

CALENDAR FOR 2019

September 25Michael Wehner, *French Medals in California*
October 30.....*Speaker & Topic TBA**
November 27*Speaker & Topic TBA**
December 18Holiday gathering and elections

* See "Speak Up!" below

SPEAK UP!

There is still an opportunity for **you** to make a presentation in 2019. Your presentation can even be something about which you have submitted or plan to submit a *Paper*. Email webmaster@pcns.org to sign up.

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1241st Monthly Meeting of the

PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY



French Medals in California

Michael Wehner

Wednesday, September 25, 2019, 7:30 PM

Fort Mason Center, Building C

PCNS + PO BOX 475656 + SAN FRANCISCO CA 94147

FRENCH ART IN THE GOLDEN STATE

It's a familiar tale: Artist, unappreciated at home, decamps from the United States and lives a glorious existence in France, typically Paris. Love affairs abound, talent is appreciated, and many late nights are spent drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes with other American expatriates.

Sometimes, French artists would lend their talents to American causes. The Statue of Liberty is one particularly famous example.

Or, consider the medal illustrated here. It was created by famed French medallic artist Louis Alexandre Bottée and minted at the Paris Mint for the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. The obverse features a female figure emerging from the ruins of San Francisco in 1906. Her triumphant stance (perhaps a precursor to Jeannette MacDonald's scene at the end of the 1936 film *San Francisco*) and the sprouting tree at her left hand symbolize the ultimate rebirth of a great city.

Join us on **September 25** as Michael Wehner gives a presentation on French medallic arts and artists in California. Bring your California-themed French art, or French coins for show-and-tell.

Remember: We're back at Fort Mason Building C for the rest of 2019.

AUGUST MEETING RECAP

Back in May, Federico shared a medal celebrating the work of Clodomiro Picado Twilight, a Costa Rican science prodigy whose work with anti-venom represents a significant life-saving discovery. The medal depicts him milking a snake for venom.

Born in Nicaragua, Clodomiro Picado Twilight (sometimes called "Clorito Picado") showed an early aptitude for science and received a scholarship to study in France. He received his undergraduate degree from the Sorbonne in 1912 and returned to Costa Rica to repay the sponsorship of his scholarship with service to his country. He rose to become a member of

several scientific societies in the Americas, in addition to being admitted to the Pasteur Institute.

While working in a hospital, Picado witnessed the slow, painful effects of snake bites; this experience influenced his work on anti-venom. His discovery that anti-venom was specific to species and geographical location contributed to the development many snake anti-venoms across the Americas, saving an untold number of lives.

Picado's primary interest was botany, and he published many articles on the subject. Of greatest interest to us was his note on the impact of the secretions of certain fungi on other plants. Picado's notes from 1923 demonstrate that he understood that bacteria could be destroyed by fungi although he never investigated the mechanism nor did he publish on that specific topic.

Alexander Fleming is credited with the discovery of penicillin in 1928. While Fleming does not cite Picado's work, there remains a possibility that Fleming was aware of Picado's work with fungi. Even without attribution, Picado's work is now considered to have been a precursor to the discovery and development of modern antibiotics.



AUGUST MEMBER EXHIBITS

Stephen: A veterinary medicine medal and his latest purchase and reattribution, a Phoenician ancient.

Jeff: Three Dan Carr medals.

Paul: 1860 cent with DW Tisdell counterstamp, 1867 three cent piece, 1847 cent and 1811 half dollar.

Jerry: Pictures of snake venom extraction.

Bob: Set of four Washington Masonic National Memorial Commemorative Monument medals.

Dan: 1804 English 5 schillings made from Spanish reales and Japanese trade dollars.

Charlie: Venice merchant token and two credit tags from Gimbel's and Kaufmann's.

Chris: 60th anniversary medal of Queen Victoria's reign and horse brass.

Mark: Chinese "ghost" money of Kwangtung.