

Museum showcase to feature rich numismatic history of the South

Coins from nation's first gold rush highlights Atlanta National Money Show exhibits

The rich numismatic history of Georgia and the South will be on display when the National Money Show comes to the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta, Ga., Feb. 27-March 1, 2014.

On exhibit in the ANA's signature Museum Showcase, featuring rarities from the Edward C. Rochette Money Museum in Colorado Springs and exclusive private collections, will be a collection of Georgia Colonial paper money from its beginnings in 1735 to the end of the American Revolution. Also on display will be gold coins from the U.S. Branch Mints in Dahlonega, Ga., and Charlotte, N.C., which operated from 1838 through 1861.

"In Atlanta, we have a wonderful opportunity to showcase the numismatic history of Georgia, from its early colonial days through the Civil War," said Douglas Mudd, curator for the Money Museum. "And we'll be able to spotlight an era of history that is often neglected: Georgia's very own gold rush."

Following is a list of Museum Showcase exhibits to be displayed in Atlanta.

Gold! The Coins of Georgia and North Carolina -The gold rushes of the American West have been well-documented, but the eastern United States experienced its own gold rushes in the early 1800s. Gold was discovered in North Carolina at the end of the 18th century, but a more extensive find in 1828 near Dahlonega displaced the Cherokee and sent thousands of prospectors into the region. By 1830 local assayers began to produce gold coins in Georgia and North Carolina in order to simplify transactions. On March 3, 1835, Congress authorized new mint facilities at Dahlonega, Charlotte and New Orleans to take advantage of these finds and reduce transportation costs. To distinguish their issues from those of the Philadelphia Mint, the branch mints used mintmarks for the first time on U.S. coinage: O for New Orleans, C for Charlotte and D for Dahlonega.

"This exhibit features gold from the first gold rush in the United States, one that has been largely forgotten," Mudd said. "This was the first circumstance where gold from a local region was produced into coins within that same region by the U.S. Mint."

Colonial Paper Money of Georgia -The story of paper currency in Georgia begins in 1735 on the British pound sterling standard, soon after the founding of the colony in 1732 by James Oglethorpe. Georgia notes were produced thereafter up to and through the American Revolution. During the Revolution, Georgia used continental currency denominated in sterling and in Spanish dollars instead of the Continental dollar at the rate of 1 dollar = 5 shillings. After the Revolution, continental currency was replaced by the new U.S. dollar and the Constitution disbanded State-issued currencies.

This exceptional selection of Georgia Colonial notes is from the collection of the late ANA Governor Radford Stearns.

Confederate Currency -Financing war has always presented problems for governments - the stress of feeding, paying, equipping, housing and training soldiers presents challenges well beyond the normal capacity of authorities to handle. This is especially true of civil wars. This display features a selection from the Money Museum exhibit "A House Divided: Money of the Civil War" in Colorado Springs and highlights some of the difficulties faced by the Confederacy as it attempted to create a new national currency and finance a war from scratch.

As a special attraction, the Museum Showcase will also feature an 1862 Gatling gun, a weapon used by the Union during the Civil War. The Gatling gun was a precursor to the modern machine gun, and it was one of the first guns used in wartime that was capable of producing large amounts of firepower in rapid-fire succession.

1792 Half Disme -An estimated 1,500 half disme (an early version of "dime") silver coins were struck in the basement of a saw-maker's shop in Philadelphia in 1792 because the U.S. Mint was not yet operational. The coins - slightly smaller than a modern dime and weighing half as much - were first authorized by President Washington under the Mint Act of 1792. According to legend, the silver used to mint the 1792 half dismes came from Martha Washington's personal silverware. Thomas Jefferson, then serving as secretary of state, personally received the coins on Washington's behalf. Modern researchers estimate that about 275 of the 1,500 originally struck survive today. The coin was donated to the Money Museum by Steven L. Contursi.

1804 Dollar, Idler/Bebee Class III -Known as "The King of U.S. Coins," the 1804 dollar is extremely rare, with only 15 known examples. Class I 1804-dated silver dollars were actually struck in the 1830s when the United States Mint was asked by to produce them for sets of U.S. coins to be presented to foreign dignitaries. Class III specimens (six known) were struck during the 1850s for collectors. The Idler/Bebee specimen was donated to the ANA by Aubrey and Adeline Bebee.

1913 Liberty Head V Nickel, McDermott/Bebee -This famous coin is one of five 1913 "V" nickels that were struck in mysterious circumstances at the Philadelphia Mint. The design for these coins was used from 1883 to 1912. In 1913 they were replaced by the Buffalo nickel design; however, five unauthorized "V" nickels were struck with the 1913 date. The existence of the nickels was unknown until 1919, when an advertisement in *The Numismatist* offered to purchase any example for \$500. The ad was placed by Samuel W. Brown, a former Mint employee. In 1920 Brown exhibited all five nickels at the ANA convention in Chicago. The McDermott/Bebee specimen was donated to the ANA by Aubrey and Adeline Bebee, and it was [recently featured on the Travel Channel program, "Mysteries at the Museum."](#)

The Atlanta National Money Show features more than 500 numismatic dealers with an extensive inventory; a major auction by Heritage Auctions; the ANA Museum Showcase, exhibiting some of the world's most valuable and beautiful coins and paper money; the Collector Exhibits area; exhibits by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and the United States Mint, as well as educational presentations and seminars. Show hours are 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27; 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 1. ANA members are admitted free. Public admission is \$6 for adults and free for children 12 and under Feb.27-28, and admission is free for everyone on Saturday, March 1. For more information, go to NationalMoneyShow.com