

Cumberland Coins

The Volunteer Coin Club Newsletter January, 2017

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will on Tuesday January 10th starting at 6:30. The meeting is will be held at the 127 Senior Center on Highway 127 (Main Street) South of town. Doors open at 6:00.

Happy New Year. Our club is growing, the meetings are becoming more interesting, and the raffle and door prizes are better. If you haven't been attending regularly you may be pleasantly surprised if you come.

The membership year starts in a couple of months. I think the Treasurer will be ready to start collecting 2017 dues if you want to pay them. This month we will have the usual business meeting, show and tell, raffle, and member prize drawing.

Coin Lore

A Godly Ancient Coin

by Bill Groom

Among the earliest, ancient bronze coins to portray an image of Jesus Christ were the Byzantine *folles* (*follis*, being the singular for this denomination). The image of Christ had appeared on some ancient gold coins, under the rule of Justinian back in the seventh century. The bronze *follis*, was then a common, circulating coin that any average citizen might possess. Thus, the significance of the message it carried was spread far and wide.

Pictured below is a bronze *follis*, dated between 1028 and 1041 A.D. Likely minted in Constantinople, note that some detail has been lost in circulation. Jesus appears on the obverse, holding gospels with both hands. The reverse legend in Greek, surrounding a cross, is "*Jesus Christ, King of Kings.*"



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Nowadays, one can only imagine the impact that these coins had upon their ancient possessors. The religious and political message is a powerful one. Earthly emperors and kings would bow to a Divine King a humbling message, indeed. Now, what present day history buff or Christian wouldn't like to own one of these and tell the story?

In today's coin market, decent specimens of the follis can be had in the \$20-\$40 range. Collectors need to be wary of counterfeits when looking at high grade specimens. The counterfeiting of ancient coins was done as long as two or three hundred years ago in order to provide wealthy collectors with hard to locate specimens. Fortunately, folles (plural) are plentiful and less likely to be counterfeited in average grades.

Current Events

I saw this article Tuesday in the Chattanooga Times Free Press. Most of you probably know about the experimental glass cent (not penny as the paper called it), but I don't think I knew that it was made in Tennessee. I also didn't know that there was only one unbroken specimen, if the owner is correct. The coin sold yesterday (1/5/17) in the Heritage auction at the FUN show for \$70,500.

Here is the article reformatted with the text and pictures from the TFP.

Tennessee- made glass penny up for auction

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — An experimental penny made of glass during World War II is about to be auctioned.

Owner Roger Burdette said the coin is the only known unbroken glass penny in existence.

During the war, copper was needed for ammunition. The U.S. Mint authorized tests that included making uncirculated pennies from other metals, plastic and rubber. The Blue Ridge Glass Co. in Kingsport, Tenn., made experimental pennies using tempered glass.



Roger Burdette, owner of this 1943 glass penny, said it's one of only two known to have survived and the other one is broken.

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Burdette said the impressions on the coins weren't precise, the weight and size weren't uniform and the coins developed sharp edges that cut fingers. He said they were likely destroyed. He said only one other glass penny exists, and it is broken.

The Mint made 1943 pennies from low-grade steel covered in zinc.

Heritage Auctions in Fort Lauderdale is conducting Thursday's bidding.

Area Coin Shows

January 14 **Knoxville**; Coin Show, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike (I-40 exit #378).

February 3-4 **Knoxville**; 53rd Annual Coin Show, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike (I-40 exit #378).

February 18 **Cookeville**; Coin Show, Upper Cumberland Coin Club. Hyder-Burkes Pavilion, 2390 Gainesboro Grade

March 3-5 **Chattanooga**; Tennessee State Numismatic Society (TSNS). Spring Coin Show. Camp Jordan Arena, I-75, Exit 1.

April 21-23 Dalton, GA; 53rd Anniversary Georgia Numismatic Association, Northwest Georgia Trade & Convention Center, Dalton, GA, I-75, Exit 333.

For more information on some of these shows see <http://www.tsns.org/Tennessee Club Shows.html>

This Month's Raffle Prizes

		Est. Grade
1880	Morgan Dollar	XF
1028-41 A.D	Byzantine Follis (1st Bronze coin w/Christ)	Avg
1907-D	Barber Half	G+
1932	Washington Quarter	AU+
1903	Liberty Nickel	VF+
1930-S, 1934 & 1937-S	Buffalo Nickels	VF-XF

Door Prize

1936 Germany 5 Mark
(Silver with Swastika)
(XF)

Note: The second item is the subject of this month's Coin Lore article.