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The mint had also ordered a third press to be used for small gold and silver. I have not found exactly when that press arrived. However, the new presses were so successful that three more were ordered and the mint had six in operation by 1850. In a Sept. 10th memo of that year to Director Patterson, Chief Coiner Franklin Peale bragged that they had “never been occupied a tenth of the time...” While I would not put too much faith in Peale’s braggadocio, the point is that the steam presses were vastly more efficient than the old screw presses.

In 1875, George Soley purchased the mint’s first steam press as a relic, restored it, and used it to strike numerous small tokens which he sold for a quarter. Soley displayed the press at major events, including the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883, the Columbian Exposition in 1893, the Pan American Exposition in 1901, and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904. In 1927, the Franklin Institute acquired the press from his widow and refurbished it to run on electric. Aluminum tokens were struck for visitors dropping a small coin in a slot. I saw the press as a child, and if I recall correctly, the cost was a nickel or a dime.

During some research in the late 1990s, I rediscovered the press, confirmed that it was the first press by the engraved brass plate on the head stock noting it had been modified by David Gilbert in 1858. While the press was not operational at that point, it was a numismatic treasure. I immediately contacted the ANA and they were instrumental in getting Joe Rust and Ron Landis of the Gallery Mint Museum to restore the press. It was on display at the 2000 ANA Convention and is now on loan to the ANA Museum in Colorado Springs.

As those who saw it on display at the 2000 ANA will attest, the mechanism operates so smoothly it sounds much like a sewing machine. The loudest noise is that of the coins dropping into the collection box beneath the frame. It is an incredible work of engineering and manufacturing!

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Call for LSCC Hall of Fame Nominations for 2025 (Due by April 15)

Nominations are being accepted for the LSCC Hall of Fame. A Nomination Form must be received by April 15. For information about the Hall of Fame, requirements for nomination, and access to the Nomination Form, please visit the LSCC website, <https://lscweb.org/LSCC/Hall-of-Fame>.

Questions or concerns regarding the LSCC Hall of Fame may be directed to Craig Eberhart, LSCC Vice President. Contact information is on the last page of this issue or send to:

Craig Eberhart at craig@eberhart.us or P.O. Box 1386, Los Alamos, NM 87544

Nominator _____ LSCC Member Yes / No
 Nominee _____

Provide any of the following information to assist with the selection:

1. Time as LSCC Club Officer or Leader / Position
2. Collections Built, including grade and as many specifics as possible
3. Published Writings (Liberty Seated Books, Articles, etc.)
4. Club Contributions (promoting or assisting the LSCC in its mission)
5. Numismatic or LSCC Awards
6. Miscellaneous Data that might add to Nominee’s consideration & Nominators Comments