



Foreword and preface

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FOREWORD

The Numismatic Association of Australia, Inc. is pleased to publish these papers which were presented at ICOMON held in Melbourne 10-16th October, 1998. ICOMON is a gathering of directors, curators and officials of public numismatic collections, around the world. The Melbourne Conference was the first to be held in Australia.

This is the second special publication of the Association, following on from the *Convict Love Tokens*, which was published in 1998.

These papers cover a wide range of interests in numismatics, and the Association is pleased to have been asked to publish them. We considered that it was more appropriate to publish them in this way, rather than in our regular *Annual Journal*, which would have meant a long delay before some of them could have been printed.

The Numismatic Association of Australia, Inc., was established to publish an annual journal for the members of the principle numismatic societies in each Australian State, and to represent the interests of collectors and numismatists to Government and other appropriate places. We have produced ten *Journals*, which have maintained a high standard of articles. The subjects covered extend over a wide range of numismatic interests, and has now become a regular annual publication.

Membership of any one of the principal State Numismatic Society's, entitles a person to receive the *Journals* as they are published, as part of the membership fees. Anyone can obtain them direct from the Association by direct individual membership, at a cost of A\$20 (overseas A\$25) per calendar year, to:

The Numismatic Association of Australia, Inc.,
Box 1920R, G.P.O.
Melbourne. Victoria. 3001.

You are invited to join your local State Numismatic Society, or direct to the N.A.A.

We trust that you enjoy this, our second special publication.

Maurice B. Keain
President,
Numismatic Association of Australia, Inc.

PREFACE

It is with great pleasure that we present a printed version of the papers given at the ICOMON meetings in Melbourne, Australia. Our members gave talks at no fewer than six ICOMON sessions, five of which were held in Melbourne and the sixth at Sovereign Hill, Ballarat. As one might expect, the speakers at the Ballarat session concentrated on the nature and the power of precious-metal discoveries, especially gold, to challenge and change the course of history through time. Those participating at the remainder of the sessions addressed more general questions, subjects of wider interest to museums, their personnel, and the public they serve.

Contributions from eighteen of our speakers make up the present volume. They fall into four large categories:

- investigation of gold rushes, mining, and the consequences;
- thoughts on museum collections;
- research into a numismatic past; and
- observations concerning relations between museums and their public.

In the first category, Takashi Ohkubo speaks of mining frontiers and their impact on money - with special reference to the Japanese experience. William Bischoff adopts a sweeping approach to gold and its meaning across ten thousand years of human history and prehistory. I also take a fairly general approach to the precious-metal phenomenon, relating the discovery and exploitation of silver and gold to the monetary and banking stories of Latin America, Australia, and the United States since their discovery by Europeans. Trevor Hart concentrates on the story of the ANZ Bank, whose creation and rise were based on the Australian version of the Gold Rush.

We next turn to contributions concerning specific museum collections. Two of our presenters examine museums of a fairly recent establishment, specializing in the monies of a particular country. They stress these institutions' development and philosophy within the wider world of museology. Wang Dan offered a paper informing us of new developments within the China Numismatic Museum in Beijing, while the other, R.A.H. Baharum, tells of the nature and mission of the numismatic collection of the Bank Negara Malaysia Museum. Robert Hoge of the American Numismatic Association adopts a different approach, presenting information about American museums and their collections and research possibilities in a distinctly non-American field, Chinese numismatics.

Our third group of speakers examines various components of the story of numismatics. Roger McNeice tells of the sicca rupee, whose origins in India were belied by its eventual popularity in early Van Diemen's Land - today's Tasmania. Elsa Lizalde Chávez relates the coming of one of the most momentous events in the entire story of money and exchange - the translation of the coinage concept from the Old World to the New. Eddie Butler-Bowdon reminds us that traditional monetary objects may continue to have resonance in a transitional or modern setting, by examining the continuing importance of the bird of paradise in the numismatics of Papua New Guinea.

Hortensia Von Roten tells of the mid-nineteenth-century creation of a new coin (the Swiss franc) for a new nation (the Swiss Confederation).

Our final seven participants examine the role of the museum in the wider world. They focus on an examination of the ways in which museums, including those devoted to money and banking, currently deal with their customers, and how these dealings might be extended and improved. Rafael Feria relates the development of an exciting new concept, one whose potential is enormous, a 'virtual museum' now accessible from the Casa de la Moneda in Madrid. Gareth Williams provides an overview of the British Museum's CD ROM entitled "World of Money" which is written for older children. Marianne Danneel investigates the possibilities of educating the museum-going public about an epochal event in the modern history of Europe - the European Monetary Union. Michael Alram adopts a different approach, discussing the prospects and difficulties in presenting an archaeological site (the Roman city of Carnuntum, near the Austrian-Slovakian border) to a wider public, which may or may not be interested in museums *per se*. His colleague Gunther Dembski speaks of a concern uppermost in the mind of anyone connected with a museum, the safeguarding of its treasures when on display before the public. John Sharples rounds out our roster of presentations with an investigation into the creation of numismatic iconography and the museum's role in recording the current trends such images of nationhood, and images for collector-targeted marketing, produce.

It is our hope that you will find these articles as enjoyable and instructive as those of us did who were fortunate enough to attend the meetings during which they were originally given. These *Proceedings* mark the third consecutive occasion upon which ICOMON papers have seen publication. We intend to continue this practice, for reaching the public through the medium of print is one our primary goals, and a basic obligation.

The participants at the Melbourne Conference would like to thank, The Royal Australian Mint, The Reserve Bank of Australia, Monetarium (Australia) Pty. Ltd., Sovereign Hill Historic Park, the Gold Museum Ballarat, the ANZ Banking Museum and Museum Victoria for their support.

Richard G. Doty
President, ICOMON