

What the Carson City Coin Collectors of America Means to Me

By Mark Archambault

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It all started in March 2007, when my wife and I took our first trip out west to Carson City and Virginia City of the Comstock region.

I have been a coin collector for over 40 years, and as I look back on the early years, I see that I was more of an accumulator rather than a collector of one series or another. As I got older, I started to become interested in set-building, and I built several sets of Franklin halves in Uncirculated condition, and in more recent times, a Barber half dollar collection, which took over five years to put together as I matched the color, eye appeal, and grades. What I experienced in building those sets has helped me with my Carson City coin collections, and has given me greater appreciation of being a member of the greatest club in numismatics, the Carson City Coin Collectors of America.

I first read about the C4OA in 2005, and at that point in time I had only owned one Carson City-minted coin. It was an 1884-CC Morgan dollar in a GSA case, which I had purchased for \$35. I pondered over joining the C4OA when I first saw the ad in *Coin World*, but I got sidetracked and time passed quickly to 2007. The “Trip” was what changed everything. I had ordered a copy of *The Mint on Carson Street*, by Rusty Goe, in 2005, and after my trip out west I was hooked. During my trip, I stopped in at Southgate Coins, and I knew after speaking with Rusty and his staff that the time to join the C4OA was right now!

I proudly became a member in 2007, and have enjoyed every article written in our club journal, *Curry's Chronicle*, ever since. I really like the fact that most of the articles are contributed by members who share their experiences of collecting Carson City-minted coinage, and their learning of the history that surrounds this mint.

I have learned about Trade dollars (and the other dollar-size coins), half eagles (and the other gold coins), dimes, quarter dollars, and my personal favorites, the half dollars. Member James Sneddon's articles on Trade dollars alone have inspired me to think about forming a collection of this denomination. Past *Curry's Chronicle* articles about type-set building, by Michael Parrott, intrigued me enough to finally build a set of my own. Member Randy Clifton has got me looking for historical documents signed by the Silver Kings and other figures that formed the western frontier. Mitchell Yee got me hooked on GSA sales-memorabilia. "Belay Off" has encouraged and inspired me in many ways, for which I say "Thanks!"

I remember writing an article for the Coin of the Week project on our C4OA website's discussion board, regarding the 1873-CC *With Arrows* quarter. This is a coin I can only wish to own, and finding myself having questions about it I phoned Southgate Coins to speak with Rusty Goe; you know, the "architect of the *Battle Born Collection*," and a true Carson City Mint expert. For Rusty to take time out of his busy schedule to talk to me about Carson City coinage and answer my questions, put me at a loss for words. Thanks Rusty!

Fast forward to 2012 and the special year it was for our club, with Carson City coins being in the spotlight. I knew that it was time for me to become a life member of the C4OA, and the time for me to complete my quest of building a ten-piece set of Carson City half dollars. I also completed my 10-piece "CC" type set, and, most important of all, I attended my first C4OA regional meeting in Carson City. At this meeting, I met for the first time the people that I had only read about, and some whom I had formed long-distance, lasting friendships with.

I recall in an email correspondence with Michael Parrott saying that

it would have been great if we had found the magic of the Carson City Mint earlier on in life. But I told The Drummer what a joy it is to experience it now in the present.

So folks, I will say it again, we are in the greatest club in numismatics!

LONG LIVE THE C40A!

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