

PCNS CALENDAR FOR 2018-19

Sep 26.....Jeff Shevlin, *So-called Dollars from the Pacific Coast Expositions at Fort Mason Center*
Oct 31.....*Speaker & Topic TBA** at Fort Mason Center
Nov 28.....*Speaker & Topic TBA** at the Mechanics' Institute
Dec 27Holiday gathering and elections at the Mechanics' Institute
Jan 23*Speaker & Topic TBA** at the Mechanics' Institute
Feb 27.....*Speaker & Topic TBA** Location TBA
Mar 27.....*Speaker & Topic TBA** Location TBA

* See "Speak Up!" below

SPEAK UP!

A quick look at the Calendar above reveals that there is ample opportunity for **you** to make a presentation in the coming months: October 2018 and the first three months of 2019 are open. Your presentation can even be something about which you have submitted or plan to submit a *Paper*. Email webmaster@pcns.org to sign up.

MEETING LOCATION AND TIME CHANGES

Due to scheduled construction at Fort Mason Center, PCNS meetings for November 2018, December 2018 and January 2019 will take place at the Mechanics' Institute in downtown San Francisco. Meetings at the Mechanics Institute will start at 7:15pm.

2018 PCNS OFFICERS

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Visit www.pcns.org to read our *Papers*, get the latest Bulletin, or to check our meeting schedule.

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1229th Monthly Meeting of the

PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY



So-called Dollars from the Pacific Coast Expositions

Jeff Shevlin

Wednesday, September 26, 2018, 7:30 PM
Fort Mason Center, Building C, San Francisco

PCNS + PO BOX 475656 + SAN FRANCISCO CA 94147

GO WEST

Between 1894 and 1962, there were eight major expositions on the Pacific Coast. San Francisco hosted three of them, Seattle and San Diego each hosted two, and Portland, one. Traditionally, expositions were seen as a way to showcase the economic prowess and potential of a city, region, or country. Often, expositions were conceived under the guise of commemorating a specific accomplishment (e.g., completion of the Panama Canal) or an event's anniversary (e.g., the centennial of the Lewis & Clark expedition).



Of particular interest to numismatists is the practice of issuing medals and tokens as prizes or souvenirs of the expositions. Because many of these items were approximately the size of a silver dollar, the moniker "so-called dollar" is convenient shorthand for these bits of exonomia.



Most expositions featured a variety of of so-called dollars, with varying themes and struck on different metals (e.g., bronze or aluminum). The result is a wide array of material to collect.



The eight Pacific Coast expositions were:

- 1894 California Midwinter Exposition, San Francisco (cover, left)
- 1905 Lewis & Clark Centennial, Portland (top left)
- 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle (top right)
- 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco (middle left)
- 1915-16 Panama-California Exposition, San Diego (middle right)
- 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition, San Diego (bottom left)
- 1939-40 Golden Gate International Exposition, San Francisco (bottom right)
- 1962 World's Fair, Seattle (cover, right)



Join us on September 26 at Fort Mason Center as "So-called Guy" Jeff Shevlin identifies dozens of previously unknown medals and varieties from this wide-ranging and fascinating series of historical medals.

Remember: This meeting is at Fort Mason Center and begins at 7:30pm

AUGUST PRESENTATION RECAP

For the August presentation, Michael Wehner spoke on the topic of his 2017 award-winning paper, "Moses Gunst has went."

Moses Gunst was born in New York in 1853 and moved to San Francisco in 1871. He opened his own cigar store by 1873 and eventually his own firm, M.A. Gunst & Co. The firm specialized in wholesale cigar store supplies and included a chain of retail cigar stands throughout the country.

This business made Gunst a wealthy and influential man. The governor of California appointed him to a position on the San Francisco Police Commission. In the late 19th century, San Francisco politics were incredibly corrupt, as exemplified by Commissioner Gunst. Although gambling was technically illegal in San Francisco, Moses ran his own slot machine and gaming operations and used his influence as a Police Commissioner to suppress competition. Local newspapers, most notably the *Call*, often wrote unflattering articles about his gambling operations as well as his frequent long trips out of town. Newspapers would print "Moses Gunst has went" to call attention to his absence.

On one trip to Europe, Gunst stopped in New York City, where he was treated to a banquet in his honor. Michael exhibited a medal that that was likely a souvenir of that dinner. The obverse of the engraved silver medal states "Complementary Dinner to Police Commissioner Moses A. Gunst of San Francisco by Deputy Chief W.W. McLaughlin and Chief of Detectives George A. McClusky Sept. 26, '99." The reverse lists other guests, most of whom Michael found in the New York City Directories of 1899 and 1900. One guest listed, J. Henry Rothschild, was a milliner and father of writer Dorothy Parker.

Gunst ended his involvement in politics at the end of his term in 1899. In 1913 he sold controlling interest in M.A. Gunst & Co. Inc. to his long-time rival, United Cigar Stores, though he remained on as a Director.

Gunst died in 1928, leaving a number of items to his numismatic legacy, including M.A.G. & Co. slot machine tokens, a five cent trade token from "M.A. Gunst & Co. — "The House of Staples" as well as paper 12-1/2 cent cigar coupons from the same.

AUGUST MEMBER EXHIBITS

Mark: United Cigar store coupons, a tobacco revenue stamp, post card of First National Bank, San Francisco.

Dan: 1908 Consular Corp ribbon medal.

Joseph: Gambling chips from the Oaks Card Club.

Ken: 2018 silver proof set, 2019 American Legion centennial medal.

Federico: 1908 Central America restrike medal, Ecuador FOB, Mexico FOB and Argentina FOB.

Charlie: Ancients of Edom, Philistine, Samarian, Phoenician and Judea.