

CONTACT: Morgan Perry
Telephone: [719-482-9871](tel:719-482-9871)
E-mail: pr@money.org

Colorado Springs-based American Numismatic Association Celebrates 125th Anniversary

In the 19th century, information about specialized subject matters was hard to obtain, particularly something as curious as numismatics – the study of coins, paper currency, tokens and medals. Meeting fellow collectors was nearly impossible, especially for those who lived too remote to take advantage of numismatic societies in large cities. Such was the dilemma of Dr. George Heath of Monroe, Michigan, a coin collector whose efforts at obtaining additional knowledge of the hobby and specimens for his collection were hampered by his location.

Supported by his conviction that there was a need for an organization that would reach all collectors, Dr. Heath posed the question, “What is the matter with having an American Numismatic Association?” And so in 1891, Dr. Heath and other numismatists met in Chicago and with 61 charter members founded the American Numismatic Association. “There is nothing like the alliance of kindred pursuits to stimulate growth and interest,” Heath said.

In the last 125 years, the ANA has grown to become the largest nonprofit numismatic organization in the world. The Association provides its 24,000 members access to the best educational programs in the hobby – seminars, lectures, correspondence courses and online learning opportunities – plus the opportunity to engage with like-minded collectors at two annual conventions.

In the early years, conventions provided the opportunity for members to come together, but relatively few took part due to the limitations of travel. The strength of ANA membership depended upon the quality of *The Numismatist*, a publication first printed and published by Dr. Heath in 1888. Heath did his best to spark interest and provide a wide array of articles, biographical sketches, news items, and the ever-interesting tidbits.



Today, *The Numismatist* remains the gold standard of hobby publications. In December 2015, the ANA digitized all 127 volumes -- 110,000-plus pages of numismatic history available at the click of a mouse. The online digital editions look exactly like the printed originals, allowing users to experience *The Numismatist* in its historical context.

National recognition was achieved by the ANA in 1912, when it was granted a Federal Charter, signed by President William H. Taft. An amendment to make the charter permanent was introduced in 1962, and was signed by President John F. Kennedy.

As the Association flourished, a call was made for a national home and headquarters, and a building fund was established in 1961. Sixteen cities in the central region of the U.S. bid for the location. Ultimately, Colorado Springs, Colorado was selected, and ground-breaking ceremonies were held in 1966. Thanks to the contributions of nearly 4,000 donors, the ANA headquarters was dedicated and opened on June 10, 1967.

The ANA is widely regarded for its variety of educational courses and seminars that enrich members' knowledge and enjoyment of the hobby. The popular Summer Seminar, held annually on the campus of Colorado College, offers students a varied selection of week-long courses. Members also have the opportunity to complete a series of correspondence courses, from their own home, to receive a "Numismatic Scholar" diploma. These courses enhance understanding of the hobby, and introduces a vast body of resources.

The ANA maintains the largest circulating numismatic library in the world, consisting of more than 128,000 books, auction catalogs, periodicals, videos and slide sets. The climate-controlled rare book room preserves and displays many of the library's most important references, including a copy of *Illustrium Imagines*, the world's first illustrated numismatic book that was printed in 1517.



The Edward C. Rochette Money Museum includes an extensive and ever-growing collection of historical numismatic treasures. This one-of-a-kind facility showcases items the public cannot see anywhere else, including the McDermott/Bebee specimen 1913 Liberty Head nickel valued at \$2 million, and two of the 15 known 1804 dollars valued together at \$6 million. The museum also features the famous Bebee collection of U.S. paper money, and a display of the spectacular Harry W. Bass Jr. collection of U.S. gold and pattern coins.

In February 2016 the Money Museum will unveil an Olympic exhibit featuring a wide range of numismatic objects produced for the Olympic Games, some dating back to the sixth century B.C. Rare Syracusan dekadrachms and other early Greek coins along with modern award and participation medals, badges and commemorative coins will be on display to highlight the history, ideals and pageantry of the world's greatest athletic event.

Membership in the ANA is less than \$50 annually and includes 12 issues of *The Numismatist*, access to the best educational programs in the hobby and free admission to the World's Fair of Money and National Money Show — the biggest, most educational coin shows in the country.

For additional information about the American Numismatic Association and its activities, please visit www.money.org, email pr@money.org or call (719) 632-2646.