

## The SJ CSRA CC now meets at the MieStelle Bakery on the first Thursday of the Month

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



The Stephen James  
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Volume 24, No. 2

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

February, 2025

**Our next meeting will be held on February 6, 2025 at the MieStelle Bakery in Aiken, SC  
Consider bringing in a Numismatic Show & Tell item!**

## Collecting U.S. Coins you never thought you could Afford #3

### 2025 Club Meeting Schedule

Jan. 2	Apr. 3	July 10	Oct. 2
Feb. 6	May 1	Aug. 7	Nov. 6
Mar. 6	June 5	Sept. 4	Dec. 4



**An 1885 Liberty Seated quarter graded MS-64 by PCGS**

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

The Liberty Seated quarter was originally designed by Christian Gobrecht, our 3<sup>rd</sup> Chief Engraver and slightly revised by Robert Ball Hughes on the obverse. First released in 1838, the coin had undergone a number of changes, most recently, the motto, **IN GOD WE TRUST** which was added above the eagle on the reverse in 1866. It was obtained by the author at the Blue Ridge Numismatic Association annual coin show held in Dalton, GA Convention Center back in August, 2009. While it was nowhere near as expensive as the 1885 "V" nickel it was still costly. Today it has soared much higher in price, so the decision to acquire the piece turned out to be a sound investment. In the author's opinion, the coin is beautiful to behold. Notice the clarity on both sides of the piece.



**An 1885 Liberty Seated half-dollar WB-101, R4+ graded MS-63 by PCGS**

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

The charming example of the 1885 Liberty Seated half-dollar cost the author \$1,550 back in 2010. One looking just like it recently sold at a Stacks-Bowers auction for \$2,880 in August, 2024. The current retail price is \$3,100. Occasionally, the author lists the price figures to show the reader that if one does his numismatic homework regarding grades, a coin's eye appeal, and saves up sufficiently before an important show, acquisitions such as the three examples shown here are perhaps better than stocks. Observe the eye appeal on all three!

(Continued on page 2, column 1)



**An 1885 Liberty Head nickel certified MS-62 by PCGS, CAC stickered**

Charles Barber's Liberty Nickels were struck from 1883 thru 1912 series; the five 1913 proof examples notwithstanding, but the 1885 dated nickel with, only 1,472,700 Liberty is considered the key date of the entire series and is expensive, especially in the uncirculated grades and is quite expensive.



**The coin shown closer to its actual size of 21.2mm**

The author discovered this example over the internet in January, 2019 and it didn't come cheap but he had saved up a sufficient amount of cash to acquire the coin and wasn't disappointed. Look at it this way: Many people collect stocks but other than their value they don't appear as artistic or as attractive as an obsolete rare coin would.

## Collecting U.S. Coins You Never thought You Could Afford

(Continued from page 1, column 2)



**An 1875-S Twenty-cent piece graded MS-62 by PCGS**

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

While we're dealing with Liberty Seated coinage, here's an interesting oddity, although the most common mint variety of the four mints in which this odd denomination coin was struck. The twenty-cent piece type was referred to as the double dime by the western state citizens during the late 1870s. While the coin shown above was certified only MS-62 by PCGS, it is still somewhat attractive and since this particular coin type was struck for only four years, the first two for circulation, the second two as proofs only, the author decided to add it to his collection due to its history.

The denomination was desired by the western state citizens because they preferred silver to nickel coinage and actually referred the coin shown above as the "double dime". The coin was designed by William Barber, who was serving as our fifth Chief Engraver during this period. While he retained Gobrecht's Liberty Seated design on the obverse, he created a different spread eagle for the reverse. The coin had a width of just 22mm, slightly smaller than the quarter which had a width of 24.3 mm and that's where the trouble began because soon after it was put into circulation, people were confusing the new coin to the quarter. So, after two years it was taken out of circulation and struck as proofs only in the following two years dating 1877 and 1878 before being retired. Today however, it is a popular coin for collectors..



**The 1875 MS-62 graded twenty-cent piece and the MS-64 graded quarter side by side**

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

During his collecting career, the author has enjoyed the challenges of acquiring a complete set of coins displaying a specific date; usually excluding gold due to the yellow metal's cost. So it was that way with the U.S. coin age of 1875; the year his grandfather was born. Shown above is the 20-cent piece at left and an 1875 Liberty Seated quarter shown at right graded MS-64, two notches higher. It was purchased at the Fun Show held in Orlando back in 2010, two years after the 20 cent piece was acquired. The obverses on both coins are the same but the reverses are not since they display two different eagle designs. On the smaller 20 cent piece at left, Engraver William Barber's version displays the eagle **facing right** with less graceful wings compared with engraver, John Reich's original version displaying the eagle **facing left** on the quarter.

The viewer can observe the differences in the two coins easily but in commerce on a busy day, the people couldn't always distinguish the dissimilarity between the two coins because of the resemblance on the obverse and their closeness in size.



**An 1873 Liberty Seated dollar graded AU-55 by PCGS**

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

The *Coinage act of 1873*, sometimes referred to as *the "Crime of '73"*, resulted in the Liberty Seated dollar being struck for the last time. The coin above, graded AU-55 by PCGS was acquired at the FUN show held in Orlando Florida away back in 2006. It cost \$1,200. Today it retails for \$3,500 with one selling for as high as \$4,320 at a Stacks Bower Auction held in 2024.



**An 1873 Trade dollar graded XF-45 by PCGS**

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

Later, that same year, the Trade dollar, designed by William Barber replaced the Liberty Seated dollar which had a slightly larger amount of silver in it than the previous dollar coin which was produced essentially to be sent to the orient, especially China. **Seen in a much larger scope due to the dollar's size, the reader can see the same eagle that appears on the reverse of the twenty-cent piece.** The motto, **IN GOD WE TRUST** is directly above it but is smaller than the one that is on the Liberty Seated dollar due to the addition on words **420 GRAINS: .900** fine silver underneath the eagle. The example shown cost the author \$350 but the coin was graded only XF-45. Today a coin in the same grade retails at \$800 with a most recent specimen selling at a Stacks-Bower action for \$6.30 back in May, 2023.



**An 1873 Gold Indian Princess dollar graded MS-61**

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

Finally, shown, is this charming specimen of the tiny 15 mm diameter **Indian Princess \$1.00 gold coin** that was first struck back in 1856 and continued to be produced thru 1889. The author acquired the coin shown above away back in 2003 at the first Augusta Coin club show held since he joined the club in 2001. It cost him just \$285.00. Upon magnification, **it looks like the scarce closed 3 version and if so it could be worth around \$2,350 today** but the dealer listed it as an **open 3** which is much more common and today retails for \$650. The author plans to have the coin reappraised.

(Continued on page 3, column 1)

**Collecting U.S. Coins You Never thought You Could Afford**  
(Continued from page 2, column 2)



**The three \$1.00 coins of 1873**  
From L to R; the Liberty Seated, Indian princess and Trade dollars



**The 1873 Indian Princess \$1.00 gold eagle enlarged**



**CLOSED 3**  
Image courtesy of Heritage Numismatic Auctions, Inc.

**OPEN 3**

Courtesy of PCGS' COINFACTS

The writer recommends that the readers consider **driving to a major state show**. From 2002 thru 2016 the author and his wife, Vilma attended a number of shows that ranged from two to seven hour drive lengths; the Orlando Show held in early January each year and perhaps the greatest in the nation being the longest. My wife was a historian, so she enjoyed accompanying me and whenever I purchased a coin, it was only with my money. When it came to the two Dalton, Georgia shows, the GNA in April and the BRNA in August, after each, we always drove to stay at a cabin in the Georgia mountains. The SCNA show almost always held their annual shows in Greenville, S C, a beautiful city which held concerts during some of times we attended. As a result, the writer was able to acquire a numerous number of better date coins in attractive grades even if they weren't always uncirculated.

**What Happened in 1879?**



**An 1879 Liberty Head half-dollar graded MS-63**

The Liberty Seated half-dollar specimen shown above is a beauty for the grade but what makes it an important acquisition to the collector is a result of the **Bland-Allison Coinage Act of 1878**. The act restored the striking of silver dollars with the newly created Morgan dollar series to be coined in the mufti-millions, and since the lower denomination silver coins were extremely available during this period, the act deceased the coining of dimes, quarters and half-dollars for circulation producing each denomination in very small numbers for collectors only. So the coin shown directly above is extremely scarce because it had a mintage of just 4,800. The author acquired it at the Augusta coin Exchange in 2020. It was expensive but worth it.



**A n 1879 Morgan dollar graded MS-63 that look like a 65 or 66**

In 1879, the Philadelphia Mint struck 14,806,000 Morgan dollars, the second year of the new coin's service but at that time hardly anyone in the north-eastern part of the United States probably knew of its existence since most were bagged in the lower rooms of banks. The author's grandpa Charlie never knew about the Morgan dollar during his lifetime. The example shown above is beautiful with virtually no marks or cuts on its surfaces. He obtained the coin at Clein's Rare coins in Martinez, GA back in 2018. It cost just \$84.00.



**The 1879 dime had a mintage if just 14,000 and the quarter, 13,600**  
**The author saved up to acquire each coin on these pages.**

### Collecting the four US Gold coins of 1900 Proved to be a Good Investment in 2019



#### A 1900 Liberty Head gold eagle certified MS-63 by NGC

In October, 2019 while the writer was attending the South Carolina Numismatic Association convention held in Greenville, SC, he came across a beautiful \$20.00 gold double Eagle that was dated 1900. It cost him **\$1,660**. Today it retails for **\$3,300** with the most recent example at a Heritage auction selling for \$3,480. The coin was first released in 1850 and created by James Barton Longacre, our fourth Chief Engraver and was struck thru 1907 when it was replaced later in the year with Saint-Gaudens magnificent twenty-dollar double eagle. As a result, of the double eagle acquisition shown above he decided to acquire the three lower denominations struck in 1900 as well.



#### A 1900 Liberty Head \$10.00 gold eagle certified MS-64 by PCGS

Later in the year he found a beautiful \$10.00 eagle at a Heritage auction that cost him **\$1,380** as the winning bidder; a lot of money back then, but today, it retails for **\$3,250** with one selling for \$2,640 back in April 2024.



#### A 1900 \$5.00 half-eagle graded MS-64 by PCGS

This charming little gem was acquired on line from the Northern Nevada Coin Company. It sold for just \$613 and the writer received it within three days of his order. Today a 1900 \$5.00 gold half-eagle retails for \$1,450 PCGS auctions ranging from \$960 to \$1,350 going back to 2023.



#### A 1900 \$2.50 quarter Eagle graded MS-64 CAC stickered

This little gem cost the writer just \$750 in Dec. 2019. Today it retails for only slightly more at \$825 with one selling for \$850 at a recent auction. With the exception of the quarter eagle the three higher 1900 gold coin denominations have increased in value considerably.

### Remembering Jim Barry A First Rate Numismatist and Member of our Club



#### Jim Barry giving a program before the SJ CSRA Coin Club

One of the first advanced coin collectors the Newsletter Editor met in the Central Savannah River Area was Jim Barry, (shown above). It was at the Augusta Club--which back then met at a school Gym not far from Washington Road. The average attendance on a good night was around 27 persons with four children, two sisters and two brothers. They were well behaved but at the auction held at the end of the meeting they had to be restrained by their fathers from overbidding on a Jefferson nickel. Ironically, during the early months which began in March, 2001, neither Jim nor I were aware of each other but in November of 2001, the Editor and his wife Vilma attended a dinner meeting of the newly formed **Stephen James CSRA Coin Club** held in Aiken, S C. Jim and his wife, Helen Barry lived in Aiken at the time having recently moved to the Central Savannah River Area. Soon afterwards, I joined the new club. With both of us involved in the two clubs I got to know Jim pretty well. We had a lot in common since both of us were former teachers.

Jim's numismatic forte was collecting Ancient Coinage and he had already amassed a fine collection of attractive pieces going back to Ancient Rome and Classical Greece. He had also collected British coinage from the era of **Queen Elizabeth the first** and displayed them during the Show and Tell sections at both area clubs, but it was collecting ancients that were his forte.

Jim was also an organizer. He would set up a get together type meeting on a Saturday where people could bring their coins to have them examined and rated even if they were not members of the club. Five to six club members including Jim would examine the coins brought in using magnifier loupes and let visitors know whether their coins were quality pieces or not. In 2013, Jim and Helen moved to Evans, GA and both attended the Augusta Coin Club even more often; also attending their two major yearly coin shows **Jim passed away on October 29, 2024. He was quite a guy and he will be missed!**

## STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB Regular Meeting Thursday, January 2, 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 twenty-one members in attendance in person and three visitors.

**Tim Stirrup** 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 JJ Engel and seconded by Sharon Smoot to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the November meeting.** A copy of the November 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 \$1347.40.  
Old Business

**Kelly thanked JJ, Sharon, and others for putting together the Christmas Dinner at the Columbus Club.** We all had an enjoyable evening.

### New Business:

Steve Kuhl provided an update on the status of our Coin Show that is coming up on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>; just n ten weeks. Please contact Chuck Goergen for flyers to distribute around town or to take to regional shows. We need to refill the kid's grab bag – and consider donating some coins that could appeal to kids (in 2x2's). The club will include a Boy Scout Merit Badge Clinic – and any donation of Ike dollars would be appreciated to support this.

In order to order a shirt for our club please contact Kelsey Forde. We need all our club members to become involved in working to support the show so that it can be as successful as past shows.

### Show & Tells:

There were several Show & Tells by members.

**Bill Orne** shared a token from a batch coins he'd obtained at the Augusta show that was made like a spinner coin. It was badly corroded, but Bill was able to use acid to remove the bulk of the corrosion and reveal that it was from Nebraska with the dates 1887-1937.

**Chuck Goergen** shared an ancient coin from a region near the southern-most part of Italy from the period 520-470 BC. Chuck share a second coin minted during the brief period of Feb-Mar 44 BC, between Caesar being elevated to dictator for life and his death.

**Kelsey Forde** shared several Civil War tokens she is researching for more information.

**Arno Safran** displayed an 1907 gold (\$2.50) quarter-eagle he won in the annual drawing between Augusta Coin Club members who present programs each year. Oddly, there were only two members who actually provided these in both 2023 and 2024 and the other one won the drawing in 2023, so Arno said he was fortunate to be the victor this time around. He suggested that members from our club consider doing programs at the Augusta Coin Club as they have in the past. He also reminded us to read our monthly club newsletter when they get the chance.

### The Program:

**Member, Walt Kubilius presented a program on coins of Ancient Greece.** This is Walt's eighth presentation to our club over the last 20 years or so and we have enjoyed them all. Walt started with a brief review of ancient Greek geography looking at other ancient Greek cities besides Athens and Sparta and the extent of the Greek Empire. Walt covered coins from 13 Greek cities. The cities ranged the area of modern-day Greece, up to colonies on the Black Sea in modern-day Romania and Ukraine, over to southern Italy, down to Cyrene on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and east to the island of Argo-Saronic Islands off the coast of Syria. Walt covered the zymology of the typical coinage for the various cities and related it to major event in the history of ancient Greece.

One very interesting observation that Walt shared with us was how certain symbols from ancient Greek coins have persisted in Mediterranean cultures over thousands of years, and coins of the region in the 20th and 21st centuries have at times mirrored the design of those from over two thousand years ago.

**Sharon Smoot** won the 50/50 - \$22.

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

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Mullaney, Secretary**

### Our Upcoming Show

The Newsletter Editor wants to thank our club Secretary, James Mullaney once again for providing our club minutes in elegant fashion especially since there were a lot more items discussed at our January, 2025 meeting.

Steve Kuhl's presentation on how we can have a successful Coin Show was the highlight of the group's discussion period since the event is scheduled for Saturday, March 15, 2025. It will once again be held at the South Aiken Presbyterian Church which is located at 1711 Whiskey Road in Aiken. The hours, 9 AM to 4 PM. Steve is the bourse chairman which covers getting dealers to do the show and publicizing the event sufficiently to reach the people in Aiken, Augusta and surrounding counties in South Carolina and Georgia. This will be our first show since 2019.

## An attractive 1900 Filler



### A 1900 Barber Liberty Head quarter graded MS-62 by PCGS

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

In 1900, the author's father, **Saul** was born in Warsaw, Poland on Christmas day. He was the middle child of seven children and the only one who became a musician. Before coming to America in 1920 he had learned to play the violin and was quite a fine instrumentalist. He met my mother, Hannah in 1924 at a orchestra in downtown Manhattan in New York City and by the time the writer was four years old, he put a tiny violin in his hands for him to learn to play.

The trouble was, the young lad apparently liked the large dog in the violin teacher's studio better than the instrument which he found hard to learn and stuck his knee into the poor little fiddle, although he doesn't remember doing it. Nevertheless, despite his father's devoted love for the writer's mother and his frustration with his first born son, he had to deal with making a living during the height of the Great Depression, so he and an recent Italian immigrant named **Percy** (for Ludwig Percivalli) decided to add two talented tailors, one also from Italy from and the other from Greece and started a tailoring business in New York City called Persall's Tailors.

**Decades later, when the writer was well into numismatics, he decided to put together a 1900 year set in honor of his father.** It took quite a while to accomplish with the copper and silver coins being acquired first over a long period if time and the four gold denominations shown on page 4 acquired in 2019.

He originally acquired a 1900-P quarter "raw" graded MS-63 back in June, 1992 at a major show in New York which turned out to have been cleaned when he sent it out for certification to PCGS, so he sold it at another major show but was not able to acquire the 1900-P quarter coin shown above until March, 2014 because the date is very popular despite its large mintage of over 10,000,000 and is difficult to find today. This coin shown above was graded only MS-62 but it was well struck with only a few minor marks and is gorgeous to behold in the author's opinion. It cost the writer **\$365 back in 2014** when he acquired it from a reliable dealership located in Massachusetts called **Northeast Numismatics**. Today it retails for **\$430.00**.

**Around 2018, however,** the Barber series of Liberty Head silver coins dropped by 20% so the 1900 quarter date can be acquired in the same grade for a lot less at a Heritage auction if you can find one because despite being a Philadelphia Mint common date item, the coin appears very seldom.

Most serious collectors don't use the auction route to acquire coins because they are either unsure of their ability on how to become a winning bidder and feel frustrated by being outbid by others. Then, there is a 20% charge to the winning bidder by the larger auction companies (like Heritage). That said, over the period from 2018 thru 2022, the author used Heritage frequently and soon discovered that even with the 20% attachment fee to his occasional winning bids, he actually obtained the coin for far less than the retail price figure.

Back to the 1900 quarter shown above: As mentioned earlier, it was obtained on line via the author's computer; a vey practical way to acquire coins of interest because the dealer actually displays the coin as shown on the top of this column.

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