



# The Planchet

A Publication of the Indianapolis Coin Club

Issue Number 481

The Meetings of the Indianapolis Coin Club are held the fourth Monday of each month at the Nora Library at 8625 Guilford Avenue in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Meetings consist of a business session, an intermission, educational program, and a numismatic auction. Doors open at 6:00pm, meeting will begin at 7:00pm.

The next meeting will be  
Monday,  
April 23, 2007!

ICC **RECOGNIZES NATIONAL COIN WEEK**  
**“Check Your Change”**  
**April 16th—22nd**

**“Check Your Change”** - In an effort to make people aware of coin collecting and that there is a Coin Club in the Indianapolis area, the ICC members are going to distribute over \$250.00 of obsolete coins into circulation during this week. So for you members that showed up at the March meeting and bought bags, this is the week to spend them. The media has been notified of what we are up to. The Hendricks County Flyer has already ran the story on their front page. We look for more of them to get hold of us and run our story.

At the meeting in April, I am going to set aside some time during the meeting for people to tell us about their experiences or reactions to spending old money. We are hoping that we will see some new faces too. I personally would like to thank all the members of the NCW team that made this happen. James Held, Committee Chairman, Mike White, Don King, and Tom Ferwerda without them this would have never happened.

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### The 2007 Indianapolis Coin Club Officers and Board Members

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# FRANKLIN HALF DOLLARS 1948 – 1963

by  
Michael Schmidt

In 1941 the Walking Liberty half dollar reached the 25 years point in its production and under the Act of Sept 26<sup>th</sup> 1890 became eligible for the replacement of the design. The Secretary of the Treasury could now make this change without having to consult with Congress, and in the past such a change had been something of an automatic decision. But even though the country was not yet at war, the government was involved with enough problems in Europe supporting our allies that the additional headache of changing designs was not something the mint needed at that time. (The Mint was involved with production of coinage not only for ourselves, but to an ever growing extent, coinage of other nations that were either short of critical materials and labor, or their industrial capabilities were redirected towards war production.)



In 1947 though, the war was over our positions in Germany and Japan had been consolidated and many of the allies were beginning to take over their own interests. The time had come to “correct” that little delay in redesigning the half dollar. Thus would end the last of the classic designs introduced in 1916. (The quarter had had it’s life cut short early but Congressional action to mark the Bicentennial of George Washington’s birth, and the dime had fallen to the passing of the immensely popular president Franklin Roosevelt.)

Interestingly, I can find no information of why Benjamin Franklin was chosen as the subject for the new half dollar. It appears to have come from down “from on high” and no other subjects were even considered. Chief Engraver John Sinnock was given the order to create the new design and he finished it just a few weeks before his death in May 1947. The Mint apparently worked on developing the designs for awhile and probably had no intention of making any changes to it because they did not bother submitting the design to the Fine Arts Commission until Nov 17<sup>th</sup>. The obverse die showed shoulder length bust of Benjamin Franklin facing right LIBERTY is above the head and IN GOD WE TRUST is below the bust. The date is in the right field below Franklin’s chin. On the reverse the coin is dominated by the Liberty Bell. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA is at the top of the coin and the denomination is along the bottom. The motto E Pluribus Unum is found in three lines to the left of the bell and it is balanced on the right by a small eagle which fulfills the law that requires an eagle appear on all coins with a denomination greater than ten cents.

The Commission was not happy with the coin though. They had two major complaints. They did not like the small eagle. I’m not sure if they wanted to eliminate it or make it larger. They also had a problem with the Bell. They seemed to think that the bell itself was fine, but could the Mint get rid of the crack?!! I think the Commission was cracked! The Liberty Bell is a memorable symbol of our early history and the crack in the bell was a well known story from that history. If you get rid of the crack then you just have a non-decrepit bell with no recognizable connection to our history or Franklin.



Fortunately after five months work and coming up on the start of the year, the Secretary of the Treasury also realized the Commission had no sense of history and proceeded with the design unchanged and the Franklin half dollar was introduced in January of 1948.

The coin seems to have been well received with few adverse comments. Learning from the conspiracy rumors that resulted from the John Sinnock’s initials on the dime, the truncation of the bust of Franklin bears the initials JRS.

According to Walter Breen , Chief Engraver Sinnock indulged in some plagiarism for the reverse design claiming that he copied it from the Sesquicentennial half dollar by John Fredrick Lewis. While there is some resemblance, that is to be expected. Both depict the Liberty Bell, but the inscriptions are different. And since they both show the same object I’m not sure how you would show it in a large size and NOT have the two coins look similar. (I guess you could leave the crack off. :o) )

There was only one change made to the design during its run. In 1956 the eagle on the back was changed slightly to increase its relief and there were a couple of small changes in its design, the most noticeable being the change from four feathers in the eagle’s right wing to three. (Viewers left, count the feather tips to the left of the eagle’s perch.) In reality this wasn’t so much a change as the introduction of a second hub. The new high relief eagle hub was only intended to be used for the proof coinages, but by 1958 it was also

(Continued on Page 5)



## March 26, 2007 Minutes of the ICC Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Mark Eberhardt. There were no visitors to introduce.

The Secretary's report and the Treasurer's report were read and accepted.

**Old Business** – Mark announced that the Editor's position and one Board member's position were still unfilled. There were no volunteers. Mark also an-

nounced that the Club must leave the library building by 8:50 PM, so he would be moving the progress of the meetings as quickly as possible.

### Committee Reports

- Fund Raising – Dave Reid reported that the Club had already received several donations. He suggested that those individuals who were purchasing 6 50/50 tickets for \$5.00 donate one of them to the Club. That way, if the Club won the drawing, both "50's" would go to the club.

- ISNA Show – Jim Fuson reported that there were still several openings on the Saturday (November 3, 2007) roster for manning the ICC table.

- Exhibitors Night – (July meeting) Vinton announced that the committee had decided that the Judges would be the Club members in attendance that night. The winners would be chosen by "Peoples Choice."

### New Business

- Mark reported that the correct dates for National Coin Week would be April 15 to April 21. He also announced that the Coin Week committee had assembled bags of old coins for distribution during Coin Week. He urged Club members to buy the bags (\$5.00 for a bag containing \$5.00 face value of old coins and currency) and spend the contents during Coin Week. Many members had purchased bags prior to the meeting, but many more bags were left. Don King would be selling the remaining bags during the break at the front of the room. Mark said the Club was over the budget on this activity, but that the extra money could be made up in other areas.

- There will be programs for the Juniors, and they are tentatively planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, starting in September. The programs will be given at 1:00 PM at the Knights of Columbus Hall on 71<sup>st</sup> Street, west of Keystone Avenue. The club now needs volunteers to conduct the programs. At this time, six programs are planned per year.

- Secretary, Vinton Dove, then read announcements about upcoming coin shows in the near future.

After the break, Board Member Bob Bettcher presented the Educational program. His topic was Flying Eagle and Indian Head Cents. His presentation was excellent, and he brought his collection to demonstrate what the coins looked like.

President Eberhardt ran an exciting auction, and most of the lots were sold. The auction also included several lots donated by members.

The club adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Vinton Dove, Secretary

### Area Coin Shows:

**April 22nd - "Madison County Coin Show"** - Anderson, IN UAW Local 663 Union Hall 2840 Madison Ave. Hours: 9am - 4pm

**May 6th - "71st Street Coin Show"** Indianapolis, IN K of C Hall 2100 East 71st Street off Keystone Ave. Hours: 9am - 3:45pm

**May 19th - "4th Annual Jasper Area Coin Club's Coin Show"** Jasper, IN Dubois County Museum 2704 N. Newton St. (Hwy. US 231 N.) Across from the Moose Lodge & next to Holiday Liquors. Hours: 9am - 4pm

**May 20th - "Lafayette Numismatic Society"** - Lafayette, IN Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds 1401 Teal Road. Hours: 9am- 4pm



## Indianapolis Coin Club

### Treasurer's Report March 2007

#### Income:

Received from 50/50	\$ 44.00
Three line add newsletter	\$ 1.00
Sale of Coin Week Coin Packets	\$ 250.00
Items donated to Auction	\$ 56.00
Additional Auction Lot	\$ 8.00
10 Membership Renewals	<u>\$ 120.00</u>

Total \$ 479.00

#### Expenses:

Mark Eberhardt Check # 1421	
Newsletter Postage	\$ 15.60
Newsletter Printing	\$ 11.08
Cost for Coin Week Program	\$ 596.46
U.S.P.S. P.O. Box Rental	<u>\$ 46.00</u>

Total \$ 669.14

Feb. Checkbook Balance \$ 2,644.27  
March Checkbook Balance \$ 2,454.13

I.C.C. CD Balance \$ 17,984.54

Respectfully Submitted,  
Karl Kreck

## Classified Section:

**Wanted** - Wooden Nickels, elongated coins, & Mardi Gras Tokens. Call Charles: 317-856-4553

Place your ad here for only \$1 a month. All ads must be submitted by the 10th of each month to the editor.

(Continued from page 3, Franklins) beginning to show up on the business strikes as well. But since they've only shown up, so far, on Philadelphia coins there is a fairly good possibility that they are from the reuse of retired proof dies to make business strike coins. The only case where we can say for sure that the proof hub was used to make a business strike die was on one die in 1959 where the die was impressed by both hub designs.

Although none of the mintages for the Franklin halves are excessively high, none of them are overly low either. The lowest mintages come from the Philadelphia mint in 1953 and 1955. Although only about two and a half million coins were minted each year rolls were widely hoarded and they are readily available. The 1949-S in top grade can be pricey but the entire set can be assembled in uncirculated and is within the reach of most collectors who want one.

### Club Looking for a New Home

The club was informed by the staff of the Nora Library that they were not aware that we were conducting an auction during our meeting. They have a strict rule that states, "that they must charge \$53.00 per month for the room if money is exchanged during a meeting".

Because we think the Dealers and the auctions are a crucial part of our meeting we will have to find a new location. So if anyone belongs to a church or organization that would allow us to use a room on the fourth Monday of every month, please contact Mark at: [fubacoin@aol.com](mailto:fubacoin@aol.com) or call 317-837-5682. Until then we will continue to meet at the Nora Library and pay the fee.

## April's Program

### "The Lore of Carson City"

By.....  
Jim Warden