

# Coin Club fair makes sense of ancient, rare currency

By **SUZANNE R. STONE**

Staff writer

The Aiken County Public Library was the place to bring those mysterious penny-pieces from the attic Saturday as the Stephen James CSRA Coin Club held a coin identification and appraisal fair.

Visitors crowded the meeting room from noon to 3 p.m. Saturday to meet with the coin club's six experts on duty, with up-to-date reference works and firsthand experience in handling U.S. coins and currency, Confederate scrip, ancient coins, gold coins and contemporary coins, according to club president Willie Simon.

"We've had an excellent turnout," Simon said. "I've seen everything from United States currency to tokens and medals, foreign coins and currency, and old gold and silver certificates. It's been an excellent variety of anything collectible."

Said visitor Alyce Hefelfinger, "I brought a lot of old American coins from my father's estate. We've found out one of them might be pretty good. (the coin club member is) sending me to one of the other members to check on it. And I've found out that this one with a hole in it is called a love token — they used to engrave initials on the back."

The Stephen James CSRA Coin Club meets once a month at the Aiken County Public Library. The meetings are usually at 6:45 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of the month, subject to scheduling conflicts with the library. The club is a member of the American Numismatic Association, the South Carolina Numismatic Association and the Ancient Coin Collec-



tors' Guild.

The group was formed in 2001 and named after founding member Patricia James' late husband, local coin dealer Stephen James. They hold an annual coin show in the fall, scheduled this year for Sept. 16 at the H. Odell Weeks Activities Center.

Visitors are welcome at club meetings; those interested can call the library at 642-2022 to confirm monthly meeting times. More information about the club is available online at the club's website, [www.sjcsracc.org](http://www.sjcsracc.org).

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Staff photos by Suzanne Stone

**Stephen James CSRA Coin Club member Arno Safran, right, talked with Robert Chapman and Lolly Logan about their coins at the coin identification and appraisal fair Saturday.**