

PCNS Minutes for March 22, 2023

The board meeting for March 22, 2023, was called to order via Zoom at 7:15 PM by President Jason Macario. In attendance were Vice President Bill Hyder, Secretary Charlie Catlett, Treasurer Stephen Huston, Past President Dan Hipple, and Governors Ed Treuting, Bob Somers, and Mike McDaniel.

The minutes for the February meeting were approved.

Financial report: the report was sent to members prior to the meeting and was discussed. We also talked about members who still owe dues for 2023 and how that is being handled.

2023 Papers Contest: submissions are due by the April 26. They can be submitted to Stephen or Jason.

We still need a speaker for May 24, 2023. Bill offered to give a talk if no other speakers arise.

June BBQ: we are waiting to hear from Federico about a date in June....

New Business: none

Adjournment 7:21 PM

At 7:33 PM, general meeting #1283 was called to order. Present in addition to the members from the board meeting via Zoom were Charlie Ludvic, Harold Tuchfeld, Jeff Pritchard, Dean Ristenpart, Herb Miles, Dean Neald, Doug Ward, Greg Burns, and guest John Duff.

Members were reminded of the 2023 Papers Contest with entries due by the April 26, 2023 meeting.

Speakers are needed for the May 24, 2023 meeting.

We are planning a June BBQ, the date is yet to be determined.

Featured Speaker: Charlie Catlett

The Tokens of Thomas Spence

I have always liked collecting old coins, including a Conder Token purchased at a coin department inside a major department store in Los Angeles 50 years ago. A few other Conder tokens were purchased over the years, but it was one obtained more recently with the image of a snail that piqued my interest. The token also featured advertising for coin dealer Thomas Spence (1750-1814). This led to research on the token's meaning and on Spence himself.

The talk started with his early formative years in Newcastle, England, and followed Spence's life with his move to London. He printed and sold radical literature (and hot beverages!), landing in and out of prison many times for doing so. He also latched onto the new craze of collecting merchant tokens by producing numbers of them- with thanks to his fabulous die engraver Charles James. His tokens almost always had a strong political message, which seem hard to decipher. With the help of a Conder token specialist's direction and of several resources, the rest of the talk focused on two dozen Spence tokens and their meaning- sometimes obvious, sometimes very obscure.

The talk was recorded and will be available on the Society's YouTube site soon.

Member Exhibits:

Michael Wehner sent his regrets for not being able to attend, but he sent me (Charlie C) images to show. They were three tokens engraved by John Henry Hancock, Jr. a child prodigy (his father John Sr. was a known engraver). The first "Sir Original" was high relief but somewhat crude, a second "W. Shake Spear" more refined, and third "Diva Britanniae" felt to be a masterpiece by Michael. He doesn't know what happened to Hancock Jr. Interestingly, the first two token inscriptions state he was aged 7 in 1800 when he engraved them; the Diva token states he was age 9 in 1800.

Stephen showed five tokens. 1- Lutwyche's Manufactory Birmingham, a different variety of the token producer from what was shown in the talk. 2- Birmingham Coining and Copper Company, in going with Stephen's collection of tokens produced by coin merchants. 3- a Kempson token featuring a lion inside a cave. 4- a Wyon penny token with unclear meaning, featuring an obelisk covered with ivy on the reverse. 5- a penny token from 1811, when there was also a shortage of small change. This featured a bear.

Bill went to the ANA show in Phoenix, and also traveled to the Basha Art Gallery in nearby Chandler, Arizona. Arriving ahead of the others in his group, he talked with one of the two employees of the gallery/museum, letting her know of his extensive collection. And they had extras of some of the medals, so Bill was able to obtain all but one variety he had been missing in bronze. He also saw a rubber mold used for casting the medals. The cost of his new medals? Nothing- they were *given* to him; they are never sold!

Dean showed us a 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire token which was given to him by a local dealer and asked for information on it. It appeared to be silver plated. Bill filled him in on details of the token, and there was a discussion of the composition. Although some are listed in silver, in fact none are known to be made of silver-- only silver-plated varieties exist.

Ed showed us three lighthouse tokens. First was an 1806-1906 centennial of the Geneva lighthouse on Lake Seneca. He is not if sure that specific lighthouse still exists or if it has been replaced- and is looking into it. Second was a pendant with a possibly enameled lighthouse on the front, with a cityscape in the background. It is slightly concave and has no inscription, so there isn't more info on it. The reverse is a convex scallop shell. And ironically Bill has the die used for that obverse! He is giving it to Ed the next time they get together (hopefully the June BBQ). And finally, he had a 2008 token for the Peninsula Coin Club featuring the Pigeon Point Lighthouse. The reverse featured their logo, which included an octagon with an eagle inside it.

Guest John Duff showed two items. First, a Robert Orchard conder token, with a large die break and a muled reverse. Second was a token for Goodman Fields Brewhouse in London featuring a bear on the obverse, the reverse denomination was three pence. He gave a history of Goodman Fields and plans to visit the area on a trip to London.

The general meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM. The next meeting will be April 26, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Catlett, Secretary PCNS