

PCNS Minutes for October 25, 2023

The board meeting for October 25, 2023, was called to order via Zoom at 7:15 PM by President Jason Macario. In attendance were Secretary Charlie Catlett, Treasurer Stephen Huston, Vice President Bill Hyder, Governors Bob Somers and Ed Treuting, and Past President Dan Hipple. Governor Mike McDaniel sent his regrets in not being able to attend.

The minutes for the September meeting were approved.

Financial report: the reports were sent to board members prior to the meeting and were discussed.

Board of Governors 2024 election will be in December via Zoom. Jason asked if all present board members are willing to run for re-election or another position.

2024 Meeting Schedule issues: there are five Wednesdays in January, May, July, and October. After discussion, it was decided to leave those scheduled meetings on the fourth Wednesdays. The fourth Wednesday of December is Christmas day, so it was decided to hold our meeting on the third Wednesday in December 2024.

New membership applications have been received from Henry Goodman (Prineville, OR) and Claudia Kraehe (San Francisco)

Speakers: A speaker was still needed for the December meeting- see regular meeting notes.

New Business: None

Adjournment 7:26 PM

At 7:32 PM, general meeting #1290 was called to order. Present in addition to the members from the board meeting via Zoom were Charlie Ludvic, Herb Miles, Scott Safe, John Duff, Jeff Pritchard, Henry Goodman, Federico Castillo, and Doug Ward.

Speakers are still needed for 2024. Federico agreed to be the speaker for our December meeting.

The December meeting will include the Board of Governors/Officers election. If anyone has interest in running for a position, please let Jason know.

Two new membership applications have been received: from Henry Goodman (Prineville, OR), who was present at the meeting and introduced himself, and from Claudia Kraehe (San Francisco).

Featured Speaker: Jeff Pritchard
"American Slavery & the Liberty Cap"

Jeff's talk was a look back in history at an ancient but somewhat obscure symbol and its numismatic appearances up to and during the US Civil War. The Phrygian cap developed into a symbolic item starting with the Romans around 200 BCE. Manumission, the act of a slaveowner freeing a slave, became a ceremony consisting of touching the slave with a rod of manumission, shaving the head, and placing a pileus (cap) on the head. Around the time of the French Revolution that cap developed into a Phrygian cap and came to represent not just freedom from slavery but also liberty and freedom from tyranny. The 1782 Libertas Americana medal created under the direction of Benjamin Franklin featured a bust of Liberty, with a Phrygian cap being held up by a staff of manumission behind her.

Jeff then described three historical vignettes relating to the use of the Phrygian cap up to the time of the American Civil War. First was a painting commissioned by the Library of Philadelphia called The Genius of America. It was the first American painting with allegorical figures of slavery and emancipation. He explained the meaning of the figures and various symbolic objects in the painting.

The second vignette was all about the Liberia "solution" and controversies. And the first coin from Liberia was an 1847 one cent coin featuring a Liberty cap.

Third was "Numismatics' Greatest Irony". This discussed the attempts at developing coinage for the Confederate States of America and the use (whether approved or not) of the Liberty cap design. There were lots of very interesting details, well documented in Jeff's presentation. Please see the recording of his interesting talk on the Society's Videos webpage to hear the full story.

Member Exhibits:

Bill showed us two items. First was a store card token from Moise. The obverse featured the State Seal of California, the reverse an advertisement for Moise. It was the first use of that die after the 1906 earthquake. Next was an 1836 token commemorating the first steam press use for coinage at the U.S. Mint.

John was at a token show in England and showed photos of two items seen at a museum while there. First was a Henry VIII medal; the second was a medal featuring Queen Mary and King Phillip in celebration of the (brief) return of Catholicism to England.

Stephen showed us his new acquisition from a Sacramento coin show. It was a small Ptolemaic bronze chalkous attributed to Ptolemy III. But Stephen has collected in that specialty area for decades and is certain it is misattributed. The fun part will be determining the correct ruler.

Federico showed a Cuban medal commemorating the end of WW I, with a small Phrygian cap above a shield. He also showed a 1952 Cuban medal for the 50th Anniversary of its independence, also with a cap on it. Finally, there were two central American coins with Liberty caps.

Charlie talked a few months ago about 1790s Conder Tokens of radical socialist Thomas Spence, and showed two of those tokens again with Liberty caps. Next was a recent acquisition of another token of Spence, with the reverse showing a Phrygian cap mounted on a staff of manumission, surrounded with rays of the sun and the inscription "Libertas"- Spence's only token with Latin on it.

Finally, Jason showed us a Trick or Treat item, an advertisement for a genuine 2024 Donald Trump coin of 99.99% pure silver..... plating.

The general meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM. The next meeting will be November 29, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Catlett, Secretary PCNS