



# ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

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## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Summer is here and all of our thoughts are on the long awaited vacation! Tuck those coins away in a safe spot and prepare to put your hobby on hold until the warm weather leaves - Not! Summer is the perfect opportunity to add to your collection, take in some interesting coin stores. Visit some museums, which have numismatic displays.

All of the provinces have trade tokens. The Bank of Canada Currency Collections in Ottawa along with the Royal Canadian Mint, which also have tours. Inco Coin Collection at the Big Nickel Mine in Sudbury. Or perhaps the Glenbow Museum in Alberta. Just because your club is not meeting over the summer doesn't mean you can't still enjoy some summer numismatic activities.

The C.N.A. Convention is the highlight of the summer for all collectors. Attending the show I noticed more new dealers, the best display of exhibits that I have seen since the last C.N.A. in Windsor. Very easy to get to, in all one of the best. The Four Toronto Coin Clubs along with the C.N.A. did an outstanding job. I did notice however that the attendance was somewhat down. All who did not attend sure missed a great show.

Our editor Linda is moving on to a new field of endeavor. We thank you every so much for your contributions to our newsletter, and good luck in your new job. Do try and support your local Coin Shows and the Clubs in your area.

*Tom Rogers*  
*ONA President*

## WANTED

**EDITOR** - for the Ontario Numismatic Association. Person should have computer skills, knowledge of coins (numismatic). Editions go out every two months. Help will be provided to get you set up. Wages to be discussed. For more information please contact

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As you have previously read, I am resigning from the position as editor of the ONA Numismatist.

I would like to say thank you to Tom Rogers for having the faith in me to take over this position. It was a challenge for me, since I have more experience in selling than editing.

Also, thank you to the people that sent good luck wishes and articles, they were much appreciated.

When I took on this endeavor I was unemployed and had time for the newsletter, but time is very limited now. With a full time job, three grown children, two grandchildren, two parents that just moved here from Sudbury, plus my other ventures, time is running out. Oh yes, I must not forget I have a son getting married next month.

Again thank you for the adventure and I am sure that I will be seeing a number of you at coin shows in the future.

*Linda Robinson  
ONA Editor*

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**“May Happy Memories replace the sadness in your heart.”**

Our condolences go out to Chris Boyer, whose father passed in June.

Condolences also to Todd Sandham who also lost his father in June.



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**UNDER THE WEATHER?**

Hope you are feeling better soon Lou.

All the best to Lou Wagenaer  
President of the Kent Coin Club.

# UPCOMING SHOWS

*A page intended to entice ONA members to attend each other's coin shows  
If there are any errors or omissions please contact me*

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## AUGUST 8 - PARIS, ON

**SWON (SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO NUMISMATIST** - Paris Fairgrounds, 139 Silver St. Hours 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. Admission \$2.00. Includes ticket on gold coin draw. 50 tables of coins, paper money, jewellery and more. Over 30 dealers. For more information contact Ted Baley at 1-866-747-COIN (2646), or email [ted@tedscollectibles.com](mailto:ted@tedscollectibles.com)

## AUGUST 21 - COLLINGWOOD, ON

**30TH ANNUAL SHOW & BOURSE** - Leisure Time Club, 100 Minnesota St. Hours: 9am to 4pm. Free parking, free admission, snack bar, 30+ dealers, displays. Sponsor/Affiliate: Collingwood Georgian Bay Coin & Stamp Club. For more information, contact Horst Bolik at (705)429-4061, email [brho\\_hobo@hotmail.com](mailto:brho_hobo@hotmail.com), or 106 Leo Blvd., Wasaga Beach, ON L0L 2P0

## SEPTEMBER 12 - WOODSTOCK, ON

**WOODSTOCK COIN CLUB 15th ANNUAL SHOW** - South Gate Centre, 191 Old Wellington St. S. Hours 9:0 am to 4:00pm. Admission \$1.00. For more information contact Tom Rogers at (519) 451-2316.

## SEPTEMBER 19 - LONDON, ON

**LONDON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY 12th ANNUAL SHOW** - The Ramada Inn, 817 Exeter Road (at401). Hours 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Admission \$1:00. For more information contact Ted Leith at (519) 472-9679.

## SEPTEMBER 24-26 - HAMILTON, ON

**TNS SHOW** - Ramada Plaza Hotel, 150 King St. East. Level P3. Hours: Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Sunday 10:00 am to 4 pm. Admission \$3.00 per day for adults, \$2.00 per day for seniors and young collectors. Early bird admission and show pass \$15.00. Auctions by Jeffrey Hoare Auctions Inc. Numismatic sessions on Saturday, militaria session on Sunday. For more information contact Terry McHugh at (905) 570-2434, fax (905) 318-1638, or e-mail [cand@rscoins.ca](mailto:cand@rscoins.ca)

*Remember to support your local Coin Shows  
and the clubs in your area.*

# UPCOMING SHOWS

*A page intended to entice ONA members to attend each other's coin shows  
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## OCTOBER 2 - GUELPH, ON

**SOUTH WELLINGTON AND WATERLOO COIN SOCIETIES COIN SHOW** - Colonel John Macrae Branch, Royal Canadian Legion, 919 York St. Hours: 9:30am to 4pm. Free admission and parking, 40 or more dealer tables, penny draw prizes, displays and lunch counter. For more information, contact SWCS Bob Zmija, 251 Mason Blvd., Acton, ON L7J 1A7, (519)853-0868

## OCTOBER 16 - OSHAWA, ON

**COIN-A-RAMA** - 5 Points Mall, 285 Taunton Rd. E. Hours: 9:30am to 5pm. Free admission. Featuring coins, paper money, tokens and medals. Free dealer, member and public draws. Sponsor/Affiliate - Oshawa District Coin Club. For more information, contact Sharon or Earl MacLean at (905)728-1352.  
Email - papman@idirect.com

## OCTOBER 24 - STRATFORD, ON

**STRATFORD COIN CLUB ANNUAL SHOW** - Festival Inn, 1144 Ontario St. Hours: 10am to 4pm. Free admission, penny sale, 50/50 draw. Sponsor/Affiliate - Stratford Coin Club. For more information, contact Larry Walker, General Delivery, Gadshill, ON NOK 1J0, phone (519) 271-3352.

## OCTOBER 30-31 TORONTO, ON

**TOREX COIN SHOW & AUCTION** - Novotel Toronto-Centre. Dealers in Canadian, ancient and foreign coins, paper money, reference books and hobby supplies. Hours: Sat 10am to 5pm; Sun 10am to 3pm. Auction viewing starts on Thursday. Daily admission \$6.00, Children 16 and under Free. For more information, contact Brian R. Smith - brian@torex.net. Web site: www.torex.net.

## NOVEMBER 27 - NIAGARA FALLS, ON

**COIN-A-RAMA** - Our Lady of Peace Hall, 6944 Stanley Ave. Coins, tokens, jewellery, paper money, medals and more. Free parking. \$2.00 admission. Free Gold Draw. Hours: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Bourse info: NICF (905) 356-5006.

## APRIL 10, 2005 - CHATHAM, ON

**CHATHAM COIN CLUB ANNUAL SHOW** - Wheels Inn, Corner #2 Highway & Keil Dr. Hours: 10am to 4pm.

# NICKEL BELT COIN CLUB HOSTING 2005 O.N.A. CONVENTION

Thank you Nickel Belt Coin Club for hosting the 43rd Annual Convention. As we all know, Sudbury can be a bit chilly in April for the Southern folk, but Northern Ontario's great hospitality will warm them up. Does this sound like I am a bit bias, well I am. Sudbury is my old stomping grounds, I was born and raised in a little mining town north of Sudbury (Levack). Needless to say, I will be attending the convention and catching up with old friends.

From what I have heard a lot of planning has already been done and more than 25 bourse tables have already been sold for the convention. The members of the Coin Club are put their thinking caps on to come up with an unique design for the convention medal. I am sure it will be a medal that everyone will want to add to their collection.

Here is a little trivia that I received from the Nickel Belt Coin Club. In 1963 one of their founding members C.F. (Chuck) Martin, paid \$3,100 for a 1921 50-cent piece in very good condition. In 1964 the City of Sudbury was working on plans for a Canadian Centennial Numismatic Park. One of the highlights was to be a 30 foot tall stainless steel replica of a Canadian Nickel. The V for Victory Nickels-we call them nickels but they're not. That's because the Royal Canadian mint issued three V for Victory 5 cent coins that weren't made of nickel from 1943 to 1945. Nickel was needed for the war effort to manufacture goods made of stainless steel and other alloys. In the early 1900's, silver miners struck it rich near Cobalt just north of Sudbury. Several years after the initial silver rush, the production of silver coins soared. The Cobalt Commemorative medal that was struck as a souvenir is worth \$100.00 today.



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# LONDON HOTEL TOKENS

A recent discovery of a five cent brass Grigg House token has shed new light on some early London hotel tokens. This Grigg House token which is normally uniface has the incuse inscription "W.A. Brock, London Ont" stamped on the reverse. The significance of this find is that Brock was a gunsmith and a small manufacturer who was responsible for making this token. As the manufacturer of this token it is reasonable to assume he made the other Grigg House tokens. All the Grigg House tokens are made of either brass or German silver with incuse legends. This style of token is also the type found for early Jerry McDonald tokens as well as the City Hotel and the Western Hotel tokens. It has been theorized for some time that this type of token with an incuse legend had been produced locally, but there had never been evidence to connect these pieces with anyone locally.

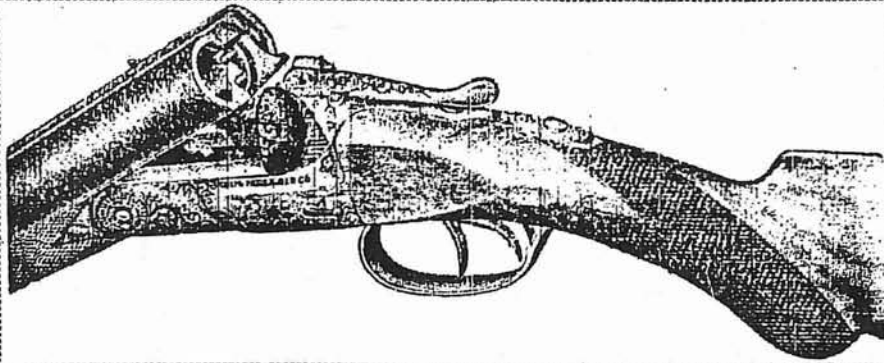


William A. Brock apprenticed under Robert W. Soper, one of London's best known gunsmiths, before opening his own business at 375 Clarence Street in 1879. In 1885, Brock moved to 374 Richmond Street where he plied his trade as a gunsmith and locksmith. He not only did barrel boring, rifling and gun repair, but was also called to open safes when the combinations were lost. He carried a large variety of fishing rods, reels, fishing tackle, pocket knives, sporting goods, rifles, pistols and ammunition. He had the equipment which allowed him to repair guns, locks and bicycles. With this equipment he could also make guns. An 1890 business publication describes William Brock's store as "first class" with new machinery, a steam engine and skilled workers. The numismatic part of the description reads "baggage, hotel and pools checks made to order, steel name stamps, burning brands, branding hammers, etc." Brock was capable of making dies and punches to produce the brass blanks for tokens and, with the aid of a steam engine, had enough power to cut and strike the pieces. In 1891 Brock moved to 192 Dundas Street, the centre of downtown. These types of early incused tokens were popular until the introduction of cheaper aluminum tokens in the mid 1890's. William Brock moved to 111 Dundas Street in 1921 and remained in the sporting goods business until his death in 1942.



Other styles of  
Grigg House tokens  
probably produced  
by William Brock.

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# **“SUN TAVERN” CANADIAN BLACKSMITH TOKEN**

by J.D. Ferguson, F.R.N.S.

All Canadian numismatists have been intrigued through many years by the interesting stories associated with the so-called “Blacksmith” tokens. Long recognized as one of the most interesting Canadian series, and collected by all distinguished numismatists of the past, the traditional story persisted that these tokens were largely if not wholly the work of a blacksmith in Montreal who coined his own tokens from scrap metal, and with dies he had himself prepared, to buy his pint of beer as he finished his day’s work. The story continues that he was a former employee of the Royal Mint in London who knew the rudimentary elements of striking coins and tokens.

Having found two of the “Sun Tavern” tokens in a “junk” box in a Toronto store in 1945, and having previously purchased the example of this token which I already had in my collection from another Toronto dealer a few years earlier, I gave a more careful examination to the design characteristics of these tokens and came to the conclusion that they were not all the work of one man.

My next step was to check which of the more outstanding Canadian collections of that period had this token. It was in the collections of Mr. Heal, Dr. Bateman of Toronto, Mr. Gibbs of Hamilton, in three of the more outstanding collections in Montreal, and in two of the outstanding Maritimes collections, but was missing from a number of other outstanding Canadian collections. In inquiring from those who had the token in their collections, I found that three of these numismatists had secured their token from the Toronto area.

With the help of the late Norman Mason, I asked him to check the Toronto directories in that city’s famous library for the period 1815 to 1840. At that time they had such a directory for 1833 and another one for 1837. The 1837 directory lists a “Rising Sun Inn” on Newgate Street (no number given) and the proprietor is given as James Watson. In examining the same directory under the name “Watson”, there was an entry for James Watson, giving his address as the Rising Sun Tavern.

In the earlier 1833 directory there is no mention of James Watson, but there is a John Watson shown as a tinsmith. The location given of the old tavern would be close to the northeast corner of Victoria and Adelaide Streets. I have mentioned that John Watson is shown as a tinsmith in the 1833 directory. The 1837 directory lists James Watson both as the proprietor of the Rising Sun Tavern and tinsmith. I believe it is a fair deduction that a tinsmith, because of working with metals and handling the tremendous variety of half-penny then in circulation in old Toronto, as a tavern proprietor, might be inclined to strike his own tokens.

From the above information I believe we can definitely place the Rising Sun token as coming from Toronto, and as struck by James Watson himself. From the quality of workmanship it may be deduced that others in the Canadian Blacksmith token series may also have been struck in Toronto by Mr. Watson.

There is considerable additional research to be carried out in this series, but I believe this is a definite “break-through” to the effect that at least two men, one in Montreal and Mr. Watson in Toronto (and there well could be more) were responsible for the Blacksmith tokens as we know them today, and which were so admirably catalogued by Howland Wood, one of America’s greatest numismatists.

A new work is needed in this series and I believe several of our numismatists are working towards such a publication at the present time. I am sure it would be welcome

*Reprinted from the Transactions of the Canadian Numismatic Research Society, April 1966*

# BUYING COINS ON eBay

My wife, Ann, is an avid grower of African Violets and is the Treasurer and Librarian of the London African Violet Society. A few months ago she cleared out some of the Society's magazines which she took to a Society meeting to sell or give away to members. One of the members suggested that the Society could make money by selling the magazines through eBay on the internet. A few months later, the member presented the club with a cheque for several hundred dollars.

This experience set me thinking, which is a painful process. If the L.A.V.S. could make serious money selling their unwanted publications on the internet then it should be possible for me to sell coins.

One of my collecting fields is Masonic Pennies and I am holding about fifty duplicate pennies which, although they are in my possession, came to be via a Shriner who had received them from various Masonic Widows. The market value of these coins is about \$10.00 each, but I had no market so the internet seemed a great way to redeem the coins. The money obtained could then be funneled back to Masonic Charities.

So what did I have to do to open my market? I consulted with the L.A.V.S. member. The first thing I had to do was to pen an eBay account, so in late March 2004 I accessed the eBay web site to see what I had to do. In fact, this was the easy part. It is not my intention to go through the intricacies of internet use and suffice it to say I was asked a number of questions about my e-mail address, my home address and telephone number and I had to choose an I.D. and password. These were sent to eBay on a secured site. My problem at this time was the I.D. which had to be eight letters or more. Five times I tried to choose an I.D. only to be told that my choice was already in use. Finally, I decided that enough was enough and in desperation I typed in "Igiveup" (not my real I.D.). The computer accepted it and now I am stuck with a stupid name. All my correspondence from eBay starts with the salutation "Dear "Igiveup" including the first email that said "Welcome to eBay.ca. Save this email, "Igiveup". Having gone through all the motions and answered all the questions I finally have an eBay account.

There are thousands of coins listed for sale and they are from a multitude of countries around the world. They are listed by categories under Continent and Country and the majority of them are illustrated with excellent photographs which are presumably taken with a digital camera. In most cases the pictures can be enlarged to full screen size. The sellers place them in the listings for a specified time and the clock ticks down.

Having now got my eBay account I decided that before I was ready to see coins on the internet, I should learn how to buy them and what easier way than to actually go through the motions and buy one. Right, I'm ready! But wait a moment, how do I pay for it if my bid is successful? More consultation with Ann's L.A.V.S. colleague. She explained that in most cases the seller would accept payment by use of a credit card but this involves giving away your credit card number every time you made a purchase. An alternative was to open an account with an organization known as PayPal. This company is a subsidiary of eBay. I would have to give them my card number and they would pay my eBay bills. The number would not be passed on to anyone else and was secure. However, it was suggested that I should open a new credit card with a minimal balance, just in case the number got into the wrong hands. So I went to the C.I.B.C. and opened a VISA card with a maximum balance of \$1,000.00. When the credit card arrived at my home I was ready to pen my PayPal account. The procedure was somewhat similar to opening an eBay account.

I was now ready to make my first purchase-or was I? I entered the eBay web site and accessed the coins. Oh joy, there was a Hamburg 3 Mark 1901J coin for sale. I have the 2 Mark and the 5 Mark so this is just the coin I want being sold by someone in California. What do I do to bid? The first thing I noticed was that there was only 3 minutes left before the coin would be sold to the highest bidder. I could see the last bid and this still left room for my bid. Where were my I.D. and password?

# BUYING COINS ON eBAY

I found those and went through the motions and put in my bid. Guess what, I had not activated my new credit card. I called C.I.B.C. on my cell phone so as not to cut off the internet. The card was activated. Back to the internet where I had a message "We're sorry but bidding on this item has closed".

The next day, May 3rd, I tried again. I decided to bid on a Confederation Argentina 4 Centavos copper coin of 1854 (Krause number 25). The photograph was clear and showed some scratches but the coin was described as VF and appeared to be so. My 1991 Krause catalogue listed this coin in VF as US \$22 so a bid of US \$11 was more than reasonable. The latest bid was us \$9.40. NOt knowing what the incremental bids were, I put in a bid for US \$10 and was told that my bid had been accepted and entered as US \$9.90. There was one hour and thirty minutes left on the clock for this coin. I had dinner and returned to the computer. Fifteen minutes to go and I was still the highest bidder. About half and hour later I checked my e-mail to be congratulated for my successful bid and purchase of Item #3909980197 at a price of US \$9.90 not including shipping charges.

I had forgotten about shipping charges and the coin was in Montevideo, Uruguay. Somewhere at the back of my mind I remembered reading that shipping by this seller was US \$4 to America or US \$5 to Europe, was Canada "America"? I hit the "pay button". Then comes an e-mail from PayPal advising me that my VISA has been debited with CAD \$19.60 and that I have CAD \$980.40 left to spend. I decide that I will wait until the coin arrives from Uruguay before making a second bid.

On May 8th I receive an e-mail from Uruguay confirming that my coin has been shipped by registered mail and am given a tracking number. The estimated delivery time is two weeks, so it should be in my hands by May 22nd. On May 17th the mail lady knocks at my door. She is holding a bright yellow envelope with a colorful registration certificate. No customs declaration, but then I have paid less than \$10 US for the coin. Eagerly I open the package with its "El Correo Uruguay postmark". There is my coin in all its glory, a piece worthy of my collection at a final price that is not unreasonable.

I have had much fund getting this coin and any effort was well worthwhile.

**I must do this again!**

by James A. Finch



# RENO WAREHOUSE YIELDS SILVER \$1 COINS, CHIPS

Collectors soon able to purchase

by Paul Gilkes  
Coin World Staff

Tens of thousands of silver dollars and casino chips with a combined face value of more than \$500,000, stashed for nearly four decades in a musty Reno, Nevada, warehouse have been acquired by a Santa Barbara, California, coin dealer Ronald J. Gillio.

The hoard is from the legendary Nevada Club of Reno Nevada Lodge of Lake Tahoe and Fitzgerald's-Reno, and their infamous founder, Detroit gambler and mobster Lincoln Fitzgerald.

"There was literally tons of materials in the hoard, more than 100,00 silver coins from dimes to dollars, and thousands of casino chips in denominations from \$1 to \$100, and brass dollar tokens, all stored in hundreds of boxes throughout the warehouse and in canvas bags inside six safes," Gillio said. "The total face value alone of the coins, chips and tokens is over a half million dollars."

"The warehouse was like a time capsule of 1950's and 1960's era Nevada gambling. It makes you wonder just how many other hidden treasures are still sitting in other Nevada warehouses he said. The holdings provide a wealth of information and memorabilia relating to the history of early legalized gaming in Nevada", he said. (continued on next page)

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**ABOVE** bags of U.S. silver dollars from the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco stored for nearly four decades in a Reno, Nev., warehouse are among the treasures from Nevada casinos once owned by mobster Lincoln Fitzgerald that Santa Barbara, Calif., coin dealer Ronald J. Gillio acquired recently from Fitzgerald's heirs. At left, an 1878 Morgan silver dollar of the type believed to be in the bags.

Gallio plans to keep some pieces for his own collections, and is making arrangements to donate representative items to the Nevada Historical Society, Nevada State Museum, and will offer many hoard items to other collectors

Two of the roulette wheels , a Seeburg jukebox and several of the steer horns, from among a dozen that decorated the club's bar, are consigned to a public sale to be conducted by Grey Martin Auctions of San Francisco, June 7.

The Reno board will be marketed during the next two years starting with sets consisting of four casino chips and a brass dollar token, Gallio said.

Each set will be certified by Numismatic Guaranty Corporation of America, the official certification service of the American Numismatic Association and the Professional Numismatic Guild.

The sets will be labeled with the pedigree "Fitzgerald's Nevada Club Reno Hoard" and encapsulated in specially designed NGC multi-coin holders. These will be offered for sale to the public by David Hendrickson from Silver Towne in Winchester, Indiana. No retail price for the sets has yet been established nor has the date the sets will be ready for sale.

The set includes blue \$1.00, red \$5.00, \$25 green and \$100 dark purple chips issued in 1976 for Fitzgerald's Reno gaming establishment that opened that year, and a 1964 brass dollar token issued for the Nevada Club of Reno and Nevada Lodge of Lake Tahoe. Fitzgerald acquired the Nevada Lodge in 1958 when it was known under a different name, according to Gallio. The sets will allow collectors of gaming memorabilia to acquire pieces for their collection that they might not be able to obtain elsewhere.

Searching through the warehouse where the hoard was secreted for nearly 40 years was an adventure, according to Gallio. "The safe each held dozens of silver dollars and silver coins", Gallio said. "A tag on one of the bags read, 'Nevada Club 1000 Standards March 1964'. That means the bag contained 1,000 old silver dollars, and it was counted, sealed and stored back in 1964".

Another tag reading "Nevada Lodge 1000 Half Dollars April 1965" was attached to an original bag of Uncirculated 40 percent silver 1965 Kennedy half dollars struck at the Philadelphia Mint, shipped from the Federal Reserve Bank in San Francisco.

Some silver dollars dating back to the 1880's were found in U.S. Treasury canvas bags with official Treasury tags on them. Gallio said tags on the bags containing the tens of thousands of silver dollars, half dollars, quarters and dimes indicate they were placed in the warehouse safes between 1964 and 1965.

"People started to keep the old silver dollars they won at gaming tables after the United States Mint stopped making silver coinage for circulation in 1964", Gallio said. "So, the casinos began putting away their silver coins in the mid 1960's and there they were 40 years later still in the warehouse". Some of the coin counting equipment was wrapped in newspaper printed in the 1960's.

"There were also large quantities of brass dollar tokens marked 'Nevada Club' and 'Nevada Lodge', Gallio said. "These are the first brass dollar tokens made between 1964 and 1966 by a San Mateo, California, company to replace the old silver dollars in the casinos. These tokens were used on tables and in slot machines, and obviously precede the Franklin Mint's production of dollar tokens as well as Eisenhower dollars".

Gallio also acquired three vintage roulette wheels; green felt layouts for roulette and craps tables; a dozen huge steer horns that decorated the club's bar in the late 1940's; a 1950's era Seeburg Jukebox for 78 rpm records that was used as a sound system for the club; casino chip holders, half-century old counting equipment; souvenir spoons, postcards and key chains; and even original drawings and blueprints for the three casino properties. "One of the roulette wheels is a 'single zero", Gallio said. "You don't find those very often".

Opened by Fitzgerald at 224 N. Virginia St. in downtown Reno in 1947, the Nevada Club was one of the oldest casinos in the state when it abruptly closed in December 1997

All the items Gallio acquired had been stored for decades before the 1997 closing in a 6,000 square foot warehouse on Dickerson Road on the outskirts of Reno.

"There were 1960's era office equipment, desks, chairs, typewriters and decades old calendars," Gallio said. "None of the magazines and newspapers was dated after the early 1970's. It took several hours for Brinks guards to load all the silver coins onto a truck to haul it to Santa Barbara".

The casino privately sold its 1940's era slot machines in the 1980's but keep other gaming equipment and materials in warehouse storage. He said it was "a long, tiring process" to examine and pack all the coins, chips and tokens prior to removing them from Reno.

"The warehouse is near railroad tracks along the Truckee River. One day, after we had just stacked about 70 heavy bags inside a safe, a train rumbled by and all the bags fell out. It was not fun", he said.



**SETS CONSISTING** of four casino chips and a brass dollar token from Nevada gaming establishments owned by mobster Lincoln Fitzgerald will be certified and encapsulated by Numismatic Guaranty Corporation of America and offered for sale to collectors by SilverTowne from Winchester, Ind. Shown is a prototype of the set, made by digitally incorporating images of the actual chips and tokens with a genuine five-coin holder and appropriate paper inserts bearing pedigree information.

# A NUMISMATIC "RAMBLE" LONDON, ENGLAND - MARCH 2004

Ross Blakey

Once again, another enticing auction sale that attracted my attention and opportunity to make further acquisitions to my collection. This time, the Marshall Collection sale offered by Spink & Son on March 31, 2004 was a collection, until recently, unknown to the numismatic fraternity. It was going to be interesting to see what affect the Slaney Sale of last year in May of 2003 will have on this collection. Strong prices were a good possibility!

So it was in early February that I made my booking through Air Canada's website, as I had done on previous occasions, and at a price that was cheaper than last year's made it an opportunity not to be missed. As usual, I made it a two-week stay, departing on a Wednesday, March 24, 2004 and returning Wednesday, April 7, 2004. Making the journey during midweek avoided the weekend surcharge, another cost savings to keep in mind.

## The Marshall Collection:

This important and wide-ranging collection was completely unknown and unseen by the current generation of numismatists and contained many fine and valuable pieces which had been previously recorded in the great sales of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup>

The war years brought much fine numismatic material on to the market, and Marshall was able to take advantage of this opportunity to acquire many exceptional pieces. There are too many pieces to list here, but he certainly had a good eye towards very good quality coins and the prices achieved in this sale realized that.

This first half of this collection consisting of a strong collection of English and Scottish, and some Irish coins, was formed over a few years in the early to mid 1940's with considerable determination and resources largely through the agency of Spink and Son and drawn from the pages of Spink's Numismatic Circular. The intention was to form a systematic collection of hammered and milled coins in gold, silver and base metal in high grade, of the type now firmly coming back in favour, and this was in large measure successfully achieved. Attractive tickets accompanying these coins, which were a little larger than crown sized coins, had the reigning monarch or country printed or written out in a cursive mixture in red ink while details of the coins were done in black ink made for an interesting companion to the coin. With these tickets it was shown that the first acquisitions were made from Spink Numismatic Circular, May 1942, for the sum of £33 3s 6d, and that within two months expenditure had risen to £347 16s 0d in July 1942. Purchases were made almost every month and the last coins were acquired from the Spink Numismatic Circular, February 1946, for a recorded total expenditure of £1,704, a very substantial sum of money in those days.

It was apparent that his initial collecting interests were in world coins as the second half of the sale consisted of the important Claus collection of British colonial and world countermarked and emergency issue coins. The first part containing the most important groups of West Indian cut and countermarked coins to have been offered for some years. It is then followed by a collection

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<sup>1</sup> Spink & Son, sales catalogue of "The Marshall Collection", March 31, 2004, page 3. Information on the following paragraphs from this introduction to the sale.

of mainly European obsidional and emergency issues including some extremely rare pieces, assiduously formed by reference to Maillat.

The British colonial and world siege coins are listed in a two volume manuscript catalogue, marked 'B. G. Claus' and dated 1921. It is thought that Marshall purchased this major group en block in the 1930's, and made only a few small later additions, notably from the Grantley sale in Glendining, December 1944. The collection had been housed in a bank vault for most of the ensuing years, until it was bequeathed to a grandson on whose behalf Spink was delighted to now offer this fine collection of fresh material to the market.

The sale ended with a good small group of important auction catalogues, most of which feature in the provenances in the collection, reference books and cabinets.

It was for this reason I departed for London on the Wednesday, a week before the sale, I knew it would get very busy just prior to the auction that enabled me to be able to see at my leisure those lots on the Thursday and Friday after my arrival, especially in the area of my interest. I was perhaps a tad disappointed with the number of lots that were being offered that were of the Tudor period in this sale but I was also given the opportunity to view those lots being offered in the next sale the following month. There was a larger number of Tudor material being offered and I was able to compare what was in the Marshall sale against those in this sale. It is not often one has a chance to be able to see this material under one roof and it made for a rather delicious irony in trying to figure out what would be the lots to go for. It certainly makes a difference viewing the lots in person and actually seeing the coins as opposed to just looking over pictures in the catalogue and pricing your bids accordingly.

So how did I fare. I had decided to go for those that I don't have in my collection rather than get a coin with differences in the legend to the ones that I already had. Out of the ten hammered gold coins, I picked out one that I thought I had a good chance at. It was lot 12, a Henry VIII half-angel of the 3<sup>rd</sup> coinage period and was estimated at £1,250 – 1,500, graded at a good very fine with the Spink Standard Catalogue having a price of £825 for a VF specimen. So as has been my experience would just double that VF price and see if I get it. Needless to say, it went to £2,000 which was pretty much my top limit but was bid to that amount on a mail bid and I decided to go no further. I could have went one more but the possibility of the mail bidder having a higher limit also was possible. One has to keep in mind that there is a 15% buyer's fee on top of the bid so one has to keep it within reason.

A couple of lots later, lot 15, a splendid half-angel of Elizabeth I that looked as good as the day it was struck was offered. I had no intention to bid on this piece as I already had one in my collection, though somewhat with a slight bend and a crack by the mint mark, it would have been a nice piece to use as an upgrade, but the starting bid pretty much took care of that. With an estimate of £1,500 – 2,000, the whole auction floor was stunned when the starting bid came out at £4,000. No one moved on that and the hammer went down at that same price. Just a foretaste of the competitive bidding that was going to occur throughout the English portion of this sale.

Looking at the 10 gold coins in the Tudor period, one went just under the low estimate and the other almost at its high estimate while all the others fetched well over the high estimates. A strong indication of the demand for Tudor coins in very good condition.

On the silver side, there were 23 lots available and if I didn't have any luck with the gold thought I might have a chance as something in this metal. Well I couldn't be more wrong. The first

silver piece to come up was lot 86, Perkin Warbeck (pretender to the English throne, executed 1499), Medallion Jeton or Groat, struck on a small flan (as usual) but an excellent example in good very fine condition, extremely rare. It was a very nicely toned coin and while not a true Tudor struck coin it was relevant to that time period. It also had an extensive provenance that could be traced back to a sale in 1817. With an estimate of £1,500 – 2,000 I thought I had a good chance at it for £2,500, as was suggested, but surprisingly it went to £4,200. Whew!!

Of interest was lot 92, a testoon of Henry VIII minted at the Tower of London, was a beautiful specimen, on an exceptionally full round flan with the details fully clear and struck up, extremely fine, thus excessively rare in this condition. Estimate was given at £6,000 – 8,000, and I heard the bidding was figuring to go to £12,000. The bids received before the sale dictated an opening price of £10,000 for this coin and a number of bidders took the price straight up to £20,000, where from then onwards it was between two people, a collector on the floor and a dealer who was bidding on behalf of another collector, where the collector was the victor ending at £30,000 hammer. This made it the most hotly contested coin in the whole sale. The history of this coin's ownership could be traced back to 1802.

The next lot of interest to me was lot 99, a Philip and Mary sixpence, I considered it as a replacement to the one in my own collection as mine was bent and not as good a shape. This piece was estimated at £500-600 and with it graded almost very fine decided to try it for £950. Alas it went for £1,200.

Of all the 23 silver coins only one fetched within its estimate, all others were above the high estimates with some just a bid or two higher but the remainder were very strongly contested. A strong indication that I will have to be a little more aggressive on future bids.

April 15, 2004 Auction:

This sale offered more hammered gold in the Tudor period than was offered in the Marshall sale. There was a total of 21 gold and 2 silver coins and thus had a larger choice in which to choose. As noted earlier, I had the opportunity to view these lots and determine what I could try for if I was unsuccessful in the Marshall sale, which turned out to be the case. This auction was to follow a week later after I returned home, so left five bids hoping for the best. What I had thought were stronger bids was to be notified that I was unsuccessful on any of the lots – a couple of which I was off by a fair margin.

BANS Congress – Chester:

The British Association of Numismatic Societies held their Annual National Numismatic Congress in Chester from Friday April 2, 2004 to Sunday April 4, 2004. For an all inclusive fee of £105 covered the registration fee, a single room at the student residence at Chester College, breakfast, lunch, and banquet for the duration of the Congress. The only extra cost was the Friday night supper and whatever souvenirs one found in Chester. Attendance to this Congress numbered 71 with a strong showing from Ireland. There were also a number of attendees that I knew from the London Coin Club that came.

A civic reception was held at the Town Hall hosted by His Worship the Lord Mayor of Chester was well received by all in attendance. It was a warm welcome to Chester by the Lord Mayor on the occasion of the Congress to his fair city of Chester. A little history of the Town Hall was elaborated on by him and he was presented with a silver penny of Edward I (1272 – 1307)

minted at Chester. Also accompanying this coin were a couple of souvenir coins similar in appearance to the Edward I penny struck by Grunal the Moneyer that were attached to a sheet of paper with greetings from BANS on the presentation to the Lord Mayor and holding of the Congress in Chester. These souvenir pennies were also handed out to all attendees of the Congress at the BANS Dinner held on the Saturday night.

There were eight speakers slated for presentations on the Saturday and Sunday. All were well presented and covered a wide range of topics. The welcoming speech to the 2004 Congress was given by Graham Dyer, OBE, President of BANS. The first presentation at 9:30 Saturday was The Howard Linecar Memorial Lecture on "The Times', Roman Style" by Peter Clayton, FRNS followed by a coffee & biscuit break. The second topic started at 11:00 a.m. was covered by Stephen Skellern, President of the Yorkshire Numismatic Society and his presentation was on "The Transition fro Copper to Bronze Coinage in 1860". A light lunch was served and the third topic was presented at 1:15 by Dr. Keith Sugden, Keeper of Numismatics, Manchester Museum on "Carian Dynastic Coinage". From 2:30 on was free time to explore the Roman and medieval city of Chester. For myself, I took it easy that afternoon as I had already made my exploration on the Friday as I arrived in Chester on the Thursday for an extra nights stay at Chester College which cost me an extra £30 over and above the BANS Congress fee mentioned above.

Saturday evening was the BANS Congress Dinner and a good meal was had by all. After the supper those that went to the bar to continue with their numismatic topics and others went back to the student residence for a get together in the residence's social room to which I joined.

Sunday morning came bright and early and after the breakfast we continued on with the seminars. At 9:00 a.m. both Dr. Christopher Challis and Christopher Comber, both who are specialists in the Tudor era, presented their presentation on "Eloye Mestrelle at Elizabeth's Tower Mint". That one was the highlight of my stay at the Congress! A break at 10:00 a.m. with coffee and biscuits and shortly thereafter the next speaker, Andrew Andison, presented his paper on "Over the North Bridge & on towards Leith". This was followed by "What is a British Colonial Coin?" by Captain Peter Thompson. Lunch was served fro 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. and the last speaker, Dr. Simon Bean, NMG Merseyside concluded the presentations with his talk on "Ancient Meols – History from the Sands". The closing speech was given by Graham Dyer OBE, President of BANS.

#### Coin Clubs:

Looking on the BANS website directory of clubs to see what meetings were available during my stay was able to find 3 that I could easily attend without any problem.

Reading Coin Club – March 29 – the speaker for the evening was Mark Rasmussen on "The Life & Times of a Coin Dealer". There were 29 in attendance with 5 table top dealers present. There were two dealers that had some hammered coins but nothing was anywhere near the condition I would have like to have picked up anything.

BNS (British Numismatic Society) – March 30 – the speaker for the evening was Stewart Lyon, MA FIA FSA who presented a lecture on "Marks, Oras, Pounds and Sterlings – An International Retrospective". There were 40 people in attendance at this meeting. I joined the "supper" group, as was the usual custom there is a group that usually go to there favourite restaurant to enjoy a great supper and continue on with their favourite numismatic topics. It was at an Italian restaurant, another eating place to add to my list of good places to go to on my next visit. It was

a little costly, £22 (thats \$50+) for a spaghetti and meat sauce dish, which was surprisingly very good, not too spicy – but seven glasses of white wine that kept being filled by the chap across from me. Needless to say, I was glad that I did not have too far to walk to my bed & breakfast room. There were 10 of us in the group and the bill was split evenly between us. But for that extra cost it was an enjoyable evening listening in on to the conversations going on.

London Coin Club – April 6 – Ken Peters was the speaker for this club meeting and he spoke on “Ancient Coin Counterfeiting”. There were 17 people in attendance and as this was my last night in London did not join the “supper” group as I had to get my luggage ready for departure and hoping for the best that I had room with the books that I acquired from Spinks.

#### British Museum Coin Room:

It was apparently a very busy time for the Coin Room as I was only able to reserve the two Tuesday mornings that were available. Usually I was able to get Thursdays but they were fully booked. The Tuesday afternoons were scheduled to visit the BNS Library as that is usually the only time that they are open to members though other dates can be arranged by prior notice. For both of these two Tuesdays I was able to view a total of 12 trays of hammered gold of Henry 8<sup>th</sup> from the Sovereign down to the Crown of the Double Rose. On my next visit I hope to view the remaining trays of the hammered gold coins of Henry 8<sup>th</sup>. It was interesting to note the many varieties of the half-sovereigns and angels that were so noticeable with so many of the coins together in one tray. For a collector to try and assemble such a collection of just either of these two denominations would take a lifetime. With today’s supply and demand it would be a very difficult task to do. As always, it was a great pleasure to handle these coins, some that are so rare that none exist on the open market and marvel at some of the coins that I know will never be able to afford to add to my own collection.

#### Book Department – Spinks:

As usual, I never know what I’m going to pick up from their bookshelves and storage room down on the lower level. Remembering my last visit when I had picked up quite a number of books and wondered how I was going to get them all in my luggage case. This time pickings were a little slimmer but I did get a couple more acquisitions to add to my library. The big item I picked up was the first two volumes of “Medallic Illustrations of the History of Great Britain and Ireland”. There was a complete set (19 folios with 10 plates in each folio) and a good many partial sets and amongst them were the first two folios that I was only interested in. So came home with 20 plates of medals that were struck during the Tudor period from Henry VII to Elizabeth I with a smattering of James I at the end. About as close as I will ever get to them though I have a couple of medals that are a variation of the ones illustrated in these plates. Published by the British Museum, these sets were offered from 1904 to 1911 as each folio was completed. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War on one of the bombing runs by Germany over London, a water pipe was broken and flooded the basement where the remaining stock of these sets of plates received water damage. These sets that were available were undamaged but certainly showing their age.

Well all in all, I didn’t leave England empty-handed. I was able to pick up a few coins from the regular stock with what Spink’s had – not as spectacular as were the pieces in the sale but filled out some empty gaps in my collection. Though after my unsuccessful bids from either sale left me a little disappointed there is always a future sale where I will have the chance to try again. But will apparently cost me a few dollars more.....

# THE WESTERN FAIR OF 1885

The London Western Fair of 1885 was especially large as it was held jointly with the Provincial Exhibition. The Governor General, Lord Landdowne came by train to open the fair officially. This was the fortieth provincial exhibition and the Provincial Government supplemented the prize list by adding an extra \$10,000, making a total of \$30,000 in prize money. They also covered some of the travel expenses for people outside of London who wished to exhibit at the Fair. The Federal Government contributed an equal amount, but that money had to be used to promote agriculture. The Provincial Government held a joint exhibition in 1854, 1861, 1869, 1873, 1877, 1881, 1885 and the last one in 1889. This fair was supposed to be the last scheduled fair on the fair grounds located north of Central Aven. between Richmond and Waterloo Streets. Part of the fair grounds had been sold to make way for the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway line. During the period of the fair, advertisements in both London newspapers were asking for tender for the removal of buildings and fences. There was also an advertisement promoting the upcoming auction of the remaining parcels of fair ground land.

The amount of money awarded in prize money varied depending on the category. More money was awarded for the best bull than for the best rooster. Certificates and cash were awarded in some categories, but just how many categories is difficult to determine. In the category "Agricultural Implements", winners are listed for first, second and third for numerous different agricultural implements, but there is no mention of a medal being awarded. In the category of "Stoves and Castings" there are also multiple winners for the first and seconds, but only McClary Manufacturing is listed as receiving a silver medal for the best and largest display. In class 35 "Carriages, Sleighs and Parts Thereof" there were a number of exhibits with first and seconds being awarded in over twenty sub categories. There were one "Dominion Gold" and two "Dominion Silver" medals awarded in this group. In the listing of winners there is no mention of a separate London Fair medal or a bronze Dominion medal. Of the three known silver medals "Reid & Co." and "John Campbell" are listed as receiving a silver medal. The "Canadian Blower Co." is listed as a winner with no standing or any indication why a medal was awarded. Because there are only three silver medals and no gold medals known at this time it is difficult to conclude how many medals were issued. Probably the number of gold medals awarded would match the prize list. Question remains to whether a silver medal was presented to every significant exhibitor. Also, a medal presented to exhibitors in a category where the prize money was greater than fifty dollars? How many silver medals were issued.



## GRAND DOMINION AND FORTIETH PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION

Under the auspices of the Agriculture and Arts  
Association of Ontario to be held at



— FROM —

September 7th to 12th, 1885.

\$30,000 IN PREMIUMS AND MEDALS.

The 45 mm medal was designed by Ernest Paulin Tasset, and was originally struck in gold, silver, bronze and gilt bronze. It was first used to award Canadian exhibitors in 1876 at the U.S. A. Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia.

The first example of this silver medal was awarded to one of London's leading businesses and was engraved "London 1885 Reid & Co. London Decorated China". The display consisted of both crockery and glassware, some of which were made in London. The display featured toilet sets of Geneva ware, dinner and tea sets and a number of pieces of armor-shield and breast plates with clocks in the centre. The W.J. Reid & Company was founded by Nathaniel Reid who came to London in 1840. The business grew to become W.J. Reid and Company, an importer of fine china and a manufacturer of china and stoneware. The store, known as Reid's Crystal Hall, sold everything from Bohemian glassware to Royal Minton dinner sets. They even employed a resident china buyer in Europe. In 1876, several artists were hired to paint flowers and fancy patterns on china. At the time the medal was awarded W.J. Reid & Company occupied a four story building at 197 Dundas Street



The second illustrated silver medal engraved "John Campbell London Display of Vehicles" was awarded for second place for best and largest display of vehicles. First place and gold medal winner went to a Montreal firm N. And A.L. Larivere. John Campbell's display consisted of five landaus and other buggies. He received a first place for a double-seated, uncovered buggy and best buckboard vehicle. He also displayed an unfinished vehicle to show the body work. It was probably the combination of all the first and second place winnings in the individual competitions in this category that determined the medal winner.

John Campbell was born in Scotland in 1823 and immigrated to Canada in 1848, settling in London shortly afterwards. Campbell was a blacksmith by trade and began working for the carriage maker Marcus Holmes. Campbell had a short term partnership with Alex Lowrie, another carriage manufacturer, before he moved to the corner of Richmond and Albert Streets in 1855 to start his own business. In 1865 he moved to a building at 75085 King Street which had been used as a barracks during the U.S. Civil War. Campbell built a large three story building at that location in 1881. In 1869 he employed twenty people and by 1889 that had grown to fifty people. Also during the 1880's when this medal was awarded, Campbell carriage business became largely wholesale, selling his vehicle by catalogue from Ontario to British Columbia.



John Campbell

John Campbell became involved in municipal politics and was first elected alderman for Ward Two in 1865. As alderman he helped form a committee that negotiated to purchase the land for what is now Victoria Park. Campbell was elected Mayor in 1872 and again in 1881 and 1882. Campbell remained active in city politics until his death in November 7, 1901 at the age of seventy-nine.

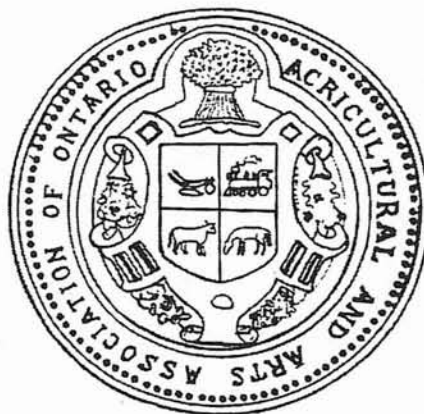


The third illustrated silver medal is engraved "Canadian Blower Co. London Co. Exhaust Fans & Pressure Blowers". The medal was awarded in class 59 "Machinery and Parts Thereof and Tools," part two metal working machinery. The actual exhibition category is listed as "extra" and reads "forge blower and bolt heading machine for blacksmiths". Although the engraving indicates this was a London business there is not directory listing for the Canadian Blower Company prior to 1885 or thereafter. Probably the Canadian Blower Company supplied a local business with its machinery, who then displayed it at the Provincial Exhibition. During the exhibition both London newspapers described a number of the displays. The London Free Press described a display by Frank Wheeler, a hardware merchant located at 112 1/2 Dundas Street. The description of the display highlights the excellent hardware and states they received "15 first prizes, a silver medal, 9 second prizes and two commended tickets have been awarded this exhibit". The article also mentioned some of the hardware that Wheeler handled at his business including "wooden wares and implements, builders and blacksmith hardware". The illustrated medal engraved "Canadian Blower Co." may be actually the one awarded to Frank Wheeler.

The fourth illustrated medal, LeRoux 1462, is a gold medal awarded to E. Leonard & Sons. The obverse die has the engraver's name "J.S. & A.B. Wyon" on it, and features a shield, a sheaf of wheat and the inscription "Agricultural and Art Association of Ontario". The reverse die has the engraver's initials "J.W." for John Wanless, a Toronto jewelry manufacturer, and features a wreath and the inscription "E. Leonard & Son London Stationery Steam London 1885". The gold medal has rounded edges and is not a well-struck medal with its uneven border merging with the beading a few times.

The Leonard Company has roots in the iron business which stretched back to Wales and from there to Massachusetts in the 1650's. The family moved to Canada in 1829 and settled at Long Point on Lake Erie where they built a foundry. They moved to St. Thomas in 1834 and then to London in 1839 where a foundry was built on Fullarton Street near Ridout Street. Elijah Leonard, the founder of "E. Leonard & Sons" which manufactured engines and boilers, became mayor of London in 1857, and a member of the provincial government in 1862. At the time of Confederation in 1867, he became a senator and remained one until his death in 1891. In 1875, Elijah Leonard admitted his two sons, Frank and Charles into a partnership in the business. At the time the medal was awarded they had a large manufacturing facility on the south side of York Street just east of Waterloo Street. They produced large wood and coal fired steam engines and boilers for industrial use.

The known awarded medals for the Dominion Exhibition of 1885 appear to be awarded to large displays for which the company had won a number of prizes in that category. The style of medal awarded to E. Leonard and Sons was first used in the Provincial Exhibition in 1870. This style of medal was issued in gold, silver and bronze and there are several varieties due to different dies. The silver medals awarded at the London Provincial Exhibition of 1885 are the Dominion of Canada medal while the gold medal is the



Agricultural and Arts Association medal. There are no bronze medals of either style known at this time. Generally money and certificates were given to winners in categories, suggesting that there were not a large number of medals issued. It is also possible that the Provincial Government had silver medals of the Dominion of Canada remaining and used them. Because of the limited number of known medals it is difficult to ascertain the criteria used to award the medals or how many of each type were issued.

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# MAKING MONEY

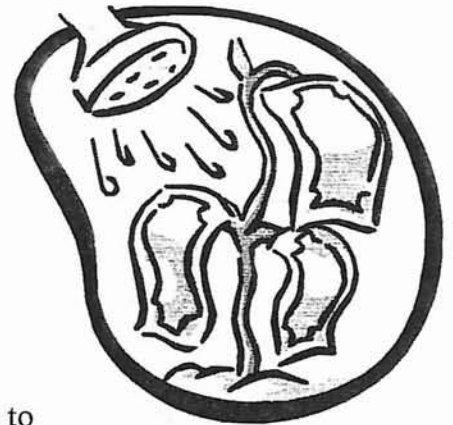
Have you heard the expression "money doesn't grow on trees"? There aren't any shady trees whose leaves are made of crisp \$1.00 bills. But money does grow on trees in a way. It grows on bushes too.

Trees give us wood pulp, which is used to make paper. And cotton and flax bushes produce flowers and seeds from which we make cotton and line cloth. This cloth is also made into paper. Paper is what money is printed on.

The Bank of Canada issues about 800 million new notes a year. At the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing, 12 million notes roll off the presses in one day. Half of these are \$1.00 bills.

Old money goes up in smoke. Anyone can take old, worn bills to a bank to exchange them for new ones. The bank ships the old bills back to the printing plant. There they are inspected to make sure that they're not reusable and that they're not fakes that slipped past the bank. Then they're bundled up, shredded and thrown into the fire!

The highest bank note in circulation is the U.S. \$10,000 bill; the lowest, the Indonesian sen, it is worth about 1,000th of a penny!



## DID YOU KNOW?

That a bank is a place to keep your money safely.

You might save your pennies in a bank shaped like a pig,

elephant, dog, bird or many other variations of coin holders. No matter what it looks like, its ancestor was a pygg. About a thousand years ago, in old England, a pygg was a kind of clay pot people used to save their coins. Several hundred years later a clever potter decided to make the pot look how its name sounded. Thus was born the piggy bank we know today.



*from The Ontario Numismatist 1987-89 - March-April issue.*

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# **FAST FACTS and HISTORY of the BIG NICKEL MONUMENT**

## **Big Nickel Fast Facts**

- The Big Nickel is the largest coin in the world.
- It was constructed in 1964.
- It is an identical, enlarged replica of the 1951 Canadian nickel.
- Heads is King George VI, Canada's monarch in 1951.
- Tails is stylized nickel refinery with on large stack.
- The Big Nickel weighs close to 13,000 kilograms (approximately 13 tons).
- It stands nine metres (30 feet) high.
- It is 61 centimetres (24 inches) thick.
- It is about 64,607,747 times the size of a Canadian nickel.

## **Big Nickel History**

The Big Nickel was the brain-child of a Sudbury fireman, Ted Szilva, and artist/sign maker, Bruno Cavallo. The idea was to develop the coin to celebrate Canada's 1967 centennial. The centennial committee rejected the submission.

Undaunted, Szilva and Cavallo formed the Nickel Monument Development Corporation Ltd. (NMDC) and Szilva coined the phrase the Big Nickel. The NMDC chose the 1961 Canadian five-cent piece as the model.

The 1951 coin was designed by Canadian artist Steven Trenka. The coin was issued to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the isolation of nickel as an element by Swedish chemist Baron Axel Frederick Cronstedt in 1751. The coin featured King George VI on one side and a nickel refinery on the other side.

As Sudbury was the second largest producer of nickel in the world, it was the perfect choice for the Big Nickel.

The construction project was undertaken in Cavallo's sign manufacturing workshop in Sudbury. Two vertical columns and several angle iron pieces make up the framework. The inside layer is a sheet of metal skin. Plywood is the middle layer and the outer layer is stainless steel sheet metal.

The May, 1964, the nickel was erected and the Canadian Centennial Numismatic Park began operations. The nickel was unveiled at the official opening on July 22, 1964 in front of 2,500 Sudbury residents and dignitaries.

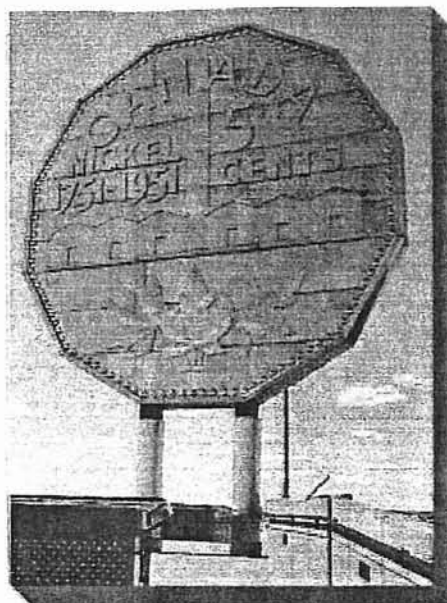
In 1965 and "underground experience" was added to complement the "numismatic park" theme. Szilva contracted the excavation of a vertical shaft and about 50 metres (164 feet) of underground drifts, as well as the construction of a simple headframe. Visitors descended in an elevator to follow a self-guided tour underground. Over the years, Cambrian College students worked at the Big Nickel Mine to extend the underground drifts, while meeting the practical requirements of their mining courses.



In 1981, Ted Szilva sold the Big Nickel and the Canadian Centennial Numismatic Park to Science North (Northern Ontario's future science centre). Science North considered dismantling the nickel due

the high cost of maintenance. But, as the monument was considered a unique, unmistakable landmark for Sudbury, Science North refurbished the nickel in 1984 at a cost of \$12,000. All other non-mining related items were removed from the site.

During the week of January 22, 2001, the Big Nickel was removed from its original base at the Big Nickel Mine in Sudbury. Dismantled for refurbishing, this was the first time in almost 40 years that the nickel was absent from Sudbury's skyline.

In April, 2001, the Big Nickel was temporarily relocated to Science North. It was moved back to its traditional site on Big Nickel Mine Road at the newly constructed Dynamic Earth on May 10, 2003.



Obverse	Reverse
	
<p><b>Canada - 1951</b>            Diameter : 21 mm            Denomination : 5 Cents            Material : Nickel            Remarks : Commemorates the 200th Anniversary of the Isolation of Nickel</p>	



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