

PLEASE NOTE: DIFFERENT MEETING LOCATION

This month's meeting will be at Fort Mason in Building C, Room 370 San Francisco. Next month will probably be at the Taraval police station. The meeting location saga will again be discussed at the board meeting. Stay tuned.

Results of auction #14 of PPIE collection

Lot#131 Train Schedule, Chicago Northwestern Line. Multiple page foldout detailing Chicago to San Francisco trains and other destinations. Mentions an office at the Exposition grounds. Sold on ebay for \$7.16

Lot #132 Small foldout picture book "The Jewel City" 17 black and white pictures with some notes about the fair. Compliments of White Sewing Machine Co. 971 Market St San Francisco, CA Sold at silent auction for \$10

Lot #133 General Daily Pass ticket. Good on Hawaii site day. Faint stamp on reverse indicates this was July 7 (?), 1914, before the fair opened. Sold on ebay for \$77

Lot #134 Pacific Service Magazine #4, V.7, September 1915. The magazine of the Pacific Gas and Electric Co. Cover features the Palace of Horticulture. Feature articles tell about the International Gas Congress and industrial uses of gas at the fair. Sold on ebay for \$26.99

Lot #135 Business card. Negro's and O'Briens Bohemian Restaurant, 625 Kearny St, San Francisco. Photo side shows a panoramic view of the fair. About 1 by 4.5 inches. Sold at silent auction for \$20.00

Lot #136 Ten real photo postcards, mostly statuary. The Piper. The Necklace Girl. Muse finding head of Orpheus. After The Bath. Ducks. Victorious Eve. Figures on Fountain of Energy. Genius of Creation. Galatea. Night Illumination.. Mostly unused. Sold on ebay \$44.00

Lot #137 Menu. Crystal Cafeteria. An elaborate 1915 menu from the Crystal Cafeteria in the Phelan Building at the junction of Market, Grant and O'Farrell in San Francisco. Filled with funny anecdotes, advertisements and the daily menus. Excellent condition, almost as new. Sold on ebay for \$56.55

Lot #138 Withdrawn

Lot #139 Blue enameled lapel pin. Sold on ebay for \$38.88

Lot #140 Souvenir pan and postcard both depicting the Horticulture building. Sold at silent auction for \$75



**1049th meeting of the
Pacific Coast Numismatic Society**

8:00PM Wednesday August 27, 2003

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

**First Coins of the Irish Free State
Larry Reppeteau**

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

Please join us Wednesday, August 27, 2003 to hear Larry Reppeteau's talk "First Coins of the Irish Free State"

CSNA symposium reminder.

Reserve your calendar for the fourth CSNA educational symposium hosted by PCNS. The time is 10:00 AM Saturday October 4, 2003. and the location is Fort Mason, Building C, Room 370 in San Francisco. The event is free but lunch must be prepaid if one is desired. See the enclosed brochure. You won't want to miss this symposium, as it promises to be a great one.

Congratulations to *Don Kagin* on his recent election to the ANA Board of Governors. With 5749 votes, Don was the second highest vote getter behind only PCNS member *John Wilson*, the outgoing ANA president. Don stopped by the July meeting to announce plans for a 12,500 square foot numismatic museum at the Old Mint on Fifth Street. This museum would be in addition to the San Francisco history museum at the Old Mint. Don is to be congratulated for his tireless efforts in promoting this idea. Much work remains and the help of the Society's membership is certainly welcome.

1048th meeting: Death and Burial on the River of Gold.

Steve Huston (reviewed by *Herb Miles*)

Stephen M. Huston presented a very enlightening program entitled, "Death and Burial on the River of Gold," subtitled "An Exploration of the Political and Economic Causes of the Dark Ages."

Steve noted that most people date the "Dark Ages" incorrectly, many thinking it occurred during the 1300-1400s. However, if the politics and economics of the years from about 309 to 1200 AD are viewed objectively, it is easy to see that the actions of barbarian hordes who attacked Rome resulted in that long period of stagnation in Europe. The barbarians hoarded almost all gold wealth, did not recirculate the money amongst the people and seemingly bought only luxury items from outside Europe. These actions led to a

dearth of money in circulation and therefore to bartering and virtual economic stagnation. With no hard currency, villagers drifted to the countryside where they could at least grow food, became tied to the land and landlords, lost many of their learned practical and artistic abilities and forgot or were unable to pass along centuries of learning.

The Roman Empire at this time centered on the Mediterranean Sea as far north as Britain, around the upper part of North Africa, through all of Europe to the Danube, and east toward Persia. This vast area was difficult to administer and protect and many enemies attacked so Rome began to pull troops back toward the center of the empire. Britain was notified that it would no longer be protected, enemies attacked Rome itself, and barbarians were paid to not attack!

The great plague arrived in the 500s decimating the population by 50%, scattering the people further, and the economic stagnation continued unabated. It is easy then to see how the Dark Ages lasted for such a long period. For the next 600 to 700 years, the feudal system predominates, coinage is made in small quantities if at all and is debased regularly, and great illnesses such as the plague and smallpox periodically reoccur. This period lasts until gold coinage appears again in Europe in Florence and Genoa in 1252 and in Venice in 1285.

This was a very well-received presentation by Steve, enjoyed by all and very educational and interesting!

Exhibits

Jerry Schimmel brought a nice variety of Asian American tokens, including one from Boise, Idaho, a Chinese Masonic piece from Oregon, and a very nice San Francisco octagonal brass piece needing further research.

Rick Webster brought an exceptional collection of Celtic pieces, most of which are very rarely seen; 2 Celtic gold pieces, a Phillip III copy and a British Celt piece, a 5th Century bronze Barbarous piece, an Anglo-Saxon bronze from the 6th Century and a number of "sceats," pronounced "Scots," being the origin of the term getting off Scot free, i.e., not having to pay!

Gordon Donnell exhibited a wooden nickel from Hungry Horse, Montana which states “2 are good for \$0.25!”, his ANA Medal with yearly pins called railroad tracks (Gordon has 12 bars meaning he has attended 12 conventions).

Stephen M. Huston brought his entire inventory of medieval coins (3!) including a Carolingian denier from about 900 AD, a Robert “the Wise” of Sicily & Provence, 1330-1343 AD “Carlino,” and a Dukes of Milan gold Ducat of 1422-1435.

Ron Johnson (good to see you again!) exhibited his $\frac{3}{4}$ ounce gold nugget with quartz flakes, a Type 1 National Banknote from his mother’s birthplace, Watertown, PA and another National Banknote from his father’s birthplace, Kane, PA!

Mark Wm. Clark brought an envelope containing a coin or token which was a promotional piece from the History Channel, a Chinese ticket to the Temple of Heaven containing a replica Chinese piece, and perhaps one other piece of quasi-numismatic junk!

Elliot Wehner brought his accumulation of “Military Fest” items from the recent ANA Summer Seminar, certificates, Fest Bonds, a Fest Pay Record, and a Fest Challenge Coin. Elliot explained that one of the classes he participated in during the seminar was Military Numismatics taught by Joe Boling and Fred Schwan, among others, and that the items he brought for display were the currency used during the course.

Michael Wehner brought a Coinage of Korea set, also obtained at the Summer Seminar, as well as a cherry-picked La Crosse, WI horsecar transit token!

With malice towards none, with charity for all *Michael Wehner*



The centennial of Abraham Lincoln’s birthday saw many numismatic mementos of the event. While the Lincoln cent is the most lasting of these, numerous portrait medals were produced in a variety of sizes, shapes and metals. In 1909, the San Francisco Examiner newspaper sponsored an essay contest as part of this general celebration. Worthy participants were awarded a silver medal with Lincoln’s portrait and a famous quotation from his second inaugural speech on the obverse. The reverse of the medal contained a space for the recipient’s name and details of the contest. Manufactured by Shreve and Co., a high end jeweler still in operation and located in the downtown San Francisco shopping district, the medal is looped for suspension to be proudly worn by the winners.

Obverse: WITH MALICE TOWARDS NONE, WITH CHARITY FOR ALL / FEB. 12, 1809 1909 / (bust of Abraham Lincoln)

Reverse: AWARDED BY / THE SAN FRANCISCO / EXAMINER / TO / (Robert Beck) / FOR MERIT IN ESSAY ON / ABRAHAM LINCOLN / 1909

Silver, 37 mm, round, looped for suspension.

The Nam Fong Club Tokens of Chinatown *Jerry F. Schimmel*



Gambling is a notably Chinese addiction. However, San Francisco's Chinese gaming devotees never matched the sheer volume of their Caucasian cousins.

Viewing turn of the 20th century newspapers, readers can believe that the vice squad scheduled alternate weekly raids, first to Chinatown and then to the Barbary Coast. Other parts of Frisco came under occasional scrutiny notably Market Street dives like the Café Royal, Kapp's and the Thalia Café.

The Nam Fong Club tokens were issued in a store front at 838 Jackson Street, a half block uphill from Stockton Street. The name Nam Fong was listed in the Telephone Directory as a residence in 1932 and 1933.

The club issued four brass tokens with the same legend on both sides: NAM FONG / (Chinese characters for Nam Fong, reading right to left) / CLUB . Sizes are 33 mm round, 32 mm octagonal, 31 mm 4-scalloped and 29 mm 8-scalloped. Some

specimens of the round token have been crudely hand filed to look like the octagonal.

Nam Fong tokens do not have denominations in the way that most American tokens do. The shape is the denomination. What value each stood for remains a mystery.

Shape-for-denomination tokens were common tools in Southeast Asian gaming resorts. Most gamblers were illiterate in any language. Few would have understood western numerals and many not even Chinese calligraphy. Good examples of this style are the porcelain gambling tokens used by ethnic Chinese in Siam (now Thailand).

The translation of Nam Fong is South Place. My translator, a veteran intelligence service officer, suggests that a good English translation is Southern Club or The South Club. Ninety-nine percent of the Chinese who came to San Francisco originated from south China, mainly Guangdong Province.

I visited Chinatown a few weeks ago. The store is there, now a fish market. Not one English word is visible in the window or on the front wall. The building was constructed in 1910 and has since been stuccoed featureless.

Sanborn Company fire insurance maps show a storefront at 838 Jackson Street from the beginning to the present, never a home. Directories record different enterprises before and after 1932-1933/

Listing the Nam Fong Club as a residence was a partial ruse meant to confuse police or anyone who became inquisitive. It was common for Chinatown's illegal enterprises to function rather openly. Announcements in Chinese characters, especially for lotteries, were posted in shop windows. The assumption was that police who were 100% non-Chinese would not understand them. This usually worked until someone ratted.