

# THE WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

## MINUTES FOR THE:

Tuesday August 1, 2023 Meeting.

Meeting called to order at 7:30PM, with 17 WPNS Members present and 10 Guests (the Scout Troop from MLUMC).

Meeting held at the Mount Lebanon United Methodist Church at 3319 West Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh PA 15216

Due to our visit from the Scout Troop we will re-arrange the meeting tonight and hold the presentation first. Mike D. welcomes the Scouts and talks a little about WPNS history – founded 1878. Mike D. will get information regarding the SCOUT MERIT BADGE to the Scout Troop at a later date. Malcolm J. then speaks about the Young Numismatists Program – the YOUNG COLLECTORS CORNER, to be held Saturday August 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:30AM at the David Lawrence Convention Center - to be held the last day of the ANA World Fair of Money Program. Richard J. then addresses the Scouts regarding miscellaneous free items which he brought which might interest them – a few coins, issues of the Clarion, along with pitching a promotion to the Scout Troop to have them join us at the ANA Convention while working as pages.

- 1) **PRESENTATION** – Dick G. then gives an excellent presentation about **P.T. Barnum – the “GREATEST SHOWMAN ON EARTH.” P.T. BARNUM is widely considered to be one of the greatest marketers of ENTERTAINMENT IN HISTORY – He was a genius in sales and marketing and made a great living running his Museums and the Barnum and Bailey Circus.**
  - a. P.T. Barnum was born 1810 and died in 1891. He had a sporadic education, as he clerked in his uncle’s store. P.T. was not a lazy child, he was very active. In 1826 his father died and P.T. goes to live with his uncle. P.T. meets Charity Holub and marries her in 1829. They build a house in Connecticut together in 1830, and P.T. purchases a store and starts a newspaper business. The store is sold and the first of four daughters are born to P.T. and Charity.
  - b. P.T. then starts promoting his museum STATING THAT GEORGE WASHINGTON’S SLAVE WAS WORKING AT HIS MUSEUM AND SHE WAS 160 YEARS OLD. As it turns out she works only one year at the museum then dies at age 80, and not the 160 years which P.T. had spoken about.
  - c. P.T. then buys another museum – the Peel Museum in 1845. Finances are good at this time so he builds a mansion for his family to live in named “IRANISACT”. P.T. meets Jenny Lynn in 1848. Jenny Lynn is the “Taylor Swift” of that time frame and P.T. gets Ms. Lynn to come to America from her native Sweden and

she does 95 concerts while being P.T. Barnum is in charge of the promotion and marketing.

- d. In 1853 P.T. buys a second newspaper and he publishes a book – “The Life of P.T. Barnum.” P.T. now gets “Tom Thumb” – a midget to appear in his shows at his museums. Tom Thumb is only age 4 when P.T. first meets him.
  - e. P.T. then suffers a calamity as his museum burns down during the Civil War period sometime between 1860 and 1865. P.T.’s first wife – Charity Holub dies after 44 years of marriage in 1873. P.T. then remarries – a daughter of one of his friends becomes his second wife.
  - f. Soon after, **P.T. Barnum meets the RINGLING BROTHERS and the BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS HAPPENS.** The great huge elephant – JUMBO, is purchased in Europe by Barnum & Bailey and brought to America. Jumbo is very successful in the Circus shows. Unfortunately, JUMBO gets hit by a train and is killed.
  - g. To wrap up, the QUOTE – **THERE IS A SUCKER BORN EVERY MINUTE – is attributed to P.T. Barnum, but in actuality, a banker named David Hannum from Syracuse NY actually stated the phrase first. To dig deeper into this quote,** the story about “the petrified American Goliath” needs to be told. A surreptitious cigar manufacturer – George Hull sculpted a GIANT from a 10 foot long block of gypsum, then buried it in Cardiff NY, then “discovered” it and put it on display charging admission. Crowds of spectators journeyed from all over the state of New York to see the “petrified American goliath.” Hull’s hoax was hugely successful as most people were convinced it was a petrified man over 300 years old. Banker Hannum purchased the “Cardiff Giant” in 1869 and displayed it for even higher admission fees. This caught the eye of Barnum – and he tried but failed to convince Hannum to sell it. This then motivated Barnum to create his own version of the giant – a simple replica – and claimed it to be the one true giant, asserting that Hannum’s was a hoax. It is alleged that, at this point, Hannum said “there’s a sucker born every minute,” referring to the gullible customers of Barnum’s more successful exhibit. Club Member Stuart S. was the one who brought the story of this quote to WPNS’s attention.
  - h. The presentation ended at approximately 8 PM and the Scout’s then exited the WPNS meeting room and returned to their own meeting room.
- 2) **TREASURER’S REPORT** – Larry H. reports a bank balance at 7-31-2023 of \$2344.22. Check Number 501 is written to MLUMC for Rent in the amount of \$250 and given to Mike D.
  - 3) **COMMITTEE REPORTS** – Nothing to report.
  - 4) **CORRESPONDENCE** – Nothing to report.
  - 5) **OLD BUSINESS** – The ANA World Fair of Money will be held in Pittsburgh next week. The Welcoming Dinner will be at the LeMont Restaurant on Tuesday evening. Exhibits may be set up Monday starting at 7AM thru Tuesday 12 Noon. The ANA Banquet will be

Friday night. Wednesday Night Tom U. will hold a reception from 5:30PM to 7:30PM at the HYP (Harvard-Yale-Princeton) Club next door to the Alcoa Building.

**6) NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. The schedule for the MONTHLY SPEAKERS FOR WPNS for the coming year is passed around.
  - b. We have a possible new member – Ryan S. who owns a Pizza store.
- 7) **SHOW & TELL** – Nothing to report.
- 8) **ADJOURNMENT** – The Meeting is adjourned at 9:05 PM.