

Collectors Forum

The collector forum resumes meeting on Monday, January 25th. This meeting is open to anyone interested. There are no dues, no membership rolls, just fun. If you or someone you know is interested, contact Kevin Kell: kevinkell@1scom.net.

Commemorative Seminar

In conjunction with the 2017 TNA show, Carl Stang will lead a class June 1-2 on collecting and grading classic commemoratives 1892-1954. Carl has taught this same class at the ANA Summer Seminars. Cost is \$75 which covers meals and refreshments on both days. The class is limited to the first 20 enrollees, so see Jack Gilbert to register at your earliest convenience.

Hawaii Sesquicentennial Commemorative

Due to the forthcoming 150th anniversary of Captain James Cook becoming the first European to reach the Hawaiian Islands, Hawaiian legislature asked the federal government to give the celebrations official status, and to have the armed forces participate. The legislature also requested that Washington invite the United Kingdom (Cook's home), and that it issue a half dollar and postage stamps in honor of the anniversary. The Cook Sesquicentennial Commission of Hawaii would then purchase the coins at face value and vend them to the public at a premium, using proceeds to purchase the Cook Memorial Collection. Congress promptly complied without opposition.

A local Hawaiian artist, Juliette May Fraser, produced sketches for the coin design. The Cook commission then asked Buffalo nickel designer James Earle Fraser (no relation) who would be most suitable to turn the sketches into plaster models; after several attempts, Chester Beach was selected.

The obverse depicts Captain James Cook. The words HALF DOLLAR are flanked by eight triangles, four on each side. These represent the eight largest volcanic islands of Hawaii. The designer's initials, CB, are found to the right of the bust base.



The reverse is based on a statue of King Kamehameha I of Hawaii that still stands in downtown Honolulu. The Hawaiian chieftain is in ceremonial dress surmounting the top of a hill, with his arm extended in greeting. The palm tree that rises above him is intended to signify romance. A Hawaiian village at Waikiki Beach with Diamond Head are behind him.

The mint coined 10,000 half dollars in June 1928, with 50 specially finished as sandblast proof pieces. Half were to be sold on the Hawaiian Islands, half reserved for orders from elsewhere (even though it is generally believed that most were distributed on the islands).

The Bank of Hawaii took charge of distribution on behalf of the Cook commission. Sales were brisk, and soon the supply was gone. Almost immediately pieces traded at a premium over the \$2 issue price, despite the fact that the original price charged was the highest of any commemorative half dollar up to that time.

Today, this coin is by far the most valuable classic silver commemorative. In addition, since many coins were purchased by non-collectors, poor handling created even more rarity in higher grades. Apparently, a group of 137 unsold pieces discovered in the Bank of Hawaii vault originally offered for sale to its employees and auctioned in 1986 make up the bulk of better pieces.

The sandblast proofs are listed for up to \$50,000 but none has recently been sold at auction.

It is recommended that buyers seek certified examples, as counterfeits are numerous.

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

- January 13-15** – Texas Coin Show, Grapevine Convention Center. \$3 or free with NETCC membership.
- January 21** – Texoma Coin Show, Exit 65, Denison. Free.
- 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.
- June 2-4** – TNA Coin and Currency Show, Arlington Convention Center. \$3 or free with TNA membership.

December New Members: None.

December First Time Visitors: Numerous, due to Christmas party.