Bill Shamhart, owner of Numismatic Americana, Inc. (NumismaticAmericana.com), is a PCGS Authorized Dealer and, like many dealers, he’s also a collector. Bill started collecting coins as a boy. Growing up in Missouri, he began shoveling snow at the age of 16 to earn money which he would then take to the bank to buy rolls of coins. Two years later, in 1976, he set up his first table as a dealer at a coin show and worked the shows for another four years until he was offered a full time position in the hobby.

Bill specializes in U.S. coins, world coins struck by the U.S. Mint, and numismatic Americana. When asked to be more specific, he said, “Any coin that is pretty!” Bill is known for having a “great eye” for both beauty and technical aspects of coins. His mission is to make coin collecting fun through history. Simply said, Bill loves coins.

For the past 12 summers, he has supported the ANA by giving seminars and teaching others about coins and coin grading. His seminar “Advanced coin grading and problem coins” is wildly popular. In 2009 he was honored with the American Numismatic Association’s Presidential award for his service. And, in 2013, Bill was awarded the ANA’s honorary Doctor of Numismatics degree.

Bill collects various things, which includes a type set of U.S. coins and currency from Warrensburg, Missouri. Among his favorite collections is his U.S. Assay Medal collection. He likes the fact that the medals are beautifully designed and were made for the individuals who honorably served on the commission.

Bill currently lives in Chester, New Jersey, with his son who is in high school. When he is not dealing in coins, you can find him shooting either trap or sporting clays.
Founded in 1792 by the United States government, the U.S. Assay Commission was established to supervise the annual testing of gold and silver coinage produced by the U.S. Mint to ensure the metal content met specifications. Members of the commission, which were composed of prominent private citizens including numismatists, were appointed every year. Beginning in 1860, to thank the members for their service, each commissioner received a medal struck by the U.S. Mint commemorating famous persons or topics and places. It is not clear why this tradition was started. It may have been the result of Director of the Mint, James Ross Snowden’s desire to expand the medal department at the Mint. The medals were produced every year from 1860 through 1977, except 1862 -1866 and 1954.

Most U.S. Assay medals are rare. With the exception of 1911 to about 1918, then more widely distributed from 1920 to 1935. After 1935, a very stringent policy was put in place. The complete set requires 180 issues. Bill’s set is currently 45.56% complete and has a weighted average of 62.34. The very finest can be found in auctions and when Bill can, he adds to and upgrades the collection.

About the Collection

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Bill Shamhart’s Top Ten Favorite Medals from the Collection:

1868 Copper U.S. Assay Commission JK-AC-4 PCGS SP66 BN - Population 2, None graded higher

1870 Copper U.S. Assay Commission JK-AC-8 PCGS SP67 BN - Population 1, None graded higher Subject: Standing Mercury Engraver: Charles E. Barber (obverse), Gilroy Roberts (reverse) Pedigree: John Verduin (marked on edge) Eng.: George Morgan • Size: 51 mm

1890 Silver U.S. Assay Commission JK-AC-33 PCGS SP67 - Population 1, None graded higher Subject: Benjamin Harrison Engraver: Charles E. Barber (obverse) and George Morgan (reverse) • Size: 33 mm

1953 Bronze U.S. Assay Commission JK-AC-08 PCGS SP67 - Population 1, None graded higher Subject: Mercury Pedigree: John Varduck (marked on edge) Eng.: Gilroy Roberts • Size: 51 mm


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The free, interactive PCGS Set Registry program has revolutionized coin collecting around the world. Established in 2001, the Registry now hosts over 70,000 sets. In addition to every major U.S. coin series, it offers many world coin categories including Australian, British, Canadian, Chinese, Costa Rican, Cuban, French, German, Japanese, Mexican, Panamanian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Russian, South African, Spanish, and Swiss coins.

The PCGS Set Registry gives collectors from all over the world the opportunity to safely show off their PCGS-graded coins in a secure online environment, and compare their collections to some of the greatest ever assembled. Registration for the PCGS Set Registry is free. To learn how you can participate in the program, visit PCGS.com and click on the Set Registry link, or call 800-447-8848.