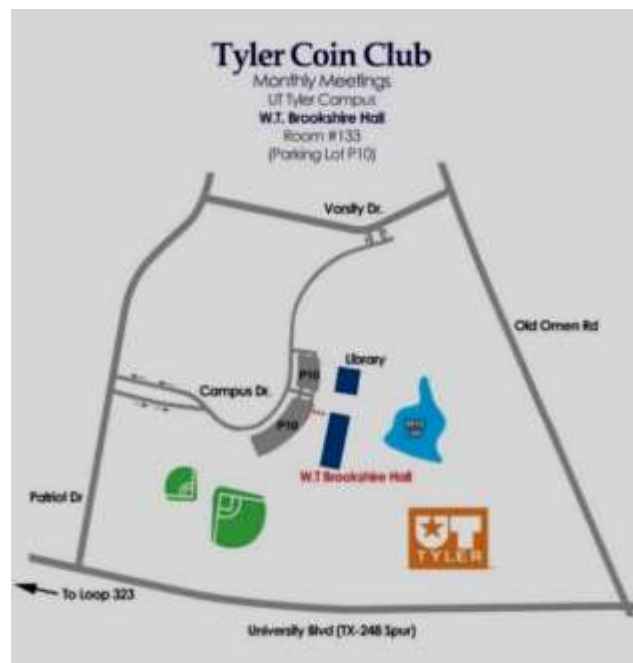


# YOUR TWO CENTS WORTH JULY 2021



(Visit the Tyler, Texas Coin Club in person and on the internet at: [tylercoinclub.org](http://tylercoinclub.org))

The Tyler, Texas Coin Club (TCC) meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Please consider yourself welcome. Meetings include great fellowship, numismatic education, a brief business session, and a spirited numismatic auction. The TCC meets on the campus of the University of Texas Tyler in room 133 of the W. T. Brookshire Building. Enter the campus via the identified “west entrance” off University Boulevard. Turn toward campus onto Patriot Dr. Enter campus and proceed on Campus Dr. to Parking Lot P10. (See map below) The W. T. Brookshire Building is in full view from the parking lot just to the right of the library.





## NUMISMATIC NOTES

### Thoughts from Our President

Lane B.

It's about the people.

Last month I was privileged to attend an event honoring three local physicians for their care for the working poor and needy community members. Hundreds of others were attending this celebration and sharing stories of these servant leaders. Typical of an East Texas social event, the people were engaging, the food was marvelous, and the evening was lovely.

Something struck me as the evening progressed. I had not seen many of these people for well over a year and a half. Then, the pandemic placed us on hold, waiting for the chance to gather again. Now we were back together, and it felt familiar. It felt good. It felt, dare I say, normal.

That evening had me reflect on our club and our monthly meetings. We have a strong club; lots of active members, with monthly attendance commonly topping 40 people. We enjoy informative presentations about highly unusual coins, new purchases, and even the non-coin, cryptocurrencies. And, of course, the entertaining auction with its cast of characters. It's a wonderful evening.

The pandemic threw us for a loop as our venue closed, as did most in the region. We went to online meetings, but it just wasn't the same. A few months ago, our venue reopened to us, and we gathered in person once again. We were cautious upon our return, with social distancing, masks, contact tracing, and all the other protocols required by our host. Nonetheless, we were back together.

Now our meetings are once again open as before, and it's been great. Our attendance is increasing, and we are back together sharing stories and catching up on our numismatic adventures. It feels familiar. It feels good. It feels, dare I say, normal.

It's about the people.

## MINUTES OF THE June 8, 2021 MEETING OF THE TYLER COIN CLUB by Carl S.

Meeting called to order by President Lane Brunner with Pledge to the Flag

**Attendance** Members: 35 New Members: 3 Guests: 3 Total: 41

### **Discussion of Agenda Items (Lane)**

- The club was lead in prayer by Larry V.
- Introduction/recognition of guests, visitors, and new members.
- Recognition of members with birthdays and anniversaries in month of June.
- Royce presented a brief Treasurer's report.
- David gave an update on preparations for the 2021 coin show (August 13-14). New location is Ornelas Activity Center. Advertising was discussed including digital signage.
- Larry V. discussed Educational Exhibits for the upcoming show.
- Lane gave a brief presentation Hercules and the Nemean Lion.
- Next regular meeting is July 13, 2021 at W.T. Brookshire Hall (room #133) on the UT Tyler campus.

### **Club Auction (Richard G.)**

- 40 items sold

### **Door Prize Winners**

- Chuck, Dudley, Jeff, and Kern

## **A VISIT WITH DR. COYNE**

### **Questions for Dr. Coyne**

1. In a date set of U.S. regular issue cents, which are the most difficult to obtain?
2. What is the first coin struck in lands which later became the United States, but were not part of the original 13 colonies?
3. When did U.S. proof sets become available to collectors?
4. Where is the mint mark (if any) located on a silver U.S. three cent piece? Where is it on a nickel U.S. three cent piece?
5. Why are so many Pine Tree Shillings bent?



6. How can I tell a reprocessed 1943 U.S. cent from an original uncirculated one?

7. Why is it almost never a good idea to ‘dip’ copper coins? What about silver?

### **Dr. Coyne responds:**

1. Among the regular issue cents, the issues of 1793, 1799, 1804, 1877, 1909 S (Indian), 1909 SVDB, 1914 D are the most difficult to obtain. The 1793 is the first year of issue of the large copper cents (it comes in three varieties). The 1799 is a scarce issue and is reputed to be responsible for pioneer collector J.J. Mickley becoming a numismatist as he looked a long time to find this cent of his birth year. The 1804 large cent and the 1877 Indian are low-mintage years. There is no genuine cent dated 1815.



2. Conventional wisdom is that the first coin struck (outside the original 13 colonies) but in the area which later became a U.S. state would be the Vermont Copper of the 1780s. But a little known, near-local piece would have a strong argument for second: the 1818 (or 1817) jola copper of San Antonio, Texas. Few of the members of the C4 coppers club would answer this tricky question correctly!

3. U.S. proof sets became generally available to collectors in 1858. For many years, it was possible to buy separate “minor coin” sets, silver sets, and gold sets. There was a break in availability after the 1915 production. In 1936, the first “modern” sets of cent through half dollar were issued. Packaging was a small gray cardboard box with the coins in cellophane sleeves inside. The first “flat packs” came part way through the 1955 issue. Plastic hard cases came in 1968.

4. Three cent silvers (trimes) had only one year coined at a branch mint, 1851-O. The mintmark is on the reverse (the side opposite the date side), and the ‘O’, if present will be at the right, in the opening between the arms of the large “C”.  
The three cent nickels were all coined at Philadelphia (no mint mark).

5. The fame of the ‘1652’ Pine Tree Shilling and the previous Willow and Oak Tree versions is richly deserved. They are the first coinage struck in lands which later became the United States. They are the only silver coins struck in substantial numbers in the U.S. until the First U.S. Mint began striking silver in 1794. But conditions at John Hull’s private mint in Massachusetts were primitive. Although he rolled and cut his own planchets for all willow tree, oak tree, and large planchet pine tree shillings, he had only a rocker press available to do the striking. He did not

begin to use a screw press until near the end of production with the small planchet pine tree shillings. Thus all the large planchet PTSs were struck with a sinusoidal bend (when viewed from the edge). This caused abnormal wear lines to appear in the fields as those high areas were most exposed to friction in handling. These coins, unlike all issues of the U.S. mint do not have raised edges to protect the design from wear. Having nothing to do with the wear patterns, it is interesting to note that all the pieces, struck for near 30 years, carry the date 1652. It is said that this was done deliberately to maintain the illusion that all were struck during the period of the Commonwealth in England, when there was no monarchy to object to the Colonists striking their own currency. Charles II, when restored to the throne, could only suspect that coinage continued long after the end of the Commonwealth.

6. We don't see so many 'reprocessed' 1943 steel cents any more. They were the rage some years ago. Folks who prepared these would take used steel cents from circulation and brush or chemically treat them, then replate them with zinc (or copper, followed by chrome). The fraud would come if they then sold them as 'uncirculated'. Indeed they would be bright, like genuine new cents, but close inspection would show the evidence of wear under the bright new plating. To me, the genuine mint luster on a 1943 cent in 2021 will always have a slight blue cast to it, while these fakes are bright silver, but mushy details on Lincoln's hair are the real giveaway.

7. The best advice continues to be: don't clean the coin. But the reality is that many, perhaps most 19<sup>th</sup> century silver coins have been cleaned. Sometimes a dip of a silver piece in a thio-urea commercial coin cleaner actually can improve (at least temporarily) the appearance of a silver coin. BUT this is virtually never true for copper or bronze coins. They always come out looking an unusual pinkish orange color which screams 'cleaned' from across the room. There are frequently dark spots left as the result of these attempts. After such a failed attempt, there is little that can be done.

## **EDUCATIONAL BLASTS FROM THE PAST**

### **The 1873-S Silver Dollar**

The official records that standard silver dollars were coined at the San Francisco Mint in 1873 is the only evidence we have in the belief that such coins were made. An industrious inquiry by Mr. Augustus G Heaton, the mint mark authority, has failed to bring to light a specimen of this description. The Numismatist, January, 1909.

## **UPCOMING COLLECTOR OPPORTUNITIES**

**Shreveport Coin Show** – July 23-24 ... Bossier City Civic Center – 620 Benton Road, Bossier City, Louisiana

**Tyler Coin Club Show** – August 13-14 ... Ornelas Activity Center – 3401 Old Omen Rd., Tyler Texas

**Texarkana Coin Club Show** – November 19-20 ... Texarkana Convention Center, 4610 Cowhorn Creek Road, Texarkana, Texas

# COMFORT, IN TEXAS

1854 – 1904

By Richard Laster



(One Of many historical sites in Comfort, Kendall County, Texas. This structure, which stands tall today, dates from 1918. It is a “Bat Roost” constructed by local Albert Steves as a scientific experiment to see if the presence of bats, in large quantity, would be useful in controlling the population of mosquitos.)

Through these last nearly eight years I have had an account on Amazon.com selling books. Most of what I part with come from my longtime collection of Texas history material. The greatest majority of these are items I have enjoyed studying, researching, and holding for “quite a spell.” But, since I realize time is moving on and my children don’t want to hassle with my stuff when **the time** comes, I have no particular regret, nor sadness in seeing them go, with a sale of nearly 800 to date. The only exception is an interesting work by a gentleman with an equally interesting name: *A Hundred Years of Comfort in Texas, published by Naylor in 1954, written by Guido E; Ransleben.*

The reason why I am thinking about the book right now is because of something unique and numismatic. But before I get to the item in questions here are a few basic thoughts related to the purpose of the book, telling the story of the small community of Comfort, Texas, in Kendall County. This information from several sources including a few articles in the massive *Handbook of Texas.*

Comfort was settled by German immigrants who joined colorful character Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels in a cross Atlantic venture in 1844. The town of New Braunfels carries his title and was his home base. From New Braunfels several of the German nationals moved to the newer community of Comfort, as it was founded and proclaimed on September 3, 1854. The duly identified first residents were a couple also from New Braunfels; Fritz and Betty Holekamp. Their new home, the one pictured on the medal you will see below, was already under construction before surveyor Ernst Hermann Altgelt made the official identification of the town’s site and name.

Fritz Holekamp founded several of the early businesses in the community. Sadly, he was killed during 1862 serving as a Captain in the Confederate Army. Betty Holekamp outlived him by over four decades. She is noted in the lore of Texana as the “Betsy Ross of Texas” owing to the fact she created the first (hand sewn) United States flag to fly in Texas just prior to the early 1846 official unification of the Republic of Texas into the United States.

Comfort has two other claims to fame, one being a tragic event, the other a point of scientific accomplishment. The first involves a group of 40 individuals who were involved in what is known as the Battle of Nueces which took place near the community of Brackettville, Texas. Because the majority of those who settled the area in and around Comfort were German pietists, they were abolitionists by nature. They made the choice to serve in the Union Army and were heading toward Mexico in April of 1862, to unite with Federal troops, when they were ambushed and assassinated on the way by Confederates. The second claim-to-fame still stands today. In 1918 a local, Albert Steves, constructed a Bat Roost. This was done as a scientific experiment to see if the presence of bats would be a natural means to fight mosquitos. The project was and still is successful and in use, one hundred and two years later.

Now ... on to my numismatic attachment to all of this. I picked up the medal pictured just below a few weeks ago. It is a touch larger than a U.S. Half Dollar, is white metal of some sort with a silver wash. I have a hunch the image on the obverse is surveyor Ernst Altgelt. Another choice would be Fritz Holekamp, even though the relief seems to be an older gentleman than Holekamp would have been in 1854. The purpose of the medal is to celebrate the Comfort Jubilee marking a half century of the town's creation, meaning 1904. The reverse shows the image of the "first house," a log cabin, the Holekamp house.

Thanks for reading this far. If I still had my book some of the holes in my research would be filled. I will keep trying. For now, I am pleased to acquire an interesting, and perhaps scarce, commemorative of a significant event in our Texas experience which gave me an opportunity to dig a bit into Comfort, Texas and find a deeper appreciation for those who have gone before.

