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NUMISMATIC
ASSOCIATION

IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Jan. 26, 2006

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Money Museum Exhibit Celebrates Ben Franklin's Influence on the Nation's Money

Ben Franklin was many things: inventor, statesman, philosopher, patriot, writer and founding father. But he also left his mark on the world of numismatics by printing money and devising ways to prevent counterfeiting.

Franklin's impact on numismatics is reflected in a new exhibit to be displayed in the American Numismatic Association's Money Museum lobby beginning Feb. 7.

"Benjamin Franklin – A Man for All Times," a two-case mini-exhibit, features a 20-shilling note printed by Franklin and issued by the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1764, an 1882 national bank note featuring a vignette of Franklin flying his kite during a thunderstorm, and a variety of commemorative tokens, coins, medals and paper money bearing Franklin's image.

"Franklin invented anti-counterfeiting techniques and was involved in some of the earliest designs of U.S. coins and money including the Continental dollar," said Doug Mudd, Money Museum curator. "After his death, he was one of the more commonly seen figures on U.S. coins, medals and tokens. His likeness appeared whenever someone wanted a representation of wisdom or American ingenuity."

Franklin has remained enormously popular in France, and is commemorated on a 2006 Euro coin minted in France. Examples of the new coins also are on display.

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The Franklin exhibit was developed both to celebrate his 300th birthday and for the ANA's 2006 National Coin Week celebration, April 16-22. This year's theme is, "A penny saved is history learned."

The exhibit will be on display through April; admission to the museum is free. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays, and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays.

The American Numismatic Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating and encouraging people to study and collect money and related items. With nearly 33,000 members, the Association serves the collecting and academic communities and the general public with an interest in numismatics. The ANA helps people discover and explore the world of money through its vast array of programs including its education and outreach, museum, library, publications, conventions and seminars.

For more information, visit www.money.org, or call 719-632-COIN.

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