

FAIRFAX COIN CLUB NEWS



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Fairfax Coin Club, P.O. Box 215 Vienna, VA <http://www.fairfaxcoinclub.com>

Member ANA, VNA

Meeting Cadence: Second Tuesday of the month at the Vienna Community Center

Board of Directors

President:	Pat Flynn	Vice President:	Mike Markowitz
Treasurer/Auctioneer:	Daryl Haynor	Secretary:	Dave Ellison
Youth Coordinator:	John Hutcheson	Webmaster:	Hari Prasad

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Reminders

- ✓ The next Vienna Coin Show is August 8th – 9th. Come out and show your support.
- ✓ Auction Etiquette: 1) Do not check out while auction is in session. 2) You can check out at break. 3) Once you check out, you cannot re-enter the auction.
- ✓ Sing For Your Supper! Since we run a deficit at each meeting, we are asking members to contribute a small donation for the pizza and drinks provided.
- ✓ Raffles! Proceeds from the raffles help support the work of the club and you may be lucky.
- ✓ Door Prize! Must attend in-person to win.
- ✓ Membership! 2026 dues were due at the end of the year for the following year. Please keep your membership up to date.
- ✓ Consider a life membership and you won't have to worry about dues again!!

President's Message

Dear Fairfax Coin Club Members,

As we welcome June and the start of summer, I would like to thank each of you for your continued support and participation in our club activities. The enthusiasm, knowledge, and camaraderie shared by our members are what make our club such a special organization.

The summer is often busy with vacations, family gatherings, and outdoor activities, but it is also a wonderful time to continue exploring our hobby. Whether you're adding new pieces to your collection, researching a favorite series, attending coin shows, or simply enjoying conversations with fellow collectors, there is always something new to discover in numismatics.

I encourage everyone to attend our upcoming meetings and events. Our educational programs are designed to provide valuable insights for collectors of all experience levels, and they offer an excellent opportunity to learn from one another. If you have an interesting item, recent acquisition, or collecting story, please consider sharing it with the membership.

As we continue through the year, we remain focused on promoting numismatic education, supporting our local collecting community, and welcoming new members to the hobby. Your participation and volunteer efforts are essential to the success of our club, and I am grateful for all that you do.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our June and July meetings before we break for August. Until then, enjoy the beginning of summer, stay safe, and happy collecting!

Best wishes,

Pat Flynn

President, Fairfax Coin Club

– In Memoriam –



Fairfax Coin Club Founding Director, Susan Coar van der Veer

We are saddened to announce the passing of Susan Coar van der Veer on March 19, 2026.

Susan is survived by her son, Christopher, of Reston, VA, her brother, Rob Coar of Crofton, MD, and her mother, Helen Coar of Safety Harbor, FL. She was preceded in death by her father, George Coar.

After earning her bachelor's degree from Penn State, she attended and graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a master's degree in systems engineering.

She spent over 30 years working as a civilian engineer for the US Navy and Department of Defense.

Susan co-founded the Fairfax Coin Club back in 2007 and some of her other hobbies included photography, traveling, and feeding her backyard birds.

To honor her memory, the Club's Board of Directors voted at its March 2026 meeting to move forward with the first annual *Sue van der Veer Memorial Young Numismatic Scholarships*. The Club wishes to honor Sue's passion for coin collecting.

The scholarships will be awarded by the Club to two young numismatists who are YN club members and/or regular attendees of the Club's youth programs at our Vienna Coin Show and the Annandale Coin Show.

A Young Numismatist in the 8- to 13-year-old age group and a Young Numismatist in the 14- to 20-year-old age group will be awarded based upon submission of a presentation on their numismatic/coin interest or pursuits. The submissions may consist of either a written essay; a recorded video presentation; or an oral presentation to the Scholarship Committee.

The scholarship recipients will be selected by the Scholarship Committee. Submissions/presentations will be due at the June 2026 Club meeting and the selected recipients announced at the July 2026 Club meeting.



“Show Me the Money” Presentation

19th Century Love Tokens

By: Arthur Aron

Arthur Aron gave a talk on 19th century Love Tokens, illustrated with examples from his collection. Love tokens were coins, usually silver, typically ground flat on one side and engraved with a monogram, date, or short, intimate message.

✓ <https://americanhistory.si.edu/explore/stories/love-tokens-where-cold-hard-cash-and-romance-meet>

Tokens usually refer to privately minted pieces used as substitutes for coins. For example, during periods of coin shortages, some merchants used tokens to make change for their customers. This happened during the Hard Times era of the 1830s and during the Civil War. Tokens also were used to advertise a business. Other tokens were produced for specific purposes such as bus and subway tokens used to pay the fare.

A love token is not that type of token. Instead, it might be described as a “token” of affection. Generally, a love token is a coin that has been filed down to a flat surface on one side. Then, something is engraved on that surface. Usually, it is a name, initials, or a date. Sometimes, an object such as an animal, scenery, or a plant is engraved on the love token. These are higher quality pieces requiring more artistic talent. The lowest quality love tokens may have been made at a carnival where someone had a supply of coins



already filed flat on one side. When a customer asked for a name to be placed on the token, the vendor used letter punches and a hammer to strike that name into the token.

Love tokens were popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They are typically on silver coins, most often dimes. However, they exist on virtually every type of coin. Some were carried loose as pocket pieces. Others were used in jewelry.

For example, a woman might have a charm bracelet with love tokens attached to it. Each token included the name of one of her children on it.



Calendar of Events

2026			
May	June	July	August
12 th Monthly Meeting	2nd Monthly Meeting*	14 th Monthly Meeting 25 th -26 th Annandale Coin Show	8 th - 9 th Vienna Coin Show

***June 2nd Meeting** - Please be aware that our June meeting will feature our 2nd Fairfax Coin Club Show. Members will set up as dealers and flaunt their wares, which will be held in the auxiliary gym, so there will be plenty of room. Pencil the date on your calendar at our 2nd Coin Show.

“What Am I?” Puzzle*

DIRECTIONS: Be the first to identify the coin partially pictured below and win – **tax free** – THREE Fairfax Coin Club bucks. To win you must email your answers to the following address: angelplay2@yahoo.com and put **What Am I** as the subject. Emailing your answers to any other address, including the board, only delays your timestamp, possibly enabling your fellow FCC member to win, even if their entry was initially after yours.



Reading Medieval Coins

By: Mike Markowitz

The fascinating and very complex field of medieval coins is just now beginning to achieve the kind of widespread popularity that it deserves. In the past, would-be collectors have been scared off by the prolixity of mints, the maze of governments involved, the crudeness of many of the coins, the shortage of useful references and the difficulty of reading the inscriptions. [Walker, (2009) page 1]

The first question many collectors ask about medieval European coins is, “Why are they so ugly?” The next question might be “Why are they so hard to read?”

Few medieval coins are masterpieces of numismatic art. But what they lack in eye appeal, they often make up for in historical interest. Medieval history leaves you with a strong impression that the main interests of the rulers were **war, hunting, and fathering illegitimate children** (not necessarily in that order). This left little time or energy for concern with technical aspects of coinage.

When we see great works of medieval art, such as the stained-glass windows of 12th century cathedrals, like *Chartres* and *Notre Dame*, we can understand that medieval artisans could create beautiful things, but these things were made for the Church, in the service of God. Some bishops and monasteries issued their own coinage, but money ranked low on the list of things that needed enrichment by the hands of skilled craftsmen. Mints were operated by for-profit contractors employing unskilled temporary workers. Medieval coins were often so thin that parts of the obverse design “bleed-through” onto the reverse. Many coins were struck in *billon*, a copper alloy with as little as two percent silver, which tends to turn dull black or gray in circulation. Coins were often recalled, melted down, and re-issued, so it wasn’t worth a lot of effort to beautify them. Surviving medieval coins are often clipped, because — despite horrendous punishments on the books — weak states lacked the power to enforce laws against this practice. The skills of engraving realistic portraits and human figures in metal, skills which take many years to develop, were gradually lost in the decline of the Roman empire and would not re-emerge until the Renaissance.

Many early medieval coins bear no inscription at all — no indication of who issued the coin, no denomination, no mint mark, no date. All the things we are accustomed to seeing on modern coins are absent. Some early medieval coins carry “pseudo-inscriptions” of meaningless lines and circles:

CAROLINGIANS. Louis 'le Pieux' (the Pious). As Emperor Louis I, 814-840. gold Solidus (22mm, 4.17 g, 1h). Contemporary imitation of Aachen mint issue. Uncertain mint in Frisia. Struck circa 830. CNG Triton XXIII, January 14, 2020 Lot: 1031, realized: \$5,500



Most medieval coin inscriptions are in Latin, the liturgical language of the Church. Literacy was limited to an educated elite of clergy and officials. The “moneymen” and artisans who engraved the dies were probably not literate in Latin, they copied what they were given. Inscriptions are often abbreviated to save space or effort, and garbled inscriptions are common.

On ancient Greek and Roman coin inscriptions each letter was painstakingly engraved by hand on the coin dies, and the standard of workmanship and legibility could be very high. On many medieval coins, letters were crudely hammered into the dies with simple punches, and they are often hard to make out, even on well preserved specimens.

Some non-Roman alphabets that appear on medieval European coins include Norse runes, Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Cyrillic and (rarely) Hebrew.

Inscriptions in the runic alphabet, or “*futhark*”¹ appear, on some Anglo-Saxon coins, including the rare silver penny of Beonna², king of East Anglia, who ruled c. 749-760. The king’s name is written as **+BENNA+** in runes around a pellet on the obverse. The coins are the main historical evidence for this ruler’s existence:



Goldberg Coins & Collectibles, Auction 46, May 26, 2008, Lot: 195, realized: \$32,000

An example of a bilingual medieval coin is a gold *solidus* struck in Spain, c. 715-717:



CNG Triton IX, January 10, 2006, Lot: 1804, realized: \$15,000

The Latin inscription on the obverse is **FERITOS SOLI IN SPAN ANXCI** (*Feritos Solidus in Spania Anno XCI*, “*Solidus made in Spain, Year 91.*”) The Arabic text on the reverse states in two lines across the center: **Muhammad rasul Allah** (“*Muhammad is the messenger of Allah*”), and around the margin “*bismillah struck was this dinar in al-*

Andalus in the year eight and ninety”. The different dating formulas of the Latin and Arabic inscriptions reflect the use of different calendars.

The Christian kingdom of Georgia in the Caucasus region developed its own alphabetic script³. A silver *dirham* of queen Rusudan, who reigned from 1223 to 1245 bears inscriptions in Georgian and Arabic:

Leu Web Auction 35, July 9, 2025, Lot: 5603, realized: approx. \$426

On the obverse, around an image of Christ, with his Greek monogram **IC XC** (abbreviating Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, “*Jesus Christ*”) the Georgian inscription gives the date according to a local era corresponding to AD 1230: “*In the name of God, struck in the year 450.*” On the reverse, around Georgian letters for **RSN** the inscription is “*Queen of queens, glory of the world and faith, Rusudan, daughter of Tamar, champion of the Messiah*” in Arabic.



Under Polish rulers Boleslav IV (1146–73,) Casimir III (1177–94,) and Mieszko III, Polish currency bore Hebrew inscriptions. An unknown mint master serving Mieszko III “the Old” who was Duke of Poland, c. 1181-1202 inscribed the word בְּרַכָּה **B’racha** (“*Blessing*”) on a thin, single-sided silver “bracteate” weighing just 0.17 grams. Formerly in the collection of Daniel Friedenberg, who wrote a standard reference on these coins (Friedenberg, 1976), this coin sold for \$10,000 in a 2022 US auction, against a pre-sale estimate of \$500.



CNG Triton XXV, January 11, 2022 Lot: 1227, realized \$10,000

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elder_Futhark

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beonna_of_East_Anglia

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgian_scripts

In the 14th century, a more elaborate style of lettering — “Gothic Uncials” — became fashionable, especially on the prestigious gold coins. A handsome example is the gold *Angel* of English king Edward IV, who ruled from 1461 to 1470, and again from 1471 until his death at the age of 40 in 1483.



CNG Auction 130, September 23, 2025, Lot: 832, realized: \$4,500

On the obverse, the Archangel Michael slays a dragon, surrounded by the inscription: **EDWARD. DEI . GRA . REX ANGL . Z FRANC** (“*Edward by the Grace of God King of England & France.*”). On the reverse a ship bears a shield of the royal arms and a large cross, between the letter **E** and a rose.

For medieval numismatists, a knowledge of heraldry — the study of coats of arms — is essential, because from the twelfth century onwards, shields of arms became an increasingly important part of the imagery on coins. Even when the inscription is unreadable or off the edge, recognition of the design on the shield may allow identification of the state or even the individual who issued the coin. For example, the royal arms of France, three gold fleurs-de-lis on a shield of blue, is commonly found on French coins, and appears combined with the arms of England during the years when English kings asserted a claim to the French crown.



On the gold *écu* of Charles VII, king of France from 1422 to 1461 the inscription around the shield is: **+ KAROLVS : DEI : GRACIA : FRANCORVM : REX**



New York Sale XLIX, January 15, 2020, Lot: 1060, realized: \$1,250

Obverse: “Charles by the Grace of God, King of the French”

Reverse: “Christ Conquers, Christ Reigns, Christ Rules”

On the reverse, around a flowery cross, the inscription, which appears on French royal issues for centuries, is: **XPC * VINCIT * XPC * REGNAT * XPC * IMPERAT**

Collecting Medievals

The inexpensive 44-page booklet *Reading Medieval Coins* (Walker, 2009) is an essential handbook for collectors. The standard reference in English is the series, *Medieval European Coins*, a massive work in progress from Cambridge University Press that will eventually total 17 volumes. The best one-volume introduction to the subject is Grierson (1991). Medieval coins appear mainly in the inventory and auctions of European dealers, but unlike ancients, there are relatively few restrictions on their importation into the United States.

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