

Rick Webster referred all to his collection of Pilgrim tokens and badges, explaining what to look for when viewing this unique set of numismatic items.

Gordon Donnell brought some new wooden items; a set of wooden post cards from the Wooden Nickel Historical Society, some wooden phone cards, and wooden nickels.

Jerry Schimmel brought for sale his newest publication; a token book on Chinese-American tokens from California and other Pacific States.

Raffle

This month's theme was numismatic literature.

Gordon Donnell won "Gold Coins of the Dahlonega Mint", by Douglas Winter.

Mark Wm. Clark won "Gold Coins of the Charlotte Mint", by Douglas Winter.

Jerry Schimmel won "Bonanza Inn", by Oscar Lewis & Carroll D. Hall (a history of San Francisco's Palace Hotel, called America's first luxury hotel).

Gordon Donnell won (again) "An Investor's group of books; "The Official Investors Guide to Buying and Selling Silver Dollars" by Alan Herbert, the "COINage Guide to Collecting and Investing in Coins", by Robert Irwin Wolenik, "High Profits from Rare Coin Investment", by Q, David Bowers, and the ubiquitous "N.C.I. Grading Guide" by James L. Halperin.

Frank Strazzarino won "The Art of Coin Collecting" by Leonard S. Forrer.

Rick Webster won July, August, September, & October 1970 issues of "Coins" magazine, for those who like to see prices of things you should have bought then, but didn't.

Banquet and other calendar items

The annual banquet will be Saturday, June 26, 2004 at the Gold Mirror Restaurant, 18th and Taraval Streets, San Francisco. The menu will include Fish of the Day, Veal, or Chicken.

The CSNA educational symposium will be on Saturday, October 2, 2004 at Fort Mason in San Francisco.

Two upcoming local shows of interest are the WESTS token show on March 26,27 in Dublin, CA and the big Santa Clara Show April 2,3,4.



1055th meeting of the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society

8:00PM Wednesday March 24, 2004

**Fort Mason, Building C, Room 370
San Francisco, California**

A Short Geographical Lesson on the Provinces of China and their Coins

Ken Takahashi

**Pacific Coast Numismatic Society
Box 194271 San Francisco, CA 94119-4271
Bulletin Editor: Michael Wehner**

Please join us Wednesday, March 24, 2004 to hear *Ken Takahashi* speak about the Provinces of China and their Coins.

1054th Meeting February 25, 2004. Medieval English Tokens 1200 to 1425 AD *Rick Webster* (reviewed by *Herb Miles*)

PCNS treasurer *Steve Huston* introduced our Speaker for the evening *Rick Webster*, noting that Rick has been collecting mainly British coins and related numismatics for the better part of 25 years. February's topic, although British, is on a little known numismatic area, "Pilgrim Tokens & Badges," where few written resources exist to give guidance to the collector. Known sources of information on these interesting tiny pieces are two monographs, one published in 1983 on the tokens of 1200-1425, another published in 1984 on tokens of 1425-1672, and a Spink & Son article discussing the Winetavern find in Dublin, Ireland.

These little mysterious pieces are made of pewter, a mixture of lead and tin with a bit of bismuth, a combination that is difficult to obtain by smelting. They are about the size of an English farthing or quarter penny, i.e., very small, and feature shields, animals (some difficult to identify), and geometric designs. Since many merchants made small change by cutting pennies in half, then cutting the half to make a farthing, these pieces certainly could suffice as change for those wandering the countryside seeking churches containing pieces of the Holy Cross! British authorities have argued over the nature of the tokens for a number of years, but probably the consensus now is that these small items indeed were used as small change substitutes for wandering pilgrims during the popular medieval activity of visiting holy shrines around Europe.

It is believed they were made by churches as a chit, something akin to our modern "good for" token and were probably redeemed within the church so they did not compete with regular coinage. From the hoard finds and the nature of their designs, pilgrim tokens were made in a mold holding 6 pieces, each different. There is also a good deal of circumstantial evidence that certain tokens were used like a

business license giving a merchant the right to make and sell goods; the token would be worn on the clothing, visible to the public.

If the churches did produce the tokens, they probably made a good deal of money as the wanderers paid for lodging, food or souvenirs with regular coinage and received pilgrim tokens as change. As the years passed, the tokens became cruder and cruder until in the 1400s merchants began making their own tokens and pilgrim tokens finally had outlived their usefulness.

Exhibits

Mark Wm. Clark brought several items from his recent trip to Mexico City, a 100 Peso "State" bimetallic coin with a silver center (similar to our own quarter series) and a massive 1 kilo silver Libertad.

Larry Reppeteau exhibited an advertisement (from Smithsonian magazine no less) for sale of an 1854 S Proof "Double Eagle." The coin is about 10 mills and if one hurries can be purchased for \$19.95!

Phil Nordin questioned us with a "Where's George" one dollar note, a website tracks dollar notes and allows one to log in and see where each *Where's George note* has been throughout the country.

Michael Wehner brought a potpourri of tokens, an encased from Israel, a French brothel token, a Norwich Game token, an 1851 Auckland New Zealand Ironmonger token, an 1867 Iowa bridge Pass for 1 Footman token, and a Knights Templar token.

Frank Strazzarino exhibited an article from a Sunday San Francisco Chronicle describing the "House of Tomorrow," a structure that had been constructed and exhibited at the 1939-40 Golden Gate International Exposition. The house still exists as it was moved to the outer Sunset district of San Francisco after the exposition. Frank and Elaine visited recently and were shown through the house by the current owners, an architect and his wife.

Visitor *Pierre M. Hahn* brought for our enjoyment two coins, a half florin and a one florin, gold pieces from Medieval Italy.

Steve Huston exhibited the latest acquisition for his growing collection of Ptolemaic coins, this one from the province of Libya, not Egypt, and although portraying Ptolemy the First, the date struck is uncertain.