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ENS is a member of:

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✓ Canadian Association of
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(h.m) ✓ Canadian Paper Money Society *

✓ Classical & Medieval
Numismatic Society

Edmonton Numismatic Society

January 2003

Volume 50 Issue 1

Celebrate our 50th Anniversary Year- Sign up a new member Today!

DATE: Wed. Jan. 8, 2003 TIME: 7:00 p.m. door opens, 7:30 Meeting

PLACE: PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA, 12845 - 102 Ave.,

(Use Archives entrance to Main Floor Lecture Rm. P138)

PROGRAM: Talk on Canadian Communion Tokens, Show & Tell

January Meeting Agenda

Welcome to the first meeting of the new year and the Club's 50th Anniversary Year! We'll kick off this year's meeting with a Show & Tell. Members are encouraged to bring in new or interesting items to share with the members. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Markus Molenda who will be talking on Canadian Tokens. Markus has been doing a lot of research on this topic and will provide some incite into this interesting area of numismatics.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**DON'T FORGET TO
RENEW YOUR**

MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

December Meeting

Minutes

Thirty-three (33) members and guests were in attendance at today's meeting. Dan welcomed everyone and thanked them for bringing in the goodies to share with the group. Welcome was extended to new members in attendance. Dan read a letter from the ANA in response to our donation of \$100 US to the ANA Building Fund. This donation was made in commemoration of Ken Prophet. A plaque will be placed on an exhibit in the building. We also received a letter from Barry

McIntyre, of the Bank of Canada. He indicates the collection will soon be on the Web in it's entirety. Ron Darbyshire gave his Kids-On-Coins report with great news about a Junior Coin Club. (see following report) Our guest speaker for the evening was Mark Bink. Mark is an Ancient collector, who's hobby is obtaining ancient hordes and cleaning them up to see what he has purchased.

Most of the coinage he has cleaned have been from buried finds, that appear to be too far gone to salvage. He has been able to clean a good percentage of his finds and obtain good clean coins. He brought some of his equipment with him and proceeded to clean some up while

he was giving his talk. This was a very interesting and informative talk which we have never done before. Thanks for a great demonstration Mark!

Following a short break, we drew for the 7 door prizes. Honourariums were also presented to the executive for all their work for the past year which consisted of a 2002 silver dollar for the Executive, and 2002 Mint Set for the Directors. After this we had our numismatic dona-

**SEE THE BACK PAGE
FOR OUR 2003 SHOWS**

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CMA

once again, and raised \$275 for the Christmas Bureau. Thanks to all the members who brought in items to auction off. The meeting adjourned and some members met after the meeting once again at Boston Pizza.

Donations to Library

Thanks are extended to Don Kabal for his donation to the Library of the book "Amphipolis—Civic Coinage in Silver & Gold (Ancients). Also, Dennis Nash donated a US 15th Edition Red Book and 1977 World Coin Book. Thanks to Ray Neiman as well for a whole box of books and magazines.

NEW MEMBERS

On behalf of the executive of the ENS, we would like to extend our welcome to the following new member. If there are no objections, he will become a member in good standing.

John Lindsay #481 Edmonton

Congratulations and welcome to the Edmonton Numismatic Society. A membership card will be forwarded in due course, with an upcoming newsletter.

Nominations for Election 2003

Once again, the ENS has put forward a full slate of executive officers for 2003. The following is the list of nominated / elected officers:

President –Dan Gosling

Vice-President - Ray Neiman

Secretary– Michael Schneider

Treasurer– John Callaghan

Directors

Marc Bink, Terry Cheesman, Maurice Doll, Ron Darbyshire, Bob Eriksson, James Kindrake, Albert Meyer, Markus Molenda, David Peter, Jules Rach, Michael Ridell, Lub Wojtiw

Due to the Clubs 50th Anniversary year, it was moved, seconded and approved to have 12 Directors for 2003.

Thanks to all who let their name stand and welcome to the new members of the executive. We hope to have a busy 50th anniversary year!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE

Membership renewals are due and payable anytime in January and February 2003. Renew your membership today and support your club. You can use the renewal

form from the December newsletter, or send in your renewal by mail or at a meeting. The club subsidizes many events throughout the year, and our cost for these functions and the newsletter mail out far exceeds the \$10 regular or \$12 family membership. Thanks for your continued support.

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENS

In the fall of 1953 a small group of men met in Edmonton to form the ENS. Application was made to the CNA in the same year. In celebration of this event, the ENS would like to encourage all members to participate at meetings and shows this year, as well as encourage new members to join. This is a very dynamic and active club. We will be once again be having 2 shows this year in March and November. (see Flyer enclosed) The March show will be a "Coin Show" only and we have a few tables available for dealers. The fall show will be our official 50th Anniversary Show, to coincide with our fall inaugural meeting in 1953. We are encouraging members to provide suggestions to the executive for special events during the year and at the 2 shows. Perhaps a special guest can be brought in to speak at a meeting or show, donation to a numismatic organization, creation of new club displays etc. Please bring your suggestions to the meetings or any member of the executive. Your ideas are encouraged and will be seriously considered.

KIDS-ON-COINS Starts Junior Coin Club

Congratulations to Ron Darbyshire for another milestone in his Kids-on-Coins program in Edmonton. Since October 1 of last year, Ron has spoken to many Edmonton schools between grade 5 and 8. Ron figures he has spoken to about 800 kids to date. In November of last year, a local teacher asked if Ron could set up a Coin Club in their school. On Nov. 27, 2002, the first meeting was held with 20 students attending between 3:15 and 5:00 pm. at Westmount Junior High. They will be electing a President, Vice-President and Secretary. Ron will guide them for the first year in operation. Congratulation on your great work Ron. Members who are willing to help Ron with this new club can contact him through the Executive of the ENS.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL AND LETS MAKE OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY THE BEST EVER!

“Saving Your Slabs with Common Sense”

by H. Robert Campbell

Recent attention in the numismatic press has been directed to the ongoing debate over whether or not coins may continue to tone after encapsulation in the plastic slabs in use by the leading grading companies. Mr. Weimar White, numismatist and chemist, has related the results of a detailed and technically superior study to determine the permeability of slabs and the potential for long-term toning of coins while remaining encapsulated. His conclusions in the July 8th edition of *Coin World* have shown the numismatic community that the smallest amounts of contamination in or around the “slab” can have a possible detrimental effect on the coin within.

I believe that the results of Mr. White’s perceptive study will form the groundwork for enhanced survivability of coins in their original (untoned) state, provided a certain knowledge base has been developed within the individual collector concerning the storage of his or her collection. The initial fallacy that must be dismissed is that coin encapsulation itself, although “ultrasonically sealed,” it is not air tight. The coin pictured illustrates this point. This 1964-D dime, Mint State “sample” in a PCGS holder was artificially toned chemically through the slab, more than two years ago by coin doctors in an experiment to see if they could color a coin that is already encapsulated. The misunderstanding of certified coin holders being air tight by collectors has not been necessarily encouraged by the grading services, as none of them have claimed to be air tight, but it is perceived in the collecting fraternity. Slabs are susceptible to contamination in a variety of ways, and many of these potential contamination sources may be eliminated by an astute collector. The only way to totally prevent coins from toning would be to subject them to a vacuum, or in other words, take oxygen completely away. I stated this publicly at the 1994 Detroit ANA Convention while speaking in a Numismatic Theater presentation on “How to detect artificial toning,” and also for the past ten years explaining to my clients on preservation techniques. The following information will help numismatists to understand the slabbing and toning process and may assist in preservation.

The plastics used by grading services, although inert, are used in encapsulations for the primary purpose of security as opposed to preservation. Ever since the worry that a coin grade may drop due to raw handling of coins after they were certified with old ANACS photo certification certificates, the slab has been the only way to possibly guarantee a grade may not change due to mishandling of rare coins. PCGS is currently using polystyrene, NGC uses acrylic and ANACS uses polycarbonate. These plastics are very commonplace and appropriate for uses such as slabbing as they are very tamper-resistant, however as we now know they are pervious to outside contamination. ANACS polycarbonate is commonly known by the trade name, Lexan, has the advantage of high impact-resistance. NGC acrylic is commonly known by the trade name Lucite or Plexiglass. Many of us have also used products from Capital Plastics, which although not intended for security, are inert as they are acrylic and polycarbonate.

The single greatest disadvantage for the usage of these plastics in the encapsulation process is that all plastics are permeable to some extent. No sealing process can forever stop all contaminants in gaseous form from passing through the plastic. Time, humidity and temperature can eventually work contaminants into a semi-permeable plastic, such as those used by the major certification services.

Plastics have several advantages in slabbing uses. The polystyrene used by PCGS welds the best, but the first generation holders used by PCGS were the easiest to contaminate as demonstrated by Mr. White's testing. However, PCGS current holders I feel are the least susceptible of current slabs to contaminants. Polystyrene is also the clearest type of plastic of the three major services. The polycarbonate used by ANACS is the most shock-resistant and may offer the best protection against a crushing blow. Safety-glasses are often made of the same material, which offers eye protection in commercial uses. The inserts that hold the coins used by all three major services is polyethylene or polypropylene, which is softer than the surrounding slab shell and safer for the coin. These materials also are semi-permeable in time.

Three major ways contaminants may reach the coin inside of slabs are:

1. The holder may be infected by contaminants passing around the seal, if the seal is not perfect.
2. The holder may be contaminated through the semi-permeable plastic itself.
3. The air inside the slab or any other solid foreign object that might be introduced in and around the coin may be a contaminant at the time of sealing.

Branching from these three main areas of concern, we see many other potential problems, some of which could be considered major while others might be of minuscule importance.

As we do not know the industry secrets of the major services, we can only speculate about some of the possible sources of contamination in slabs. The first possibility could be sulphur in all paper products used in or around the slabs. For example, we do not know if the services are or have been using, archival-type sulphur less paper for slab identification inserts. All paper has sulphur in it from the pulping process, and it takes a special process to pull it out. All new generation slabs separate the paper from the coin, but earlier versions did not necessarily do this. Even though they may be separated by a small distance, will the sulphur that is in the paper product transfer contaminated gases from one area to another? NGC was the last to separate the paper from the coin compartment with their new third-generation holder.

Contaminants also may be brought to the coin directly, not in a gaseous form. The fingers of graders have natural oils and grease on them. It would be very interesting to learn if the graders at major services wear gloves, and in fact, is it a perceived necessity by the services themselves to require the wearing of gloves? At times in the past, I have noticed PCGS has had a small sporadic problem with hair in encapsulations while NGC had accidental paper chip contaminants remain after encapsulation. One of my favorite toned example coins, looks like it has a potato chip or dry skin flake which is spotting the coin it is now encapsulated with! The answer to this is to prepare and slab coins in the equivalent of a "clean room" environment such as those used in the semiconductor industry. With large conventions now dedicated to advancing technology of "clean room" environments, it would be interesting to note what if anything is being done in this regard by the major services. We are not informed about what happens when a coin disappears behind the doors. Our coins are unquestionably secure, but are they free of possible contamination?

Cleaning and oxidation is an ongoing problem, and perhaps currently result in more dissatisfied numismatists than any other problem in the industry. Although the services do a superb job in detecting heavy cleaning problems on coins, a constant battle is being waged

between the advent of new cleaning techniques and the services' ability to detect the problem. But in addition to the potential for post-cleaning contamination caused by the submitter of the coin, recent information concerning the cleaning done at a customer request by PCGS and NGC has called into question the type and quality of cleaning done by the grading services and what effects this may have on an encapsulated coin. As an example, one of the most common substances for the "dipping" of a coin is thiourea, referred to as "Jeweluster" in the coin trade industry. Thiourea, is presumed to be used by the grading services who clean coins on request of their customers. Do they have qualified people to perform this task? Are they skilled in proper preparation and rinsing techniques? Do they allow contaminants or cross dipping of metals into the thiourea solution? Another common example of a dipping solution being used for counterfeit or surface alteration detection is trichlorotrifluoroethane, which until recently was marketed under the trade name "Dissolve." Improper rinsing of this substance could be harmful to any coin. This compound comes in several grades of purity. If a service or numismatist is using "Dissolve," presumably a "technical grade" (85%-95% pure) of the compound, a proportionally small amount of residual contaminants may remain, which could possibly harm the coin. A "spectral grade" (99.9999% pure) of the same compound eliminates the contaminants and just necessitates a proper job of rinsing to prevent future contaminant damage in the slab or holder. When grading services dip, what are they using?

Lastly in slab contamination can be caused by coin doctoring which may pass through the services. Artificially-toned and even naturally toned coins may continue to change while in the slab, possibly resulting in the mottled and ugly look of some examples we see in holders. A small percentage of toning is done by professional coin doctors, by the vast majority of negative effects are caused by improper rinsing of thiourea. Remember, the coin doctor doesn't care what the long-term damage is that he or she causes, and the neophyte who dips doesn't understand the ramifications, but in either case, the slab will show the handiwork long after it has passed the services. I have personally watched coins change in seconds after cracking and removing from a slab. Copper and silver coins both demonstrated dramatic changes in color from the time it takes to crack it out of the slab and place the coin in a customer's album. I have also noticed changes in the color of customers' coins after they have picked up a coin that has been in layaway for a few months. The coin has gone from blast-white to mottled while in the holder, not as a result of the grading services but as a result of improper rinsing or cleaning prior to submission. Being on the front lines of this problem has never been something I am comfortable with.

Common sense dictates that we take better care of the coins we hold for future generations. It is only common sense to use a silica gel pack, found at a photography store, near your slabs to remove moisture from the air around your coins (but not near paper money). Common sense also dictates that slabbing is by far the most secure method, and possibly the best method of storing your coins, as long as you are aware of potential problems that can be caused by contaminants.

As numismatists, we look forward to continued information and knowledge such as that given to us by Mr. White. His conclusions will benefit all who consider the preservation of coins in slabs, including the certification services themselves. Further work in this area will result in better-preserved examples of numismatic history for generations to come!

“FOOLING WITH MOTHER NATURE”

by H. Robert Campbell

The growing phenomenon of “coin doctoring” has emerged as one of the greatest challenges to numismatists. The doctors who alter and adjust surfaces of coins do so not to benefit the hobby of numismatics but rather to further their own agenda of a perceived enhanced grade in order to profit at the expense of the collector. Unfortunately, even though a doctor cures a malady, their role has not been to cure the market’s ailment, but rather to spread an epidemic: the alarming proliferation of coins that have been chemically treated or otherwise tampered with to make them appear better- and more valuable – than they really are. In the early 1990’s, a new realm of sophisticated toning, a so-called “second-generation” technology has made the task of detection much more difficult. The latest graduating class of doctors have honed their skills to a new level, using changes in chemistry, temperature, and surface manipulation in order to open a “Pandora’s Box” of difficulties for collectors and dealers.

Knowledge of key factors in the toning process will reveal fundamental differences in the look of natural and artificially toned coins. The appearance of a coin toned by natural environmental factors differs in slight but critical ways from the artificial changes wrought by the intervention of larcenous profiteers who are quite literally, fooling with Mother Nature in order to perpetrate a fraud. Natural toning, for instance, can greatly enhance the appearance of a coin in the eyes of many observers by embellishing its original color with dazzling rainbow hues. Artificial toning, by contrast, may be less attractive and is used all too often to conceal important flaws that could lower a coin’s value if they were visible. In the case of second-generation toning, a doctor may take advantage of a coin’s technical grade, increasing the eye-appeal by one of the major ways in which coins are doctored. Chemicals are not used to remove something from these coins, but instead are used to hide or obscure a problem or to increase grade through enhancement by coloration. These chemicals are applied through air transfer or liquid transfer, but both methods have the dual motives of enhancing eye-appeal and supplanting a true grade of a coin with an artificially enhanced one should the

doctor be successful. The air-transfer method relies on chemicals delicately altering the natural surface in a gaseous state. The increased density of these chemical agents in an ambient atmosphere react with coin surfaces much like natural agents would, although the doctors accelerate the toning timeline. Liquid transfer techniques are much bolder in nature and encompass many of the second-generation toning techniques that now challenge numismatists. In this method, the chemical agents are applied directly to the coin and chemically alter the appearance as they react with certain areas of the fields or devices. These so-called "demon Michelangelos" attempt to replicate the effects of nature without the requisite time or conditions to attain the look of an original piece. The coin doctors attempt to cover problems (first-generation) or enhance color and eye appeal (second-generation toning).

SIX CATEGORIES OF TONING

Toning may be broken down into six fundamental categories that delineate the type of natural and artificial processes. These important categories are:

1. **Original/Natural Toning**
The result of Mother Nature acting upon the surface of a coin over an extended period of time without the intentional adjustment of the environment by an outside agency.
2. **Intentional/Artificial Toning**
Typified by first-generation toning applied to cover coin flaws and damage.
3. **Accidental/Natural Toning**
Occurs when a coin is dropped by a vent or heat source that may accelerate the natural processes through artificial but accidental means.
4. **Intentional/Natural Toning**
The timeline of the toning is unknown to the coin doctor. A coin in this category may be inserted into an old holder, such as a Wayne Raymond type, activated by the application of moisture and heat, and then allowed to tone purposefully in this new environment.
5. **Accidental/Artificial Toning**
A coin may be improperly rinsed after a light cleaning/dipping.
6. **Controlled/Accelerated Artificial Toning**
Second-generation examples where toning is applied in order to increase market grade. Here the timeline is basically known by the "con-artist."

Doctors will particularly target coins with far superior luster in order to strip off the outer surfaces, allowing the toning to appear to mesh with the coin naturally when applied. The resulting doctored coin retains much of the original luster yet the toning appears very deceptive. This toning is typical of first-generation where the coin's flaws are covered by the addition of color. Second-generation toning, applied in order to improve market grade and thus the coin's valuation may have the appearance of "circus" colors, highly fluorescent and dramatic examples produced in order to raise the grade into higher and more valuable realms. This toning generally is not applied to cover flaws.

In summary, the ongoing dilemma faced by the collector and dealer of trading in coins toned by unknown factors will continue. In fact, this dark avenue of numismatics has the potential to be one of the greatest problems ever to face the numismatic industry. If you feel safe from the potential damages that could be incurred by this black art, look carefully at your prized acquisitions. If your coins change color while in your possession, whether in a certified holder or not, you can safely assume they have been doctored. Most all changes due to altered surfaces will be evident within three years. The doctoring line is crossed when you are comfortable with the result of fooling with Mother Nature and you can predict the result with a high degree of accuracy. The second-generation doctor's motive is to deceive a professional grader. Therefore if you know the timeline, **you're on the wrong side of the fence!**

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EDMONTON'S MONEY SHOW

**CELEBRATING THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY YEAR OF THE
EDMONTON NUMISMATIC
SOCIETY**

March 29 - 30, & Nov. 8 - 9, 2003

*The Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Gateway
Boulevard, Edmonton, Alberta*



Coin Show Hours:

Saturday - 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Sunday - 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Up to 30 coin dealers at 50 tables with millions of
dollars in inventory! Displays for public viewing including
Canadian Decimal Coinage, Ancients, Paper Money and More!*

GOLD COIN AND OTHER DOOR PRIZE DRAWS!

The following Dealers attended the November show:

1. National Pride Coins & Stamp; 2. Loose Change, St. Michael; 3. Classic Cash, Sylvan Lake; 4. West Edmonton Coin & Stamp; 5. Collins Coins, Sherwood Park; 6. Canada Coin & Paper Money, St. Albert; 7. Pack Rats Antiques Coins & Stamps, Morrinville; 8. OK Coin & Stamp, Kelowna, BC; 9. Joe Bardy Coins Edm.; 10. Kensington Coin & Stamp Edm.; 11. Lub Wojtiw Paper Money Edm.; 12. Calgary Coin Gallery, Calgary; 13. Diverse Equities, Calgary; 14. Lucky Dollar Coins, Edm.; 15. Kameron Coins, Edm.; 16. M.J. Daniels, Calgary; 17. Newcan Coins, Cards & Collectibles, Kenora, Ont.; 18. Ed Jackson Coins, Edm.; 19. D.B. & D Collectables, Edm.; 20. Ed & Norms Coins, Edm.; 21. Michael Riddell Coins & Stamps, Edm.; 22. George Manz Coins, Regina; 23. Lorne Paydli, Bruno, Saskatchewan. **ADDITIONAL TABLES ARE AVAILABLE FOR COIN DEALERS AT THE MARCH SHOW!**



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CAN JOIN US FOR
OUR "KIDS-ON-
COINS" PROGRAM!**

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Door
16 & under FREE!**



**Sponsored by the
Edmonton Numismatic Society**

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