

THE NORTHWEST COIN CLUB

Newsletter – May 2020

P.O. Box 18053 Minneapolis, MN 55418-0053



A Message From the President

Greetings fellow Covid Bound Numie's

I hope you are all doing well, and coping with these unique times. Being cooped up provides us all with a great opportunity to organize... sort out or just revisit some of our favorite "Finds", "Purchases", Trades or Inheritances. I don't know about you, but a few hours can go by pretty fast when I indulge into the Numismatic World. I hope you have taken the opportunity as well to let yourself journey.

Kenwood Park is not open yet for Meetings, Hopefully by June we may be able to Socialize in person.

May and June are our Election Months... I believe we can still nominate candidates... or Volunteer to serve on our board of officers. If you are interested in serving or would like to nominate someone... please respond to this email with your ideas.

President... administrate Club Business, set agenda and run Monthly Club Meetings, communicate with officers to help address ongoing concerns or issues.

Vice President... Runs Monthly meetings if President is unable to attend. Takes on various tasks and duties to support the Club as needed.

Secretary.... Takes Monthly Meeting Notes.... Gives report of previous meeting minutes... takes attendance... collects Membership dues and records them.

Treasurer... Manages ... records... disburses and administers the Club Funds... and reports monthly to the club as to the status of our Finances.

These are all simple outlines and we welcome and encourage others with an interest to serve to come forward if interested. Please give some serious thought to volunteering and see what could develop.

Hopefully in June we will be able to resume to some sort of regularity I look forward to seeing or hearing you all at our next Meeting,

Sincerely,

George Ross, President. NWCC

PS Special thanks to Greg Billman for all his hard work and mad skills enabling us to meet online.

The **April Meeting** of the Northwest Coin Club was conducted on ZOOM on April 9, 2020. Seventeen members logged on and participated. A presentation was made by Franklin N. on the Yellow Fever Epidemics and the Early U. S. Mint. Later he reported,

“I promised to get answers to two questions I was unable to satisfactorily answer at the presentation on Yellow Fever.

1. The first was about what officers might have done while they were, in today's lingo, "working from home."

The actual reference for that fact is found in Stewart, Frank H., *History of the First United States Mint*, p. 104. Referring to the 1797 closure, Stewart wrote: "Adam Eckfeldt, according to letters from the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, spent his time working on a coining press, and it is possible that Voigt and Cox were also engaged on Mint duties on the outside while it was temporarily closed."

Adam Eckfeldt was at the time, an Assistant Coiner, who for many years had constructed and maintained machinery used at the mint. He was, in short a "jack of all trades" doing any number of jobs at the mint, regardless of his title. It appears that Stewart found documentation that Eckfeldt was working on a coining press, which makes sense, as Eckfeldt had built the mint's very first screw press.

I am still not sure what exactly Henry Voigt did from home. His job was Chief Coiner. As such, he was the second in command at the mint, (after the Director; who at the time was Elias Boudinot). I am sure he could have performed any number of administrative duties from home, while the mint was closed.

Albion Cox did nothing, as he was dead; having suffered a fatal stroke in 1795. Perhaps Stewart intended to refer to Cox's work outside the Mint during the 1793 shut down, when he was provisionally employed as the Mint's Assayer, one who determines the purity of precious metals. Because he had trouble posting the legally required bond, however, he was not able to perform any actual assaying until he was officially appointed as Assayer in 1794; after posting the legally required bond, well after the Mint reopened in the fall of 1793.

2. The second question was about how long the Mint remained closed when it shut down.

In 1797, we know the mint was closed for precisely two months, between September 1, and November 1, 1797. In 1798, the mint was closed for three months, beginning on August 20. In 1799, the mint was closed for two months from August 24, to October 23. In 1802, the mint was likely closed for an unknown period of time, beginning on August 6, and in 1803 it was closed for six weeks beginning on September 16. *See*, Stewart, at 104-105.

Our May Meeting will be on ZOOM again on Thursday May 14, 2020. Instructions for logging in will be sent to members only.

How Are You Doing?

In the April newsletter, we asked for reports from members. These are some responses.

George R. and Ron S. are working to clean up coins that were in a fire at a friend's house.

Mary P reported, "I'm engaged in bidding in Auction 39 from Davisson. Hoping to acquire, at long last, a William and Mary coin. This one is a pattern farthing, very beautiful. Ellen was rushing to complete the second framed display of my English coins for The Money Show, but has stopped to do other things, now that the Show was cancelled. And, we're waiting to see if I get the W&M coin to add to the display."

Later she added, "I was outbid. So I'm still looking for a William and Mary silver coin with a sharp portrait and a price not astronomical."

Patrick S. wrote: "I just got a really cool item in the mail today.(4-22) This item literally traveled half way around the world during a pandemic. It falls into two categories of things I collect. It has an amazing numismatic story, and it definitely checks the "I collect weird stuff" box. Can't wait for the next club show and tell.

John J. reports, "I am doing well. I continue to go to work every day. I am hopeful that this will pass soon and spare lives."

Marty S is doing day care for his grandson three days a week.

Pete S. walks with his sister once a week staying six feet apart. On nice days he jogs around Silverwood Park.

Dan H. frequently visits the Mill City Museum to check for break-ins or vagrants sleeping in the building. So far no problems. He recently crawled up on the roof to fix a leak at one of his rental properties.

The April meeting of the Twin Cities Ancient Coin Club was cancelled.

And finally, a longer story from George and Kathleen R.:

"The Challenges of owning a small business in difficult financial times

I started my first business 40+ years ago. Just me, after we married, my wife joined me, later our oldest son joined us. Everything worked well. There are tax advantages to having family work for you. Then the crash of 2008-2009 hit. We went from 3-4 jobs a day to 3 jobs a week. Lived off savings till things opened up in 2010. When those that have felt it was o.k. to spend again, and not feel guilty about it. We hoped this would be the worst of times financially that we would have to endure.

In early 2018 I bought my second business, from a friend I had worked with for 25 years, and trusted. I never thought to ask her “How much work do you have right now?” There was none. She hadn’t taken any orders for the last four months as she thought she’d be closing the doors. For four months I paid employees to clean out files. Polish the furniture, get rid of equipment not used for years, made new forms with the letterhead, anything to keep them working. I did have to lay off two people, something I’d never had to do before, very difficult.

By Spring things were looking up. Machines were humming again. Work was being produced. In August I was sent to the Bahamas to do a measure. I checked my bank accounts while I waited at the air port for my return flight home. Discovered my computer and bank accounts had been hacked, leaving us with just \$40. It took three weeks before the bank was able to get the funds back into my accounts. We thought it had to be the worst it can get financially.

Then the winter of 2020 COVID 19 hit the U. S. with a vengeance. We were having the best start of the year ever. By the end of March we were forced to shut down for what was to be two weeks by the governor. Not a problem we thought, we can do this. Then two weeks turned into three, four and five. Employees were furloughed. We told them to apply for unemployment. We assured them if we survived they’d have their jobs back as soon as we could open. Everything everywhere came to a screaming halt. But then this was important. Lives were at stake. There was comfort in knowing we were not alone in this. Everyone was in the same situation. After three weeks, clients started getting antsy. “When do you think you can get this done?” they’d ask. Some employees worked from home processing orders. The physical work was a challenge.

About three weeks in, the Governor O.K’d work being done on new construction to continue. That gave us an opening. We were able to stagger employees and their shifts to get those orders filled. Monday 5-4 we got the O.K. from the Governor to open. Employees were given a new set of guide lines. Temps would be taken upon entering the shop, mask and gloves would be worn. They were told to stay six feet away from each other at all times. Yet they were happy to be back at work, to their new normal.

Was this the worst of financial times? I’m not even going to wager a guess. It was by far the scariest of times. So much uncertainty for everyone. There’s a feeling that life as we know will never be exactly as it was. But that’s not all bad. We will persevere, changing old ways to new, different, hopefully much better. We’ve made longer range plans now, contingency plans. Something we weren’t very good at before. We’ve come to appreciate everyday things more, like toilet paper! Business is like life, filled with uncertainties. We just continue to work hard, treat people well, plan and have faith.”

At the National Level

One prominent member of the New York Numismatic Club has died from COVID-19. That is the first reported death in the numismatic community.

The ANA Summer Seminar has been cancelled. The ANA convention scheduled for August in Pittsburgh has not been cancelled.

The Early American Coppers convention, scheduled for May in Pittsburgh, has been moved to coincide with the ANA convention in August.

Most of the ANA staff is working from home. Executive Director Kim Kiick announced a staff reduction of four members and consolidation of duties for other staff members.

The American Numismatic Society, a usually staid and not particularly progressive organization, has used the pandemic to move the Society into the 21st century. The Society has made its "Money Talks" presentations available free to members via ZOOM. In the past in person attendance was required, which necessitated travel to New York and payment of an entrance fee. Two programs have aired and both included lecture and "Question and Answer" from participating audience members. On April 4, The ANS Assistant Curator of Roman Coins, Dr. Lucia Carbone, gave a talk titled, *Antony and Cleopatra; a Match Made on Coinage*. On April 25, Dr. Peter van Alfen and Zachary Taylor presented, *Coins and Computation: New Developments in the Computer Aided Die Study*. Both programs were informative and well attended (over 50 participants each). The content of each program was quite sophisticated, and those in "attendance" had insightful questions. In addition to making their "Money Talks" programs available on line, the ANS has also launched a series of podcasts called, "*The Planchet*," and today (May 2) at noon, the ANS is rolling out its first "Long Table." Today's topic is, *Slabbing: How it has Changed Collecting Coins*.

Report from Show Committee

On Saturday (May 2), most of our Money Show Meeting Committee met via Zoom to discuss the planning of our next Money Show in March 2021. During the meeting we addressed one concern and a few potential improvements.

The concern, which I feel is on everyone's mind, was will we have the show next year. Our stance is that we will be planning to have a full show. Major decisions on venue, advertising, and announcements to the dealers are not necessary until the mid September to late October time frame. Therefore, will be waiting to see what transpires for social gatherings in the coming months. During that time we will be working on some contingency plans.

We also talked about some improvements to our show. We are working to add some educational pieces, such as having a Keynote Speaker give a presentation, having a booth with a TV and looping short videos, and investigating the possibility of purchasing a Fly Press to demonstrate minting coins. Each of these elements needs to have some research and planning before we can implement them into our show.

As for the show events we currently have, we are looking to add a few improvements to the Exhibits and Youth Auction. For the Exhibits, we will be continuing to request more club

members to create exhibits for the judged competition. The committee members are looking into trying to help people find themes for exhibits, since this feels to be the biggest hurdle for starting an exhibit. For the Youth Auction, we will be looking into the feasibility of displaying the items for bid on a screen. There are a few different methods being reviewed.

We will continue to meet each first Saturday of the month at 9am to discuss the Money Show. Ideas are welcome for consideration and can be sent to nwccmoneyshow@gmail.com.

The ANA NCW Trivia Challenge

Each year the American Numismatic Association conducts a trivia challenge for clubs during National Coin Week. The club has submitted perfect results in the past but had not been selected from those with perfect scores to be declared the winner.

The original deadline was announced as Monday, May 4, but this has been extended into June. The Club Trivial Challenge form will be sent to club members only as a separate mailing. Do your best with the questions and return your answers to the Newsletter editor at nwcc1934editor@gmail.com. The results will be combined into one response and sent in to the ANA. Let's have a winner this year!