

Cumberland Coins

The Volunteer Coin Club Newsletter

July, 2010

Next Meeting

Our June meeting will be next Tuesday, the 13th at 6:30 pm. We meet at the 127 Senior Center on Highway 127 (Main Street) South of town. Doors open at 6:00.

There will not be a formal program this month, but we will spend some time planning for our Family Picnic in August. Betty Harris has kindly volunteered to coordinate the food for the picnic again this year. She will be taking reservations so we know how much food to buy. The club will supply the meat dish and each family is asked to bring a side dish, soda, etc. If you won't be at the meeting but plan to attend the picnic, contact Betty Harris at 474-9152. The picnic will be at 5:00 on August 10 (our regular meeting night) in Centennial Park on Industrial Blvd. More details and a map will be in the August newsletter.

Coin Lore

A Sharpe Political Token and Storecard - by Bill Groom

Advertising tokens are commonly referred to as storecards. These storecards were a medium of advertising a business by virtue of their being conversation pieces; to be proudly displayed by a customer to some prospective customer. Such advertising was commonplace in England in the late 1700's and started to catch on stateside in the early 1800's. Storecards from the Hard Times era, 1832-44 and the Civil War era, 1861-64, tend to be the most desirable such tokens. Yet, there are later, 19th century tokens from the so-called Trade era that are seldom seen and have great appeal to collectors. The below pictured token is one that took me many years to locate and acquire.



This token was once worn as a medalet, tied to one's lapel button by a ribbon. It promotes the election of Grover Cleveland for president in 1884. Interestingly, there exists a similar storecard/medalet, promoting Cleveland's opponent, James G. Blaine. Political statements had then long accompanied commercial advertising on tokens. Such tokens, turned into medalets, tend to be quite popular nowadays as they're desirable to those who collect local memorabilia and/or political items as well. Since Mr. Sharpe issued these medalets on behalf of both candidates, he likely saw neutrality as a preferable means of salesmanship.

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This token is 15mm in diameter, compared to a current cent which has a diameter of 19mm. It is brass, and known specimens are typically *hfs* or holed for suspension. Rulau lists the Sharpe storecards in the 2004, fourth edition of his United States Tokens 1700-1900. He then valued the Blaine and Cleveland issues at \$50 and \$70, respectively. Rulau gauged them each at "Rarity 8" - estimating that less than ten specimens have been seen by knowledgeable collectors. Over twenty-five years of searching netted me but this one!

Adolph D. Sharpe had assumed ownership of his dry goods business from a Mr. Hazeltine who also billed his business as the PEOPLE'S STORE. Therein were sold carpets, rugs, mats, and all manner of textile goods like towels, quilts, etc. He issued many, colorful advertising cards, about the size of postcards, too. One has to wonder if Mr. Sharpe ever gave thought to the fact that his advertising efforts would be so long remembered?

COINfucious says: *"Numismatists who only seek quarters are but two-bit collectors."*

Area Coin Shows

July 10, 2010 **Knoxville Coin Show**, Rothchild Center, 8807 Kingston Pike (I-40 exit #378)
August 7, 2010

August 20-22, 2010 **Blue Ridge Numismatics Association (BRNA) 51st Annual Convention.**
Northwest Georgia Trade and Convention Center, Dalton, GA. I-75, Exit 333.

October 30, 2010 **Crossville**, La Quinta Inn, Highway 127 North at I-40 exit 317.

November 5-7, 2010 **Tennessee State Numismatic Society Annual Fall Convention,**
Camp Jordan Arena, Chattanooga, TN, I-75, Exit 1.

This Month's Raffle Prizes

| | | Est.. Grade |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1853 | Liberty Seated Dime | VG |
| 1897 | Barber Quarter & 2 Indian cents | VG + Fine |
| 1881 | CN Three Cent Piece | VF |
| 1923, 1924 + 1925 | Buffalo Nickels | F-VF |
| 1981 | U.S. Proof Set | Proof |

The Door Prize will be a 1971 Ike \$1 and 3 1970's Kennedy Halves; AU- UNC.