

A Tale From the Other Side by A. Stephen Patrick

Dear Collecting Friends.....

I saw this cartoon in the Sentinel and it spurred this article. Most of the boys/kids my age got Whitman coin folders in the 1950's and tried to fill them up from pocket change. I still have my folders even though my major passion has been stamp collecting since my teens.

In 1986, I was introduced to souvenir cards by my friends Curt Radford and Art Benjamin. To find souvenir cards, you have to look at other places besides stamp shows and that means COIN SHOWS! For years now I have attended the Florida Numismatist FUN show because it was at the Orange County Convention Center, so I didn't have to travel far. I have spent many hours at the Souvenir Card Collectors Society table trying to sell memberships. Of course I am at every drawing for a Bureau of Engraving BEP pulled proof, or a Mike Bean card. I even travelled to Memphis for the International Paper Money show in search of stuff when the BEP showed up.



Recently John Wilson, the biggest evangelist for the American Numismatic Association sold me on a membership for the ANA. I had resisted this forever, but the deal included a nice slabbed silver dollar and promised free admission into the ANA convention to be held in Orlando next March, a \$24 value. (It's my fault that I scheduled a cruise and will miss the convention.) When I told my friends at the Central Florida Stamp Club about my new membership, my friend Fergie said "You have gone over to the dark side."

Three years ago, I had free time at FUN and decided to start a collection of Eisenhower silver dollars. Nice copies could be had for around \$3.00 and the series was limited to less than 30 coins. There are only a few that cost more, so my budget could handle it, and it gave me something to do. Previously I had walked the floor and started a collection of foreign bank notes with engravings of the noted engraver Czeslaw Slania.

So here is the rest of the story. Two weeks ago I went on a buying trip with my friend John Parker. He steered me to spend a day at the Blue Ridge Coin Show in Dalton, GA. I was almost out of money but walked the floor looking for something interesting to do. John was busy, and I was tired so I slipped out to a quiet part of the lobby and took a nap. Upon a refreshing rest, I found a dealer who had a small box of about 1000 Indian Head pennies priced at \$2.00 a coin. These had disappeared from circulation when I was a kid. When we got married, Linda had brought into our marriage about a dozen Indian head cents that her grandfather had given her.

So I had a bright? Idea. I went to a supply dealer and bought a Whitman folder for \$4.00 and proceeded to spend the next hour seeing how many different dates I could find in the penny box. I found 31 different dates from 1879 to 1909 in varying condition. For a total of \$4 plus \$62, I now have an interesting collection of pennies that would have been far beyond my means when I was a kid.

So now, like Hagar in the funnies, I seem to be a COIN COLLECTOR! I'm not giving up stamps or souvenir cards. This is just another way to divert my limited budget. Linda is sure I don't need another hobby, but I am even enjoying reading the American Numismatist journal. Maybe some of you have had a similar experience. Just sharing my story on this Labor-less Day.

[Editor's note: I will never understand coins – I am a stamp collector through and through!]

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Present*

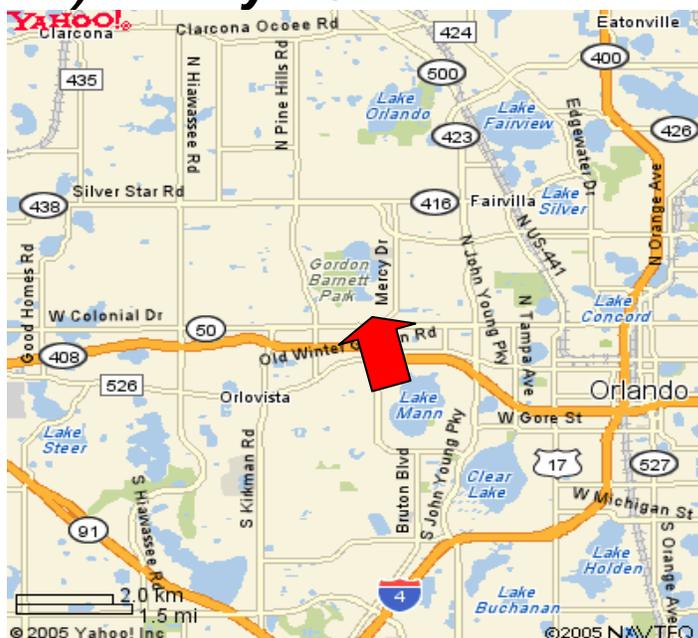
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