

# Independent Coin News



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Welcome to the November 2023 issue of Independent Coin News, an online magazine containing the latest Australian and international coin news.

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## What is a Mule?

In coin terms, a mule is generally defined as a coin produced by dies that are not meant to be used together. This sounds simple but when specific cases are examined, the correct usage of the term “mule” is less clear.



One coin for which there is complete agreement is the 1916 halfpenny with the Indian quarter anna obverse, but for other coins opinions differ, so I asked a few keen variety and error collectors how they would define a mule and added my own opinion.

### Keith Day

A coin that was struck by a pair of dies that do not normally belong together or are not normally used together, resulting in a coin exhibiting an incorrect combination of obverse and reverse designs. Also known as a mismatched die strike. (Thanks to Alan Herbert). An example of an Australian “mule” is the year 2000 mob of kangaroos one dollar coin that had the correct mob of kangaroos reverse die accidentally paired with the incorrect, year 2000 ten cent obverse die.

Another example, this time with international appeal, is the 1978 twenty cent coin exhibiting a reverse design struck with a Fijian twenty cent coin die paired with the 1978 obverse die design, as used on the Australian twenty cent coin. Several controversial coins also exist. One being the 1977 kangaroo and

emu reverse fifty cent coin and the other being the 1988 kangaroo and emu reverse fifty cent coin. Note that both coin types were struck with die pairs that were not supposed to be used together for the 1977 and the 1988 fifty cent coin striking, even though the die designs did belong together for other years. I



consider these coins to be “mule” strikes but I can understand why other collectors do not.

## Fred Lever

Fred's reply to my email:

Hi Peter, I had a look at what I worked out in 2008 where I mused about definitions to describe coins that had odd die pairings. I'll pin the ACB article to this email. You can reproduce part or all of that article, as you wish. I don't see much difference in thinking even now after the 15 years or so.

The problem is the term "mule" got used first on a coin with "different" dies and it has stuck. In the pre-decimal, the 1916 ¼ Anna 1/2d is the only mule I know of.

Not sure about decimals but I have seen from time-to-time coins auctioned with different country dies used. To me that is the definition of a Mule. Dies that are same country, same series should be called Hybrids. That would make the Yr 2000 \$1 a Hybrid. The taxonomy is something that could be discussed! If I had my way we would have: Mules, Hybrids, Varieties.

Examples:

- Mule 1916 1/2d, Australian/Indian, 1/2d / 1/4 Anna.
- Hybrid 2000 1D, Australian/Australian, \$1 / 10c
- Variety. 1930 1d, Australian/Australian, London reverse/English obverse.

.....

Cheers, Fred.

Some extracts from Fred Lever's article in Australasian Coin & Banknote Magazine in 2008, reproduced with permission of the author.

*"..... A mule is an offspring of two different breeds or species, originally the offspring of a*

*male ass and a female horse. In coin collecting the word "Mule" was kidnapped and applied to a coin, which was struck from dies that really ought not to have been used together. Now which coins should earn the tag of "Mule"? Perhaps we could say that the current decimal example of the year 2000, consisting of a one-Dollar reverse and a Ten-Cent obverse truly deserves "Mule" because it is the offspring of two different breeds of coin. That is a clear case. Then we may take the 1916 Halfpenny, which again seems pretty clear cut, being the offspring of a Commonwealth Half Penny reverse die and an Indian one quarter Anna obverse die.*

*So far so good. But then we enter mine-filled waters! Coins have been minted with dies of similar, but not identical, breeds. This is where a reverse or obverse die may have identifying pointers such as rim bead alignment or dots to signify the origin or place of use. These coins could be the 1955 and 1956 mu... oops, differential pair, or even the 1920s' pennies with limited mintages of London or Indian Obverses. One may even seek to include the variations of date font changes and positions, but even I would draw a line at that. In the plant and animal world, the word "Hybrid" is applied to offspring of a cross between different varieties of the same breed as well as to offspring of a cross between different species or breeds.*

*Conclusions*

*..... So I am running with the word "Mule" to describe different breed pairings and "Hybrid" to describe same breed pairings."*

## Mark Nemtsas

I believe a mule is a coin struck with dies that were never (in any circumstances) intended to be used together. When I say dies I mean the obverse, reverse, and collar die. This might include mixed denomination dies, mixed

foreign dies, or incorrect collar dies (reeding/edge lettering/security edge etc).

Personally I do not consider coins such as the 1955/1956 Perth pennies with various obverses to be mules, but rather varieties. The expediencies of manufacturing mean that excess dies or old dies will be used in production to keep the wheels of industry turning and to reduce costs. Similarly dies might easily be sent from one Royal Mint branch to another to keep production running.

### **Kathryn Harris**

My definition of a mule is exactly as Mark says. A coin struck from dies not intended to be used together. This may be intentionally or accidentally and also includes the often forgotten collar die.

I have difficulty with clarity on the 2005 proof MOR as it was struck quite within technical specifications so should not be classed as a mule (or a variety for that matter). It is just a coin with very low mintage.

A mule is more appealing if it is obv/rev of different countries or missing denomination/two denominations.

### **Peter Andrews**

I define a mule as a coin struck with an incorrect die. In reality there are three dies that are used to strike a coin – the obverse die, the reverse die and the collar.

I consider a standard reverse for a particular denomination to be quite normal. The standard reverse is valid, whatever the date, as it does not require a new currency determination to pass parliament for each change of date. So while the 1977 and 1988 50c with coat of arms reverse are certainly

rare die combinations, I consider them to be classified as just that – a die combination, not a mule. This is also true for the 1955 and 1956 Perth pennies, the 1924 penny and the other penny die varieties. After the reverse designs for the pre decimal coinage were changed in 1938 and 1939, one could easily argue that a coin found with the old reverse and a date after the transition to be a mule. This scenario is purely hypothetical as no such coin is known. But an example of using a reverse after a reverse was deprecated did occur at the Royal Mint. In 1982 the United Kingdom transitioned from using a reverse design with the legend “NEW PENCE” to “PENCE” on their currency. However, some 1983 2p have been found using the old deprecated design (fig 1). These certainly are classified as mules.



*Fig 1. UK 1983 2p mule using the deprecated “new pence” reverse.*

As an obverse should not be paired with another obverse and a reverse not with another reverse, one can argue that double headed and double tailed coins could be classified as mules.

If the collar is accepted as a third die, then a coin with an incorrect collar would also be classified as a mule. While some shillings appear to have been struck with a halfpenny collar, the edge milling on a recently auctioned 1994 5c tells us that the coin certainly was struck with a \$2 collar (fig 2).



Fig 2 (a) 1994 5c struck with \$2 collar.  
 Photograph courtesy of Status International.



Fig 2 (b). 1994 Edge of the coin from 2(a)  
 photograph courtesy of Phill Fisherman.

### Specific “Mules”

As mules, by their very nature, should not exist, the genesis of almost all is shrouded in mystery, with many rumours and unverifiable stories. I have included the more plausible of those but as documentation is lacking am unable to quote references.

We could categorise mules into several different types.

#### Dies from different nations.

##### 1916 Indian quarter anna, Australian halfpenny

This coin has the obverse of the Indian quarter anna and the reverse of the Australian halfpenny (fig 3) and is arguably the most famous Australian mule.



Fig 3. 1916 halfpenny mule. Notice slightly different size of the obverse (but not sufficient to allow metal to flow between edge of die and collar as in \$1/10c mule), different legend and elephant in robes. The pearls in the band of the crown are also missing on a quarter anna. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.

While there is anecdotal evidence that one example was found in the early 1930s, the first 1916 halfpenny with the obverse of an Indian quarter anna was reported in the early 1960s. There was early skepticism as to their authenticity, however x-rays revealed that they were genuine<sup>1</sup>.

Australian bronze coins were struck at the Royal Mint’s Calcutta branch in 1916, 1917 and 1918. This mint was also responsible for striking Indian quarter annas during 1916. Given that the quarter anna is almost the same size as the halfpenny (table 1) and the dies quite similar (fig 4) , one can imagine an incorrect die being fitted to the press and when the mistake was discovered, a “search and destroy” mission being mounted to remove the invalid coins. If so it was very successful as few examples of the mules are known.



Fig 4. 1916 Indian quarter anna (left), Australian halfpenny (right). Notice the similarity of the obverse.

The Indian quarter anna is about the same size as Australian halfpenny but thinner, and of course weighs less (see table 1).

Coin	Diameter (mm)	Weight (gm)
George V Indian Quarter Anna	25.4	4.72
Australian Halfpenny	25.5	5.67

Table 1. Diameter and weight of Australian halfpennies and Indian quarter annas.

The weights of the mules are consistent with the weight of an Australian halfpenny and far heavier than an Indian quarter anna. This implies that the planchets used were intended for halfpennies and hints that the mistake occurred during a production run of Australian halfpennies.

To quote Bill Myatt & Tom Hanley “About 250 of these coins are supposed to have been struck at the Calcutta Mint, where all of the Australian bronze of 1916-1918 was produced, some 60 being given away and the rest added to the general Australian issue. It is nothing short of amazing this mule was not noticed before 1965 when one turned up in Adelaide.”

I do not know Myatt and Hanley's source, however the fact that roughly 10 have been found, all in Australia, and all in circulated condition raises serious issues as to its accuracy.

Indian quarter annas occasionally turn up in bulk lots of Australian halfpennies and lead to an adrenalin rush if you see the obverse first. The latest example of mule reportedly being found in a bulk lot was auctioned by Roxbury’s in 2019. That was the coin shown in fig 3.



## Dies paired with different denominations

### \$1 obverse, 10c reverse

#### a) 2000 \$1/10c Mule

The earliest were found in circulation in 2000, but the finds not widely publicised<sup>2</sup>. The alignment of the lettering with the interruption in the edge milling is identical for all 2000 \$1/10c mules (fig 5). As the edge milling is produced by the collar and the collar is placed in a random position compared with the dies, we can be virtually certain that one die pair has produced all the mules.



*Fig 5. Alignment of the interrupted milling on two 2000 \$1/10c mules. This is identical on all examples and is a firm indication that all coins were due to just one die pair.*

While not easy to find, the quantity of the coins and the fact that they were clearly put into circulation, indicates that their production was due to a genuine mistake at the Royal Australian Mint. It was rumoured that the die problem occurred when a die was replaced during a production run of 2000 \$1 coins and when discovered, the RAM staff searched for and melted all the mules they could find. This is the only mule example that I know of where the existence was acknowledged by the RAM CEO. The 10c is only slightly smaller than the \$1 so it is understandable how a mistake with the dies could be made.

Due to the smaller obverse die, the diameter of the collar is slightly larger than the diameter of the face of the die. When the coin was struck, there was a gap between the collar and the edge of the die and metal was forced upwards, thus forming the “outer” obverse rim (fig 6). The appearance of the rim varies from coin to coin as the obverse die “wandered” a little during a production run (this is normal for any denomination on any production run. It is more noticeable on the mule because this affects the apparent width of the outer rim). The rim is usually thinner at 10 o’clock but the occasional coin is found well centred. Well centred coins often command a premium.



*Fig 6. 2000 \$1/10c Mule. This coin was one of four coins found in a pair of security company rolls in Perth in 2000. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

Distribution: The coins were most common in Perth, but also found in Queensland, Newcastle and some in Adelaide. I talked to one person in Perth who said he had found four mules in two security company rolls in 2000. He gave two to his children (who spent them), kept one for himself and the other is the coin in fig 6. The fact that that most of the coins in those rolls had the normal \$1 obverse is also consistent with just one die pair producing the entire mintage.

#### b) 2014 \$1 (100 Years of Anzac) with 10c obverse

Several examples have surfaced, all in suspiciously high grade and suspiciously well centred. They are almost certainly mint sport, but whether or not they are considered to be such, they are still mules.

#### c) Others

Other issues such as 2015 mob of roos with 10c obverse have occasionally appeared at auctions. It is accepted that these are mint sport.

#### 5c obverse, \$2 reverse

These have been seen in public auction, but as far as I know never genuinely found in circulation.

### **Dies paired with reverse/obverse not normally used for that year**

These are classified as a mule or not, depending upon whom you talk to.

#### 1977 and 1988 Coat of Arms 50c

The circulation and proof issues for these dates had commemorative (jubilee and tall ships respectively) reverses. Coins with the standard reverse are known by no more than three or four

examples. The 1977 exists just as a “business strike”, although incredibly well struck and with excessive brush marks. The brush marks on the 1988 are not quite as bad as the 1977 but are still noticeable. Proof 1988 coat of arms also exist. There are rumours of even more bizarre 1988 combinations such as the tall ships reverse paired with the coat of arms reverse. It is commonly accepted that all these are mint sport.

2005 proof \$1 mob of roos reverse and 2005 proof 20c platypus reverse



*Fig 7. 2005 proof mob of roos dollar and proof platypus twenty cent. Photographs courtesy of PCGS.*

The 2005 proof set dollar coin had the end of WWII Dancing Man reverse. The 2005 proof \$1 with the standard mob of roos reverse was discovered in some 2006 proof sets\* and publicised by Downie’s who sold them for \$1995 each. They were sold out within a couple of days. More were later found by collectors and other dealers. It is difficult to understand how this error came about. Firstly, the wrong die was used, presumably a 2005 proof \$1 die instead of a 2006 and secondly, you would think that the people packaging the coins into the sets would notice they were dated 2005. It is easy to imagine that the Royal Australian Mint had manufactured these on purpose to gain publicity. However, this theory is unlikely as I have been informed by a “reliable source” that the RAM requested the return of all the “error sets”.

Similar to the dollar coin, the 2005 proof set twenty cent had the end of WWII Homecoming reverse. The 2005 proof platypus 20c is far rarer than the 2005 proof Mob of roos dollar and I know of only two examples. One was sold by Downie’s on eBay in late 2006, the other was found by the late Caird Ramsay in a proof set just after the sets had been released. For some reason he didn’t publicise his discovery at the time. That coin has since been removed from the proof set and graded by PCGS as PR70 (fig 7).

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\* The whole scenario began when one of Downie’s customers complained that the proof set that Downie’s had sold contained a 2005 rather than a 2006 \$1 coin. Downie’s convinced the customer to keep their “error” set as it was far more valuable than a normal set. Downie’s then checked all their unsold stock and found those they sold through their monthly coin catalogue.

## Double Obverse and Double Reverse

It can be argued that these coins qualify as mules as, for example, two obverse dies should not (and apparently are quite difficult to) be paired. Most issues are definitely mint sport but there are two that definitely entered circulation.

### 1951Y penny double reverse

This is extremely rare, with several examples known. Given that all are well circulated, this is much less likely to be mint sport than most of the decimal double head/double tail issues.

### 2007 5c Double Head

These are very scarce. It has been rumoured that it was done on purpose, but whatever the genesis, coins such as that in fig 8 did enter circulation. While they are mainly found in New South Wales, some have appeared elsewhere.



*Fig 8. 2007 5c Double Header. Photograph courtesy of Downie's Australian Coin Auctions.*

## What has been called a mule in the past and really shouldn't be

### 1955Y and 1956Y penny

The Melbourne and Perth penny obverses are based upon a different hub and are almost identical - the major difference being the alignment of the denticles with the legend. In 1956 the Perth Mint was transitioning between using those two obverses. As dies are manufactured and stored until needed, several of the new Perth obverse dies were used at end of 1955 dated penny run (fig 9). Similarly, several of the old Melbourne obverses were used at start of the 1956 dated penny production. Both obverses are perfectly valid to use. It is far more accurate to describe these as die varieties. (If described as "mules", one wonders why the 1957Y wide date penny is not also called a mule as that variety has the London reverse, not the more common Perth reverse.)



Fig 9. 1955 Perth pennies with Melbourne obverse (left) and Perth obverse (right). While they have been described as “mules” in the past a much more accurate description is “die varieties”.

#### 1924 Penny with Indian obverse

These were minted by the Sydney mint from 1924 to 1926 using 1924 dated dies. Most 1924 dated pennies have the English obverse die. I really don't know why this particular issue was singled out as a “mule” as both English and Indian obverse exist for the 1920, 1921, 1922, 1927, 1929, 1930 and 1931 pennies.

#### 2005 Mob of Roos dollar – business strike

The mint set and circulation issues for the 2005 \$1 used the commemorative Dancing Man reverse – at least at first. Early in 2006, 2005 dated \$1 coins with the standard mob of roos reverse entered circulation (see fig 10).



Fig 10. The circulation issue \$1 for 2005 – Dancing man (left), mob of roos (right). Photographs courtesy of PCGS.

Eagerly proclaimed to be a mule, it was even referred to as such in Greg McDonald's yearly catalogue -

*'(e) Error 2005/2006 Mule. Some obverse dies were accidentally mixed with 2006 “Mob of Roos” (MOR) reverses. When discovered it was decided to continue with the mismatched striking to avoid publicity that would be generated from a low mintage mule issue. A similar error occurred the following year when the proof dollar in a few 2006 proof sets included the 2005 dated MOR dollar.'*<sup>23</sup>

As a 2005 mob of roos dollar was included in the 2015 RAM mint master “proof of record” collection sold through Downie's Australian Coin Auctions in 2015, these coins were not minted in “error” and the information Greg McDonald was given to include in his catalogue about the business strike is incorrect.

The \$1 coin was not the only 2005 dated coin that appeared as a commemorative and a standard design. The 20c was originally issued with the Coming Home reverse but later released with the standard platypus reverse. This issue however was not proclaimed a “mule”.

A standard design reverse can be used at any stage with any date on the obverse as it is, until repealed, covered by the Currency Determination.

## References

1. Dion Skinner, Renniks Australian Coin and Banknote Guide, 6th Edition, 1970 pg 36.
2. Ken Skinner, private communication.  
Keith Day, private communication.
3. Greg McDonald, “The Pocket Guide to Australian Coins and Banknotes”, 22<sup>nd</sup> edition pg 171
4. Downie’s Australian Coin Auctions Auction 319A, May 2015.

*The photograph of the 1916 halfpenny / quarter anna mule on the first page of this article is courtesy of International Auction Galleries. The photograph of the 1988 coat of arms 50c also on that page is courtesy of PCGS.*

 *The Purple Penny*

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## Charles III \$1 Coins to be in Circulation by Christmas



2023 Charles III \$1 coins. Photograph courtesy of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.



The Charles III effigy to be used on Australian coins. Photograph of \$1 coin courtesy of Mick Tsikas AAP.

The first Charles III \$1 coins will be in tills in December. The Royal Australian Mint expects to release 10 million of them to satisfy the demand for coinage in the weeks up to Christmas.

The effigy to be used for Australian coins was unveiled by the Assistant Minister for Treasury Dr. Andrew Leigh and the Royal Australian Mint CEO Leigh Gordon on the 5<sup>th</sup> October. The portrait was designed by Dan Thorne of the Royal Mint and approved by the palace.

The other denominations will be released in 2024 to meet demand. This may mean that the only 2023 Charles III coin will be the one dollar.

The Royal Australian Mint said it would not produce commemorative coins with the image of Queen Elizabeth II from June next year.

Source:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-10-05/king-charles-coin-unveiled-royal-australian-mint-canberra/102936920>

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## Charles III coins appear in the Currency Determination

Also on the 5<sup>th</sup> October, the latest Currency Determination (F2023L01363 – Royal Australian Mint currency determination number 7 for 2023) was posted in the Federal Register of Legislation. This contains the details of the six “standard reverse” coins with the new Charles III obverse. We will talk more about the Currency Determination in the next article.

## The Currency Determination and How to Use it

A design for a coin must be passed by the Australian Parliament before being released into circulation. The legislation pertaining to the RAM can be found by doing a search for “Royal Australian Mint 2023” at <https://www.legislation.gov.au>. A quick link is <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Search/Royal%20Australian%20Mint%202023>

(For the Perth Mint currency determination replace “Royal Australian Mint” by “Perth Mint” in the above search).

The search returns a list of documents. As of the 7<sup>th</sup> October there are three in the list (fig 1). We are only interested in the amendment to the Currency Determination. To open this document, select the “Download” button to the right (fig 2).



Fig 1. List of documents from the search for “Royal Australian Mint 2023”.

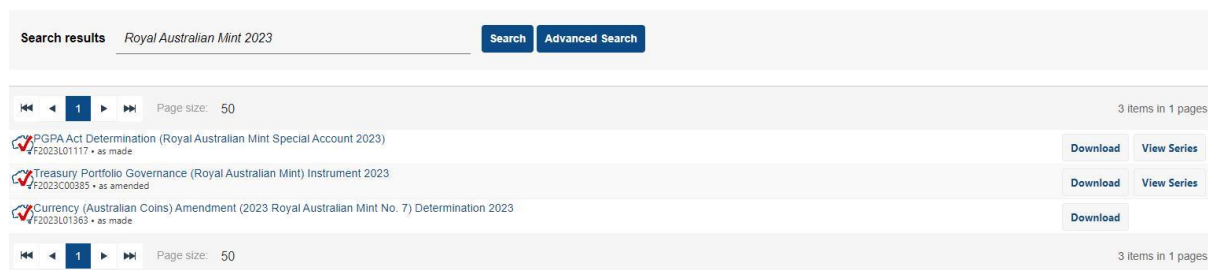


Fig 2. As in fig 1 but showing the “Download button” to the right.

We now have the Amendment #7 for 2023 document open (fig 3, next page). We can actually download the entire document or select ‘Text’ or ‘Explanatory Statement’.

‘Text’ gives the full description of each coin, including shape, mass, type of edge etc. While this is useful for unfamiliar coins (such as commemoratives with unusual shapes), it is usually more detail than we need.

The ‘Explanatory Statement’ is the easiest to follow. Selecting this gives us details on all the new coins the RAM is proposing – those with the standard design and the new Dan Thorne effigy of Charles III. This currency determination is required so that the RAM can release standard designs with Charles III on the obverse.



Fig 3. The amendment detailing the Charles III coins.

Below, we have reproduced the explanatory statement for the \$2 coin. Note in particular the phrase “and the inscription, in numerals, of a year”. This means that the standard designs can be used each year without the need for another Determination. Also notice how the font of the text, exact size of the design features and size and font of designer’s initials are not mentioned. This means that the mint can make small changes (such as a larger, lower relief echidna which was done in 2007) to prolong die life or improve reproduction of the design, without the need for another currency determination amendment.

### ***Australian Standard \$2 Coin – Aboriginal Elder***

The design on the Australian standard \$2 coin – Aboriginal Elder consists of a representation of a male Indigenous Australian elder, the Southern Cross and a grass tree. The design includes the following inscriptions: “2”; and “DOLLARS”.

Consistent with the tradition of an effigy of the reigning sovereign appearing on the obverse side of all Australian legal tender coinage, an effigy of His Majesty King Charles III will appear on the obverse side of the coin together with the inscriptions “CHARLES III”, “AUSTRALIA”, and the inscription, in numerals, of a year. The obverse design includes the initials of the designer Dan Thorne “DT”.

When made law, previous documents were added to document F2019L01323 – which can be found here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2019L01323>

which contains all amendments since 2019, including all the Royal Australian Mint and Perth Mint issues before the most recent determination. Since it has some issues not yet released by the Royal Australian Mint and the Perth Mint, let’s have a look at it (fig 4). Unfortunately the explanatory statements for each issue aren’t included in the final document so we’ll have to do this the hard way. Now expand the ‘schedule 2023’, ‘Royal Australian Mint’, ‘Division 1’ and ‘Division 2’ as shown in fig 4. This is a rather lengthy document but the information we are interested in is at the end of each section.

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    - [+] Schedule 2021—Australian Coins
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    - [-] Schedule 2023—Australian Coins
      - [-] Part 1—Royal Australian Mint
        - [+] Division 1—Specifications of coins
        - [+] Division 2—Explanation of symbols
      - [+] Part 2—The Perth Mint

Fig 4. Document F2019L01323 (expanded).

Now click on 'Division 1 - Specification of coins'. This gives a list of all coins for 2023. If you scroll down, you'll eventually see entries such as in fig 5. These define coins by size (S1 etc), edge (E3 etc), obverse (O1 or O2 normally), reverse (such as R110, R111 etc).

and nickel										
136	S2	Copper, aluminium and nickel	6.60 ± 0.60	20.62	3.70	S1	E3	O1	R108	21/07/2023
137	S2	Copper, aluminium and nickel	6.60 ± 0.60	20.62	3.70	S1	E3	O1	R109	21/07/2023
138	S2	Copper, aluminium and nickel	6.60 ± 0.60	20.62	3.70	S1	E3	O2	R110	21/07/2023
139	S2	Copper, aluminium and nickel	6.60 ± 0.60	20.62	3.70	S1	E3	O2	R111	21/07/2023
140	S2	Copper, aluminium and nickel	6.60 ± 0.60	20.62	3.70	S1	E3	O2	R112	21/07/2023
141	S2	Copper, aluminium and nickel	6.60 ± 0.60	20.62	3.70	S1	E3	O1	R113	21/07/2023
142	S2	Copper, aluminium and nickel	6.60 ± 0.60	20.62	3.70	S1	E3	O1	R114	21/07/2023

Fig 5. Extract from specifications of coins.

Suppose we wish to find out what the coin defined by R110 looks like. We already know from line 138 in fig 5 that it is a \$2. Next we need details on the obverse and reverse. If we click on 'Explanation of symbols' we can scroll down to find the definitions for O2 and R110 (fig 6 and 7)

21	Obverse	O2	<p>A design consisting of an effigy of Queen Elizabeth II and the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) "ELIZABETH II"; and</li> <li>(b) "AUSTRALIA"; and</li> <li>(c) "2023"; and</li> <li>(d) Arabic numerals for the amount, in dollars or cents, of the denomination of the coin, followed by "DOLLAR", "DOLLARS" or "CENTS" as the case requires; and</li> <li>(e) "JC"; and</li> <li>(f) "1952-2022".</li> </ul>
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Fig 6. Obverse explanation of symbols extract.

208	Reverse	R109	<p>A design consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a representation of an athlete in a racing wheelchair; and</li> <li>(b) a horizontal line and a vertical line; and</li> <li>(c) the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) "2 DOLLARS"; and</li> <li>(ii) "INVICTUS GAMES"; and</li> <li>(iii) "2018"; and</li> <li>(iv) "SYDNEY"; and</li> <li>(v) "AS".</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
209	Reverse	R110	<p>A design consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) in the foreground, 4 central concentric circles; and</li> <li>(b) superimposed over the circles, a coloured stylised depiction of flames; and</li> <li>(c) in the background, 2 firefighters in protective clothing standing back-to-back and holding hoses with water emanating from each hose; and</li> <li>(d) a stylised, curved framing motif at the base of the figures; and</li> <li>(e) behind the firefighters, stylised flames; and</li> <li>(f) the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) "FIREFIGHTERS"; and</li> <li>(ii) "AS".</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Fig 7. Reverse explanation of symbols extract.

The obverse for this coin is then the Queen Elizabeth II memorial obverse dated 2023 and the reverse appears identical to the 2020 fire fighters \$2 coin. This is one of a new group of rehashed coloured \$2 designs, that may soon appear in a folder (similar to the 2018 \$2 twelve coin set) or may not, as there is no guarantee that a coin that appears in the currency determination will actually be minted.

## Rare Gold and German New Guinea Silver at Heritage

Heritage's World & Ancient Coins auction on August 17<sup>th</sup> 2023 featured some spectacular gold and silver coins, as well as the occasional rare bronze coin and some interesting ancients.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

A 1643 Charles I gold triple unite, graded by NGC as MS64 and the highest of only about 70 graded by PCGS and NGC, sold for US\$240,000. This was struck during the English civil war. The reverse is double struck, the Latin legends translating to "Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered" and "The religion of the Protestants, the laws of England, and the liberty of Parliament." The latter is somewhat ironic as Parliament was at war with Charles who they viewed as an absolute monarch.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



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Two 1839 Una and the Lion gold £5 with Victoria as Una. The design is inspired by one of the books of the 1590 poem "The Faerie Queen by Edmund Spenser". In this the young Una, on a quest to free her parents, encounters a lion who becomes her protector. This coin is considered one of the most

beautiful ever minted. The two examples, graded by NGC as PR64 ultra cameo and PR63+ ultra cameo, sold for US\$420,000 and US\$408,000 respectively.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

A gold 20 Yen, Year 9 of the Meiji era (1876) graded as MS64 deep prooflike by NGC sold for US\$198,000. This is one of the finest examples still in existence of a low mintage (954 pieces) coin,



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

Two German New Guinea 1894-A 5 Marks were part of a vast collection of German coins. The business strike graded as NGC MS65 sold for \$17,400 and the proof in NGC PR66 for \$72,000. Featuring the bird of paradise, it is a lovely design. Both of these coins are superb, with the proof exceptional.

There was also a large ancient coins section. Some of the more interesting pieces were an extremely early gold coin from the reign of Croesus and an exceptional Julius Caesar as dictator denarius.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

The exceptional Croesus (561-546 BC) stater from Lydia, lion and bull confronting each other on the obverse, two squarish punches on the reverse, sold for US\$52,800. The wealth of the last Lydian king is immortalised by the expression “as rich as Croesus”. This series of gold coins has been described as “the world’s first major gold coinage”.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

A Julius Caesar as dictator (49-44 BC) denarius, graded by NGC, sold for US\$12,000. The obverse shows an advancing elephant trampling a horned serpent. The reverse is religious, marking Caesar as chief pontificate – a culullus (a horn shaped vessel, the emblem of the vestal virgins), an aspergillum (an implement for sprinkling holy water), a securis (sacred axe) and an apex (leather skull cap worn by priests).

Closer to home, a full centre diamond Australian 1930 penny graded as XF40 by PCGS, fetched US\$19,200.

All the photographs in this article are courtesy of Heritage (ha.com).



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## Rare 1066 Harold II Silver Penny Sells at Noonans



A silver penny of Harold Godwinson (Harold II) minted in Hastings in 1066 was sold at Noonans on the 19<sup>th</sup> September for £24,800, including buyer's commission. Harold II reigned for a comparatively short time during 1066 until his death on October 14<sup>th</sup> that year during the Battle of Hastings, at the beginning of the Norman invasion of England.

Although coins of Harold II are relatively common, coins minted in Hastings are not. According to the Noonans auction catalogue, this is the first sale of a Harold II coin from Hastings since 1986<sup>1</sup>.

Described as "extremely fine, toned and with an impressive provenance", the coin shows superb detail. The provenance goes back as far as the E. J. Shepherd Collection, sold by Sotheby in 1885.

The high auction price, more than twice the estimate, is a function of the coin's rarity, condition and provenance.

Photograph courtesy of Noonans.

### Reference

1. Noonans Catalogue [https://issuu.com/noonansauctions/docs/coins\\_19-20\\_sep\\_23](https://issuu.com/noonansauctions/docs/coins_19-20_sep_23)

The catalogue entry for this coin is well worth the reading.

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## US Colonial New England Shilling Sells for US\$76,000

Struck at the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1652, the NE (New England) shilling was the first coin made in British North America, the result of shortage of circulating coinage and the debased silver coins then in use. Threepence, sixpence and shillings were struck, with the denomination in pence, III or VI or XII on one side, NE on the other. These were applied by jeweller's punches on hand made planchets, with each side struck separately. The coins were struck from early September to late October 1652 and are scarce to rare in any grade. The example sold by Stacks Bowers on August 19, 2023 was graded VF35 by PCGS and described as "The Cleneay Specimen. Provenance to 1890. Undated (1652) NE Shilling. Noe 2-A, Salmon 2-B, W-60. Rarity-7-."





NE Shilling. Photograph courtesy of Stacks Bowers.

## Signed Syracuse Silver Decadrachm Sells for £320,000



Circa 405 BC. Greek Syracuse (Sicily). Signed by artist Kimon (KI) at the Syracuse Mint. Photograph courtesy of Morton & Eden.

Morton & Eden sold three signed (i.e. with engraver's initials) Syracuse decadrachms at their 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 auction (auction 124). Lot 144 (pictured above) was described in the auction catalogue as "fast quadriga driven left by charioteer who holds goad over horses in extended right hand and reins in left; above, Nike flies right to crown charioteer with wreath; in exergual area on two steps, shield and cuirass between two greaves and helmet; below, ΑΘΛΑ, rev., ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙ-ΩΝ, head of Arethusa left wearing ampyx and sphenone, single-drop earring and beaded necklace; on ampyx, artist's signature KI, 43.35g"

Arethusa was a nymph in Greek mythology who, pursued (in a romantic sense) by the river god Alpheus, fled to Ortegia (an island near Syracuse) where she was changed into a spring.

Nike was the personification of victory and a quadriga was a four horse chariot. This coin is graded as good EF with the die engraving and artistry superb.

Two other similar Syracusan decadrachms were sold in the sale.

- Lot 145 circa 400 B.C. in good EF and signed by Euainetos realized a hammer price of £130,000
- Lot 146 from the same time, also signed by Euainetos sold for £40,000.

All three pieces had impeccable provenances.

**Source:**

Morton & Eden Ltd auction 124. Lots can still be seen online at

<https://www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=sale&sid=7115&cid=225583>

## Misaligned Paint Error on 2023 Christmas 50c

A few of the recent Royal Australian Mint 2023 Christmas 50c have been found with the paint misaligned by 60 degrees, leading to an interesting yet strangely attractive error. First reported by Nurlene Block soon after their release, a number of others have since surfaced.



*Christmas 50c with misaligned paint (left), normal coin (right). Photographs courtesy of Nurlene Block and the Royal Australian Mint respectively.*

## The Importance of Dots

Any collector of predecimal bronze coins or collector of varieties will be familiar with catalogue entries similar to these:

*1d 1919 dot below bottom scroll*

*1d 1919 dot below bottom scroll and above top scroll*

*1/2d 1954 dot after Y*

*1d 1934 dot before ONE*

*1/2d 1945Y many dots variety*

What is a dot? Is each dot the same? Is it intentional? If so, what is its importance? If not, why is it there? Which dot combinations are rare and how do we identify them?

We'll try to answer those questions in this article. (We'll only discuss dots that occurred during the minting process, as dots or blobs can appear on a coin due to post mint and environmental damage.)

The answer to the first question is relatively straightforward. A dot on a coin is the result of a small hole drilled or stamped into a die or master die.

### Dot Used as a Mintmark

Some usages of a dot are clear in their purpose. From 1940 onwards, dots were used as a mintmark at the Perth Mint.

#### 1940, 1941 K.G

In 1940 and part of 1941 a dot was added between the K and G of the designer's initials on the pennies struck at this mint. The position of the dot can vary as the holes were hand punched onto the working dies. These



*Fig 1. Mintmark on 1941 K.G penny.  
Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

holes appear to have been deep as, even when the KG has disappeared because of die fill, the dot can still be visible.

#### 1942-1951, 1954-1964 Y.

During 1941 the Perth Mint changed from using a dot between K and G to a dot after the Y in PENNY as their mintmark (fig 2).



*Fig 2. Dot after Y mintmark on 1941 Perth Penny. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

Dots can vary a little in size and shape and for earlier dates also in position. Strike weakness and die fill can sometimes make the dot difficult or impossible to see such as the 1945 (Perth) penny “missing mintmark variety”. (This is definitely due to die fill and should not be confused with the 1945 Melbourne Mint penny as Melbourne only struck a few archival coins that year and none for circulation. The Melbourne coins are extremely valuable). Another issue where the mintmark is difficult to discern occurs on 1941 dated coins, weakly struck and possibly suffering die fill (see fig 3).



*Fig 3. 1941 Penny with mintmark missing due to die fill. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

No conversation about the K.G and Y. transition is complete without mentioning the 1941 high Y dot (fig 4). This is a coin with a definite K.G mintmark and an apparent dot at the top of the Y.

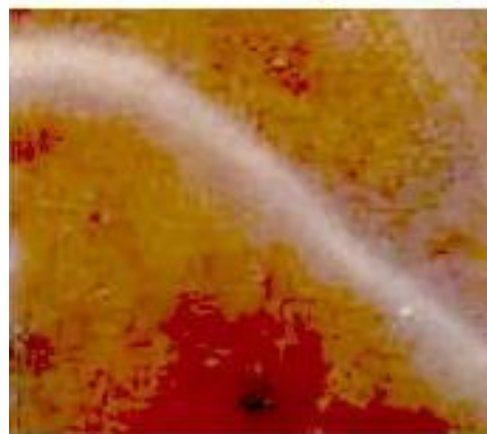


*Fig 4. 1941 Penny K.G “high Y dot” is almost certainly a die chip.*

John Sharples<sup>1</sup> has raised the possibility of this being an intermediate test between K.G and Y., however, given its shape it is now believed to be much more likely a die chip.

Die chips and die rust can be found anywhere on a coin, and sometimes through their placement can masquerade as a ‘mintmark dot’ – at least until more careful examination. We will discuss rust spots more in the next section.

One of the more obvious cases where rust spots have been confused with a ‘mintmark dot’ is on some 1946 pennies where there is a tiny rust spot between the K and G, close to the mintmark position for the 1940 and 1941 Perth Mint K.G (see fig 5). If we compare this with the Perth Mint mintmark coins (fig 1), the “dot” is way too close to the G, it is far too shallow, the Perth Mint were using a dot after Y as mintmark by 1946 and no 1946 dated pennies were produced in Perth in any case.



*Fig 5. Enhanced images of a 1946 penny with a “dot” near G of KG and a dot one near the kangaroo’s back. These dots and others on the coin are due to die rust. Images courtesy of Paul Whenman.*

Close examination of the coin reveals other “dots” in random positions, some larger than that between the K and G. These were caused by die rust and it requires little numismatic knowledge or thought to realise that the “dot between KG” on the 1946 penny cannot possibly be a mintmark.

### **1952, 1953 Dot After A**

In 1952 the Perth Mint began using dies they had manufactured themselves and denoted these dies with a dot after AUSTRALIA on both the pennies and halfpennies dated 1952 and 1953<sup>3</sup>. The dots are generally large and obvious. The position and shape can vary for the 1952 pennies and 1953 halfpennies as more than one dated master die was required to produce these coins<sup>4</sup>.



*Fig 6. Dot after A on 1952 Perth (broad 2) penny. The Perth Mint used this as a mint*

*mark in 1952 and 1953. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

### **1946 .S Shilling**

The Perth Mint struck shillings dated 1946 using the six reverse dies they were provided by the Melbourne Mint. A hole was punched or drilled into each die before the S of SHILLING to create the mintmark. As this was done individually for each die, the position of course varies slightly. These dots are clear and do not appear to be a victim of die fill.



*Fig 7. Dot before S of shilling on 1946 Perth shilling. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

### **Dots in Strange Places – Rust Spots and Die Chips**

Sometimes we find a “dot” in such a strange place that there is no way it could be intentional. These dots may be due to a small die chip (where a piece of the die has broken off and any subsequent coins struck by the die

show a raised area), the die being struck through a round foreign object or a rust spot on the die. If the chip is tiny this can look a little like a “mintmark dot”. Two of the classic penny varieties are pictured in fig 8. – the 1934 “dot before ONE” variety and the 1945 KG dot variety. As we will discuss below, both are likely due to rusted dies.



*Fig 8. “Dots” in strange positions. Before O of ONE on a 1934 penny and after KG on a 1945 Y penny.*

Dots can be formed from rust on a die. Small water droplets (quite possibly from sweat) will form into spheres on a surface such as the steel on a die. If left for a length of time, rust begins at the edges of the droplet and progresses inward<sup>2</sup>. If the droplet is wiped off at a fairly early stage, the rust will take the form of a circle. When the die is used this rust circle will fall off the die leaving a circular indent in the die. Coins struck with this die have a small raised circle. An impressive example of this occurs on some 1945Y halfpennies where multiple dots can be seen (see fig 8). These circles are also seen on some decimal coins such as the 2010 20c (called a “bubble error” by some) shown in fig 10.



*Fig 9. Various dots and annular circles on a 1945Y halfpenny. Photograph from Paul Holland’s article on the 1945Y halfpenny<sup>2</sup>.*

If the droplet is left on for longer, the rust will begin to eat into the die. Coins struck with dies in this state will produce flat dots such as the large dot after the KG on the 1945Y penny (fig 8, right hand side) and the dot sitting on the R of AUSTRALIA in fig 9.

If left untreated, eventually the rust will be in the form of a hemisphere eating into the die. When this rust falls off the die, subsequent coins will have a perfect rounded dot such as that on the left hand side of fig 8.



Fig 10. "Bubble error" on 2010 20c caused by die rust.

## Dots to Denote Die Source

### 1951 Halfpennies

The initial halfpenny dies dated 1951 and used by the Perth Mint were sourced from the Melbourne branch of the Royal Mint. As was normal for Perth issues, these dies had a dot after PENNY as a mintmark. Later in 1951, further halfpenny dies were obtained directly from the Royal Mint. These were left without a mintmark. The presence of a mintmark thus denotes the origin of the dies, however as the mintmark can suffer from die fill, we need to check other factors to be certain of the origin. Fortunately the date (particularly the 5) differs for the dies from Melbourne and those from London (fig 11).



Fig 11. The date of the 1951 Y. (top) and the 1951 no mintmark (bottom) halfpennies differ.

### 1919 Pennies

Australian copper coins were minted in Calcutta from 1916 until 1918. Due to Calcutta being unable to supply sufficient bronze coinage for Australian use, the Melbourne Mint requested dies from the Royal Mint in London. The Australian Treasury had decided that Australian coins would not carry mintmarks (although the M mintmark did remain on silver coins until sometime during 1921). Because of this, the dies provided by London did not carry a mintmark.

Later in 1919 more dies were required. As the Royal Mint was not immediately able to provide further dies, the Melbourne Mint made their own dies by using an unused pair of dies to create new hubs and manufacture working dies from those hubs. To quote Paul Holland <sup>6</sup>

*"This forced the Melbourne Mint to 'clone' the additional 1+B working dies that were needed for 1919 bronze pennies from dies supplied by London as a stop-gap measure. The procedure would be to use a working die supplied by London to produce 'derivative' hubs (or punches), then use these locally produced hubs to produce 'cloned' working dies. The inexperience of the Melbourne Mint at producing both hubs and dies coupled with*

*the fact that the final dies were several stages further removed from the original master dies created in London, led to cloned dies that exhibit observable distortions such as 'curved base letters', especially on the reverse."*

The result is that 1919 plain pennies have flat fields and the dot below concave fields. A dot below the scroll appears to indicate cloned dies as all coins with a dot show curved base letters to a greater or lesser extent (fig 12). The use of a dot was likely to be "for internal use" as Treasury had explicitly stated they did not want mintmarks on Australian coins.

The dots are reasonably large, in different places and slightly different shapes indicating they were punched onto individual dies rather than the derived master die (fig 13). Each has a "moat". This arises because the steel of the die is pushed up in a lip around the punch as the hole is being created which makes the hole in the die look like a crater. The lip could be removed by grinding and polishing the die in the area around the hole, but that was evidently not done in 1919. (This lip was certainly removed when creating the mintmark on dated master dies for Perth Mint coins as can be seen in fig 6 and fig 7).



*Fig 12. The date and reverse lettering of the 1919 penny no dot (top) has flat based letters, that of the dot below (bottom) has curved base letters to some extent. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

It is almost certain that all 1919 dated pennies were minted in Melbourne.

The final variety of 1919 penny is the one with a dot under the bottom scroll and above the top scroll (fig 14). All coins are the result of a single pair of dies. The reason for using two dots as a marker is unclear. Paul Holland has hypothesized that while the intention was to create a dot under the bottom scroll, the initial hole was 'poorly' punched on the die (and possibly double punched) above the top scroll by accident, with another hole then punched below the lower scroll<sup>6</sup>.



*Fig 13 (next page). Ten randomly selected 1919 dot below scroll pennies. The dot differs in position and size. All dots have a "moat" although the moat is less evident on coins struck by older dies.*





1919 double dot pennies have sufficient fishtailing in the lettering (particularly from 1 o'clock to 5 o'clock on the reverse) to indicate the reverse die was derived from a "cloned" dies. The dots are large with clear 'moats' around them. Given the flatness of the fields, the obverse die used may have been one of the originals from London rather than a "cloned" die.

These features are large and readily visible even on low grade examples.



*Fig 14 Reverse of 1919 double dot penny. Even on a photograph this size the dots can be easily seen. Photographs courtesy of PCGS.*

So where were the 1919 double dot pennies minted? There have been attempts to link the 1919 double dot pennies with three die pairs sent to Sydney in July 1920. These dies would have been "cloned" dies as all the original dies had been used and the worn dies destroyed by March, thus the reverse would have been dot below or double dot. The three obverse dies could only have had the English obverse.

New tools and dies (dated 1920) arrived in Melbourne from Calcutta in mid August, seventeen pairs were finished off and forwarded before the ceremonial striking of first penny in Sydney on October 6th. It is

known from contemporary reports that the first coins struck in Sydney were dated 1920 and had a dot above the bottom scroll and Dr. Arthur Andrews exhibited an example at coin club several weeks after the first coins were struck.

Now if the three English obverse dies and the 1919 dated dies were used at any stage, they would have been put in the presses whenever a die failed, i.e. at random. This means we would see 1919 (dot below or double dot) pennies paired with the Indian obverse (as there were many more Indian obverse dies at Sydney than the three English dies), which we do not. Also we would see a substantial quantity of 1920 dot above with English obverse. While that variety exists, it is rare, and due to strike characteristics, unlikely to have originated in Sydney. This will be further discussed later.



*Fig 15. Rims and beading on (top) 1920 dot above bottom scroll (Sydney Mint), (middle) 1919 double dot, (bottom) 1919 dot below. Note the poorly formed rim and beading on the top coin, known to be minted in Sydney. Photographs courtesy of PCGS.*

One other piece of evidence is the appearance of the pence struck in Sydney. Invariably these have a low rim and poorly defined rim beads, possibly due to the use of planchets with small or non-existent preformed rims.

As can be seen in fig 15, all 1919 dated pennies, including the double dot, have high rims, with denticles reasonably well formed, completely unlike the coins known to be minted in Sydney.

This rules out the possibility that the three 1919 die pairs sent to Sydney in July 1920 were ever used and means that the 1919 double dot penny was definitely not minted in Sydney, with Melbourne the most likely candidate.

#### The false double dot

There is a 'variety' of 1919 penny known as the "false double dot". This has been known about since the 1960s. To quote Mike Locke's webpage<sup>7</sup>:

*"1919 #3C as #3A but with large dots above top scroll and below bottom scroll. A small die lump appears at the top of "Australia". The upper dot sits in a well, giving the appearance\* that it was added post strike. This is a popular, scarce and pricey variety. Don't be fooled by the variety listed under cracks and chips."*

Under 1919 Cracks and chips

*"Variety 2B, crack through date, tiny rust pit above top scroll simulates the two dot coin."*

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\* "appearance" - it just looks that way on a low grade coin, the dot was certainly NOT added post strike. However fakes of this coin with a dot pressed into a circulated coin have been sighted. The 'dot' on these is invariably circular and easy to detect.

So let's compare the genuine double dot with the "false double dot" and explain why it should never have been thought to be the real thing.

Comparison of the upper and lower dots can be seen in figs 16 and 17. The upper 'dot' on the 'false double dot', while it is in a similar position to the genuine article, looks nothing like that of the genuine double dot, is nothing like the dot below the bottom scroll on that coin or any other 1919 dot below penny (see fig 13). The false double dot has extensive die cracks through the date (fig 19) as described by Mike Locke<sup>7</sup>.



Fig 16. The region above the top. False double dot (top), genuine 1919 double dot (bottom). Photographs courtesy of PCGS.



*Fig 17. The dots below the bottom scroll. False double dot (top), genuine 1919 double dot (bottom). Photographs courtesy of PCGS.*

The false double dot shown in fig 17 is a late die state strike, where the moat around the dot has disappeared due to die wear. An earlier die state example where the moat is still visible can be seen in fig 18. (That particular coin has die cracks through the date but they are less extensive than for the specimen in figs 16 and 17).



*Fig 18. Early die state of lower dot of 'false double dot'. Notice how the moat is still visible.*



*Fig 19. Die cracks through date of false double dot. See ref 7.*

So what is the origin of the 'dot' above the top scroll on the 'false double dot'? As we discussed in the section on Dots in Strange Places, possible culprits are a die chip or a rust spot. This 'dot' is unusually regular for a little die chip, although we cannot rule out the possibility. However with a more careful look at the coin, similar to the 1946 K.G penny we see many other small 'dots' of a similar size to the 'mystery dot' and other evidence of die rust elsewhere on the coin (fig 20).



*Fig 20. Other small 'dots' and evidence of rust on the reverse of the 'false double dot' coin.*

Just a little understanding of die production, a little honest research of the literature and actual comparison with a genuine piece is all that is required for it to be obvious that the upper dot of the 'false double dot' was clearly not due to a hole deliberately punched into a die.

### **1920 Pennies**

The 1920 pennies come in 7 varieties – no dot, dot below bottom scroll (both Indian and English obverse), dot above bottom scroll (both Indian and English obverse), dot below

bottom scroll and above top scroll (double dot) and dot above top scroll only.

While the dots were not intended as mintmarks, we can use the combination of dots and obverse hubs to identify where some varieties were struck.

#### 1920 Dot Above Bottom Scroll, Indian obverse



*Fig 21. Dots on 1920 dot above bottom scroll. Indian obverse pennies.*

As mentioned earlier, the first batch of dies that arrived in Melbourne from Calcutta were finished, dotted and sent to Sydney. Coins minted in Sydney are characterised by low

rims and weak denticles (see the top coin in fig 15) and flat based letters.

The dots are on average smaller than the dots on 1919 pennies (fig 21). Some show a moat, but others do not, most likely due to die wear. The dots of course vary slightly in position and also a little in size. Die fill does occur as we find some coins with no apparent dot that have all other appearances of a Sydney strike.

There is no doubt that these coins were struck in Sydney.

#### 1920 Dot Below Bottom Scroll, Indian obverse

These appear to be struck from dies that Melbourne 'derived or cloned' (in the same way as the 1919 dot below penny dies) from those obtained from Calcutta.

The dots are normally much smaller than the previous year and particularly susceptible to die fill (fig 22, next page). The tiny holes punched into the dies may have been intended to indicate where the die originated from. If this was the case, then it would not matter to the mint that these dots would easily fill with other material and no longer be visible on the struck coins.

#### 1920 No Dots

The question is why would there be coins without apparent dots?

Paul Holland has conjectured that the intention of the Melbourne Mint was to identify each reverse die in some way and that either all apparent no dot coins are the result of die fill or that there were a few dies on which the dot was forgotten<sup>6</sup>.

The work of Fred Lever and Neil Effendi has shown that the same die defects occur on many coins that are apparently no dot or obvious dot below and that the tiny holes on

many dot below dies disappeared due to die fill. Their conclusion is that the number of genuine no dot dies is, at best, very small and show examples of coins struck by dies they believe to be no-dots<sup>8</sup>. A full discussion on the current status of the no dot pennies is beyond the scope of this article and hopefully can be done in future.



*Fig 22. Dots on 1920 dot below (Indian obverse) pennies. Note how they are generally smaller and shallower than for 1919 and that some have been partially erased by die fill.*

1920 Dot Above Bottom Scroll, English Obverse



*Fig 23 (previous page). 1920 penny dot above bottom scroll with English obverse. The denticles are poorly formed from 12 o'clock to 3 o'clock but strong elsewhere on the obverse of this example, however the rims are strong, quite unlike the rims of the dot above bottom scroll Indian obverse pennies minted in Sydney.*

The 1920 penny with dot above bottom scroll and English obverse is a genuinely rare coin, the variety first reported in 2003 by Geoff Raynes<sup>9</sup>. The dot size is consistent with the Indian obverse dot above pennies minted in Sydney, however the strike characteristics definitely preclude the Sydney Mint as the origin of these coins (see fig 23). Die fill has not been reported on this issue.

Given that the majority of these coins have surfaced in the southwest of Western Australia, it is tempting to designate Perth as the mint of origin of this issue. Pennies were minted in Perth from December 1921 until February 1923. These coins were dated 1920, 1921 and 1922<sup>10</sup>, so Perth is a likely source for this variety..

One characteristic which can aid in identification in the case of fakes, is the flaw through the D of FD on the obverse die (fig 24).



*Fig 24. Die gouge through D of FD on 1920 English obverse dot above bottom scroll penny.*

#### 1920 Dot Below Bottom Scroll, English Obverse

There are just two die pairs known for this variety. The first die pair can be identified by a die crack through IN of IND on the obverse (fig 25). This die pair is now well known for the dot below the scroll disappearing through die fill, which is the reason some old catalogues incorrectly include a 1920 no dot English obverse penny.



*Fig 25. Die crack though IN of IND on 1920 dot below, English obverse penny. The dot on the reverse disappears due to die fill on later die state coins. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

The second die pair does not have this die crack and apparently does not suffer die fill. There is a small defect on His Majesty's collar (fig 26) and later die state coins also have a small chip at the top of the E of PENNY.



*Fig 26. Tiny die flaw on HM's collar on the second die pair of the 1920 dot below, English obverse penny. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*

### 1920 Double Dot

These coins were also produced by just a single die pair.

The dots are strong and show moats, at least for early die states (fig 27). As the production run progressed, the lower dot suffered die fill, which is why some 1920 double dot have been misidentified as a 'dot above top scroll'. Fortunately there is an easy way of correctly identifying this variety. The double dot has a die flaw above the W in COMMONWEALTH (fig 28). The dot above top scroll does not have this 'feature'.

The mint is unknown but could be either Melbourne or Perth, with Sydney extremely unlikely due to full rim and denticles appearance of the coin.



*Fig 27. Dot below bottom scroll and dot above top scroll on a 1920 double dot penny. The dot below the scroll disappears due to die fill on later die state pennies. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*



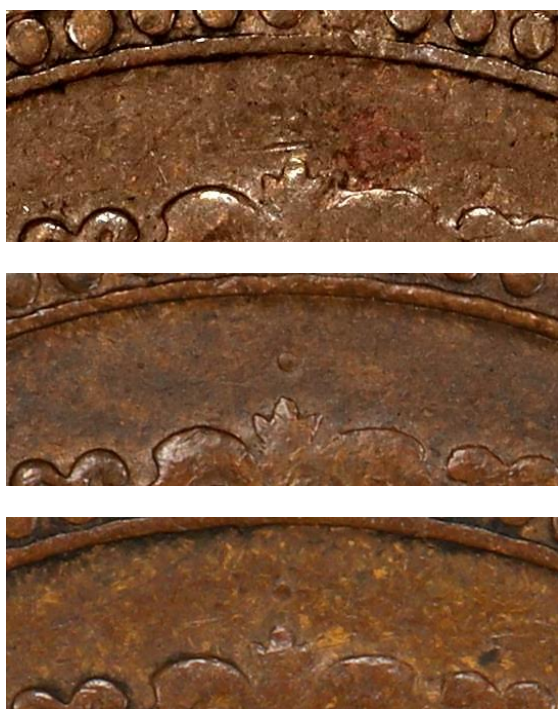
*Fig 28. Die flaw at the top of the W in COMMONWEALTH on 1920 double dot penny. This can be used to identify the double dot. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.*



## 1920 Dot Above Top Scroll

The final of the 1920 varieties and the second scarcest after the dot above, English obverse, with its existence not reported until 1985<sup>1</sup>.

These coins are also the result of just one reverse die. The dot is usually hard to see as it is small (but often shows a moat) and the coins are often weakly struck (fig 29).



*Fig 29. 1920 dot above top scroll penny. The dot can be weak. (top) fairly strong strike, (middle) weaker strike, (bottom) even weaker strike. Photographs courtesy of PCGS.*

Because of the tendency of the double dot die to die fill, it is essential to check that there is no flaw above W of COMMONWEALTH. If so, the coin is a double dot.

Some dot above top scroll pennies have a small line extending out from the base of the final A in AUSTRALIA. As this 'feature' suffers from die wear, it is not visible on all coins.

## **Conclusions**

Dots on coins have many purposes and origins, from mintmarks to die identification markers to die rust to die chips. We have seen how to tell whether a dot is intentional or due to die rust by examining such examples as a spurious 1946 K.G penny variety and the 1919 'false double dot' penny.

## **References**

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10. Andrew Crellin, "The 1922 Indian Obverse Penny Is The First Copper Coin That Can be Definitely Attributed to the Perth Mint", September 27 2021, website at <https://www.sterlingcurrency.com.au/blog/news-research/commonwealth-coins/the-1922-indian-obverse-penny-the-first-copper-coi/>

## The Numismatic Society of South Australia Coin & Banknote Expo

The Numismatic Association of South Australia held their annual coin & banknote expo on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at the usual location, Drill Hall on the Torrens Parade Ground.

This year the Royal Australian Mint attended the show. Their “coin swap” (where a \$10 RAM bag of five \$2 coins was swapped for \$10 in cash) was very popular, with a lengthy lineup extending well beyond the venue and many re-queueing immediately after being served. One suspects those people were not at the show solely to obtain coins for their collections. Robbie Colborne reports that “*The line was well into the park and I would*



*People waiting in line for the RAM coin swap on Saturday.*



*The Purple Penny and customers.*

*estimate was about 500. I tried counting, in lots of 25, and got to 450. Saturday was very busy, I would say like 750 people came through. Sunday was slower, perhaps 250”.*



*The CommCoinage table.*



*The Royal Australian Mint table.*



*Shields Stamps & Coins*



*Looking down the hall from the far end.*

While the show was very “buy and sell oriented”, most people were apparently happy with the experience. All the dealers I talked to said they felt the show had been worthwhile, which augers well for its future.

*Thanks to Cameron Roberts, Glenys Roberts and Alex Birkin for the photographs taken at the show.*

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## **Coin Cat Answers Your Emails**



No one has sent any emails since our last issue, so it's been a quiet period for Coin Cat. However he has busied himself with naps, feed time and just simply looking good.

If you want Coin Cat to also do some work, please feel free to send him some questions and he'll attempt to answer them.

Please send emails to  
[coincat@independentcoinnews.com](mailto:coincat@independentcoinnews.com)

## The Sydney Money Fair

The annual Sydney Money Fair was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October at the Sydney Town Hall.



Although they had been unable to do so at the Perth Money Fair, the Perth Mint once again provided a 'show special' 1 ounce silver kookaburra, this time with a coloured kookaburra privy mark. The Royal Australian Mint also made available a special issue; a 2023 \$1 mob of roos four coin privy mark set to celebrate each of the year's money fairs. Along with the special postal numismatic covers (PNCs) available only at the coin fair or through the dealers, this ensured a reasonable sized queue (but nowhere near as long as the one in Adelaide) for the 'show products'.

The show was reportedly busy on the Saturday morning but a little quieter in the afternoon. The Sunday was very quiet which resulted in many dealers packing up early, however most dealers I have talked to were happy with the buying and selling they did at the fair.

Next year the Sydney Coin Expo will be on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October, but as the cost of hiring the Sydney Town Hall is extreme, it is planned to be at a new venue – the Hurstville Entertainment Centre.

*Thanks to Gary Needham for the two Saturday morning photographs.*



*The queue inside the entrance on Saturday morning.*



*Saturday afternoon.*



*Inside the venue, also on Saturday morning.*

## What Could Have Been – Alternate Designs for Decimal Currency

### Introduction

The platypus on the 20c, lyre bird on the 10c, echidna on the 5c, frill neck lizard on the 2c and feather tailed glider on the 1c are the designs we are familiar with. But alternative designs were considered. In this article, we'll have a brief look at some of the other designs that could have been used.

### History

In the old system, there were 12 pennies to a shilling and 20 shillings to a pound, so that a penny was 1/240<sup>th</sup> of a pound. Now while 12 pence to a shilling is useful if you want to split a shilling evenly - 12 is divisible by 2, 3, 4 and 6, addition of amounts such as £4/10s/9d to £15/10s/6d was relatively complicated. Certainly a system with 100 cents to a dollar is much more useful. In Australia, there was always the thought of using a decimal system, as we used had the florin (two shillings), which is 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a pound, whereas the United Kingdom favoured the half crown (1/8<sup>th</sup> of a pound).

In 1935, the Australian government set up a major inquiry into Australia's banking and monetary system, which included an investigation into decimalisation. Decimalisation was recommended by a 1937 Royal Commission, but nothing was done until 1959. By then, apart from the United Kingdom and some other commonwealth countries such as New Zealand, almost all Australia's trading partners used a decimal system. In 1959 then Treasurer Harold Holt appointed a Decimal Currency Committee. Some trials on the size and composition of the new coinage appear to have been carried out at the Melbourne Mint at that time, as we know of bronze coins the size of the 1c (fig 1) and a 1959 dated penny struck in 80% silver (the same composition as used for the 1966 50c).



*Fig 1. Kookaburra Pattern Bronze Penny (believed to be a David Gee forgery). The genuine examples were minted around 1959, probably as trials for coins the size of the 1c. Photograph courtesy of International Auction Galleries.*

In 1963 it was finally announced that Australia would convert to decimal. Under the new system, there would be 100 cents to the dollar (Prime Minister Menzies favoured the name 'Royal' but was quickly over ruled by public opinion). A penny would convert to 1c, a threepence to 2c, a sixpence to 5c, a shilling to 10c, a florin to 20c, 10 shillings to \$1, £1 to \$2, £5 to \$10 and £10 to \$20. Denominations under \$1 were to be coins, with the higher denominations banknotes. There would be no decimal equivalent to the halfpenny. Although the crown (5 shillings) had not been minted since 1938, the new 50c was its decimal equivalent. \$5 banknotes, which had no predecimal equivalent, were not introduced until 1967.

A group of six artists were appointed to submit designs for Australian decimal coinage. The artists were Gordon Andrews (whose designs were used on the first decimal banknotes), stamp designer Eileen Mayo, artist John Saxton, graphic designer and photographer Richard Beck, medal designer Andor Mészáros and Stuart Devlin.

The selection of Stuart Devlin's designs was announced to the public on August 24<sup>th</sup> 1964<sup>1</sup>, although some coins had already been struck at both the Melbourne and Perth mints (the Perth Mint die record book shows mintage of 2c coins earlier in 1964).

What do we know of the other potential designs?

The Perth Mint issued a set in proof silver of Andor Mészáros' designs in 2009. This included the 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c and 20c (fig 2). (His wattle and black swan designs were later the basis for the obverse and reverse of the 1967 unofficial swan dollar (fig 3)).



*Fig 2. Andor Mészáros' designs in 2009 Decimal Pattern set (left), resins in Decimal Currency Heritage Set (right). Photographs courtesy of Australian Coin Collecting Blog and Numisbid respectively.*

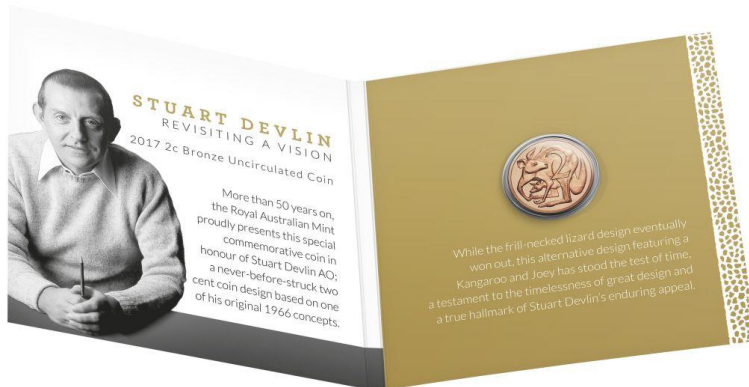
The 1966 Decimal Currency Heritage Set, issued by the Royal Australian Mint in 2010, included replica 'resins' of some alternative designs by the commissioned artists in 1963. Unfortunately there are no details as to which design was by which artist (fig 2). According to Stuart Devlin, Gordon Andrews' designs were all floral in nature, so that while beautiful "without colour flowers tend to look not that much different from flowers of other countries. They [do] not look sufficiently Australian".<sup>2</sup>

Another of Stuart Devlin's designs, a kangaroo and joey 2c, was released as a commemorative in a card by the Royal Australian Mint in 2017 (fig 4).

It was always understood that the 50c would feature the coat of arms but the actual design of the 50c was left up to the winning artist. Stuart Devlin tucked the kangaroo's tail around the rim so the design fills up the space available on the coin.



*Fig 3. (1967) Unofficial swan dollar in gold by Mészáros. This used his wattle (2c) and black swan (20c) designs from 1966. Photograph courtesy of International Auction Galleries.*



*Fig 4. Stuart Devlin's 2c design as issued by the Royal Australian Mint in 2017. Photograph courtesy of the Purple Penny.*

In the composite photographs that follow, the two photographs on the top line are resins from the Heritage set (but enhanced to show detail), the third coin is a silver proof version of a Mészáros design from the 2009 Australian decimal pattern set and the final coin is the circulation issue by Stuart Devlin. The 2c composite has an extra coin also designed by Stuart Devlin.

There are certainly other designs that were considered, some now known just by sketches, others for which plasters or resins exist (some displayed at the Royal Australian Mint). There is also one of Richard Beck's plasters (a 20c lyrebird) in the Powerhouse Collection.

We ran a poll of the designs below on the Independent Coin News Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1998954263780361>) asking which design people preferred.



*1c designs. From left to right, top to bottom: emu (designer not known), gum nut (designer not known), waratah (Andor Mészáros), feather tailed glider (Devlin).*

1c Design	Votes	Percentage
emu (designer not known)	5	10
gum nut (designer not known)	7	14
waratah (Andor Mészáros)	8	16
feather tailed glider (Stuart Devlin)	29	60





2c designs. From left to right, top to bottom: banksia (designer not known), frill necked lizard (designer not known), wattle (Andor Mészáros), kangaroo and joey (Stuart Devlin), frill necked lizard (Stuart Devlin).

2c Design	Votes	Percentage
banksia (designer not known)	3	5
frill necked lizard (designer not known)	5	8
wattle (Andor Mészáros)	13	24
kangaroo and joey (Stuart Devlin)	21	37
frill necked lizard (Stuart Devlin)	14	26



5c designs. From left to right, top to bottom: kookaburra (designer not known), wattle (designer not known), platypus and yabbie (Andor Mészáros), echidna (Stuart Devlin).

5c Design	Votes	Percentage
kookaburra (designer not known)	6	13
wattle (designer not known)	4	10
platypus and yabbie (Andor Mészáros)	18	40
echidna (Stuart Devlin)	16	37



10c designs. From left to right, top to bottom: banksia seed pod (designer not known), black swan (designer not known), kookaburra with yummy snake (Andor Mészáros), lyre bird (Stuart Devlin).

10c Design	Votes	Percentage
banksia seed pod (designer not known)	1	1
black swan (designer not known)	5	10
kookaburra (Andor Mészáros)	22	41
lyre bird (Stuart Devlin)	25	48



20c designs. From left to right, top to bottom: lyre bird (designer not known), platypus (designer not known), black swan (Andor Mészáros), platypus (Stuart Devlin).

20c Design	Votes	Percentage
lyre bird (designer not known)	0	0
platypus (designer not known)	4	8
black swan (Andor Mészáros)	25	50
platypus (Stuart Devlin)	21	42

With roughly 50 responses to each of our polls, we have just enough data to obtain a rough idea of peoples' opinions. For the 1c, the support for Stuart Devlin's feather tailed glider was overwhelming. The 2c was more interesting with Devlin's kangaroo and joey the clear favourite over his frill necked lizard and the Mészáros wattle. The 5c poll had the platypus and yabbie of Andor Mészáros slightly preferred over the echidna. For both the 10c and 20c, the Mészáros and Devlin designs were neck and neck. There was comparatively little support for any of the resin designs, although it is possible people may have been influenced by the unnatural colour of the 'coins' in the photographs. Also the

beauty of the silver proof rendering of the Mészáros designs may have been a factor in the other direction. Familiarity could play a part as well. As Lynne Csorba on the Facebook group said “I looked really hard at these but was wondering how much my opinion was affected by being familiar with the ones that were used....”

This was just a quick look at some of the alternate designs that could be easily found and reproduced without copyright issues. It would be interesting to see someone do a more in depth study of the alternate decimal designs.

### **Important Note:**

*On the 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c and 20c compilations, the resin photographs are courtesy of Kathryn Harris at the Coin Collecting Blog, all others courtesy of PCGS. Please do not reproduce the resin photographs without the permission of the Coin Collecting Blog.*

### **References**

1. New York Times, “Australia Chooses 6 Animal Designs For Decimal Coins”, August 24<sup>th</sup> 1964. <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/08/30/archives/australia-chooses-6-animal-designs-for-decimal-coins.html>
2. Stuart Devin in an address to the Numismatic Society of Victoria quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald February 4<sup>th</sup> 2016 <https://www.smh.com.au/national/coin-designer-stuart-devlin-reflects-on-decimal-currencys-50th-anniversary-20160203-gmkj76.html>

### **Further Reading**

Andor Mészáros, Decimal pattern Set: <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/items/1477492>

National Museum of Australia “Defining Moments Decimal Currency”  
<https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/decimal-currency>

Museum of Australian Democracy <https://moadoph.gov.au/explore/stories/history/the-introduction-of-decimal-currency-how-we-avoided-nostrils-and-learned-to>

The Australian Coin Collecting Blog “1966 Decimal Heritage Set” <https://www.australian-coins.com/blog/2010/11/1966-decimal-heritage-set.html>

Royal Australian Mint – Mint Issue 86  
<https://www.ramint.gov.au/sites/default/files/mintissue05/mintissue05/mintissue86.pdf>

Parliament of Australia “Stuart Devlin’s Australian Coins”,  
[https://www.aph.gov.au/Visit\\_Parliament/Art/Stories\\_and\\_Histories/Stuart\\_Devlins\\_Australian\\_coins](https://www.aph.gov.au/Visit_Parliament/Art/Stories_and_Histories/Stuart_Devlins_Australian_coins)

Richard Beck’s 20c lyrebird in the Powerhouse Collection:  
<https://collection.powerhouse.com.au/object/119890>

## Recent Perth Mint Releases



**Chinese Myths and Legends Dragon and Koi** - the same basic design as the coloured koi silver coin released a few months ago, it has been minted in 1 oz gold and also as a 1 oz silver antiqued coin in a card. The gold coin was priced at \$4,400 and the silver at \$139.



**Australian Swan 2023 1oz Gold Proof High Relief Coin.** Priced at \$4,400 and still available from the Perth Mint as of 11<sup>th</sup> October, but listed as “close to sell out”. This was also available as a **1 ounce silver proof** with a retail price of \$125. Unfortunately it is sold out at both the Perth Mint and Downie’s.



**Australian Koala 2023 5oz Silver Proof High Relief Gilded Coin.** This is an attractive silver proof gilded with 22 carat pink gold. The issue price was \$645. The coin is currently out of stock at the Perth Mint but not yet sold out.



**Diwali 2023 1oz Silver Gilded Medallion.** This isn’t a legal tender coin but it is an attractive medallion issued to celebrate the festival of Diwali, the Hindu ‘festival of lights’. The obverse portrays the deities Lakshmi and Ganesha. The medallion comes in a display case. As of 11<sup>th</sup> October it is still available from the Perth Mint website for \$115.



Chinese Myths and Legends **Phoenix 2023 1oz Silver Antiqued Coin** in Card. The coin has a price of \$139. It was still available at issue price from the Perth Mint website as of 11<sup>th</sup> October.



**Australian Kangaroo 2023 2oz Silver Reverse Gilded Coin** – which means that the gilding is on the low points rather than the high points of the design and is on both sides of the coin,

which gives the coin considerable eye appeal. This was still available from the Perth Mint website on the 11<sup>th</sup> October at issue price of \$249.



**Australian Brumby 2023 2oz Silver Proof High Relief Coin.** The coin has a RRP of \$249 and was out of stock on the Perth Mint website on 11<sup>th</sup> October but apparently not yet 'sold out'.



**Dragon 2023 1oz Gold Proof Coin** – Chinese dragon with long snake like body (coiled), curved horns, bulging eyes and strong jaws. With a retail price of \$4,400, it is currently out of stock at the Perth Mint as of 11<sup>th</sup> November, but not yet "sold out".



Mythical Creatures **Basilisk 1oz Gold Proof Coin** in the mythical creatures series. A mythical beast that, although small, is known for its venom, noxious breath and gaze – any of which would kill. The coin has a retail price of \$4,400 and as of the 11<sup>th</sup> October is also out of stock on the Perth Mint website but apparently not yet ‘sold out’.



**Australian Kookaburra 2023 1oz Silver Coin with Kookaburra Privy Mark** was released specifically for the Sydney Money Expo but is also available from the Perth Mint website (as of 25<sup>th</sup> October) for \$89.

All of these coins have the QEII memorial obverse.

All photographs courtesy of the Perth Mint.



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## Recent Royal Australian Mint Releases

With the Royal Australian Mint still making changes to their sales procedures and many dealers receiving nowhere near enough stock to satisfy their customers, in the last few months it has been difficult for many collectors to purchase all the coins they desire.



### 2023 Six Coin Gold Proof Year Set

This set has the standard reverse designs with the QEII memorial obverse. 99.9% gold. RRP \$14,500 with a mintage of just 50.



### 2023 Six Coin Silver Proof Year Set

This set has the standard reverse designs with the QEII memorial obverse. 99.9% silver. RRP \$375 with a mintage of 1000.

This year the silver (and gold) sets differ from the norm in that they use a different obverse to the standard mint and proof sets.



### 2023 50c Festive Florals Christmas

**Decoration** RRP of \$12.50, the same coin is found in five different coloured cards. These were still available from the Royal Australian Mint as of 11<sup>th</sup> October.

Some error coins have been found with the paint misaligned by 60 degrees (see page 24). They are surprisingly attractive.

### 2023 \$5 Australian World Heritage Properties

The coin depicts all twenty Australian world heritage sites as well the 11 sites that comprise the "Australian convict site". (A list of sites can be found on Wikipedia at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_World\\_Heritage\\_Sites\\_in\\_Australia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_World_Heritage_Sites_in_Australia)).



Actually getting one of these coins at the issue price of \$30 was extremely difficult. Large quantities quickly appeared on internet sites such as eBay. However, the prices have been steadily dropping since release day, so if you'd like one and don't need it immediately, it may pay to be patient.



#### 2023 50c AC/DC Silver Antique Coin

Celebrating 50 years of the group of musicians known as AC/DC. The mintage was 5000 with a retail price of \$100. These coins were also eagerly snapped up and quickly traded for higher prices on the secondary market.



#### 2023 50c coin 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bathurst.

Ten years on from the 50 years of Bathurst 50c coin, the Royal Australian Mint have issued another coin celebrating this car race. This coin had an issue price of \$15 and also sold through Repco and at the race itself.

### An Important Comment Concerning Royal Australian Mint Releases

To quote the RAM release notes, October 2023: *"Please keep in mind these products are limited mintage and not all stockists will choose to sell this release. Those that do have stock will only have a limited quantity available."* Coin dealers have no control over how many coins of a given release they receive from the RAM. In recent times the allocations to most dealers have been a fraction of what they received a couple of years ago. As a result they have been unable to supply collectors, speculators and resellers with the quantity they would like.

We have heard of recent episodes where coin dealers have been abused by customers because they were unable to supply the number of coins wanted. **Independent Coin News** deplores such aggressive and self centred behaviour.

## Fiji 100 Cent Year of the Dragon Banknote

In August, Fiji released a 100 cent collector banknote to celebrate the 2024 lunar Year of the dragon. While legal tender, the banknote sold for 30 Fijian dollars.



*Photographs courtesy of Banknote News*

The obverse shows a hibiscus, the coat of arms of Fiji, Fiji, the denomination and the governor's signature.

The reverse shows a Chinese dragon, the sun, Chinese characters for dragon, the denomination, the serial number and the Reserve Bank of Fiji Tagaga.

In the holographic foil stripe 100 fish in the middle swim amongst the coral when note is moved. Other security features include an optical variable ink feature green to blue, the lizard and parrot stand out against a dark background either side of the holographic stripe on the obverse, microtext and fluorescent colours in the dragon under UV light.

### **Sources:**

Banknote News: <https://banknotenews.com/?p=40715>

Reserve Bank of Fiji – youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y5Tqf30tNM>

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## 2020 \$20 Lowe Kennedy Banknotes are in Circulation

While the time between minting a coin and its release is generally short, banknotes can remain in stock for many years before release (or even never be released, with the stock destroyed such as occurred with the 2014 \$5). Printed in 2020, the first Lowe/Kennedy \$20 have begun appearing in change. So far (as of 12<sup>th</sup> October) only a few general prefix banknotes have been sighted. The Reserve Bank have stated that the first prefix carry serial numbers beginning with AA20 and the last prefix EA20. Neither of these prefixes have yet been reported in circulation.



R428a (general prefix). Photograph courtesy of syd-wegood on eBay.

## PCGS Authenticates First 1922 Perth Mint Specimen Penny



Fig 1. 1922 Perth Mint specimen penny. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.

PCGS has authenticated the earliest Perth Mint specimen bronze coin.

Specimens are typically made for archival purposes or to present to dignitaries. Usually they are struck multiple times with normal dies, occasionally on polished planchets, but often on just carefully selected (problem free) planchets.

So how do we tell if a given coin is a specimen?

Basically, the coin will be as perfect as possible. Rims are well formed, as are the denticles due to the strong strike. There will be no strike weakness on the high points or the other side of the coin opposite the high points. If the planchet has moved slightly between strikes we may see evidence of a second strike, although that has not happened on this particular coin.

The die is new and shows full or almost full detail. Because of the fresh die, there will be little or no cartwheel lustre (cartwheel lustre is formed by miniscule striations on the die that occur due to metal flow – early die state coins have little of this). A careful look at the specimen in fig 1 and another 1922 Indian obverse coin minted in Perth in fig 2 (which is a very nice coin in its own right) shows the differences.

From fig 3, we see that the rim and beads are almost perfect on the specimen and only reasonably strong on the business strike. The orb and pearls leading up crown are fully formed on the specimen, but lacking in detail due to die wear or die fill on the business strike.

Fig 4 highlights that the inner beads are weak on the business strike, with the top scroll and top of N of PENNY weak due to the poor strike. In comparison, the detail on the specimen is exquisite. Notice that while the specimen die is new, it is not quite perfect as there appears to be a small die defect above and to the left of the centre of the top scroll.



Fig 2. 1922 Perth Mint business strike penny. Photograph courtesy of PCGS.



Fig 3. Business strike (left), specimen (right). Notice the difference in the detail.



Fig 4. Business strike (left), specimen (right). Notice the difference in the detail.

Andrew Crellin gives the provenance of this coin as:

*Produced at the Perth Mint between 14th and 17th February 1922;*

*Stored as a record of production by a public collection or by a VIP as a presentation piece;*

*Sold to a coin dealer in Melbourne sometime in the late 1970's / early 1980's;*

*Consigned for sale by auction to Noble Numismatics in 2007;*

*Acquired by Sterling & Currency at Noble Numismatics Sale 85a, July 24th 2007;*

*Acquired in 2008 by the Rare Coin Company and sold to a prominent Western Australian collector;*

*Acquired by Sterling & Currency ex the deceased estate of the previous owner.*

**Further reading:**

Andrew Crellin, "The 1922 Specimen Penny - One of the Very First Copper Coins Struck at the Perth Mint", Sterling and Currency Website, October 22, 2008.

<https://www.sterlingcurrency.com.au/blog/news-research/commonwealth-coins/the-1922-specimen-penny-one-of-the-very-first-copp/>

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## Royal Succession Royal Mint Coins Sell at Stacks Bowers



*Last Elizabeth II and first Charles III one ounce Britannia gold coins. Photographs courtesy of Stacks Bowers.*

Stacks Bowers auction on August 21<sup>st</sup> featured the last QEII and first Charles III coins struck by the Royal Mint. Given the grades awarded by Numismatic Guaranty Company (NGC) were all MS70 or PF70, exceptional care must have been taken by the Royal Mint in striking and handling these coins.

The last gold one ounce Elizabeth II sold for US\$50,000 and the first Charles III for US\$42,000. The sovereigns realised US\$42,000 and US\$34,000 respectively. The silver coins reached new heights also, with the last one ounce Britannia selling for US\$19,000 and the first Charles III for US\$18,000.



*Last Elizabeth II and first Charles III sovereigns inside their NGC holders. Photographs courtesy of Stacks Bowers.*

### Source

Stacks Bowers: <https://stacksbowers.com/sbpressreleases/more-than-5-1-million-realized-in-stacks-bowers-galleries-sale-of-sovereign-and-britannia-coins-for-the-royal-mint/>



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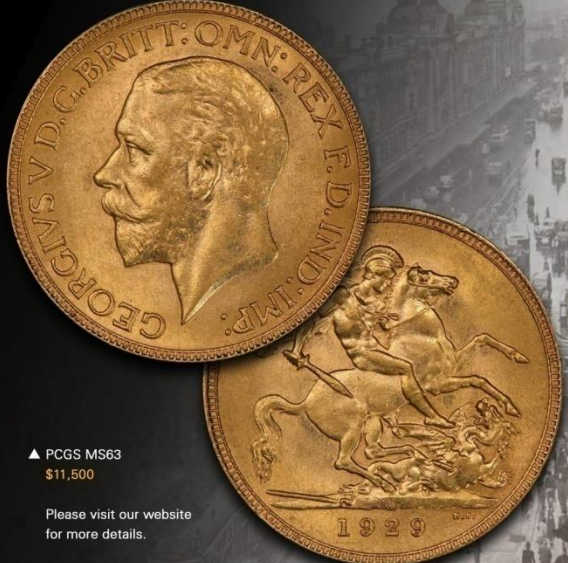
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## Upcoming Coin Fairs, Coin Shows and Numismatic Events

November 2nd, 3rd, 4th

### **Perth 2023 National Stamp Exhibition**

3 Nelson Crescent  
Gloucester Park  
East Perth WA 6004

November 4<sup>th</sup> 9:00am – 2:00 pm

### **The Shire Stamp and Coin Collectors Fair**

GyMEA Anglican Church  
131 GyMEA Bay Rd, GyMEA NSW

November 5<sup>th</sup> 9:00am — 1:00pm

### **The Canberra Collectables Fair**

Garran Adventure Scout Hall  
123 Kitchener St, Garran.

November 11<sup>th</sup> 9am – 1pm

### **Perth Numismatic Society** Coin, Banknote and Stamp Fair

South Perth Community Centre, South Perth WA

November 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 9am-4pm

### **Wagga Stamp and Coin Fair**

Sturt Public School  
White Avenue, Koorngal NSW

November 26<sup>th</sup>

### **Ringwood East Coin and Stamp Fair**

Ringwood East Citizen Centre  
9 Laurence Ringwood East Vic

December 2<sup>nd</sup> 9am – 2pm

### **The Shire Stamp and Coin Collectors Fair**

GyMEA Anglican Church  
131 GyMEA Bay Rd, GyMEA NSW

December 3rd 9 am - 2pm

### **Moonee Ponds Coin Fair**

Community Hall  
5 Kellaway Avenue, Moonee Ponds, Vic

December 26<sup>th</sup> 9am – 1pm

### **Perth Numismatic Society** Coin, Banknote and Stamp Fair

South Perth Community Centre, South Perth WA

January 6<sup>th</sup>, 9:00am – 2:00 pm

### **The Shire Stamp and Coin Collectors Fair**

GyMEA Anglican Church  
131 GyMEA Bay Rd, GyMEA NSW

January 28th

### **Ringwood East Coin and Stamp Fair**

Ringwood East Citizen Centre  
9 Laurence Ringwood East Vic

February 3rd 9:00am – 2:00 pm

### **The Shire Stamp and Coin Collectors Fair**

GyMEA Anglican Church  
131 GyMEA Bay Rd, GyMEA NSW

February 3rd 9 am - 2pm

### **Moonee Ponds Coin Fair**

Community Hall  
5 Kellaway Avenue, Moonee Ponds, Vic

February 4<sup>th</sup> 9:00am — 1:00pm

### **The Canberra Collectables Fair**

Garran Adventure Scout Hall  
123 Kitchener St, Garran.

For information contact Wayne on 0414 374 511

February 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 10am-4pm, 10am-3pm

### **Melbourne Money Expo**

Malvern Town Hall  
1251 High Street, Malvern, Victoria

February 25<sup>th</sup>

### **Ringwood East Coin and Stamp Fair**

Ringwood East Citizen Centre  
9 Laurence Ringwood East Vic

March 2<sup>nd</sup> 9:00am – 2:00 pm

### **The Shire Stamp and Coin Collectors Fair**

GyMEA Anglican Church  
131 GyMEA Bay Rd, GyMEA NSW

March 2<sup>nd</sup> 9 am - 2pm

### **Moonee Ponds Coin Fair**

Community Hall  
5 Kellaway Avenue, Moonee Ponds, Vic

March 3<sup>rd</sup> 9:00am — 1:00pm  
**The Canberra Collectables Fair**  
Garran Adventure Scout Hall  
123 Kitchener St, Garran.

Friday 8 March 2024 1 - 5pm  
Saturday 9 March 2024 10am - 4pm  
Sunday 10 March 2024 10am - 3pm  
**Perth Stamp & Coin Show**  
South Perth Community Centre, South Perth WA

March 30<sup>th</sup>, 9am-4pm  
**Wagga Stamp and Coin Market**  
ARCC Hall  
131 Tarcutta St Wagga Wagga NSW

March 31<sup>st</sup>  
**Ringwood East Coin and Stamp Fair**  
Ringwood East Citizen Centre  
9 Laurence Ringwood East Vic

March 31<sup>st</sup> 9:30am – 4pm  
**Petersham Super Fair**  
Petersham Town Hall  
107 Crystal Street, Petersham, NSW  
<https://scdaa.com.au>

**If you have a show that you would like added to the list or there are any changes that need to be made, please send an email to [editor@independentcoinnews.com](mailto:editor@independentcoinnews.com)**



**Ringwood East Coin and Stamp Fair**

Ringwood East Citizen Centre

9 Laurence Grove Ringwood East

Last Sunday of every month except December

Contact T. Gordon 0412092917

## Downie's Auction 350 Results

Downie's Australian Coin Auctions Number 350 was held at their premises on October 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> 2023. This auction had fewer high value items than normal but the items in the decimal section sold well.

This is an early report based upon the prices realised posted online by Downie's on the 27<sup>th</sup> October.

### Predecimal & Proclamation Coins



A 1797 cartwheel twopence graded by NGC as MS61BN sold for \$701.



A 1930 penny in about fine, a lower grade but problem free, sold for \$19,520.



A 1931 dropped 1, Indian obverse penny with old obverse scratches else very fine sold for \$1952. With less than 1000 minted, these coins are rarer than the 1930 penny.

### Decimal Coins



Each of the 2018 dated 30th Anniversary of the Two Dollar Coin 12-coin folders sold for \$803.

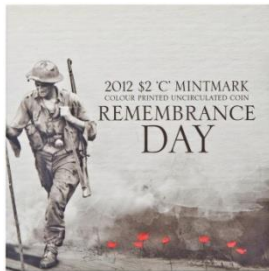


A complete 2017 \$1 alphabet set, described as "the first complete set we have offered in five years (26 coins)" sold for \$2684. These are very tough to find as complete sets.



Several lots of 2019 \$1 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day coins sold. The coins were originally released as part of a 4 coin multinational set available only in the United Kingdom. The first coin realised \$146. Strangely enough the

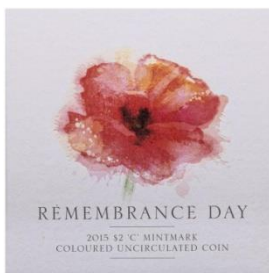
following two lots, each consisting of pairs of this coin, sold for just \$146 and \$171.



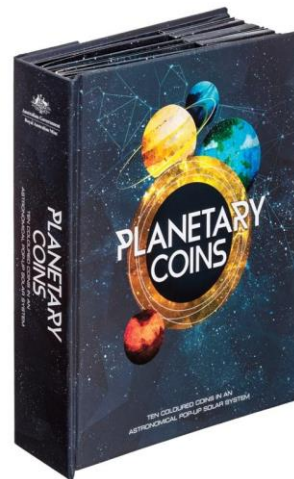
There were seven 2012 C mintmark Remembrance red poppies in their original cards, spread over three lots. Each coin sold for \$579.



The 2013 \$2 C mintmark coronation coins in original cards (21 coins in total over 10 lots) averaged \$532 per coin.



The 2015 \$2 Remembrance Day C mintmark (3 coins total over multiple lots) averaged \$159 per coin.



The two 2017 Planetary sets each sold for \$4636. This is consistent with other recent public auction results over the last six months.

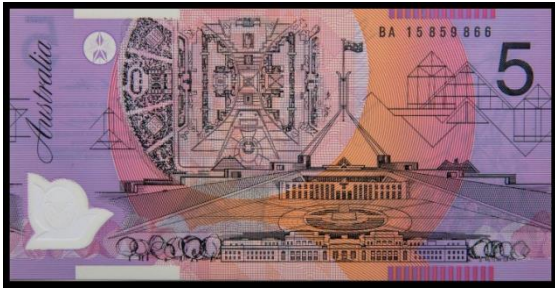


Wrong planchet errors are still popular, particularly when the planchet is of the wrong metal. A 1980 10c on an underweight and wrong (maybe a copper alloy) planchet sold for \$2196.

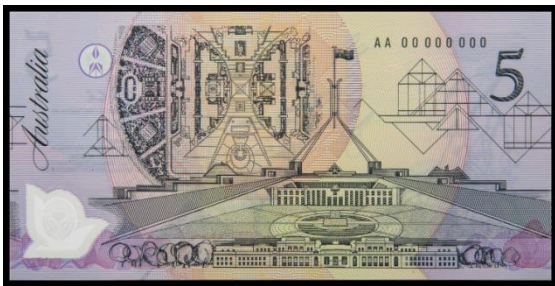
### Banknotes



A Commercial Banking Company of Sydney £5 19-- proof record note, punch hole "Cancelled" and a fresh EF sold for \$1708.



A 2015 \$5 Stevens-Fraser BA15 first prefix sold for \$1586. These notes were only available in some of the Reserve Bank last and first folders and never issued into circulation.



A \$5 Fraser Cole polymer with serial number AA00 000000 (dark green serial numbers) sold for \$1708. As described in the catalogue "one of only 34 existing as a single note, very rare as such. The full sheet of notes with this prefix and serial was auctioned for charity over 25 years ago by Australian Associated Press Group Financial Markets at a dinner held in Sydney. The sheet was signed by Fraser and Cole and later cut into a block of four, one pair and 34 single note notes that were retailed at the time for \$2,500 each".

### Ancient Coins



An Alexander the Great tetradrachm, described as "Alexander III (336-323BC) Tetradrachm (17.2gms) Damascus mint, Head of Heracles, Rev Zeus enthroned left, four pellets between rails below throne, foreparts of a ram in field, minor edge bump otherwise attractive aEF" sold for \$1220.



A Rhodes, Damatrios magistrate, silver tetradrachm from the 205-190 BC described as "Damatrios magistrate, head of Heracles right wearing lion skin, rev Zeus seated left, magistrate's name above rose in left field, an attractive coin, well centred on a large flan VF" sold for \$1037.



Of the Roman coins, a Tiberius denarius obverse head of Tiberius, reverse Livia seated right, also known as the biblical tribute penny, sold for \$993.

**Downie's next auction will be in February 2024 with consignments closing during December.**



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## International Auction Galleries Signature Auction 98 in Review

International Auction Galleries held their Signature Auction 98 from October 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Some of the highlights were:



The 1897 Melbourne Mint proof half sovereign sold for \$67,100.



The pattern swan dollar in gold (of which there are only 7 still in existence) sold for \$46,970.



The 1916 halfpenny/quarter anna mule fetched \$43,310.

### Other Gold Coins



An Adelaide Pound (type II) graded as about unc/unc (with tag as previously sold for \$152,000) sold for \$26,840.

While not particularly rare in low grade, Edward VII sovereigns are hard in uc and very tough to find nicer. Noteworthy amongst the offerings were three Edward VII Perth sovereigns.



A 1902P sovereign PCGS graded MS63 Ex Bentley Collection sold for \$2013.



A 1906P sovereign PCGS graded MS64 sold for \$4026. Edward VII Perth Mint sovereigns are very scarce in choice and this is the equal highest graded.

A 1907P sovereign PCGS graded MS64 sold for \$5612.

## Predecimal Coins



A pleasant 1947Y. halfpenny PCGS graded MS65 BN sold for \$500.

A 1920 penny with dot above top scroll and graded by PCGS at F15 sold for \$354. As penny collectors know, this is a very tough issue in any grade and it was only a few years ago that examples in this grade sold for around \$100.



The finest known 1920 penny with dot above bottom scroll and English obverse (PCGS AU58) sold for \$36,600.

Also up for auction was another example of this rare variety graded as XF40 by PCGS. This sold for \$9760, more than twice the estimate.



A 1945Y halfpenny graded by PCGS as MS64 BN reached \$683, more than twice estimate. This is an underrated date in unc or better and very hard to find attractive.



The 1952 halfpenny, described as “rainbow brown and red” and PCGS graded NS64RB realised \$707 – the high price doubtless in a large part to its brilliant colouring.



The 1919 double dot penny is a tough issue in any grade and particularly desirable even in mid grades. A genuine example graded by PCGS as VF35 sold for \$597, which was around estimate.

## Error Coins



A 1964Y penny uncirculated and double struck with about 40% overlap sold for \$1769.



A 2020 donation dollar “bullseye error” (paint applied to the wrong side) sold for a respectable \$2684. Genuine examples of this error are very scarce. It is quite possible that people are still cautious about the legitimacy of each “bullseye”, however there is no doubt this particular coin is genuine.

### Banknotes



A National Bank of Australasia Ltd, Perth double-sided full colour £1 specimen. About unc (with tag as previously sold for \$35,000), it sold for \$3904, just a little below estimate.



A £5 Riddle-Heathershaw Q/12 (R 41L) in good fine sold for \$12,200.



A £10 Collins-Allen (R 51) described as “Flattened of light bends with good colour, slight edge stain”, with provenance going back to 1977 and graded very fine, realised \$34,770.



The specimen 1920 5 shillings Cerutti-Collins banknote, one of only five known in private hands sold for \$54,900. The 5 shilling note was proposed during World War I when the price of silver was extremely high. These plans were shelved when the silver price decreased. This note also has solid provenance, being ex Cerutti estate.

### Error Banknotes



A 1998 \$10 MacFarlane-Evans (R 318c) consecutive pair with mismatched serial numbers and printed upside down along top/through centre of note sold for \$5246. The OVD coating is also printed over 10 on RH side (both sides) and the correct serials have been written on front of each note in marker by checker.

**If you wish to consign your collection or part of your collection, contact details are on the next page.**

**The next International Auction Galleries sale will be in early March 2024.**



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**ANDA**

## New Coin Designs for the United Kingdom

The Royal Mint has revealed changes to the designs of the circulating United Kingdom currency<sup>1</sup>. These 'definitives' (or standard reverse) coins feature British flora and fauna, inspired by the King Charles III's lifelong passion for conservation<sup>2</sup>. The chief Royal Mint engraver, Gordon Summers, and an advisory committee at the Royal Mint was responsible for the designs.



The penny or 1p features the hazel dormouse whose numbers have been in decline.

The 2p has the red squirrel. It now exists mainly in Scotland, although previously was found across the entire country.

The 5p has an oak leaf. The oak supports more life than any other native tree species in the UK and is thus important for biodiversity.



The 10p features the capercaillie, the world's large grouse.

The 20p has a puffin. The population is expected to severely regress over the next few decades unless their nesting sites and food supply are protected.



The 50p shows the Atlantic salmon; wild populations are low due to over fishing, habitat loss and river pollution.



The £1 (previous page) features bees, which of course are necessary for pollination of most plants.

The £2 (previous page) shows the four national flowers - the rose for England, daffodil for Wales, thistle for Scotland and shamrock for Northern Ireland. The edge inscription reads "In servitio omnium" - "In the service of all".

The left hand side of each of the eight coins has the theme of interlocking Cs, from the C in Charles' royal cipher and also for conservation.

All coins are the same size, shape and compositions as their predecessors.

Use of flora and fauna on British currency is unusual as it has normally been heraldic. The previous definitives, which have been used since 2008, were based around the UK shield (see below).

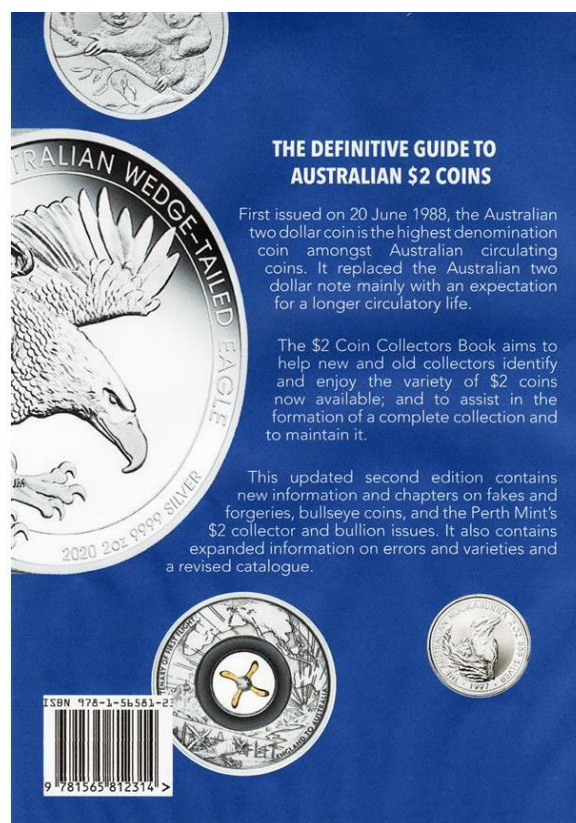
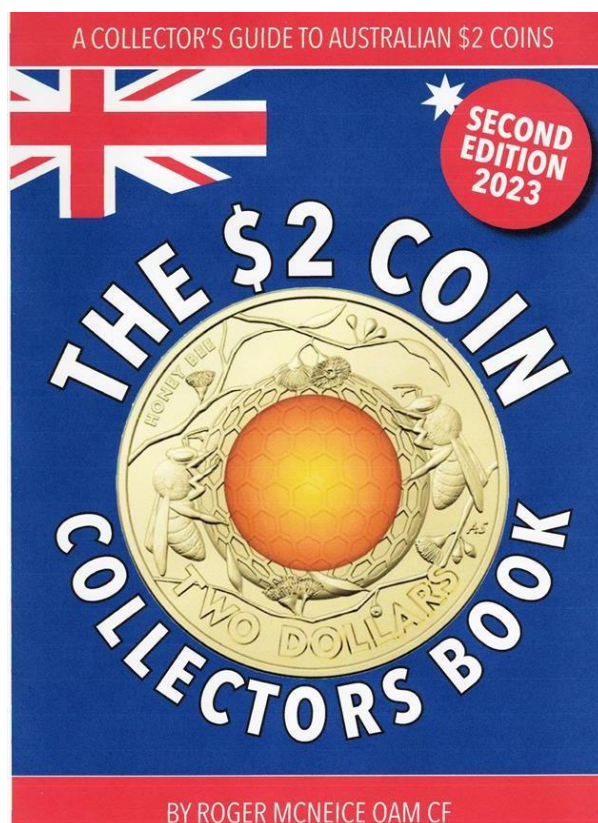


It is expected that the first coins with the new design will enter circulation by the end of 2023. The older designs will still be legal tender and circulated until the coins wear out.

All photographs were cropped from larger photographs that are courtesy of the Royal Mint.

### References

1. Royal Mint press release:  
<https://www.royalmint.com/aboutus/press-centre/the-royal-mint-unveils-new-coins-of-the-nation/>
2. National Geographic (UK):  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/environment-and-conservation/2022/09/prince-charles-was-an-environment-radical-what-happens-now-hes-king>



### Updated and expanded to include

1. A large chapter on all the Perth Mint \$2 gold and silver issues- all illustrated with mintage figures.
2. A completely revised chapter on errors to include fakes, counterfeits, how to identify fake bullseye coins, test coins and more.
3. A large chapter on society and dealer sources.
4. A new chapter on Memorial Coins.
5. An expanded chapter on PNCs with estimates of value.
6. Updated catalogue values and mintage figures.

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Hard Cover: \$39.50 plus \$12.50 postage.

**Contact [rvmn@internode.on.net](mailto:rvmn@internode.on.net)**

## The \$2 Market Report for October

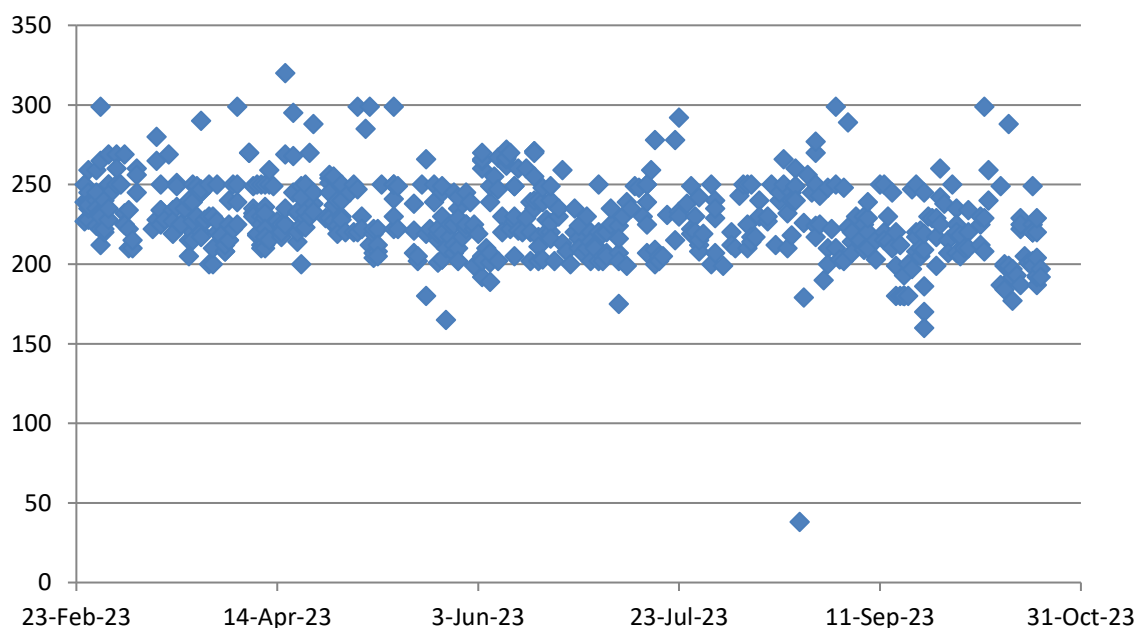
The total number of sales and number of listings for the recent two month period (23<sup>rd</sup> August to 22<sup>nd</sup> October) is given in table 1. Comparing this two month period with the previous two months, the Vietnam \$2 proof sales have dropped from 47 to 21 and the Vietnam C mintmark sales from 385 to 237. There was a 30% increase in sales of the 2022 C mintmark red poppy, reversing the trend of the previous two months.

The data used in these reports was extracted from eBay “sold” listings, both auction and buy it now. Data for the business strike issues (2012 remembrance plain poppy and 2013 coronation) and the NCLT 2012 remembrance red poppy was extracted manually so as not to include circulated and damaged coins. For the other issues it was possible to extract the data via a program, although some data checking was still required. As there is no guarantee that all the eBay sales were honoured, the data for those that we suspected (from the seller’s feedback) had been dishonoured was removed. Sales of PCGS graded coins were not included, neither were listings that included multiple items and bulk lots.

Coin	Number of Sales	Number of Listings
2012 \$2 Remembrance Plain Poppy	13	40
2012 \$2 Remembrance Red Poppy	168	92
2012 \$2 Remembrance C Mintmark	18	16
2013 \$2 Coronation	43	43
2022 \$2 C Mintmark Red Poppy	140	121
2023 \$2 Vietnam Proof	21	63
2023 \$2 Vietnam Aluminium Bronze	237	265

Table 1. Sales on eBay in the two months 23<sup>rd</sup> August to 22<sup>nd</sup> August and listings on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Note that the prices on some of the latter were somewhat optimistic.

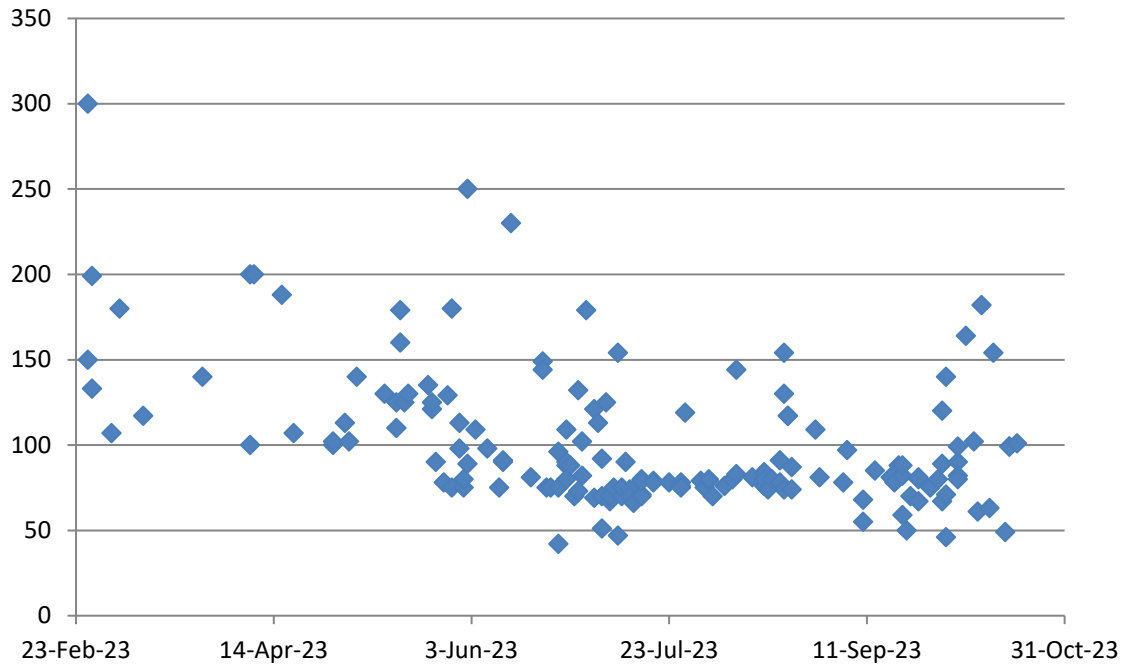
### 2022 C Mintmark Red Poppy





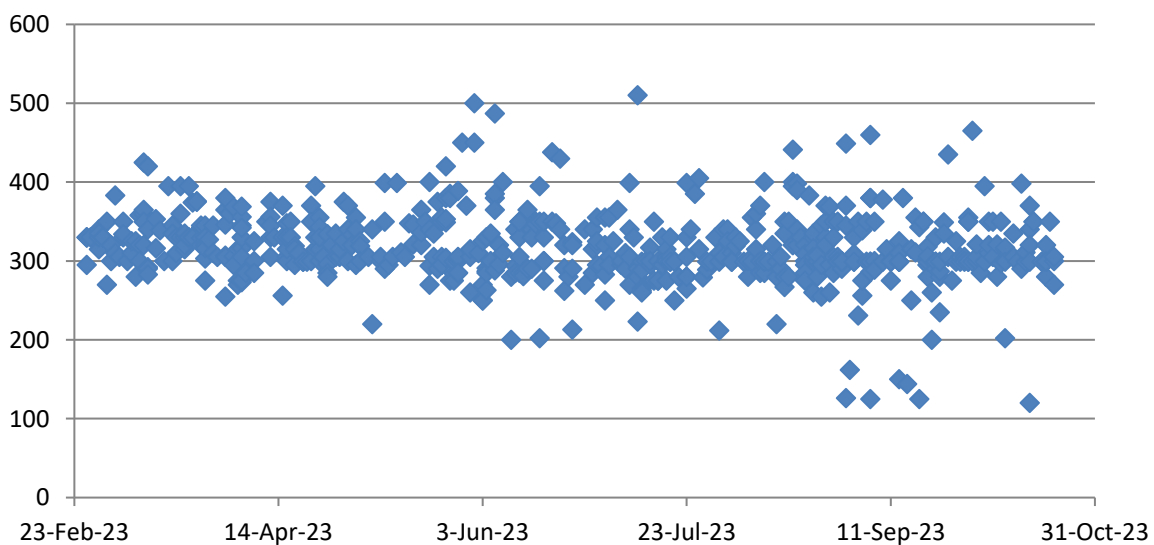
The average prices have dropped, particularly in the last month, with many sales now below \$200. Average sale price is now about 20% lower than late February.

### 2013 \$2 Coronation



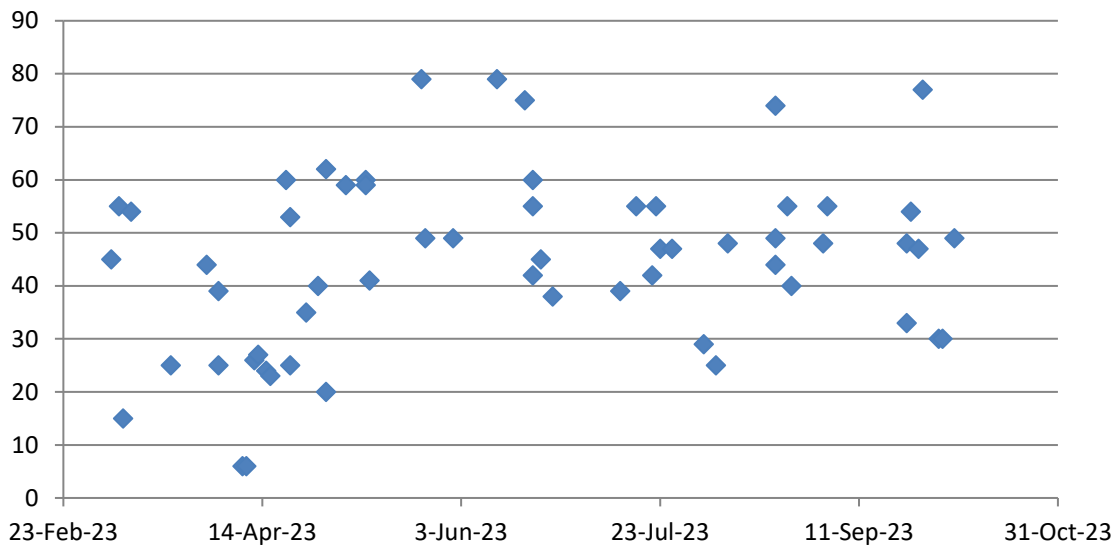
Data includes only those coins described in the listing as “uncirculated”. The number of sales decreased significantly in this two month period compared with the previous two months, down to the levels of May to June. The average price has increased recently, but the data scatter is quite large. Examination of individual sales indicates that the price realised is heavily dependent upon the quality of the image of the coin being sold.

### 2012 \$2 Remembrance Red Poppy



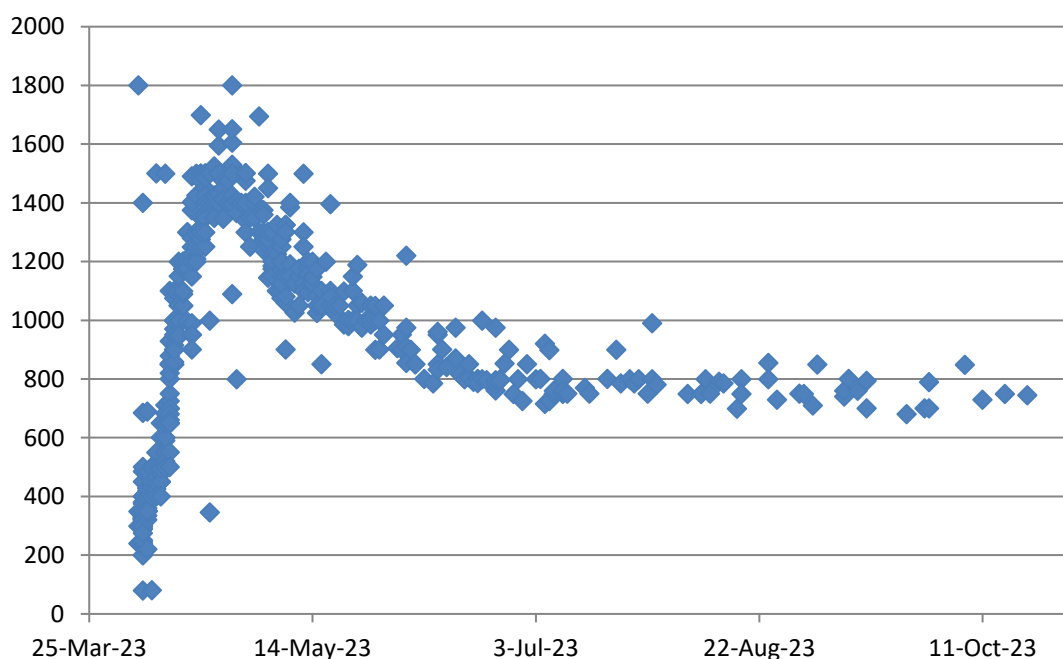
The data includes only uncirculated coins without paint chips. Due to the NCLT nature of the product, sellers' descriptions of coins as "uncirculated" are more reliable than that of coins such as the 2012 \$2 plain poppy and 2013 \$2 coronation. Even ignoring a handful of bargain sales in September, the slight downwards trend we noticed last issue has been maintained.

### 2012 \$2 Remembrance Plain Poppy



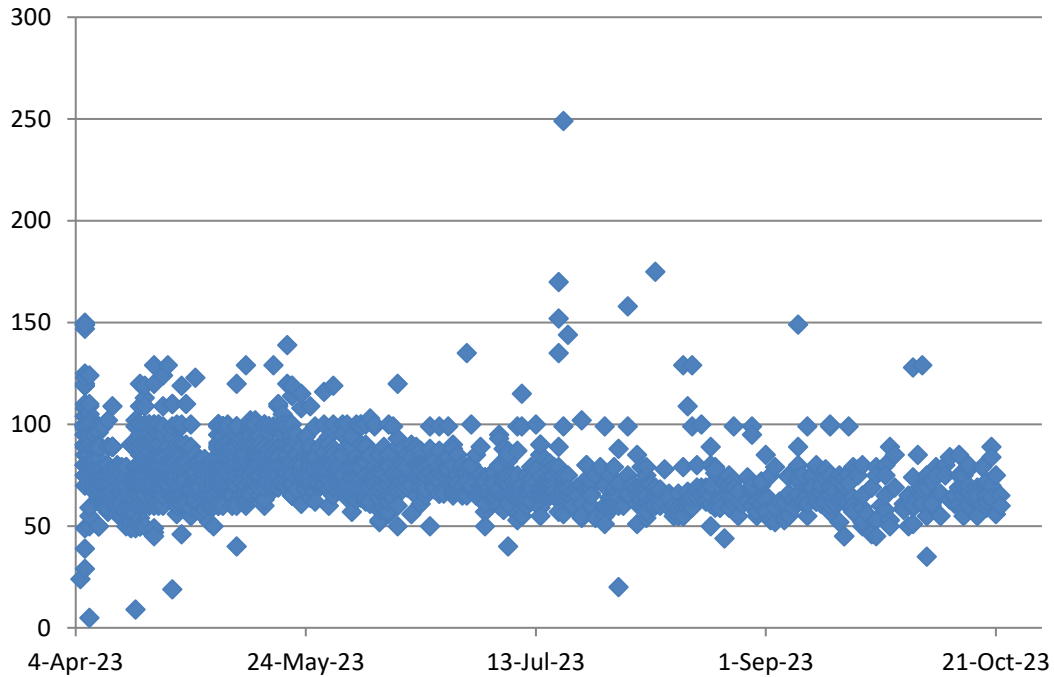
The data includes only those described as "uncirculated" with coins that are obviously polished removed. This issue is the most difficult to find uncirculated given there were just 13 sales in the last two months. The average price in the last month appears to be similar to two months ago and higher than it was six months ago. As plain poppy is much scarcer in uncirculated than the red poppy, the current price of roughly \$50 is anomalously low compared with that of the coloured version.

### 2023 \$2 Vietnam Silver Proof



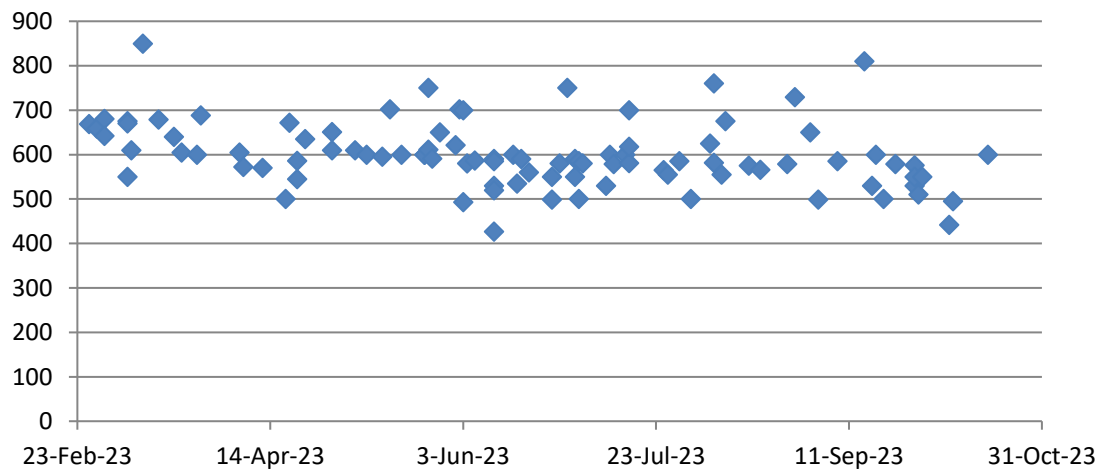
Since the peak at around \$1,500 in late April we saw a steady decrease to around \$800 in mid June. Sales prices slowly decreased in the last two months as has the sales rate. Given that the number of listings is much the same as two months ago, the chances are that these trends will continue.

### 2023 \$2 Vietnam C Mintmark



There are plenty to go around but so far have only seen a gradual price drop in the last four months despite the apparent oversupply. Recent sales have been steady at around \$50 to \$60.

### 2012 \$2 Remembrance Red Poppy C Mintmark



While the number of sales has been comparatively small, we have seen a downward trend from the high \$600s to the low \$500s over the last eight months. This coin is probably the toughest of the C mintmark \$2.

Past sales results and the current trend are no guarantee of future returns. If you plan on buying coins purely for investment purposes, Independent Coin News suggests you first consult a financial adviser.

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## News in Brief

### RAM Coin Swap in Perth

The Royal Australian Mint will have a coin swap at the Perth 2023 National Stamp Exhibition in Gloucester Park on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November at 8:30 am.

"Along with the coin swap there will be the opportunity to purchase a select range of our numismatic products and press your own specialised counter stamp!"

The coin swap will be small bags of five \$2 coins, presumably the 2020 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWII and the 2021 Indigenous Military Service as they were available at the coin expo in Adelaide.

### Latest Edition of Renniks Now Available

The 32nd edition of *Renniks Australian Coin & Banknote Values* edited by Michael Pitt has been released. At 350+ pages it is quite a hefty volume. This edition includes major changes to banknote prices to make them more in line with the current market. Thanks to Max Stern & Co for providing me a copy. The catalogue is available at most coin dealers or may be obtained directly from the publishers at <https://www.renniks.com>.

### Pobjoy Mint to Close

After operating for 58 years in Surrey, the private UK Pobjoy Mint will close at the end of the year. Over the years, the mint has struck

coins for more than 40 countries and territories and won fourteen 'Coin of the Year' awards. It currently produces coins for more than 10 British overseas territories. Coin World reports that a little under 40 employees will be affected and that the managing director, Taya Pobjoy said "the mint will continue to sell coins as normal, both retail and wholesale, up until the end of November".

### The \$2 Book Released

Roger McNeice has advised that the latest edition of *The \$2 Coin Collectors Book* has been printed and will be available for purchase in the next week or two. Please see the advertisement on page 77.

### Royal Australian Mint Annual Report Available

The annual report for the period July 2022 to June 2023 has been released. Of interest to many collectors are the mintage figures, which are of course just for that 12 month period. As expected, no 2023 dated coins for circulation had been struck before the middle of the year.

This and earlier annual reports can be found online at <https://www.ramint.gov.au/annual-reports>

## Envelope Privy Mark Coins Released through Australia Post

In mid October, three postal numismatic covers (pncs) containing 'envelope' privy mark coins were sold only through Australia Post, and were 'out of stock' on their website very quickly. The three coins are all identical to the regular issue except for the privy mark. The pncs are

Opera House: containing the 2023 opera house 50c with envelope privy.

FIFA Women's World Cup: containing the 2023 coloured world cup \$1 with envelope privy.

Creatures of the Deep: containing the Creatures of the Deep \$1 with an envelope privy.

The mintages of each were 7,500 and all issues are now only available on the secondary market.

## Perth Mint Upcoming Releases

2024 is the Lunar Year of the Dragon. On Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> of November the Perth Mint will be releasing their Year of the Dragon Coins.

*1/2oz Silver Proof Coin*

*1oz Silver Proof Coin*

*Silver Proof Three-Coin Set*

*1oz Silver Proof Coloured Coin*

*1/10oz Gold Proof Coin*

*1/4oz Gold Proof Coin*

*1oz Gold Proof Coin*

## PNC Book Available in November

*The Essential Guide to Postal Numismatic Covers* by Greg McDonald will be on sale in

mid to late November. As far as I know, this is the first time anyone has produced a catalogue specifically for Australian PNCs. It will be available from some coin dealers, "PNC Collectors Australia" and other coin groups on Facebook.

## PCGS Set Registry Awards Announced

The 2023 awards for best registry sets were announced in late October. Similar to last year, PCGS will not mail out plaques but instead give out pins, such as those below, to all winners, including those who formerly would have just received an icon next to their set.



PCGS gives out gold awards to those "sets that are the best in their category and have been selected by our judging committee to be recognized for outstanding set building". This year, 45 Australian sets were considered worthy of the honour. The full list can be found at

<https://www.pcgs.com/setregistry/awards>

# Pirate Guide to Collecting Australian Coins

Available in both Paperback and Digital (e-Book).

This book contains over 120 pages featuring details of all Australian decimal coins that have gone into circulation from 1966, with:

- A chapter for each coin denomination, from 1c to \$2.
- Large high-quality photos of every coin, including coins released through retail coin promotions.
- Coin mintage details (where figures have been published).
- Errors to look for and how to verify them.
- Information on storing your coins.

Available from coin dealers,  
select bookstores and online at:  
[www.AustraliaCoins.com.au](http://www.AustraliaCoins.com.au)

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Of course, thanks once again to Bronwyn Halls for providing the cover illustration.

This document was prepared in the lands of the Wurrundjeri people. We acknowledge them as the traditional owners of the land and pay respect to their elders past, present and emerging