions. The author was fortunate to come across the coin shown directly above at a major show held in NJ a cross the Delaware River from nearby Philadelphia away back in 1989 and even then, the coin was expensive but the writer had saved up enough money just so he could take advantage of acquiring a rare coin if it appeared.

Some of these coins have been shown before in the club newsletter but in this issue the writer wishes to explain that even on a college professor's salary and later pension, he was able to save enough cash prior to each major show that he planned to attend during the last decade of the 20th century and the first two decades of the 21st.

Today, the lovely 1822 dime shown above is worth far more than he paid for it and still seldom appears in auctions or major coin shows. One does not have to be a millionaire to acquire rare coins although there are a goodly number that are above the budget of most middle class collectors.



An 1824/2 Capped Bust quarter graded VF-35

[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 150% to see details more clearly.]

From 1815 thru 1828, Asst. Engraver John Reich's large size Capped Bust quarters were struck but not in every year. After 1815, none were produced thru 1819. Starting in 1820, the quarter was struck in consecutive years thru 1825 although the 1823 is virtually impossible to acquire since only a tiny handful of specimens exist. None were produced in 1826. In 1827, there are even less quarters that exist than the 1823 and most of the, proofs. Finally, in 1828 a large enough number of quarters were produced before the series ended.

Back in 2022, when the author wrote an article on collecting the Capped Bust quarters created by John Reich, he expressed the following:

The author's favorite date of the series is the 1824/2 which he acquired for only \$550 away back in 1991. The *Red Book* still combines the mintages of the 1824 and 1825 together listing a mintage of 168,000 next to the 1824 for both dates, but recent research by Steve Tompkins, author of *Early Quarters of the United States (1796 to 1838)*, indicates that only 16,000 quarters were actually minted with the 1824 date and although not extremely rare, the coin is the scarcest date of the collectible quarters in this series! The author obtained the piece via mail-order from a national coin dealer from Colorado who used to set up at many of the major shows on the east coast including Atlanta. He was an excellent grader, supremely honest and fair in his pricing based on his knowledge of the value of scarcer coins. Today, the 1824 quarter shown above retails for \$4,000 and sells for around \$2,800 to \$3,800 at recent auctions.



An 1815/2 Lettered Edge Capped Bust half-dollar

[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 200% to see details more clearly.]

Only 47,150 Lettered Edge Capped Bust half dollars were issued in 1815 compared with over one million in the years that preceded and followed, so, the coin is extremely desirable by collectors of the **series which ran from 1807 thru 1836** with most halves struck well over a million in the later years.

The author acquired this coin at the American Numismatic Association's Annual summer Convention which was held in Atlanta, GA back in August of 2001. Even back then, it cost plenty but again, it turned out to be a good investment because an 1815/2 Bust half in the same grade after more than two decades since the coin was acquired has more than tripled in value. The 1815/2 half-dollar is still quite popular with numismatists. The photo above is clear, displaying a well struck coin that appears almost uncirculated.

(Continued on page 3, column 1)

Collecting U.S. Coins You Never Thought You Could Obtain (Continued from page 2, column 2)



A 1795 Flowing Hair silver dollar B-2, R2 graded Fine-15
[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 150% to see details more clearly.]

When the author first started collecting U.S. coinage he was a New Jersey resident and despite the state's small geographic shape it had 23 coin clubs and numerous coin dealer's shops throughout the state. It also allowed for plentiful small to large size coin shows as it was located between Philadelphia and New York. The interesting early dollar shown above was coined in only two years, 1794 with only 1,758 produced and quite rare and in 1795 with 160,295 struck. The author was in his second decade of coin collecting but when he came across this historic American dollar coin at a small show held in a suburb of Philadelphia, he decided to purchase it and today it is worth more than five times what he paid for it back then. Recently the U.S. Mint produced a beautiful replica of this coin which is worth acquiring .



A 1799 Draped Bust silver dollar, BB-151, R6 graded VF-30 by PCGS
[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 150% to see details more clearly.]

Residing in the state of New Jersey at the time the author acquired the coins displayed in this article was a god-send for any numismatist who was becoming more involved in the hobby.

The lovely Draped Bust 1799 dollar shown above was first seen by the author at a Trenton Numismatic Club meeting back in June, 1992 where the dealer was set up at one of the few tables at the rear of the meeting hall. For an old coin going back almost two centuries the attractive coin design was intriguing to the author and he asked the dealer who he knew well and respected what the price of the coin was. "\$550, but I want to take it home first because in the meeting hall, the light is not that good and I need to check to see if the piece is a scarce variety. If so, I will have to charge more!"

Fortunately both the dealer and the author resided in towns ten minutes away from each other, so when the dealer

called the author the following evening and told him that the coin was an extremely rare variety and would have to charge him \$650, the author at first thought, "Ouch!" but respecting the dealer's high standard, decided to buy the coin anyway. Today it is listed as the rarest variety for that date and retails for \$4,500 although the very few times it has appeared in auctions going back several years, it has sold for somewhat less.

Gold

For many years the author had not had the opportunity to acquire any early U.S. gold coins. They were somewhat to extremely scarce and very costly. During that period of the author's numismatic involvement, the gold coins he collected were later 19th century gold dollars and a couple of \$21/2 quarter eagles coins and a few latter date 19th and early 20th coin sets that included gold double eagles such as the 1924 Saint Gaudens \$20.00 piece that was very common.



A pair of 1807 \$5.00 half-eagles, the Draped Bust graded AU-55 above the Capped Bust type graded AU-58

[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 150% to see details more clearly.]

It wasn't until 2018 that he began to consider acquiring some of the earlier U.S. gold coins, especially the \$5.00 half-eagles such as the two 1807 transitional dates shown directly above and they are "beauties" for the grade. Having acquired these two pieces, he needed one more type of the early half-eagles to complete his set and at the a ANA Show held in Atlanta GA in February, 2020 he came across this desirable 1813 Capped Head \$5.00 half-eagle shown directly below.



An 1813 Capped Head \$5.00 half-eagle graded AU-55
[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen or 150% to see details more clearly.]

John Reich served as Asst. Chief Engraver to Robert Scot from 1807 thru 1817 but the jury is still out as to who actually altered Reich's Capped Bust design to what today is referred to as the Capped Head design. While somewhat similar, the coin appears more masculine than the Reich's earlier more feminine design of Miss Liberty. The only two common dates of this series are the 1813 and the 1814/3 which followed. All the dates are rare due to silver to gold ratio issues. These three gold coins shown are the author's favorites.

**STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB
Regular Meeting Thursday, November 7, 2024**

President Kelly Nordeen, called the regular meeting of the coin club to order at 6:45 p.m. in the Oh Mie Stelle Bakery on Pine Log Road. There were fourteen members in attendance in person and two visitors.

Sharon Smoot won the door prize – a 2024 quarter-ounce silver Britannia.

Jim Sproull informed members of upcoming coin shows in the region.

A motion was made by Steve Kuhl and seconded by Chuck Goergen to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the October meeting. A copy of the October Meeting Minutes will be on file with the other club records and the Minutes are also reported in the Club newsletter.

Treasurer Chuck Goergen reported that the club's balance is \$1154.47.

We were informed that a charter and founding member of our club, Jim Barry, passed away on October 29. A memorial service will be held at Brandon Wilde Sr Living Community on November 14 at 2:00 m. Jim and his wife Helen were extremely active over our club's first decade, serving as various officers including President, Bourse Chair, and Secretary..

Old Business:

J.J. Engel reminded us that the club's Christmas dinner will be December 5th at the Columbus Club. Menu and arrangements will be similar to the last two years. Sharon Smoot volunteered to coordinate reservations for the dinner.

Sharon made a motion that the club contribute \$5 to reduce the dinner price for each paying member. The motion was seconded and passed on a voice vote. The cost of the dinner will be \$30 for members and \$35 for guests. The doors open at 6 pm for a cash bar, and dinner will start at 7 pm.

New Business:

There was no new business this month.

Show & Tells:

There were several Show & Tells by members.

Chuck Goergen shared an ancient Byzantine gold coin from the Constantinople mint. The coin differed markedly from today's coin in that it was very thin and instead had been minted such that it was noticeably cupped – the edges of the coin were raised above the center of the coin when placed with the obverse up. Chuck also shared an 1803 Bust half dollar.

Jimmy Widener shared a recent item he'd received from the US Mint – a silver high relief medal based on the 1793 dollar.

The Program:

In place of a program this month, several members shared their experiences from the SCNA Coin Show in Greenville last week. Our club was well-represented at the SCNA Convention & Coin Show. Kelly & Typhany Nordeen along with Steve Kuhl worked the show as SCNA members. Kelsey Forde, Tim Stirrup and Jim Mullaney also attended.

Items obtained at the show that our members shared with us include the following.

Tim Stirrup obtained a collection of Tobacco Tags from the mid 20th century that he'd found interesting.

Typhany Nordeen shared three foreign coins that she received from her new favorite dealer for her birthday – a 1912 penny from Finland, an Icelandic 1965 5 aurar coin, and a 1987 \$2 coin from Hong Kong. 1`

Jim Mullaney shared his experience attending the hybrid (online/in-person) auction at the show on Saturday. Jim also shared a set of several dozen high-relief pewter medals based on American historical figures issued in the 70's. Jim also displayed a 10-ounce Silver Britannia from 2021 and a 5-ounce copper replica of a 1909- S VDB cent. Kelsey Forde found four Hobo nickels to add to her growing collection along with a fossil tooth of a pre-historic shark that she picked up at a rock & mineral show going on in the same building as the coin show.

Steve Kuhl shared his experiences from the show, including attending the 2nd day seminar on counterfeit coin detection.

Kelly Nordeen shared a short-Snorter he got at the show – which was actually 3 bills from different countries taped together and signed on the back.

Jim Sproull won the 50/50 - \$13.

Jim Sproull, assisted by Jim Mullaney, conducted the monthly club auction.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jim Mullaney, Secretary*

The Newsletter Editor would like to thank Jim Mullaney not only for his excellent minutes that he provides the club each month but on the obituary column he composed on Jim Barry who was one of the four founders of our club which appears on the following page.



Jim Barry

Jim Barry, a charter and founding member of our club, passed away on October 29. Jim and his wife Helen were extremely active over our club's first decade, serving as various officers including Vice-President, Bourse Chair, and Secretary. Jim and Helen were made lifetime honorary members of our club in 2016.

After retiring following a career as an educator in the East Hampton Union Free School District in New York, Jim combined his love of history, interest in coins, and ability to teach by learning numismatics at the ANA summer seminars in Colorado Springs and sharing his knowledge with our club, other club's around the region, and by writing in national numismatic publications.

Jim set the standard for our club meetings with both Show & Tells as well as full presentations combining history & coins. He also shared his knowledge with the public with club events such as a Coin & Currency Road Show at the library where anyone could bring in coins or currency and club members could quickly research them and give the owners more information about what they had.

Jim was also a life member of the American Numismatic Association, member of the Augusta Coin Club, Board Member and Past President of the South Carolina Numismatic Association and a member of various other numismatic clubs.

In 2014, Jim and Helen Barry received the ANA's President award. The award was presented to the Barry's for their service as District Delegates over a long span of years and later as Regional Coordinators for the Carolinas thru 2005. As District Delegates and Coordinators, the Barry's publicized the ANA to local and state area club meetings and regional shows, helped collectors join the ANA and encouraged education at club meetings.

A memorial service was held for Jim at Brandon Wilde Senior Living Community in Evans GA on November 14.

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