

The SJ CSRA CC now meets at the South Aiken Presbyterian Church at 1711 Whiskey Road

Pres. J.J. Engel
 V.P. Pat James
 Sec. Jim Mullaney
 Treas. Chuck Goergen
 Sgt. in Arms: Jim Sproull



The Stephen James
 CSRA Coin Club of Aiken
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Volume 21, No. 4

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

April, 2022

Our next will be on Thursday, April, 7 at 6:45 PM in the South Aiken Presbyterian Church Gymnasium
 Due to the latest Omicron variant of Covid-19, please wear a face mask inside the building

Collecting the US Coins of 1912, 110 Years Ago

2022 Club Meeting Schedule

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



A 1926 Oregon Trail 50c commemorative graded MS-65 CAC
 [Increase page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

One of our most popular commemorative coins from the 1892-1954 series is the Oregon Trail half-dollar struck from 1926 thru 1937 although not in every year. The obverse displaying the native American was designed by Laura Fraser and the reverse--showing the covered wagon moving westward towards the setting sun--was designed by her husband, James Earle Fraser, best known as the creator of the Buffalo nickel in 1913. The famed Oregon trail was heavily used between 1840 and 1860.



Ezra Morgan Meeker

One of the memorable westward ho pioneers was Ezra Meeker who lived from 1830 to 1920 and travelled the route in 1852 with his young wife, Eliza Jane Sumner, baby son and his younger brother from Indiana reaching Portland six months later. Years later, he and his wife had an exceptional and eventful life travelling the world but shortly after the 20th century began, he wanted to commemorate the Oregon trail. The Oregon Trail 50c was struck at all three mints from 1926 to 1933 although not in every year with the tiny mint-mark, S or D placed on the bottom of the obverse to the right of the F in HALF just under the drapery.

(See detail at right!)



The 1926 coin shown was coined in Philadelphia and San Francisco and is the most common of the series' eight year span.

Collecting the US Coins of 1912, (sans gold) 110 Years ago By Arno Safran



The obverses of a 1912 BU year set showing the 50c, 25c and 10c above the 5c & 1c denominations
 [Increase page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

The suspension of the Morgan dollar after 1904 left only three silver coin denominations, all designed by Chief Engraver Charles Barber; the highest silver denomination being the half-dollar. As a result, only five denominations were struck each year, (excluding gold). These included the cent, five-cent nickel, dime, quarter and half-dollar; the latter three, not always at all three US mints then in operation; these being the Philadelphia, Denver and San Francisco Mints; the New Orleans Mint having closed after 1909. The mintage of our gold coinage were all in the six figures, quite plentiful during that timeframe but saw little circulation since their value was well above the budget of most US citizens, the yellow metal being used primarily by banks dealing with large corporations of the period.



William Howard Taft

1912 was an election year and President Taft was serving his fourth year of his term, although up against Democrat, Woodrow Wilson who was Gov. of NJ as well as the popular former Republican president, Theodore Roosevelt who recommended him but thought he had sold out to the big business crowd.

(Continued on page 2, column 1)

Collecting the US Coins of 1912, (*sans gold*)

110 Years ago (Continued from page 1, column 2)



The reverses of a 1912 BU year set showing the 50c, 25c and 10c above the 5c & 1c denominations
[Increase the page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

All five denominations shown above are uncirculated ranging from MS-62 to MS-64. During the era when these coins were released, they had tremendous purchasing power because prices for goods were considerably lower than today. A daily tabloid newspaper sold for two to three cents. With a nickel, you could buy a candy bar, an ice cream cone, even a sandwich or salad plus a ride on the trolley, elevated train or subway. Before 1965--the year our silver coinage intended for circulation was replaced by cupro-nickel scrip with no metal value--one could come across well worn examples of Barber nickels, dimes, quarters and half-dollars in change, especially in the large eastern and mid western cities as well as Los Angeles and San Francisco, wherever the large populations were. Morgan dollars were seldom seen in the eastern cities during most residents' lifetimes. They're existence were more noticeable in the south and far west at gambling spots. Today, even Lincoln cents struck from 1909 through the early 1930s are becoming scarcer to find in grades, XF-45 and higher.



A 1912 Lincoln Wheat-back cent graded MS -64 RB
[Increase page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

In 1912, the Philadelphia Mint struck 68,153,060 Lincoln cents compared with 10,411,000 at Denver and 4,431,000 at San Francisco. Back in 1988, the author acquired a 1912-P Lincoln cent graded MS-64 RB for \$35.00 by a highly reliable dealer who used to set up at various club meetings. Today it sells for \$190 in the same grade. The 1912-D Lincoln cent in the same grade based on PCGS' COIN FACTS is priced at \$450 while a 1912-S is listed at \$575 retail. Recent auctions range either slightly lower or higher depending on the quality of the coin's overall appearance. It's hard to imagine what the price increases of a 2022 modern day Lincoln cent will be 110 years from now with well over two billion struck each year.



A 1912 Liberty "V" nickel graded MS-64 by PCGS
[Increase the page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

Our first Liberty nickels were struck for circulation in 1912. Two years earlier, in 1881, Mint director, Archibald Snowden asked Chief Engraver Charles Barber to create a new design and the following year, Barber came up with a pattern coin dated 1882 somewhat similar to the 1883 design shown above except both the pattern and the 1883 "V" nickels lacked the word, "CENTS" on the reverse. Soon, con man began gold-plating the new nickel since it appeared similar to the \$5.00 gold half-eagle that was still being coined. Later in 1883, the words, FIVE-CENTS were added under the wreath resulting in a **triple transitional date** since the Shield nickel was last struck in 1883. Liberty nickels, like their predecessors, were struck only at the Philadelphia Mint from 1883 thru 1911 when it was decided to produce the 5c denomination at all three mints in 1912 with 26234,560 struck at Philadelphia, 8,474,000 at Denver and a paltry 238,000 coined at the San Francisco facility. The mint-mark **D** or **S** is located on the reverse under the dot that lies between the **U** in United and the **C** in cents.



A 1912-D Liberty "V" nickel graded MS-63 by PCGS
[Increase the page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

The author acquired the 1912-D specimen of the Liberty Head "V" nickel thirty years ago back in June of 1992. It was certified six years after PCGS started their certification company which was back in 1986. The coin sold for \$245 back then and has increased in value very little to \$400, which is not much but unlike the 1912-S, had a much larger mintage.



A 1912-S Liberty "V" nickel graded MS-63 by PCGS
[Increase the page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

The 1912-S Liberty nickel with a tiny mintage of just 238,000 coined is another story. It was acquired for \$650 together with the 1912-D but today the 1912-S is valued at \$2,000 certified MS-63, so together, both coins turned out to be a good investment.

Upon enlarging all the page, the surfaces on all three 1912 nickels appear to be smooth and clear and free of unsightly marks, spotting, cuts or ties, while the strikes tend to be somewhat soft.

Acquiring a mini set of all three 1912 Liberty nickels is in some ways more rewarding than obtaining one of the five 1913 Liberty nickel proofs since they were surreptitiously created.

(Continued on page 3, column 1)

Collecting the US Coins of 1912, (*sans* gold) 110 Years ago

(Continued from page 2, column 2)



A 1912-D Barber dime graded MS-63 by PCGS
[Increase the page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

In 1912, the Philadelphia Mint struck 19,350,000 Barber dimes followed by the Denver Mint's production of 11,760,000 while the San Francisco Mint struck only 3,420,000. Despite the lower mintages of the two branch mints, both the 1912-P and D are priced similarly in the same grades while the 1912-S is priced only slightly higher since all three of the 1912 Barber dimes are considered to be among the more common dates of the series.

When the author was a youth, the Barber silver coin-types were called "Liberty Heads" back then, but there are some noticeable difference between the dime and the two higher denominations. While the allegorical Miss Liberty on the dime is similar to the quarter and half-dollar denomination, the placement of the legend, UNITED STATES appears on the circumference of the dime instead of the thirteen stars which curves around the Bust of Liberty on the quarter and half-dollar.

It has been rumored that Barber took the easy way out when it came to the reverse of the dime, since he didn't bother to create one. Instead, he simply continued to use the wreath of corn, cotton, tobacco which engraver, James Barton Longacre introduced on the reverse of Liberty seated dime away back in 1860. On the 1912-D, the mintmark is located under the wreath. Despite these slurs, Barber's coin designs are well balanced and the 1912-D shown above has lots of eye appeal for a MS-63 BU example. The author acquired the piece at the August Coin Club fall show back in November, 2009.



A 1912 Barber Quarter graded MS-62 by NGC
[Increase the page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

In 1912, the Barber quarter was struck at the Philadelphia Mint with a mintage of 4,400,000 while the San Francisco Mint coined just 708,000. None were produced at the Denver Mint that year. One would expect the cost for an 1912-S Barber quarter to be much higher priced than the 1912-P, but according to PCGS's *COINFACT*, if certified MS -62 like the specimen shown above, it would be only 2 to 3 times more expensive. Nevertheless, the author, on a budget, acquired the 1912-P quarter shown directly above while at the Georgia Numismatic Association Convention held at the Dalton, GA Convention center back in April, 2009 since the price for the

coin at the time was very reasonable. Just as some certified coins graded AU-58 look like a MS-63 with a tiny bit of "rub", a coin graded MS-62 usually appears much more attractive than either one certified MS-60 or MS-61, and in some cases looks closer to a specimen graded MS-64 with just a few light tics on the surface.

The specimen of the 1912-P quarter--shown on the lower portion of the previous column--appears quite different from the dime as it displays 13 stars around the Bust of Miss Liberty instead of the legend, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. Unlike the dime, the reverse on the quarter displays an eagle facing left, its wings spread upward coin with the denomination, QUARTER DOLLAR centered at the bottom of the coin.



A 1912-D Barber half-dollar
graded MS-64+ by PCGS, CAC stickered
[Increase the page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

Every so once in a while the collector will come across a beautiful example of a coin, usually at a major show and the magnificent 1912-D Barber half-dollar is one such piece. It was acquired in 2015 at the FUN shown held in Orlando, FL in early January of that year, and yes, it cost plenty, but still affordable because the annual Florida United Numismatists Show--at least in the opinion of this writer--is arguably the best show of the year and worth saving up for in the months ahead.

The 1912-D Barber half-dollar had a mintage of 2,300,800 with the Philadelphia Mint issuing 1,550,000 and the San Francisco Mint, 1,370,000. While far from having a record mintage, the date is still considered very common and in the MS-64 grade shown, displays the engraver's artistry at its best. As the reader will observe, Barber's half-dollar design looks exactly like the quarter, only bigger with **HALF DOLLAR** instead of **QUARTER DOLLAR** appearing on the reverse. The balance of the images on both sides of the coin are perfectly arranged.

For many years, Charles Barber was debunked as lacking imagination as an engraver, but in more recent years, his talent has been praised by serious numismatists who view Barber's artistry as a reflection of the times in which he lived. As a result, today he is regarded as being an extremely competent engraver whose craftsmanship was exemplary rather than old fashioned.



CHARLES BARBER

As a youth, the author recalls finding a Barber coin usually ranging in grades from Poor 1 thru VG-10, appearing somewhat old fashioned, perhaps even eerie but a specimen grading Fine-12, a fascinating chunk of U.S. history.

(Continued on page 4, column 1)

Collecting the US Coins of 1912, (*sans gold*) 110 Years ago (Continued from page 3 column 2)



The obverses over the reverses of a 1912 BU year set showing the Barber designed 50c, 25c and 10c above his 5c Liberty Head "V" nickel & the copper cent created by Victor D. Brenner in 1909 [Increase page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

Coin Collecting, Grading and Cost

Before the coinage Act of 1965--which basically removed silver coinage from circulation--one occasionally came across a well-worn obsolete silver coin, but even after that, an outdated copper or nickel coin could fascinate the observer. Sometimes the date was so well worn, the viewer couldn't make out whether it was a common date or rare one such as a Liberty Head nickel the writer once found in circulation. Due to its extensive wear on the last digit of the date, he couldn't tell whether it was the somewhat common **1883 type 2** Liberty head *with cents* variety, the **rare key date**, **1885** or an **1888** Liberty nickel which was more common.

When it comes to cost, the scarcer the coin, the lower the grade a collector can afford. The good news is that one doesn't have to possess uncirculated coins to enjoy the hobby. There are a number of coins graded **Fine thru XF-40** that exhibit eye appeal if the surfaces of the coin have been evenly worn without unsightly marks. Coins graded **XF-45 thru AU-58** can also appear fairly attractive, and although more expensive, are still nowhere near as pricey as an uncirculated example would be from the same series. Finally, within the uncirculated grades, **MS-60**; (dull or heavily marked) thru **MS-70**, (a supposedly dazzling and spotless coin), there are some examples certified from **MS-62 thru MS-64** (like those shown in the article above) that are still attractive enough and affordable--(if one saves up)--than super graded pieces dubbed **MS-66 thru 68**, which if **motley toned**, may not be aesthetically worth the outrageously high prices being asked.

STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB Regular Meeting Thursday, March 3, 2022

President J.J. Engel, called the regular meeting of the club to order at 6:47 p.m. The Club members once again enjoyed using the gym at the South Aiken Presbyterian Church for their new monthly meetings. There were 18 members and one guest in attendance, with member Bob Sanborn joining the meeting via Zoom from his home in Indianapolis.

A few minutes into the meeting, two more people arrived, one of whom is a young man who later enthusiastically participated in the auction.

Pat James won the member door prize drawing, a 2017 ¼ oz silver Mexican Libertad.

Steve Kuhl reported the upcoming area coin shows which included the following:

March 26, 2022, the Camden Coin Club's 2022 Spring Show at the Camden Recreational Dept on Hwy S in Camden, SC.

April 9 - 10, 2022, the Georgia Numismatic Association's Coin Show at the Dalton Convention Center, in Dalton, GA.

May 20 - 21, 2022, the Augusta Coin Club's Spring 2022 Coin Show, at the Columbia County Exhibition Center, in Grovetown, GA.

A motion was made by Sharon Smoot and seconded by Marion Engel, to dispense with the reading of Minutes of the February 2022 meeting. A copy of the Meeting Minutes will be on file with the other club records, and a copy appears in the Club newsletter.

Treasurer Chuck Goergen reported the Club's bank balance was \$780.56.

Old Business

1. President Engel reminded the members that it was the time for the annual election of officers. Since there were no nominations from the floor, the present slate of officers had all agreed to continue to serve in their respective offices for another fiscal year. Chuck Goergen therefore made a motion that a vote be cast for the current slate of officers as provided by the club's By-Laws, and the motion carried.

The current slate continues with (J .J. Engel, as President; Patricia James, as Vice President; and program chairperson, James Mullaney, Secretary; Chuck Goergen, Treasurer; and James Sproull, Sgt at Arms), all unanimously re-elected.

2. President Engel reported the Aiken County Library had told him that when they had a Meeting Room available, the Library would be closing at 6:00 p.m. most nights, except for Thursday when it would close at 7:00 p.m., thus making it impossible for the coin club to return to the Library after virtually two decades.

(The Minutes continue on top of page 5, column 1)

STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB
Regular Meeting Thursday, March 3, 2022

(Minutes continued from the previous page)

3. Steve Kuhl, who has served as liaison with the South Aiken Presbyterian Church-- informed the members that the **SAPC** had approved the coin club's use of the gymnasium for the **Coin Show scheduled for Saturday, September 10, 2022**, as well as the prior day for set-up of the tables. SAPC has generously lent us the use of the gym to the coin club without charge. Steve Kuhl also spoke about the positive impact and vital importance of a coin show for our club, and he encouraged the members to support its undertaking. **Coin Show Coordinator, Pat James** said when she received word on Monday that the club had again been granted the use of the gym, she started to send out Letters and Bourse Applications to the dealers who had previously taken tables at our annual shows and promptly received on Wednesday a reservation from Dr. David Cashin for two tables. Dr. Cashin, a professor at the University of Columbia, SC, has been a regular Dealer at the club's coin shows over the past several years as well as traveling to Aiken to present programs on the ancient coinage of India.

Pat also reported that the Board and most of the other workers from the last coin show in 2019 had agreed to contribute the same support for the 2022 Coin Show as they had in 2019.

4. President Engel reminded the members that our annual club dues of \$15.00 would be due at the April meeting and could be paid any time.

5. **President Engel also reported that the coin club was once again a current member of the American Numismatic Associate (ANA) thanks to Glenn Sanders' efforts.** The Club's membership in the ANA had lapsed with the pandemic making it uncertain in its earlier days of Covia-19 whether the coin club would even continue to exist as the Library closed its doors. All group meetings were suspended and it looked as if membership in the club would dramatically fall off. Upon becoming aware of the situation with the ANA, **Glenn paid the past due years' membership fees. Glenn's generous contribution was roundly applauded.**

6. The club's immediate past president, Steve Kuhl, who is also a Vice President of the South Carolina Numismatic Association (SCNA), reported that the coin club's application for Life Membership in SCNA had been approved. He presented President Engel with the coin club's permanent Life Membership card.

New Business:

1. President Engel reported that once again Glenn Sanders had offered to obtain Red Books at a discounted price for club members. Those wishing to obtain a Red Book should let him or Glenn know.

Show and Tells:

Glenn Sanders shared his copy of, as well as his appreciation for, the latest SCNA issue of the "The SScanner" He said it was the best he had ever seen since 1995 when he first started receiving them, with the really excellent articles and pictures. Glenn also noted that member Steve Kuhl is the current Editor and responsible for the superiority of the publication, which in 2020 was awarded First Place for Outstanding Electronic Numismatic Publication by the ANA.

Kelly Nordeen, a collector of Star bank notes shared his latest acquisition, a 2003 sheet of four \$10 star notes which he and his wife, Typhany, had recently obtained on a trip to the Charleston area.

Steve Kuhl brought an error coin he found at the Spartanburg coin show while helping to work the table for PQ Dollars (Steve Twitty). It was a very nice 2001 double struck error cent. Steve also remarked upon an article he penned for the SScanner noting club member Garry Naples' developing an interest in obsolete notes and SC fractional currency since moving to South Carolina in 2013.

The members cheered when Glenn Sanders, who has contributed a tremendous amount of time, effort and money since the inception of the coin club in 2001, won \$17 in the 50/50 drawing.

The Program:

The March meeting's program was Part 2 of Arno Safran's "Contemplating the Beauty of our US Gold Coins." Arno gave Part 1 at the November 2021, meeting which worked out so well for the members who later received various replicas of the rare older U. S. gold coins at the December holiday party. Having heard the history and background of the advent of the gold coins, members had a greater familiarity and appreciation for them, most of which are out of reach of the average collector and are never even seen in person. Accordingly, the members having seen the replicas had a greater appreciation for the circumstances of their issuance.

Arno began Part 2 where he left off, in 1838, when the \$10 gold eagle was resumed with Gobrecht's Coronet Liberty design. Three new Mints opened, the New Orleans, another in Charlotte, NC and a third in Dahlonaga, GA. the latter two striking the fewest coins which are rare and expensive to acquire today. When Gobrecht died in 1844, Engraver, James Barton Longacre replaced him. Due to the discovery of Gold at Sutters Mill in California in 1838 and the Gold Rush which followed, Longacre was asked to create two new gold denominations in 1849 that had not existed in the original Coinage Act of 1792. These were the tiny \$1.00 gold piece with a diameter of just 13 mm and the only US coin with the date on the reverse. The second was the largest, a \$20.00 double eagle with a diameter of 34 mm which was first released for circulation in 1850.

STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB
Regular Meeting Thursday, March 3, 2022

(Minutes continued from the previous page)

Arno displayed Longacre's magnificent Coronet \$20 double eagle Liberty obverse with an equally stunning reverse showing an eagle with wings spread outward behind an ornate shield.



An 1850 Coronet Double Eagle graded MS-65 by NGC
 Sold for \$161,000 at the FUN Show held in January, 2007
 (Courtesy of Heritage Auction Archives and PCGS-COINFACT)

In 1854, Longacre was asked by then Mint Director, Robert Snowden to enlarge the \$1.00 to 15 mm. The new design type was called the 'Indian Princess' type. Later in 1854, he was asked to create a \$3.00 gold piece which was 20.5 mm, which made it easier for businesses to obtain 100 3c first class postage stamps. Finally, in 1856, Longacre transferred the beautiful Indian princess design that was on the \$3.00 gold coin to the \$1.00 gold. Both the \$1.00 and \$3.00 gold pieces would continue to be struck unchanged until 1889 when they were terminated.



The three versions of Longacre's gold dollars
 The tiny 1849 Coronet type, the larger 1854 Indian Prince with tiara
 tipped back & the 3rd type with larger head and crown more erect

Arno mentioned one more new gold denomination that was being considered, called a **Stella**, a \$4.00 gold denomination that was intended to be used in trade with European gold coinage of a similar value. A number of patterns were struck in 1879 and again in 1880 by Charles Barber and George T. Morgan who were already engravers at the Mint. Morgan--of the dollar that bears his name--used as his model a Philadelphia school teacher by the name of Anna Williams--produced the Coiled hair version while Barber struck the Flowing Hair type. The program concluded with the four gold coins of 1900.

President Engel thanked Arno for another of his interesting and excellent presentations.

The April 7 meeting educational program will be a presentation by Steve Kuhl on *the Treasures of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History*.

Sgt at Arms Jim Sproull was absent and the monthly club auction was handled by President Engel who was assisted by Steve Kuhl. The auction was again quite active with silver items going for good buying prices.

President Engel reminded the members that the next regular meeting would be at 6:45 p.m. on April 7, 2022, at South Aiken Presbyterian Church, and then adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Mullaney, Secretary

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