



Bulletin of the
PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
MARCH, 2024

1294th Monthly Meeting
Numismatic Short Stories and Tall Tales
Extended Sharing

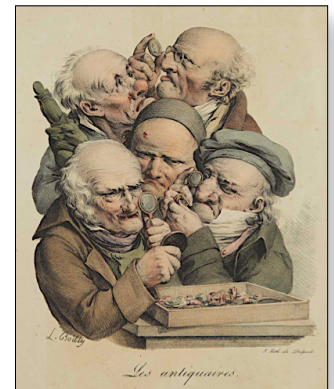
Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 7:30 PM PDT
Online

To paraphrase the familiar saying, “Every coin tells a story.” Perhaps not literally true, but certainly many coins do. This month, in lieu of a regular speaker, we’ll engage in an extended sharing session, focused on **your** numismatic items and the story **you** can tell about them.

Pick one, or two, or maybe three of your most interesting specimens, and come share your story about them. Your story can cover many aspects of each item, including, for example:

- How you acquired it
- Its provenance
- Why it’s special to you
- Under what circumstances would you get rid of it

In the spirit of tall tales, you can also create a fictional story about your item. So pick out your famous (or notorious) coins, and plan to share them on **Wednesday, March 27**. So that everyone may participate, please take pictures of your exhibits to facilitate viewing on Zoom.



FEBRUARY MEETING RECAP

Speaker **John Duff** grew up in El Centro, CA, close to Mexicali. He wrote an article about the ABW Clubs of Mexicali and Tijuana and of a token which came out two years before the ABW syndicate stopped at the end of Prohibition.

He began with Carl L. “Carlie” Wittington, the “King of Vice of Bakersfield”. Around the turn of the 20th century, he had a saloon/bordello “The Owl” in Bakersfield. With the California Temperance movement approaching, a 1912 anti-prostitution law was to come first. Carlie saw the light (so to speak) and he formed a syndicate with Marvin Allen, Frank “Booze” Beyer: the AB&W Syndicate. A 1911 meeting in Mexicali with Esteban Cantú, later a governor of Baja California, set up a lucrative deal to control red light districts of Mexicali and Tijuana. The deal provided Cantú with funding for infrastructure, while The ABW Club (aka The Owl) became a large, organized syndicate eventually run by four “Border Barons” who ran different specific aspects of the business: gambling, prostitution, liquor. John showed photos and various items from The Owl (El Tecolote), including gambling chips, a menu, match book, and of course the token with the image of an owl.

John discussed the expansion of the business into Agua Caliente and the racetrack in Tijuana. The Agua Caliente area became the “Mexican Riviera” and was visited by many famous people.

John also presented new information from the granddaughter of Esteban Cantú. There was an Owl Café in El Centro that he finally connected to the business- though it closed in 2010. He showed photos connecting El Centro to the Mexican border town- the business had ties to both sides of the border.

We encourage you to view John’s excellent talk on the [PCNS YouTube channel](#) for the full story.

PCNS MEETINGS

PCNS meetings take place at 7:30 pm Pacific Time on the fourth Wednesday of most months. Currently, meetings are held online using the Zoom platform, thereby allowing members, presenters, and guests to attend no matter where they are located. Everyone with an interest in numismatics is welcome to attend. A meeting code/invitation link will be emailed to all members separately the day before the meeting; non-members can request a link by emailing webmaster@pcns.org.

Special occasions, such as the annual BBQ, will continue to occur in person.

PCNS CALENDAR FOR 2024

March 27, 2024.....	Speaker and Topic TBA*
April 24, 2024	Speaker and Topic TBA*
April 24, 2024.....	Deadline for 2024 Papers Contest Submissions
May 22, 2024.....	Speaker and Topic TBA*
June 22, 2024	PCNS Summer BBQ

SPEAK UP!

There are always opportunities for **you** to make a presentation. Thanks to Zoom, you don't even need to be in San Francisco. Your topic can even be something about which you have submitted or plan to submit a *Paper*. Please email webmaster@pcns.org to sign up.

FEBRUARY MEMBER EXHIBITS

Stephen showed a newly acquired 1810 Italian 5 Lira coin featuring Napoleon. The crown-sized coin was from the Venice mint.

Michael showed a Conder Token featuring Joseph Priestly, who "discovered" oxygen and had an interesting political career before fleeing to America.

Charlie showed three ancient Greek electrum coin denominations: 1/6, 1/48, and 1/96 staters.

Federico showed us his Mexicali tokens, one from the Chinese-Mexican Mercantile, the other from Mariano Ma. He also had an ABW token and an Anillo restrrike of an ABW token.

Bill was at the Santa Rosa Token show, and he got the final Santa Barbara saloon token that was missing from his collection.

FEELING JUDGMENTAL?

PCNS will inaugurate a new competition in 2024. Following the general format of the annual Papers Competition, prizes will be awarded for the best presentation of the preceding calendar year. We still need one or two volunteers to serve as judges for the contest.

Judges will be expected to review the videos of all eleven presentations from the prior year, rating each one on several criteria to be finalized soon. Scores will be required to be submitted by May 15 so that prizes can be awarded at the annual BBQ on June 22.

If you are interested in being a judge for this new contest, please contact webmaster@pcns.org. Note that you cannot be a judge if you gave a presentation last year.

WRITE! NOW!

The submission deadline for the 2024 Papers Contest is the **April 24** meeting. Important: Refer to the publication section of pcns.org for the contest rules and our copyright policy.

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Meetings of the Board of Governors normally take place 15 minutes before the membership meeting.

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