The SJ CSRA CC now meets at the MieStelle Bakery on the first Thursday of the Month

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Volume 24, No. 12 — **the Stephen James CSRA Coin Club, Founded in 2001** — **December 2025**
Monthly Newsletter

Interesting Commemorative and Regular Gold Coins acquired in 2025

2025 Club Meeting Schedule

Jan. 2	Apr. 3	July 3	Oct. 2
Feb. 6	May 1	Aug. 7	Nov. 6
Mar. 6	June 5	Sept. 4	**Dec. 4**

A 1999 Gold Bi-centennial Commemorative $5.00 graded MS-69 by PCGS struck in honor of George Washington's Death in 1799

In December of 2024, this collector went into the American Coin Exchange located in Martinez, GA and discovered the availability of a long desirable modern commemorative shown directly above. This design type of George Washington was actually created by Laura Gardin Frazer back in 1931 as the winning design choice of a committee hired to create the new Washington Quarter series which would begin in 1932, thereby replacing Sculptor but it never came to pass because Andrew W. Mellon, the Secretary of the Treasury at the time, preferred John Flanagan's design type over the committee's with the result that the coin shown above would not be released until 1999, but as a commemorative gold $5.00 piece commemorating the 200th anniversary of George Washington's death instead. The coin was struck both as a business strike and a proof and is \a beauty to behold.

A 1901 gold Half-Sovereign of Queen Victoria graded MS-63 struck for the last time in 1901 and is considered a common date.
This is one of the many coin design types struck in her honor.

A 1916 Gold Commemorative of former President William McKinley Graded MS-63 by PCGS

In 1903 and again in 1916 & '17, President McKinley appeared on the tiny gold $1.00 commemorative coin, the latter type shown directly above. The second McKinley Commemorate little gold type was stuck in 1916 and 1917. The coin was were created by Chief Mint Director, Charles Barber on the obverse and George Morgan, the Asst. Chief Engraver on the reverse. William McKinley--who was assonated in 2001--was very popular during his presidency, especially by those whose who lived in Ohio. Originally 100,000 gold dollars were planned to be struck and sold at a cost of $3.00. Today, with gold soaring over $4,000 an ounce the 1916 McKinley commemorative grading MS-63, the grade shown above, sells for slightly over $400. The 1917 issue is the scarcer of the two.

A 1928 $2.50 gold Indian head quarter Eagle graded MS-62 by PCGS

The first Indian-Head quarter eagles designed by Bela Lyon Pratt were produced in 1908 and struck ever year at the Philadelphia Mint thru 1915. After 1915, no quarter eagles were struck until 1926 which the Philadelphia Mint produced every year thru 1929. None were struck at the Denver mint except in 1925. The mintage for the 1928 quarter eagle was 416,000 and is considered a common date. This coin featured a raised edge with the main figures sunken in relief so the date and other important features would not wear. The writer acquired the 1928 quarter eagle at the Stephen James CSRA Coin Club show held on March, 10, 2025. (Continued on page 2, column 1)

Interesting Commemorative and Regular U.S. Gold Coins

A 1922 Saint-Gaudens gold Double Eagle Graded MS-64 by PCGS

Augustus Saint-Gaudens' $20.00 double-eagle first appeared in 1907 after a number of versions were made and was struck annually from 1907 thru 1933 at all three mints. The coin is a work of art and is considered the most attractive of all U.S. coins. It was struck in 90% gold backed by 10% copper and from the get-go was a highly popular with the public. After the great depression in October 1929 which deepened during the next four years, in 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt asked all citizens except coin collectors to return their gold coinage to be repaid in cash but allowed hobbyists to continue to save them. As a result, a large number of these coins are still available for a price. The author remembers attaining the most common date 1924 –P $20 piece graded MS-63 back in the 1990s when it cost just $600. He sold all his gold coins back in 1999 before moving to Augusta. Over the past two decades, he has acquired a few of these masterpieces including the 1922 example shown above. While quite costly then, gold has already increased in value during the past three months so it increased in value**.** He needed the piece in order to complete his **1922 date set** which ironically only included two other coins; the copper Lincoln cent and the Peace dollar coins struck that year.

Other Interesting Coins acquired in 2025

An 1829 Capped Bust dime graded XF-45 by PCGS

Towards the second half of 1828, the Closed Collar was installed in the creating of the dime to regulate the exact size of the dime's diameter which had been reduced from 18.8 mm to 18.5 mm. While the 1829 dime is considered a relatively common date, various die varieties produced for each date altered a specific coin's value. For example, in 1829 there were three date sizes for the dime; the small size 10 C, the medium size and the larger size, the last named shown above and the scarcest of the three. There was also a single die variety showing a ***curled base 2*** on the date which is extremely rare. The coin shown above is extraordinarily attractive for the grade and was required earlier in 2025 locally. While certified only XF--45, it has the sharpness in eye appeal of a AU-58 graded coin.

An 1877-P Trade dollar graded MS-62 by PCGS

The Trade dollar was a sort of unconditional U.S. coin from the get-go. Originally used to replaced the Liberty Seated silver dollar that was struck as far back as 1840 based on the 1,000 Gobrecht dollars of 1836, by 1873, after a small number of Liberty Seated dollars were produced, the Trade dollar w type replaced it with most being used for trade with the east Asian nations, mainly China rather than for our own country's use, so most of them we sent to the orient. Those that remained here were legal tender up to $5.00 and only large businesses probably used them since the average U.S. citizen living in the last quarter of the 19th century seldom acquired our silver coinage beyond the half-dollar. The coin was never popular with the U.S. citizens however, even though the design type is highly original and interesting artistically, having been created by our 5th Chief Engraver, William Barber, the father of Charles Barber who would replace him in 1880 after his death on August 31, 1879. The 1877 Trade dollar was struck at three different Mints; 9,159,000 at the San Francisco Mint, just 534,000 at the Carson City Mint and 3,039,200 at the Philadelphia Mint like the example shown directly above, so the date is available for a price.

A 1904 Barber dime graded MS-65 by PCGS

Upon enlarging the page to 150%, the coin above displays a fine example of the Barber dime that our citizens used from 1892 thru 1916. The clarity of the coin is both attractive as well as simple. Surrounding the Bust of Miss Liberty on the obverse is the legend, **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** and beneath at the center is the date, **1904**. On the reverse, engraver, Charles Barber simply continued to use the same type that appeared on the late date Liberty Head coinage first employed in 1859 by James Barton Longacre who was our 4th Chief Engraver at the time, so technically, when it came to a new coin type beginning in 1892, Barber just created a different version of Miss Liberty on the obverse; ***period***! In 1904 the Philadelphia Mint produced 14,600,357 dimes compared with the 8l0,000 struck at the San Francisco Mint so the 1904-P dime is far more affordable than the 1904-S. If the dime on the right column looks slightly smaller than the Capped Bust dime on the lower right side it is due too the reduction of the coin from 18.5 mm to 17.9 mm which occurred way back in 1837 when the Liberty Seated type replaced the Capped bust dime.

More Interesting U.S. Gold coins

Another dazzling $20.00 double Eagle; this one dated 1928

About three months before this was being written, the writer happened to spot another attractive gold Saint-Gaudens $20 Double Eagle in one of the local coin dealer's shops. This one was a **2018 dated gem** which he also needed to complete his 1928 date set. Gold had been rising since earlier in 2025 and it appeared that it wasn't going to stop, so he decided to acquire this extremely attractive looking 1928 dated Saint-Gaudens $20.00 example which despite having a reported original mintage of 8,816,000 was not as common as the 1924 or 1927 double eagles since many these were probably melted in greater numbers during the great depression. According to PCGS's Coin Facts, the date is still fairly common graded up to MS-63 but much scarcer if graded MS-64 and higher. As a result, the coin shown directly above that was certified MS-64 by PCGS is not as common as the 1924 and 1927 Twenty dollar gold pieces.

A few months later after acquiring the coin, gold rose again from $3,500 an ounce to a high of $4,200 an ounce, so the purchase was rightly timed by the writer. Collecting-wise as a result, the 1928 Saint-Gaudens Double Eagle was the last U.S. coin denomination he needed for his 1928 year set; another reason he was so eager to acquire the coin shown directly above.

A 1929 $2.50 Indian Head Quarter eagle graded MS -63 by NGC

Earlier in the year, the collector came across this 1929 $2.50 Indian Head quarter eagle; **the last year of its type originally created by Engraver Bela Lyn Pratt** and first released in 1908. The coin had an odd life being struck in consecutive years from **1908 thru 1915**, then not again until **1925 thru 1929**. After 1915, none were struck by the Philadelphia mint until 1926 which produced the $2.50 quarter-eagle in consecutive years thru 1929. The mintage for the 1929 quarter eagle 532,000 and is considered a common date, so collectors interested in acquiring U.S. gold coinage prior to 1933 should have no difficulty obtaining an example. Apparently, due to the Great Depression that began in October of 1929, gold coinage was no loner produced in either the $2.50 quarter eagle or $5.00 half-eagle denominations.

An Entertaining group of War nickels

A uncirculated Jefferson War Nickel Set from 1942 thru 1945

Originally the Jefferson nickel--first coined in 1938--was made in .750 copper and .250 nickel just like the previous five-cent nickel types, but shortly after 1942, the combination of metals changed drastically to .560 copper, .350 silver and .90 manganese because nickel was more needed for the war effort. This arrangement lasted thru the end of the war in 1945. In 1946, the original copper to nickel arranging returned; but the three previous war years group of nickels has remained popular with numerous collectors and the author became one of them when he saw the set at the American Coin Exchange in Martinez, GA. The set was relatively inexpensive retailing for $125.00. If one current collector parents or grandparents collected a similar shortly after they first were released at the end of the war, the cons would cost the sum of the whole would cost fifty-five cents.

The nickels shown above had to be reduced in size slightly in order to fit the column but if the reader magnifies the page to 150%, the coins will appear closer to their actual size although the features while larger appear less clear due to the flexibility of the lighting when the camera took the photo. When it comes to interesting U.S. coinage, all of the foregoing examples are affordable if one saves up a bit.

STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB

Regular Meeting Thursday, November 6, 2025

Minutes

President Kelly Nordeen called the regular meeting of the coin club to order at 6:45 p.m. in the Oh Mie Stelle Bakery on Pine Log Road. There were 20 members and 2 visitors attending in person, and 2 members viewing online .

Glen Sanders won the door prize, a quarter-ounce silver Britannia.

Jim Sproull announced that the Augusta Coin Show was coming up the 21st & 22nd of this month.

The Midlands Coin Club holds their coin show in Columbia on Nov 7-8. Dec 12-13 is the Myrtle Beach Coin Show.

JJ Engel made a motion which Sharon Smoot seconded to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the October meeting. The motion passed unanimously. A copy of the October Meeting Minutes will be on file with the other club records and the Minutes are also reported in the Club newsletter.

Chuck Goergen reported that the club's treasury had a balance of $3190.

Old Business:

Steve Kuhl reminded us of our club's upcoming show on March 7th 2026. He requested that anyone going to other shows in the region please help us advertise our show by taking flyers and business cards to put on information tables at those other shows. Steve indicated that we'd be doing advertising efforts similar to last year, including at the YMCA gyms.

The club's annual Christmas dinner will be at the Columbus Club the first Thursday in December in place of our regular meeting. RSVP with payment is due to Sharon Smoot by Nov 14th . Everyone is welcome to bring a desert to share with the group.

New Business:

The club's January meeting will be held on January 8th , shifted a week to avoid New Year's Day.

Steve Kuhl requested that anyone that is developing a future program for our club please send an email to the club address (sjcsracoinclub@gmail.com), so we can plan future meetings.

Show & Tells:

Willie Simon's guest shared a Morgan silver dollar he'd obtained while visiting Tombstone Arizona last Spring. He'd wanted to obtain a coin that was likely to be made of silver from Tombstone – and the local dealer indicated that would be most likely with New Orleans mint coinage from 1884, and he was able to get one from 1888.

Gene Belair shared an encased coin, a Jefferson nickel, which was encased in wood from a tree. He also had recently received a Tuskegee airman quarter, which he gave to our youngest member.

Arno Safran shared an 1857 flying eagle cent, graded MS-63.

Steve Kuhl shared a 500 billion mark note issued by Germany in the fall of 1923 during the period of hyperinflation following World War I.

Typhany Nordeen shared items she'd obtained from Bruce's World Coins at the SCNA convention in Greenville. They were coins from New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Australia.

The Program:

Steve Kuhl presented a program tiled – **We all Remember our First VAM** which , featured Steve's favorite, **the VAM 14.4 1878-P Morgan with 8 tail feathers and concave reverse**. Steve briefly touched on the origin of the VAM cataloging system which identifies over 3000 varieties of Morgan dollars, and mentioned the three-volume set of books that has been updated to include all varieties. The name VAM was derived from the initials of Leroy Van Allen & A. George Mallis, the primary numismatists, researchers, and authors of the catalog. Although 3000 varieties have been identified, only around 10% of them are considered significant enough for the grading services (PCGS & NGC) to recognize.

(Minutes Continued on page 5, column 1)

STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB
Regular Meeting Thursday, November 6, 2025
Minutes (Continued)

The Program:

(continued from page 4, column 2)

Michael Fey is currently continuing the research and cataloging started by Van Allen and Mallis.

The varieties are based on either major or minor differences in the dies used to strike coins. The more significant varieties include whether the eagle has 7 or 8 tail feathers, whether the arrow shafts are straight or slant, or whether the eagle's breast is flat or rounded. Minor varieties may be based on die cracks or chips that developed as the dies aged.
Steve shared a very useful website for researching VAM's which was surprisingly hard to find even when searching the internet for VAM World.

The website is at located at
http://ec2-18-216-53-178.us-east
2.compute.amazonaws.com/wiki/Home

Steve passed around his favorite VAM, VAM 14.4. This coin variety is exceptional because the reverse of the coin is noticeably concave and the silver is brilliant with a deep, mirror, proof-like (DMPL) field.

Steve was given a Certificate of Appreciation for his well researched program.

The Monthly club Auction:

Jim Sproull, assisted by Steve Kuhl, conducted the monthly club auction.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Mullaney, Secretary

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