

NAAC2023 ABSTRACTS

PLENARY SPEAKERS

Half a century of an Australian in numismatics

Walter R Bloom

Numismatic histories tend to focus on three main approaches:

1. The development of numismatics of the country (if small enough) or a suitable sub-region.
2. The development of a well-defined area of numismatics in the country.
3. The history of a (usually deceased) numismatist.

In the context of Australia: The first might look at coinage since the 1800 Or Proclamation or banknotes of South Australia. For the second, there has been a lot of work done on Australian (and New Zealand) merchant tokens and this has been well covered by Alfred Chitty, Arthur Andrews and Simon Gray. And for the third, there is the detailed history of Sedley Towler and her work in the Art Gallery of South Australia in *The Coin Cabinet* by Peter Lane (and edited by me), a publication known to most of you.

In this talk I am taking a different approach by looking at my numismatic life in Australia and beyond, first as a beginning collector, then as a more advanced collector and researcher, and finally as one heavily involved in the organising and running of numismatic activities locally, nation-wide, and internationally. These are of course not discrete time periods, but it convenient to list them as such.

During this journey I have encountered some fascinating characters and others have encountered me! I will detail some of the more interesting hopefully without attracting any libel action.

Some thoughts on ancient coins in public and private collections in Australia and the Australian interest in ancient numismatics

Kenneth Sheedy

This address reviews something of the history of the creation (and loss) of collections of ancient coins in Australia. It also looks at the Australian interest in ancient numismatics as an academic and as a private area of study. It attempts to explore why the colonists and later the citizens of Australia should have been interested in ancient coins. We can make a clear distinction between private collections (which seem to be more common than one might expect) and public collections. It is notable that the public collections, with a few important exceptions, were modest. The academic interest in numismatics (university collections; the teaching of ancient history through coins) was apparently limited.

Only the University of Sydney and the collection of the Nicholson Museum had a well-known interest in ancient numismatics. But there is evidence that other universities in this country did at certain times make an effort to acquire ancient coins. Australian museums were relatively uninterested. The creation of private collections of ancient coins can be followed with some difficulty. This is because they were rarely donated or sold to public collections or to universities but were dispersed on the market.

SESSION SPEAKERS

Australian Masonic Mark Pennies: *They Received Every Man A Penny*

Mike Carter

A Masonic penny is a coin-sized token used by members of a Lodge for identification or ritual purposes. It has symbolic meanings and references to basic Masonic teachings. They are called pennies based on the line 'They Received Every Man A Penny' [Matthew 20:9 - King James Bible].

The Mark Penny signifies a pivotal part of a Mason's initiation process and they have been in use in England since the 1820s. They were originally the size of a penny, and featured keystones, mauls and similar Masonic symbols. In some Lodges they take the form of a Shekel.

Mark Pennies are very popular in America, with an enormous number of varieties, commemoratives and keepsakes. Australian Mark Pennies were issued by individual Mark or Royal Arch Chapter lodges from the 1890s onwards. When United Grand Mark Lodges were formed the practice of an individual lodge having their own penny declined and they were replaced by more general pennies issued by the relevant United Lodge.

We look at these early Australian Mark tokens and their role and relationship to Australian and Masonic history.

Making money out of making money in Ancient Athens

Gil Davis

The observed weights of ancient coins are usually less than the nominal 'ideal' weights of the coin standards to which they belong because state authorities took a fee, 'seigniorage', for minting coins to cover costs and make a profit. The basis for calculating the amount taken by the state and the way it administered manufacture are not well understood. Here we analyse the weights of 1,344 of the earliest coins of Athens (c.550-479 BC). We reveal a parabolic relationship between the cost of the silver and the weights of the coins whereby a progressively higher proportion was taken as the denomination decreased, meaning that the smaller the coin, the larger the proportion of silver taken from it. There was tight control

of the minting process and mathematical sophistication in precisely adjusting the silver content from the first introduction of coinage. It also made minting a profitable business. Changes in minting practice that can be detected with the introduction of the Athenian 'owl' coins, when the percentage of silver taken by the state increased and the spread of weights widened to include coins weighing more than the nominal weight. The latter indicates a significant shift towards monetisation of the economy. The data come from the Archaic Athenian coins project by Associate Professor Sheedy, Professor Damian Gore and the speaker.

Bryant & May – Silver and bronze medals for Long Service

David Figg

Hardly anybody today would work for the same employer for 25 years let alone 50 years. However, in 1921, Bryant & May, the match manufacturers, introduced a Silver Medal for 50 Years' Service followed in 1923 with the introduction of a Bronze Medal for 25 Years' Service. The medals were discontinued in 1958 being replaced by a certificate and monetary gift. At that time 1,315 Bronze and 122 Silver medals had been awarded. This presentation outlines the two medals, their manufacturer as well as the replacement certificates. One example of each medal will be (physically) shown and two recipients "brought to life" following extensive research in the Brymay Magazine, ancestral and other records.

Rare New Zealand coins and banknotes

David Galt

New Zealand's trial and pattern coins and banknotes are not generally well described in published catalogues. The talk will cover some examples of rare New Zealand coins and banknotes, particularly in the decimal series that have been seen in major collections or auctions in recent years with illustrations.

Utilising numismatic collections to understand Master Silversmith Adam van Vianen's silver "recipe"

Liesel Gentelli

Adam van Vianen (1568/69-1627) is celebrated as an unsurpassed master of silver smithing, and the originator of the auricular (or *kwab*) art style (Whittle 2021). He is known to have perfected his "recipe" for silver, taking advantage of his years as assay master and later guild master at the Utrecht mint (van Bennekom et al 2021a, van Bennekom et al 2021b). Van Vianen's silver is of higher purity (97%-98%) than that required by the Silversmith's Guild at the time (93.5%), his particular alloy having physical properties that made it more malleable and able to be formed into the fantastical shapes that characterise the auricular style.

The auricular style gained popularity in the Netherlands and Europe, beyond silver and into many other mediums. However, questions remain as to the methods used by van Vianen; it is not known if the particular silver alloy used by Adam van Vianen could be characterised to enable identification against standard silver taken directly from coinage stock? Where did Adam van Vianen source his silver?

While analysis has been undertaken to identify the major compositional difference between van Vianen's silver alloy compared to that of silver stock available at the time (van Bennekom et al 2021a, van Bennekom et al 2021b), our understanding is limited while the silver stock, likely from the Utrecht mint, has not been characterised.

In this presentation, we look to the coins of the Utrecht mint to understand the fantastical auricular art created by van Vianen. and detail results of a literature review and compilation of data from the literature undertaken at the American Numismatic Society. The results will enable further understanding of silver movement in the Dutch Golden Age, and the techniques used by master and pioneer silversmiths of that time.

VAN BENNEKOM, J., VAN BORK, E. & TÉREYGEOL, F. 2021. Explorative Studies in 16th century silver refining recipes. *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 36, 102775.

VAN BENNEKOM, J., VAN BORK, E., PAPPOT, A. 2021. The unsurpassed silversmithing techniques of Adam van Vianen: his silver ewer unravelled. *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, 69, 216-243.

WHITTLE, J. 2021. Chaos and creation: Adam van Vianen's gilt ewer. *Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, 69, 196-215.

**Collecting beyond numismatics but inspired by numismatics.
*Coo-ee: come with me on a journey of discovery***

Peter Lane

For the last 60 years, the speaker has been collecting coins, medals and love tokens and for a little over a decade he has changed his focus to collecting objects that reflect his long-held interest, like money boxes, maps, tobacco tins, shields and fragments of clothing and the like. This presentation places his 'other collecting fields' side by side with numismatic specimens. His audience will gain an understanding why placing numismatic specimens with other objects is often seen in museums. The general public tend to prefer an assortment of objects in a cabinet than say a collection of pennies by date. The speaker has recently retired from the AGSA as its Honorary Numismatist and was involved in mounting many ANZAC displays that required a variety of objects.

The phenomenon of Nymphaea on coinage of the Severan period in the Near East

Rachel Mansfield

During the Severan period the province of Syria-Palaestina underwent an increase in minting activity. Provincial bronze coins from Syria-Palaestina cities during this period are also characterised by an apparent freedom regarding the selection of reverse types. This resulted in the appearance of new reverse types which boasted local gods and important architecture. One of these new iconographic features is the appearance of Nymphaea on some coinage. Nymphaea are temples, niches or fountains which were built at, or near, the source of water for a city or the beginning of a river. They were considered very important as the cities, especially in this province, would not survive in the absence of their water source.

Alongside the increase of minting activity, the Severan period brought with it a large building program in the province of Syria-Palaestina. This paper will explore the connection of the construction of nymphaea as part of this building campaign, and the reflection of this on the bronze coinage of some provincial cities. This will involve a study of the coins of Joppa, Ptolemais and Pella, as well as smaller cities with more limited minting activity.

Although the Nymphaeum phenomenon has been recognised in Rome from the study of Trell (1978), there is limited discussion around the same feature of provincial coinage. For instance, these images have been previously misidentified as Tetrastyle temples or double-storey temples. This paper will propose a re-identification of some of these images and explore the use of Nymphaea, in their various forms, on coinage in the Near East and Trans-Jordan.

Exotic creatures pulling chariots on Roman Republican coins

Bruce Marshall

People are intrigued by strange and exotic creatures, be they in a zoo or a circus or amphitheatres. Unfortunately, in the latter Roman case, it was to watch them being killed for entertainment. At first the images on the new denarius remained the same for a long time. The first change to this came around 190BCE when the Dioscuri twins on the reverse were replaced by Luna in a two-horsed chariot (biga), and the moon and the twins kept changing places for the next 70 years, occasionally being interrupted by Victory in a biga. Then in 143BCE they were all replaced by deities depicted in chariots pulled by two creatures. This presentation will look at some of these exotic, but appropriate, creatures. Not much is known about the moneyers who issued these coins, but we can make some religious conclusions why they chose the images they used.

Attributes, Adjuncts, and Identity? Iconographical Alterations to the Tarentine Dolphin Rider in the Fifth – Fourth Century BCE

Bridget McClean

The image of a man riding a dolphin is one of the most enigmatic types to feature on Tarentine coinage. This particular design graced Tarentine coinage from the settlement's incipient series (c. 510 – 500BCE) and featured across different denominations until the end of autonomous coin production at Taras. Acknowledged today as the characteristic Tarentine type, the identity of the dolphin rider has long been subject to debate. The dolphin rider is typically identified as one of two important Tarentine figures: Phalanthos (their "historical" founder), or Taras (their eponymous hero).

From c. 470 - c. 415BCE a previously unseen Tarentine coin type – that of a seated male figure - was introduced on staters and was paired with the dolphin rider. This seated figure/dolphin rider combination adds to the confusion regarding the identity of the dolphin rider as both the seated figure and the dolphin rider are commonly identified as either Taras or Phalanthos. Further, it would be unusual to have the same figure on both the obverse and the reverse.

This paper surveys the dolphin rider's attributes and adjuncts pre and post c. 415BCE as well as that of the seated figure. It reveals that the conclusion of the seated figure series witnessed a variation to the objects which appeared in conjunction with the dolphin rider. The nature of these iconographical alterations could suggest a change in the identity of the dolphin rider in the period after c. 415BCE.

Items from the Troedel and Cooper Archive of Relevance to Australian Numismatics

Richard O'Hair

Charles Troedel (1835–1906), born Hamburg, trained as a lithographic printer and while working in Norway came to the attention of A W Schuhkrafft, a Melbourne printer, who headhunted him [1]. Troedel arrived in Melbourne in 1860 and after a three-year stint with Schuhkrafft, set up his own business in Collins Street. Although Troedel is best known for producing *The Melbourne Album*, where he employed various artists to document early Melbourne scenes, his company produced a vast amount of commercial printing of high quality.

In 1968, the State Library of Victoria received a donation of the archive of Troedel and Cooper, which remains one of the most significant printer's archives to survive in a public collection. While a general overview of this massive collection of over 9000 items has been published,[2] and a book focussing on the visual history of print advertising has appeared,[3] items of numismatic interest have remained hidden. These include dozens of examples of share certificates of Australian companies, ranging from banks, breweries, building societies, carriage builders through to hotels. There is particularly strong representation of gold and other mining companies from Victoria, Western Australia and other colonies.

In this talk I will provide a short overview of early Australian share certificates[4], summarise the shares found in the Troedel and Cooper archive and provide a brief history of some of the companies that played an important part in Australian colonial history.

References:

(1) C. Turnbull, Troedel, Johannes Theodor Charles (1836–1906), Australian Dictionary of Biography.

(2) O. Tsara, Troedel and Co.: Master Printers and Lithographers, *The LaTrobe Journal*, 1998, 62, 31.

(3) A. Scardamaglia, *Printed on Stone: The Lithographs of Charles Troedel*. Melbourne Books, 2020.

(4) M. P. A. Liebig, *Terra Australis An Adventurous Financial History of Australian Shares and Loans*, Markt and Technik, Verlag AG, Munich, 1988.

Imagining the past: the historical perspective in numismatics

David Rampling

This presentation is a brief overview of how our understanding of ancient and medieval coinages may be influenced by present day assumptions, prerogatives, and populist marketing. Examples of these various forces at play are given by way of illustration. Some recent research methodologies offer hope of a more accurate historical perspective in numismatic studies.

Australian decimal banknote designs

Mick Vort-Ronald

The planning and preparation of designs for decimal currency was a long and complicated task, not without some controversy with the abandonment of the name *The Royal*, and the corruption of the first series by the appearance of forgeries of the \$10 note. Many years of planning forgery-proof banknotes followed and continues to this day, and, until recently, many of those designs remained unpublished.

NUMISMATIC GEMS

Difficulties in presenting a proposal to produce commemorative 1oz gold ingots to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the United Arab Emirates

Barrie Newman

The Rare and Varied Banknotes of the Oriental Bank Corporation

Andrew Clifford

One of the great British Imperial banks, during the 19th Century, was the Oriental Bank Corporation (OBC).

Founded in 1842, as the Bank of Western India, it primarily focused on the trade between England and Bombay (now Mumbai), India. The bank was renamed to the Oriental Bank Corporation in 1845, then quickly expanded its operations in the next ten years, as one of the earliest British banks to establish a presence in Asia and Africa. Its Royal Charter permitted it to open branches anywhere "East of the Cape of Good Hope.

Branch locations included South Africa, Ceylon, Singapore, Mauritius, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

It was heavily involved in financing trade, especially the opium trade between India and China. The 1870s brought financial strains to the bank. Due to a combination of natural disasters and competition from banks such as Standard Chartered and HSBC, and the decline in the time-value of Bills of Exchange due to the fast messaging via international telegraph cables.

The OBC had a spectacular fall in 1884, closing its doors in all colonies and leaving angry depositors and note holders without their funds. A brief recapitalisation as the New Oriental Bank, failed again, in 1892.

Arguably, the OBC issued banknotes in more countries than any other private bank. All its notes are rare and varied, prized examples of numismatic paper ephemera.