

Collectors Forum

A group of collectors is meeting on the fourth Monday of each month at the North Richland Hills Library. This is a casual meeting with no specific format, but with a topic for each meeting (suggestions are welcome) and the conversation is allowed to flow freely. The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 27th.

This meeting is open to anyone interested, and is not associated with NETCC. There are no dues, no membership rolls, just fun. If you or someone you know is interested, contact Kevin Kell: kevinkell@1scom.net.

Rhode Island Commemorative

The Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Tercentenary Committee was created in 1931 to honor the 300th anniversary of the landing of Roger Williams in 1636 and founding of Providence. Seeking funding of celebrations planned for 1936, the Committee petitioned Congress for a commemorative coin. In a bill which included the Hudson, New York coin as well, the Rhode Island half dollar was approved in 1935. 50,000 coins were authorized, and the Committee requested that these be struck at all three mints.

The prime mover behind the founding of Providence was Roger Williams. He immigrated to Massachusetts in 1631 as a Puritan minister. However, his unconventional beliefs of religious freedom and separation of church and state soon landed him in hot water with the Puritan society and legal system. He also dared to suggest that native people should be paid for their land. Banished in 1635, Williams purchased a parcel of land from the Narragansett Indians the following year and established his own settlement called Providence (a tribute to God's goodwill). His policy of religious freedom soon drew those of like mind, and additional nearby communities appeared. Williams returned to England in 1643 where he gained recognition for the tiny colony.

Williams' beliefs would later be reflected in Rhode Island's refusal to approve the Constitution until the Bill of Rights was ratified (including the First Amendment).

The obverse features a scene of John Williams in a canoe, holding a bible, and greeting a Native American who stands on the shore extending a hand. The "sun of religious liberty" appears in the background. Inscriptions read, "In God We Trust", "Rhode Island", "1636", "1936", and "Liberty". The reverse design features an anchor and shield motif, loosely copying the state seal. The inscriptions read "United States of America", "Half Dollar", "Hope", and "E Pluribus Unum". These designs were struck in low relief, but with sharply designed elements that resemble a woodcut.

HOPE was shorthand for the



actual motto, IN TE DOMINE SPERAMUS or "In There, O Lord, we hope." Salmon Chase later used this motto by changing "hope" to "trust" and placing it on US coins.

The coins were issued by the Rhode Island and Providence Plantations Tercentenary and available at local banks and Grant's Hobby Shop in Providence. The cost was \$1 each locally and \$1.50 for the coins sold through the mail. However, collectors ordering by mail were outraged when told the entire mintage had been sold out the same day it was offered. In reality, dealer Grant had plenty of unsold pieces, and began selling them at inflated prices.

Rhode Island Half Dollars today are fairly abundant in the lower Mint State grades; the key issue in higher grades is the 1936-S. Luster of these coins ranges from frosty (whether dull or brilliant) to semi-prooflike.

Special Meeting Activity Calendar

- April** – Donation auction
- May** – Quiz Night
- June** – Youth Night
- July** – Weenie Roast
- September** – Show and Tell Night
- November** – Veteran's night, Officer/Director elections
- December** – Christmas party

We need volunteers to give programs in 2017. Contact Kevin Kell if you have an interest.

Upcoming Local Coin Shows

- February 3-5** – Cowtown Coin Show, Forest Hill Civic/Convention Center. \$3.
- March 17-19** – Texas Coin Show, Grapevine Convention Center. \$3 or free with NETCC membership.
- March 31-April 2** – Fort Worth Coin Club Coin Show, Forest Hill Civic/Convention Center. \$3.
- April 7-8** – Waco Coin Club Coin Show, Bellmead Civic Center, Bellmead. \$2.
- April 21-23** – Texas Coin Show, Grapevine Convention Center. \$3 or free with NETCC membership.
- April 29** – Collin County Coin Club Coin Show, Exit 40B, McKinney. Free.
- June 2-4** – TNA Coin and Currency Show, Arlington Convention Center. \$3 or free with TNA membership.

January New Members: Glenn Roberts, Joseph and Victoria Gerczak.

January First Time Visitors: Bruce Brinick.