



The Curious Collector

by Len Augsburger, LSCC #1271

LSCC Annual Meeting in August

The Liberty Seated Collectors Club annual meeting took place during the American Numismatic Association convention in Oklahoma City on August 21, 2025, at 9am. Following the customary group photograph (see cover), members introduced themselves and noted their collecting interests. Approximately 40 members were on hand, along with a few others who arrived after the group photo was taken.

Among the attendees was Norma McCloskey and her daughter Susan. Norma continues to attend the annual ANA conventions to visit with LSCC and JRCS (John Reich Collectors Society), organizations with which John McCloskey (1938-2018) was closely associated. An old bit of LSCC trivia is that LSCC Education Director John Frost was born on the same day that Norma and John were married.

Len Augsburger opened the meeting with a quick recap of the year's highlights, all of which were covered in greater depth by successive speakers. Dennis Fortier noted that the ANA recognized Bill Bugert with the Adna G. Wilde award, given for exemplary service in the advancement of

(Continued on next page)

SUNSHINE RARE COINS

David Sunshine
Sunshinecoins.com

Specializing in
Choice U.S. Type
Bust and Seated Coins

ANA, LSCC, JRCS Member
(203)339-2911
davidbsunshine@yahoo.com



(Continued from previous page)

numismatic knowledge among the public. Bill served as The Gobrecht Journal editor following the retirement of John McCloskey, and is well-known for his comprehensive research on Liberty Seated half dollar die varieties, which he has graciously shared at: <https://lscweb.org/Bill-Bugert-Books>. Dennis received this award on behalf of Bill during the ANA awards ceremony.

Craig Eberhart followed up with a report on the New Orleans class presented by Craig, Len Augsburg, and John Frost at the ANA Summer Seminar in Colorado Springs, June 22-25. The student course evaluations were exceptionally positive, and we plan to again offer this course in 2026. John Frost further served as the Summer Seminar “taxi driver,” ferrying students on the ANA golf cart between ANA headquarters, the dining hall, and Colorado College classrooms.

John Frost then presented the background on the Christian Gobrecht gravesite, initially at Monument Cemetery in Philadelphia, and today at Lawnview Memorial Park in Rockledge, PA. Monument Cemetery was redeveloped in the 1950s, with the remains transferred to Lawnview. In the process, many gravestones went unclaimed, including that of the Gobrecht family. The Gobrecht site at Lawnview was eventually accompanied by a plain marker simply indicating “Gobrecht.”

Bill Bugert and Dennis Fortier led the effort to replace the current marker at Lawnview, and this came to fruition in November 2024 (see complete details with photos in the December 2024 E-Gobrecht), as the LSCC, U.S. Mint, ANA, and Gobrecht descendants gathered in Rockledge to dedicate a new, more prominent marker at the site. Attending the ceremonies were Mint Director Ventris Gibson, Chief Engraver Joe Menna, ANA President Tom Uram, Ben Franklin (aka Pat McBride), and other dignitaries. Joe Menna offered especially poignant remarks, in view of his relation to Gobrecht in a professional lineage.

Jeff Pritchard followed next with the Secretary’s report. Our current membership is 492, a slight decline from a year ago. Conversely, the percentage of the Club’s multi-year members has increased. Jeff is also working on our 501c3 status, which changes the LSCC’s status from a “membership” organization to a “charity.” More importantly, this allows the LSCC to receive tax-deductible donations. Jeff is overseeing the necessary modifications to the LSCC Constitution, as well as the related IRS filings. Jeff also noted that, with the latest tax bill, taxpayers may now deduct up to \$1,000 for donations (\$2,000 if married filing jointly) even if claiming the standard deduction.

John Lundsten spoke next on the Treasurer’s report. The Club Treasury is healthy, with \$72,979 in the bank and current liabilities of \$23,726, which includes paid-ahead dues and printing bills for the Gobrecht Journal. Year-to-date advertising revenue is \$7,170, an

(Continued on next page)

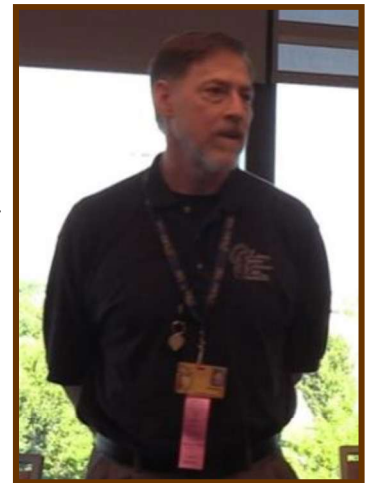
(Continued from previous page)

important source of revenue for the Club. John further noted that the Club website now allows members to manage their memberships, including renewals and changes of address.

Ken Otto covered updates from the Regional program. The LSCC has had a presence at over 20 events in the last year, including exhibits at club tables, club meetings, and presentations. For many of these appearances, we pair with the Barber Coin Collectors Society (BCCS) and share a table. The LSCC has appeared this year in Baltimore, Orlando, Chicago, Denver, St. Louis, and many other locations. Our strong club presence at regional shows throughout the country would not be possible without an army of volunteers who set up and represent the LSCC at various events.

Greg Johnson spoke on The Gobrecht Journal, the most recent issue of which was mailed to members in early July. Articles for the Fall issue have been received from Jeff Pritchard and Dick Osburn. There will also be a response from Bob Julian regarding the Gobrecht dollar research presented in the July issue by Messrs. Sholley, Dannreuther, and Teichman. Greg encouraged members to forward address changes as early as possible.

Len Augsburg next noted recent updates to the published works on Liberty Seated die varieties. Bill Bugert has published a census of 1849 WB-6 double date half dollars, with 38 distinct examples reported to date. Clint Cummins continues to update his half dime die varieties website. John Frost is working on a second edition of the 20-cent book, while Dick Osburn produced a reprint of his (and Brian Cushing's) volume on Seated dollars, in response to strong demand for this book. Note, this represented a reprint and not a second edition. Joe Kirchgessner has recently published his work on Trade dollar varieties, a copy of which was exhibited at the LSCC Club table at the convention.



Greg Johnson
Editor & Publisher
The Gobrecht Journal

Greg Johnson proceeded with the LSCC literary awards. The Kam Ahwash award, for best article appearing in the 2024 issues, went to Jeff Pritchard for his article in Gobrecht Journal #151 (Fall 2024) on Liberty Seated patterns and trial pieces. The John McCloskey award, for best article on die variety analysis, was won by Dick Osburn for his work on 1876-CC half dollars, which also appeared in the Fall 2024 Journal. Greg and Norma McCloskey jointly made this award presentation. The Featured Collection award was claimed by Gerry Fortin, for his presentation of Liberty Seated dimes in the Spring 2024 Journal. The LSCC President's Award, given by the President for overall service to the Club, went to Carl Feldman in recognition of his retirement as the New Member Chairman.

Craig Eberhart moved to the Hall of Fame presentation. Several nominations were made this year, with selection criteria including 10-year Club membership, contributions to research, collecting achievements, and exceptional service to the Club. The first two members of the Hall of Fame were John McCloskey and Kam Ahwash. This year's selection is Dick Osburn, co-author of the standard work on Liberty Seated dollar varieties and a longtime dealer (now retired) of Liberty Seated coins.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

Dick previously won the Kam Ahwash award on two occasions, in 2013 and 2020. Dick was exceptionally appreciative and called out Jim O'Donnell as his mentor in collecting and dealing Liberty Seated coinage. Dick further acknowledged Bill Bugert and Randy Wiley for their work on Liberty Seated half dollars, which led to an expansion of Dick's interest in the series.

Greg Bennick next delivered the educational presentation on Liberty Seated counterstamped coins. The Liberty Seated series dovetails nicely with the topic, as counterstamps were especially popular as a means of advertising in the 19th century. Counterstamps were "little billboards" that were used throughout the United States, although more commonly in the north and midwest than in the south. Greg felt that counterstamps on silver coins are more visually appealing than on other coins, as the deeper color within the counterstamp neatly contrasts with the surrounding silver surfaces.

Greg noted the many professions reflected on counterstamps, including that of a "lemon squeezer" from New York. Most pieces served strictly as advertising for goods or services, though in some cases pieces were also used as admission passes or for political slogans. While counterstamps typically denoted the full name of a business, many examples featured only initials, which can be difficult or impossible to attribute.

Greg recommended two auction sale catalogs that featured noteworthy collections of counterstamped coins, including the September 1985 Bowers and Merena sale of the Van Ormer collection, and the John J. Ford, Jr. XXIII sale, August 2013. Bennick further recommended as reference works Gregory Brunk's Merchant and Privately Countermarked Coins, and Russell Rulau's United States Token 1700-1900. Greg also has his own column on counterstamps that appears in the TAMS Journal, in addition to Bill Groom, who writes on counterstamps for Talkin' Tokens, the periodical of the National Token Collectors Society.

Greg proceeded to discuss a few specific examples. The first was a Pine Bluff, Arkansas counterstamp for "Yankee Robinson's Quadruple Show," on an 1877 half dollar. Bennick likes New York City pieces and shared an example stamped by Andrew Ward, a hardware store owner, on an 1853 Arrows & Rays quarter. Similarly, a Parisian Varieties stamp, on an 1875 half dollar, advertised a show running in New York City. Greg noted that in some cases a silversmith's mark may appear on both a coin and on silver pieces crafted by the same silversmith. **Jewelers did the same, as on an 1840 dime stamped by Charles Wendell** – the same mark appears on his watches. Examples from gunsmiths are also known. **(See images of coin counterstamp examples on next page).**

Greg has done research on a couple of specific pieces, including W. E. Bowman, a photographer from Ottawa, Illinois, who marked an 1857 half dollar. Bowman was the exclusive photographer for the "Little Eskimo Lady," who traveled widely and orated on Eskimo life, ostensibly from personal experience. In truth, she was from Greenland and a complete fraud. Greg has since acquired many Bowman photographs. Greg also investigated a coin marked by Sprague & Blodgett's Georgia Minstrels, and located information on George Lucas, who was a member of this traveling troupe. Remarkably, Greg found a 1914 silent film starring the same George Lucas.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

[Editor's Note]: Paul Hybert of the Chicago Coin Club and an LSCC member brought to our attention the following interesting information related to Greg Bennick's presentation:

This is the jeweler's mark of Charles W. Wendell who setup his business in Chicago in about 1856. He was at 87 Lake St., later moving to 170 State. Before coming to Chicago he was in a partnership with his brother Jules in Oswego, NY. (Wendel & Brother). The two different spellings of his surname aren't a mistake, they used both. His coins were likely stamped between 1856 and 1859. He took in a partner named Sigmund Hyman in 1859 and changed the name of the company to Wendell & Hyman. Earlier, while in Oswego, he and his brother Jules had also stamped coins. Bruce B RandM, Aug 17, 2014 (Cited from: <https://www.cointalk.com/threads/post-your-counterstamped-coins.250308/page-2>)

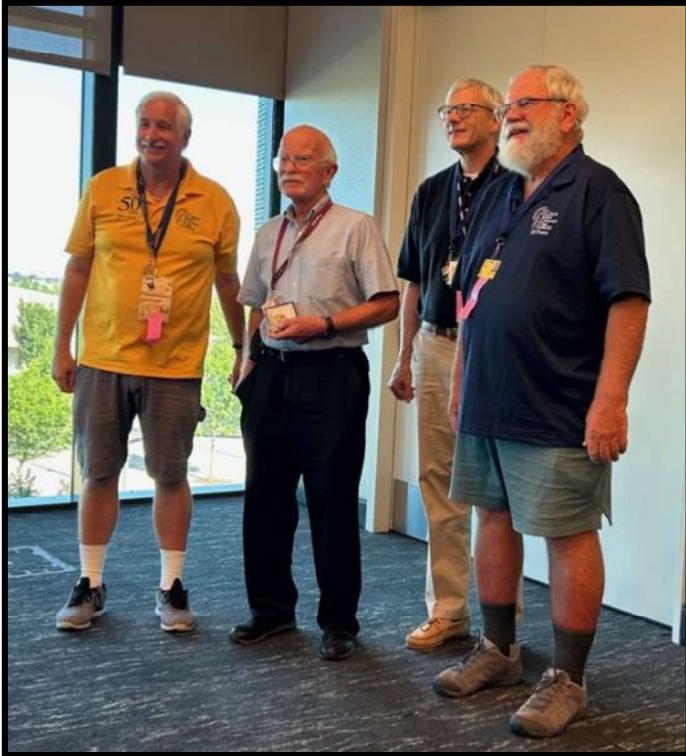


Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

This is not to say they stamped this coin in 1837, but were stamping coins dated earlier than 1856-1859.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)



**Presentation of the
2025 Hall of Fame
Award to Dick Osburn
(2nd from left) with John
Frost, Len Augsburger and
Craig Eberhart (others
left to right)**

**Presentation of the
John W. McCloskey Award
also to Dick Osburn
(far right) with Greg Johnson
and Norma McCloskey**



The meeting concluded with a raffle which included a set of the Gene Gardner photo books on Seated quarters, medals commissioned by Tom Uram for the Gobrecht gravesite ceremony, and “swag-bags” from the LSCC 50th anniversary open house, which took place at the ANA convention in 2023. Dennis Fortier called the raffle, which raised approximately \$300 for the Club treasury.

(END)