



The Curious Collector

by Len Augsburger, LSCC #1271

Central States is Back!

The recent Central States Numismatic Society (CSNS) show, resuming after a three year pandemic-related break, has always been one of my favorite events on the annual coin calendar. In his later years John McCloskey attended only two major shows each year—this, and the ANA summer convention. As a result, the LSCC has always had a strong presence here, and this year was no exception. Dennis Fortier capably managed the Club table (shared with the Barber Coin Collectors Society), which was sandwiched between the Chicago Coin Club and the American Numismatic Society, and traffic was active throughout the three-day convention.

CSNS is a low overhead event for me. I live 25 minutes away, the parking is free, and it's a short walk from the parking lot to the show floor. No dank parking garages or long walkways are involved, and the CSNS organizers ensured the constant presence of a manned squad car in the parking area. It really doesn't get much easier than that.

The only hiccup encountered was a python-length registration line on Thursday morning, which took about 20 minutes to get through. A distraught dealer, who had flown in for one day, greeted me upon entering the convention center and asked me if the line was really that long. Sadly it was. CSNS President Mitch Ernst did his best and personally apologized to many of those waiting. Other than that, everything was smooth sailing, and I have no doubt the CSNS staff will work out the kinks for next year. It should be noted that this year's event was essentially built from scratch, as the CSNS board had transitioned to a new show management team, headed by Larry Shepherd.

Once inside the show, action was abundant, and every dealer I spoke to reported healthy activity. The exhibit highlight was the Heritage Auctions display of the Tom Bender collection, which will be offered at the summer ANA. Tom exhibited highlights several years ago at Seated Fest II (held March 2019 in Baltimore), including the unique 1870-S half dime, which was on display here as well. The Bender collection includes a strong selection of important Seated coinage (I could mention the 1870-S half dime and stop there) that is especially notable for Carson City pieces. Great Collections also had an exhibit, combining an 1804 dollar, 1913 nickel, 1894-S dime, and 1943 copper cent. While none of the coins were Liberty Seated, it's difficult to walk by such a group without taking a long look.

We held the LSCC Club meeting at the usual appointed time of 9am on Friday. I counted 25 people in the room, a good turnout for this event. Lianna Spurrier captured the Club meeting on video, which will be posted in due course. I presented on my collection of First Steam Coinage



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medals, which were also on display at the LSCC Club table (see page 11). The 1836 commemorative piece, engraved by Christian Gobrecht, marked the introduction of the steam press into the Mint, an important step forward in the technology of our national coin factory. Several variants of the medal exist, with varying dates and compositions. I've had fun collecting these over the last 15 years or so, and was fortunate to acquire the collection of a like-minded enthusiast at the 2021 Summer FUN show.

The show ended (for me) on Saturday afternoon with a brief chat with the always-engaging Brad Karoleff, who reported that Heritage Auctions would be making gifts to both LSCC and the John Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) in memory of John McCloskey. It was a fitting and welcome tribute, all the more so because of John's traditional presence at the CSNS show.

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