

## **Million-Dollar Nickel Reunion at ANA Show in Baltimore Four 1913 Liberty Head nickels to make first joint appearance in 60 years**

Four of the five fabled and valuable 1913 Liberty Head nickels will make an historic, once-in-a-lifetime joint appearance at the American Numismatic Association (ANA) World's Fair of Money<sup>SM</sup> in Baltimore, July 30-August 3.

Ninety years after their suspicious creation and six decades since anyone saw the coins together, these numismatic treasures will be on display at the ANA's five-day convention. In addition, the specially made container that once contained all five of the multimillion-dollar coins will be reunited with the rarities for this special exhibit.

"The tale of the 1913 Liberty Head nickel is full of mystery and intrigue, written around a cast of characters that includes an eccentric millionaire, a noted banker and an Egyptian king," says ANA Money Museum Curator Lawrence J. Lee. "While the original story is simple, the who, how and why are unknown, as is the location of the fifth famed nickel that has been missing since at least the 1960s - maybe longer."

After nearly 30 years of issuing nickels with Charles Barber's Liberty Head design, the United States Mint began producing the popular Buffalo nickel in 1913. However, five 5-cent coins with the old design were struck with the new date.

In 1919 former Mint employee Samuel W. Brown placed an ad in the ANA's monthly journal offering to pay the unheard of price of \$500 for any Liberty Head nickel dated 1913. At the Association's 1920 convention in Chicago, collectors got their first glimpse of the coins when Brown exhibited the five-piece set. Six years later, the set was sold to eccentric millionaire collector Col. E.H.R. Green, son of the infamous "Witch of Wall Street," Hetty Green. After Green's death, the nickels were purchased in 1941 by St. Louis collector Eric P. Newman, who broke up the set and sold the individual coins over the next seven years.

Today, two of the 1913 Liberty Head nickels are in private hands. California sports agent Dwight Manley purchased one at the ANA's 2001 National Money Show<sup>SM</sup> auction in Salt Lake City for \$1.84 million. From 1949-96, it had been kept in a vault by noted Baltimore banker Louis E. Eliasberg Sr. The other privately held coin, reportedly purchased for more than \$1.84 million in a private transaction in 2002 by Legend Numismatics of Lincroft, New Jersey, was prominently featured in an episode of the popular 1970s television series Hawaii Five-O.

The other two 1913 Liberty Head nickels to be displayed at the ANA show in Baltimore reside in museums. One, part of The Smithsonian Institution's collection since 1978, once was owned by Egypt's King Farouk. The fourth nickel, donated in 1989 to the ANA's Money Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado, by the late Aubrey and Adeline Bebee, was previously owned by a Milwaukee collector who generously passed it around to strangers he met in taverns.

A nationwide search for the missing 1913 Liberty Head nickel was launched in May by Bowers and Merena Galleries, the official auctioneer for the ANA show in Baltimore. The auctioneer is offering at least \$1 million for the lost coin. For years, numismatists speculated that the missing quint, last seen when it was sold in 1946, vanished in a 1962 automobile accident. However, recent research has cast serious doubt on that story's credibility.

"I felt my numismatic life was complete just seeing one these coins," says ANA President John Wilson. "Bringing them together is beyond my wildest dreams. On behalf of the ANA and collectors everywhere, I want to extend my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to all those who made this unbelievable exhibit possible."

Laurie Sperber of Legend Numismatics was the first to offer her 1913 Liberty Head nickel for exhibit at the show. Beth Deisher, editor of *Coin World*, then posed the idea of bringing the other three known specimens together. Dwight Manley, The Smithsonian and the ANA then all agreed to display their respective specimens, and Eric Newman offered the container that once contained the entire set. Diamond International Galleries of Timonium, Maryland, loaned the exhibit cases for the show, and Paul Montgomery, president of Bowers and Merena Galleries, came up with the reward for the missing nickel.

Adjacent to the exhibit of the rare nickels, Diamond International will display a \$3 million collection of 12 original works of art depicting Disney's famous big bucks character, Scrooge McDuck, in money-related themes. The paintings, by the late cartoon storyteller and painter Carl Barks, feature the noted miser holding some of numismatics' most recognized coins; maybe Uncle Scrooge has the missing 1913 Liberty Head nickel. Brochures will be available explaining the artwork by Barks, who created the Donald and Scrooge McDuck stories for Disney from the 1940s to the 1960s. In his retirement, the artist turned his hand to oil painting, producing more than 100 prized works. Gemstone Publishing, a sister company of Diamond International and publisher of Disney Comics, will give away posters featuring the cover of a Scrooge McDuck comic book and a reprint of a 1940s Donald Duck comic book.

The Expert by Carl Barks

Courtesy of Gemstone Publishing

The World's Fair of Money at the Baltimore Convention Center will be open from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday through Saturday, July 30-August 2, and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday, August 3. Admission is free.

For additional information on the World's Fair of Money, contact the ANA Convention Department, 818 N. Cascade Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3279; phone 719/632-2646; fax 719/634-4085; e-mail [convention@money.org](mailto:convention@money.org); or visit the ANA website at [www.money.org](http://www.money.org).

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