

Cumberland Coins

The Volunteer Coin Club Newsletter

July, 2012

Next Meeting

Our July meeting will be Tuesday July 11th starting at 6:30. The meeting is will be held at the 127 Senior Center on Highway 127 (Main Street) South of town. Doors open at 6:00.

We will finalize our plans for the annual August picnic, which will be in place of our regular meeting. If you plan to attend the picnic, but will not be at this month's meeting, call Loretta Groom at 787-4578 so we can get a count of the number that will be there. We will also have our normal business meeting, show and tell, the raffle, and the auction.

Coin Lore

Finding a Counterfeit

By Bill Groom

This past month's auction saw a first time experience for me. I called a stop on an auction item because I thought it was a counterfeit. Fortunately, for me, there was a scale on-hand, and the item's weight proved my assumption to be correct. In this case, the questionable coin, which looked like an 1882-CC Morgan dollar, was overweight. Typically, these typically Chinese counterfeits are underweight, and this one was different in that regard.

I felt badly for the consignor who, evidenced by his reaction, obviously didn't know that the alleged coin was not genuine. It's never any fun for me, relating such information, being the bearer of bad news. The consignor asked me a fair question though - one that time and circumstances, an auction in process, didn't give me ample time to respond. The question was, "How do you know?" "All I could say at the time was, "It's the look" and "I've seen many of these." I thus felt badly that I couldn't adequately explain what I saw, so here goes.

To my experience, the most commonly seen counterfeits nowadays are "silver" dollars. Those bearing a better date or being a better type coin always deserve close scrutiny. Next, I note that the color of the Chinese counterfeits is more often a light, washed-out gray hue. The condition of these typically reveals XF detail. The evidenced "wear" is not that which circulation would render. The dies were tooled so that when the "coin" was struck, the "wear" is built into the strike. The rims tend to look thicker, and despite the appearance of little wear, the details lack sufficient crispness or high relief that Morgans evidence. These counterfeits tend to exhibit the lower relief that's typical on Peace dollars. If one balances a Morgan on a fingertip and strikes the rim with another coin, a sustained, high-pitched ring can be heard. Lacking silver content, or even perhaps even with a little silver, the counterfeits will not perform as a real silver dollar.

There are other telling aspects to the modern counterfeits, and these can be found at online websites. One of my personal, favorite websites is Coin Community Forum. One can Google that website and type "Chinese counterfeit" in the search box.

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I have a number of counterfeits in my collection; their being study pieces that I've previously used to educate myself and fellow collectors. Having seen so many of the counterfeit Morgans in antique malls and even coin dealer's cases, I'm fairly quick to recognize most such items. I will say that there are some better quality counterfeits out there that require closer scrutiny. Some are even housed in counterfeit slabs of respected third party graders! This is why some companies have adopted an online registry to confirm their slab numbers.

Should any of our members somehow acquire a counterfeit, I'd encourage them to use the piece to educate fellow collectors. Years ago, I unknowingly purchased a counterfeit gold coin at a country auction. It's gold, but was not struck at the U.S. Mint. I once heard a respected and knowledgeable coin dealer say, "If I don't purchase a counterfeit now and then, I'm not doing enough business!" Lesson learned

COINfucious says: *"Knowledge is key to any coin collection!"*

Area Coin Shows

- July 7, 2012 **Knoxville Coin Show**, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike
(I-40 exit #378)
- August 4, 2012 **Knoxville Coin Show**, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike
(I-40 exit #378)
- September 1, 2012 **Knoxville Coin Show**, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike
(I-40 exit #378)
- November 2-4, 2012 **Chattanooga, [Tennessee State Numismatic Society \(TSNS\)](http://www.tsns.org/Tennessee%20Club%20Shows.html)** Fall Coin Show.
Camp Jordan Arena, I-75, Exit 1

For more information on any of these shows see <http://www.tsns.org/Tennessee Club Shows.html>

This Month's Raffle Prizes

		Est. Grade
1893	Columbian Comm. Half	VF+
1899	Barber Quarter	Good
1865	CN Three Cent Piece	VF
1883	NC Liberty Nickel	VF
1935 & 1938-D	Buffalo Nickels	AU&VF

The Door Prize will be an 1932 Washington Quarter (XF).