

Editor's View From the Rim

Ramping Up for the Semiquincentennial...PK

What's That? Our Nation's 250th Year
Celebration on July 4th, 2026... **1776-2026**

Can you pronounce it? Do you remember the
Bi-Centennial event 50 years ago on July 4th, 1976?

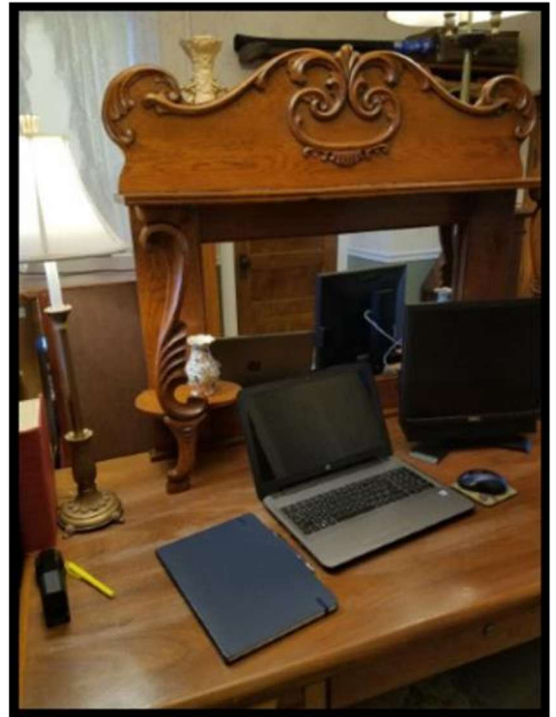
Well the U.S. Mint is already preparing.

See the link for the details and to sign-up for updates:

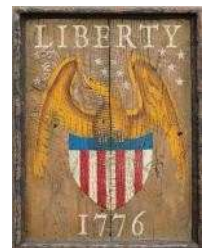
[https://www.usmint.gov/coins/coin-programs/
semiquincentennial/?](https://www.usmint.gov/coins/coin-programs/semiquincentennial/?)

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(Note: You may have to copy and past this link into your browser.)



"Independence Hall
in Philadelphia" painting
by Ferdinand Richardt (1858-63)



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Japan's 'Coin Culture'

by Jeff Pritchard, LSCC #1759

Prior to departing for a family excursion to Japan, my daughter-in-law advised us to consider bringing small, old-fashion coin purses. Coin purses? The last person I'd seen using a coin purse was my great Aunt Eleanor. That was several decades ago. Do they still exist? And why in the world would we need them in Tokyo?

Unbeknownst to me prior to our trip, coins still play an oversized role in Japan's daily commerce, much more so than in the U.S., or most other economically developed countries. In an age of ever-expanding electronic payment options, Japan's commitment to coins is refreshing.

In 1984, Japan discontinued production of currency notes smaller than 1,000 Yen, nearly \$7.00 by today's value. But that leaves a large monetary gap for smaller transactions or for making change – a need fulfilled with coins. Japan's largest coin denomination is 500 Yen, \$3.50, while their smallest denomination is an aluminum one-Yen piece, representing a miniscule seven-tenths of a cent.



Japan's 500-Yen Copper/Zinc/Nickel coin.

(Can you spot the anti-counterfeiting letters in the zeros?)

Perhaps the most prominent cultural marker of Japan's love affair with coins are the ubiquitous coin-operated vending machines found on every street corner with a mind-numbing variety of drinks, snacks and souvenirs. (They really are everywhere!) And surprisingly, younger Japanese appear to embrace the coin culture despite the proliferation of mobile payment apps and platforms.

Receiving change in coins at every turn, it wasn't long before our pockets were bulging with 100-, 50-, 20-, 10- and one-Yen pieces. The country feels awash in coins and the data backs this up. By comparison, the U.S. Treasury estimates the total value of circulating coinage in the United States to be \$47.8 billion, or \$140 per person. However, according to Statista, Japan's circulating coinage, totaling 4.7 trillion Yen, is the equivalent of \$261 per Japanese person, nearly double the U.S. per capita amount. (And we all know a great deal of U.S. coinage never actually circulates.)