

# The GOLD Standard

~ A QUARTERLY JOURNAL THAT COVERS  
NUMISMATICS, BULLION, MARKET CHANGES,  
NEWS AND EDUCATIONAL TOPICS ~

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

- GOLD DISCOVERY IN THE  
PLATTE RIVER 1858 AND THE  
DENVER MINT (CINDY MOHON)
- THE NOT SO ITSY-  
BITSY-ETSY PROBLEM  
(CHRISTOPHER SHANDS)
- NEGLECTED  
NUMISMATICS:  
WWII AND THE  
SHORT SNORTERS  
(ROMAN REECE)
- 2025  
U.S. MINT  
CATALOG  
PREVIEW  
JAN - FEB



# Archangel Coins



# MEET ARCHANGEL COINS



Archangel Coins was founded in 2013 by long time Numismatist Christopher Shands. Our retail store features over 2000 coins on display alongside a selection of currency and antiques. Archangel Coins' staff has a

combined 100+ years of experience in the purchase, sale, authentication and grading of coins, currency and related fields. The store is equipped with some of the most reliable and

counterfeit detection and analytical devices available, including an XRF spectrometer. We are members of the American Numismatic Association, the Certified Coin Exchange, the Las Vegas Numismatic Society, and are PCGS, NGC & CAC authorized dealers. Collectors of all levels are welcome, from the beginner just starting out, to the serious investor seeking out numismatic rarities.

Christopher Shands (owner) began collecting coins at 11 years old. By the time he was 14, he could be found working at local coin shows handling sales and purchases. At 16, he became the youngest board member and officer of the Las Vegas Numismatic Society (LVNS), serving for more than 10 years, and he is now a current member of the coin club's trust committee. In the summers between high school, he began working in a local Las Vegas coin shop, and he would return to work each summer while attending college. In 2008, he received the LVNS' Outstanding Service Award. He personally collects Flowing Hair, Draped Bust, and Capped Bust Coinage.



# Gold Discovery in the Platte River in 1858 and the Denver Mint

**From Placer Mining to Gruber & Co**

***By Cindy Mohon***

It was tough to become wealthy in the 1899's if your background was lower or middle class. Daily necessities

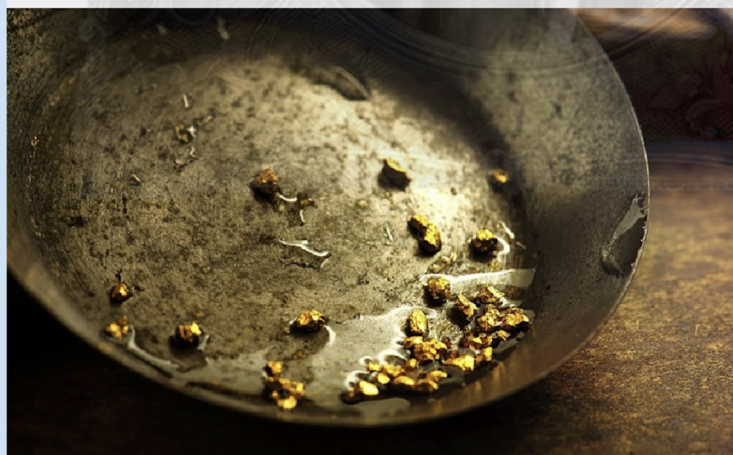


required a regular job and sometimes made advanced education impractical. Avenues to better lives were limited. Today lottery tickets are often the desperate hope of those who are living in conditions they wish to improve. In the 1800's the discovery of gold fired the imaginations of many men aspiring to make their fortunes. The scramble to assemble minimal equipment, acquire transportation and travel to the gold 'fields' came to be known as a "Gold Rush."

One such discovery took place on the Platte River near what is now Denver city in 1858. At the time the area was frontier wilderness and it was two years later (February 28, 1861) that Congress created the Territory of Colorado. Travel hardships and enmity

from the area's Indian tribes increased the risk and difficulty of the journey to the Platte.

The technique used at first was placer mining. Gold





migrated due to water pressure or due to earth movement; and accumulated due to its weight into some kind of backwash area—called a “pocket.” One method of acquiring this gold was to use the gold pan. Another method uses a construction called a “slew” or “launder” (essentially a trough through which river water is routed in order to wash gravel and soil past riffles or matting in order to catch the heavier gold as it settles to the bottom. The gravel and soil would be shoveled into the trough. Another more complicated method was “dredging” which required much more construction and equipment.

The resulting gold was often in a form called ‘gold dust’ and had to be converted into some practical way to use it as money. This was tough because there wasn’t much circulating money in the area. In 1860 to 1862 three firms—Clark, Gruber & Co., John Parsons & Co. and John Conway & Co.—who minted \$5 and \$10 gold pieces.

Congress approved an Act in April 21, 1862 authorizing the establishment of a mint in Denver. \$75,000 was allotted to establish this mint and fund the expenses for it in the fiscal year 1863. It was to mint gold coins exclusively. In June of 1862 a committee was appointed to research and organize the fulfillment of this Act.

It appeared that the purchase of Clark, Gruber & Co. was the most

efficient way to proceed. In November of 1862 an offer of \$25,000 was proffered to the company for the purchase of the building, equipment, supplies and the land. This sale was delayed by a problem of a ‘clouded’ title to the land since no land office had every been established for that district.



The simple fix was for Congress to pass a resolution on March 3, 1863 which stated in part:

“Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the U.S.A. ... That the Secretary of the Treasury ... is hereby, authorized to receive and accept from said Clarke, Gruber and Company such relinquishments; and conveyances of their right and claim to said lots and property as ... the Secretary shall deem sufficient for the extinguishment of any claim, right to said lots and property as ... the Secretary shall deem sufficient for the extinguishment of any claim, right or title which the said Clarke, Gruber and Company may or can have thereto. And said lots and property shall thereafter be reserved from public sale, preemption, or homestead settlement, and shall remain the property of the United States.”



What an extraordinary real estate transaction! The U.S. took title in April 1863; and, after transporting equipment and reconstructing the building, the Denver Mint opened in September 1863.



In the early stages of this mint, it did not mint coins, but melted, refined assayed and stamped bullion which was then returned to the depositors in unparted bars, stamped with the weight and fineness. Staff included a superintendent, assayer, coiner, melter and refiner—although the mint still did not mint coinage.

The placer gold in the Platte River area appeared exhausted by 1867; and the miners turned to lode mining with high percentages of gold and silver. In 1869 Congress provided that the Denver establishment would be designated as and assay office with an assayer in charge. It was decided that the amount of bullion



deposited did not merit its designation of Branch Mint with a full corps of officers. Congress passed an act February 20, 1895, providing again for the establishment of a mint at Denver Colorado for the coinage of gold and silver.

The original site at the old Clarke, Gruber & Co. was considered inadequate; and the old mint assayer's office was sold

by an Act of Congress on June 30, 1906. The funds were applied to the costs of finishing the new mint on property located at West Colfax and Delaware Street.

The new building was occupied in 1904 but the coinage operations did not begin until February 1906.

**“In the early stages of this mint, it did not mint coins, but melted, refined assayed and stamped bullion which was then returned to the depositors in unparted bars, stamped with the weight and fineness.”**





## Denver Mint interesting facts:

### Architectural Style

Gothic Renaissance

### Architect

John Knox Taylor

### Stone Façade Facing

Colorado granite

### Appears as Two Story Building

Appears as 2 stories, actually is 5 stories:  
2 below ground and 3 above

### Above Ground Structure

175 feet x 100 feet- below ground  
extended on both sides

### Sub-Basement

Had boilers, pumps, fuel economizer,  
induced draft apparatus, air compressors  
for well, house water pumps and a  
multitude of other equipment

### Engine Room

Finished in white enameled brick

### Basement

Housed deposit melting room-3 small and  
1 large melting furnaces-plus receiving,  
shipping, carpenter shops, lockers,  
restrooms, pipe and steam fitters room,  
storage rooms and main storage vault

### Main Storage Vault

75 X 20 feet wide with extra heavy door  
and vestibule

### Basement Sweeps Room

Discarded crucibles, furnace brick and  
other material treated and crushed here

### Fireproof Building

Many interior walls, floors and partitions  
are steel, brick and terra cotta

### Wood Used

Wood trim, floors and desk equipment,  
but steel wardrobes, lockers, filing  
cabinets

### Vestibule

Three murals above the cornice-  
Commerce, Mining and Manufacturing  
done by Vincent Adriente under  
supervision of Edwin Howland Blashfield

### Vestibule Floor

Large metal casting of the Great Seal,  
later removed due to wear and hung in the  
Gold Hall

### Metal Great Seal

Replaced with a mosaic

### State of the Art

Many innovations in the minting process  
were utilized in the equipping of the  
construction

### Machine Gun Guard Post

Added many years after opening  
Built high into the vestibule after rumors  
of a proposed gang robbery, never used



A tour of the Denver Mint is an  
amazing treat. If you attend the ANA  
Summer Seminars, the Denver Mint  
tour is offered with a great many other  
classes, social events and activities. I  
recommend it highly if you want to have  
a great time learning more about  
numismatics and meeting some great  
new friends.

Cindy Mohon founded P&M Rare Coins in  
1986. In the late 90's, she and Gloria Peters  
authored *The Complete Guide to Shield and  
Liberty Head Nickels*. This was the most ad-  
vanced reference book published at that time  
on nickels and the 1913 Liberty Head nickel.  
Mohon has had numismatic articles published  
in *Coin World*, *The Centinel* and *Winning Ways*.



# COIN SUPPLIES AVAILABLE IN STORE



**DIGITAL POCKET SCALE**  
**\$15.00**

**ILLUMINATED LOUPE**  
**\$7.00**

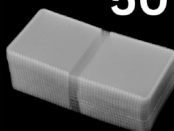


**AIR-TITE COIN CAPSULES**  
**(MOST SIZES AVAILABLE)**  
**\$1 EACH**

**2X2 CARDBOARD FLIPS**  
**\$4.00 PER 100**



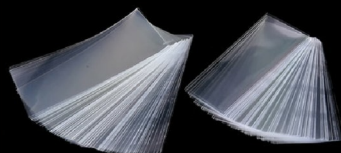
**2X2 NON-PVC**  
**FLIPS**  
**50 FOR \$5**



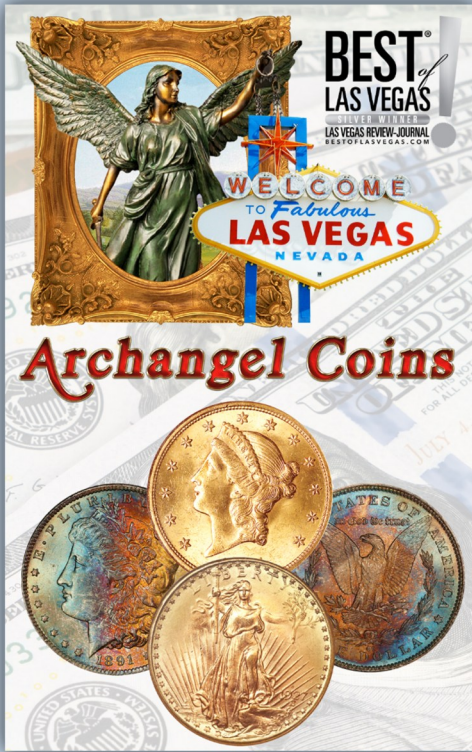
50 2x2 Double Pocket Flips

**50**

**CURRENCY**  
**SLEEVES**  
**3 FOR \$1**



# THE REASON WE ARE DIFFERENT



Archangel Coins is more than just another coin shop. We are a group of friends and family that loves coins, gold, silver, currency, history, and everything else that relates. We'd love for you to join us in experiencing the fun of numismatics, whether you are a collector or an investor. If you happen to be selling, regardless of the reason, we take pride in treating people right. That means paying

the most we can for anything in the fields we handle. We attend many coin shows for the purpose of buying and selling, and we are not afraid to compete. As always, we encourage everyone to get multiple offers. Like we've said before, "Don't accept the first offer, accept the BEST offer."

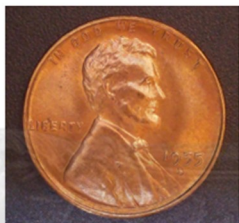


**594 S. DECATUR BLVD LAS VEGAS, NV 89107**  
**MON - SAT | 10AM - 5PM | 702 - 683 - 2196**  
**ARCHANGELCOINS.COM**



# THE NOT SO ITSY-BITSY ETSY PROBLEM

## LIFE IN A COIN STORE BY CHRISTOPHER SHANDS



Rare find

**\$995.50**

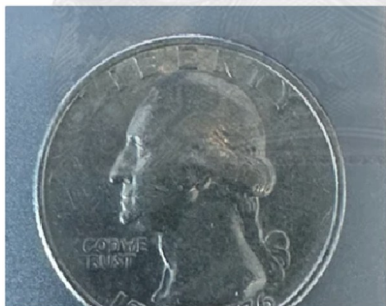
1955-S Lincoln Cent Beautiful Error Coin, Filled in S, Mint Mark, DDO Liberty is doubled, and IN GOD WE Trust has doubling, Red brownish tone

**\*None of the statements made by seller are true, Greysheet bid in MS63 RD is \$1.00**

As a long-time coin collector, dealer, and coin store owner, it is rare that a day goes by without the famous words, "I saw it on the internet for [insert absurd price]." Where does all this wrong information come from? Why does this false information exist? And why do people believe all the lies that are out there?

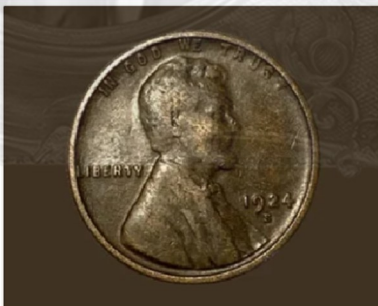
The source of a great deal of this false information appears to be Etsy: a popular but less monitored website for selling items than eBay. Please do not take this as saying I am an

an eBay lover. This is far from the truth. That said, they do have two barriers in place that help prevent people from being scammed. Firstly, there's a requirement that items being listed over a certain amount must be certified by PCGS, NGC, ANACS, or ICG. And secondly, eBay tries to monitor and investigate items that may be counterfeited or altered. However, a quick glance at Etsy's coin category set to "highest price first" shows numerous counterfeits, common coins listed for tens of thousands of dollars, and damaged coins being paraded around as errors. A few examples: a damaged 1978 D penny (claimed to be an error, asking \$50,000), a 1944 steel penny (which clearly displays known diagnostics of a counterfeit (asking \$50,000), and a 1945 wheat cent (that's right, a regular circulated coin that I would sell in my store for only four cents, asking \$50,000).



1776 - 1776 Bicentennial Quarter Dollar no Mint

**\$999.00**



1924 S Wheat Penny

**\$999.00**

**\* Left photo is a common quarter with no additional value**

**\* Right photo is worth \$2.00**

At this point, someone might be wondering why all this false information exists. Well, the answer is simple: since coins have existed, there have been those who are willing to deceive to make a quick buck. Coins were first counterfeited in ancient times. That means that faking & misrepresenting coins for profit is literally an ancient practice. For some reason, people tend to jump headfirst into coin collecting. Often, those who move too fast and do not learn the basics first fall victim to scam artists. Always buy the book before the coin and if an item is expensive, it should be certified by one of five grading services: CAC, PCGS, NGC, ANACS, or ICG (other grading services should be avoided). It is also important to know that CAC, PGCS and NGC are revered as the premier grading services, and that ANACS and ICG are consistently worth less than the other two grading services.



Another source that constantly provides partial or incorrect information is YouTube. Content creators on various platforms may be paid based on the number views that their videos accumulate. If we examine a commonly misrepresented subject, the 1975 no S Roosevelt Dime, we can easily see how a title can affect viewership. Which title would you likely pick? “RARE 1975 DIMES THAT YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR - ERROR DIMES WORTH MONEY, these are rare 1975 dimes you should be looking for in your pocket change”; or “Rare 1975 no S proof Dime discovered, check your 1975 Proof sets”? The first title is misleading as any 1975 dime struck for standard use with no mint mark was made at Philadelphia, which did not use a mintmark, these are commonly found in pocket change. The second title is accurate



but not exciting to the general public because someone who is not familiar with coin terminology would have no idea what a proof set is. We advise people to avoid flashy headlines and stick with videos from PCGS, NGC, and the American Numismatic Association. These sources are renowned for their expertise in numismatics.



If all the above is not bad enough, there are headlines that present themselves on the internet as sponsored content, sometimes from what appear to be reputable news websites, also attempting to drive viewership for the purpose of selling ads to companies based on site traffic.

The most common misinformation in this category seems to be centered around the 1976 Bicentennial coinage. These articles claim that these coins are rare and worth millions of dollars. The most recent one that we have encountered at the time of writing this suggests a value of more than \$50 million. This is entirely false information, as for reference the most expensive coin to ever sell was the 1933 \$20 Saint Gaudens. [Fun Fact: In 1933, all \$20 gold pieces made for the year were supposed to be melted. When a specimen that slipped through the cracks was discovered in 1996, the U.S. Government seized it. A 5-year-long legal battle ensued, and a deal was made to sell the only publicly tradable example at auction. It set the record for the most expensive coin sold ever at \$7.59 million in 2002. In 2021, it sold for \$18.87 million. This coin is likely to be the one of the most famous coins of all time.] In contrast, a bicentennial quarter, half dollar or dollar, of which there are hundreds of millions still in existence, cannot and will never be a rare coin.

Now comes the hardest part of this equation: the attempt of knowledgeable coin experts to explain all of this to someone who just had their hopes of a big payday smashed. It's not that any of us coin dealers want to deliver bad news, but we are unfortunately tasked with debunking all the falsehoods presented on the internet. Coin dealers as a whole try to be polite, but are often accused of just trying to conceal the facts because "You're just trying to buy my coins for less". The reality is that if someone came into my store with an ultra-rarity, we would want to help that person get the item certified, and then want to purchase it or assist the customer in sending it to an auction. The time to become suspicious would be if a coin dealer claimed that an item is worthless, yet still wants to buy it. The old coin collecting mantra of "Buy the book before the coin" comes to mind. But if I may, I'll offer up something that hopefully will become a new mantra, "Buy the book before selling the coins."



**QUARTERLY INVENTORY HIGHLIGHTS**  
**(CALL FOR PRICING) 702 - 683 - 2196**  
**10AM - 5PM | MONDAY - SATURDAY**



**1830**  
**\$2.50 GOLD PIECE**  
**PCGS MS-61**



**1893 - S**  
**MORGAN**  
**SILVER DOLLAR**  
**PCGS VF-35**



**1861**  
**SEATED LIBERTY**  
**HALF DOLLAR**  
**PCGS MS-65**



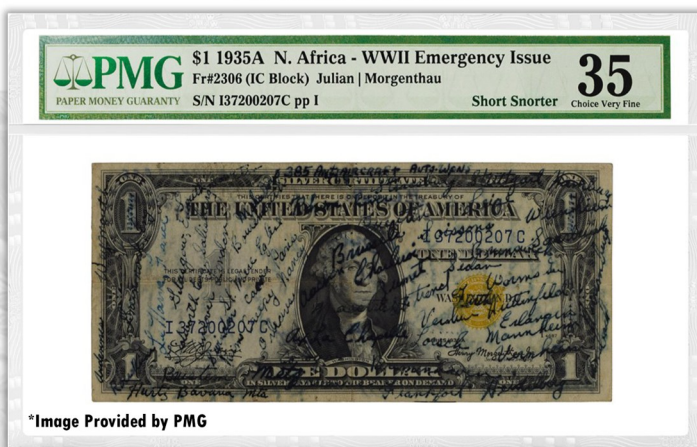
**1891 - CC**  
**MORGAN**  
**SILVER DOLLAR**  
**PCGS MS-65**

**\*COINS SHOWN HERE ARE SUBJECT TO PRIOR SALE**



# NEGLECTED NUMISMATICS: WWII & THE SHORT SNORTER

BY ROMAN REECE



\*Image Provided by PMG

Originally started by Alaskan Bush Pilots in the 1920's, flight crews would sign each other's dollar bills/currency and keep them as a souvenir. This would eventually become a drinking game across the U.S. Military, and these souvenirs were labeled as "Short Snorters." If you were at a bar with your fellow pilots, and one challenged you to produce the "Short Snorter" with their signature on it and you couldn't, you would owe that person a drink.

The term "Short Snorter" refers to a less than full shot of hard liquor. Barkeepers would often pour a smaller amount of liquor in each shot so they can make a little more profit on each bottle. This was, of course, many years before Federal Aviation Regulations, as many pilots would often "Drink and Fly", which led to some pilots meeting nefarious ends. This would eventually become a running joke with pilots, as they also started calling each other "Short Snorters".

During World War II, collecting signatures on a "Short Snorter" note was a popular preoccupation. These notes became a record of members' travels and associations overseas, and it became a social status symbol, boasting the quantity and importance of signatures collected.

Many of the notes that have been collected as "Short Snorters" are on foreign currency, since most service members were traveling overseas in different countries. You can even find signatures on Military Payment Certificates (MPC's) and photographs of other pilots or family.



Generally, pilots or servicemembers that enjoyed this hobby were part of a "Short Snorter Club." Many clubs had different rules and requirements to join, but the most common one is "Any pilot, crewmember, or passenger who has completed a full transoceanic flight is eligible."

After so many missions and flights, a lot of people had issues finding space for more signatures to add to their "Short Snorter." To fix this problem, they would often tape and staple them to the ends of each other and create a "Roll of Short Snorters." The longest roll which was owned by Grover Criswell is over 200 feet long, has between 400-500 notes taped together, and is 15 inches thick.

Some famous generals and politicians are known for signing "Short Snorters," such as President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill, just to name a few. This game would end up helping many veterans get through some of the worst times in American History. The history that "Short Snorters" represent is unique, with no two exactly alike. The different ways to build a collection of these notes are endless!



## 2025 US MINT RELEASE DATES

**Jan 2nd - USMC  
250th Anniversary  
Commemoratives  
50c / \$1 / \$5**

**Jan 7th - American  
Innovation Dollars  
Arkansas**

**Jan 9th - American  
Eagle 1oz Silver  
Proof | 2025  
Congratulations Set**

**Jan 28th - Native  
American Dollars**

**Feb 4th - American  
Woman Quarters  
Ida B. Wells**

**Feb 10th - Benjamin  
Harris Silver Medal**

**Feb 20th - 1st  
Amendment to the  
U.S. Constitution  
Proof Platinum:  
"Right to Petition"**

**Feb 27th - American  
Women Quarters  
Proof Set**

**United States Mint  
products can be viewed  
& purchased at the  
mint's website:  
[USmint.gov](https://www.usmint.gov)**

\* Archangel Coins is not responsible in any way for pricing information, release dates, delivery delays, etc. of U.S. Mint products. This section provides information directly from their website. Please do not contact us about orders you have placed with them, we will be unable to assist you.

\*March release dates were not published as of compilation



# NUMISMATIC EVENT CALENDAR (LAS VEGAS)

## Las Vegas Numismatic Society Meets Every 2nd Saturday of Each Month



Doors Open at 1pm | Meeting Starts at 2pm

Located in the **Diamond Mae**  
**Ballroom in Arizona Charlie's Decatur**  
740 S Decatur Blvd. Las Vegas, NV 89107

**NEW  
LOCATION**

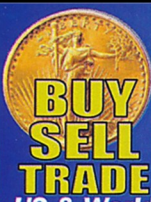
**TUSCANY  
Suites &  
Casino**

EASY ACCESS  
FREE PARKING

**2025  
SCHEDULE**

**Feb 14-16  
July 25-27  
Oct 17-19**

CALL FOR  
SPECIAL HOTEL  
RATES!



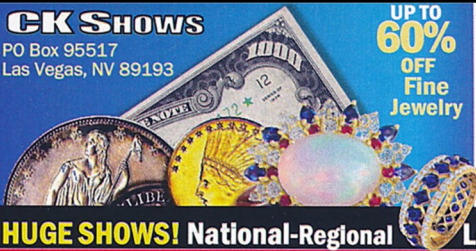
**BUY  
SELL  
TRADE**  
US & World  
Rare Coins  
Paper Money  
**GOLD  
SILVER**  
Diamonds  
Fine Jewelry

On-Site Grading  
Submissions



**CK SHOWS**

PO Box 95517  
Las Vegas, NV 89193



**UP TO  
60%  
OFF  
Fine  
Jewelry**



**SEE US THERE!**

**HUGE SHOWS! National-Regional Local Dealers**

US & World Rare Coins, Paper Money, Ancients, Stamps, Tokens, Jewels

**888-330-5188 + 800-208-1810**  
**@vegascoinshow CKShows.com**

**FREE**

With On-Site  
Registration  
OR This PASS



**↓ OTHER LARGE NATIONAL SHOWS ↓**

**FUTURE LONG  
BEACH EXPO  
DATES**

**February 20-22, 2025**

**June 26-28, 2025**

**October 23-25, 2025**

**AMERICAN  
NUMISMATIC  
ASSOCIATION  
COIN SHOWS**



# Archangel Coins



**VOTED "BEST OF LAS VEGAS"**  
**BY REVIEW JOURNAL READERS**

**594 S. Decatur Blvd Las Vegas, NV 89107**

**Hours: Mon - Sat 10AM - 5PM**

**(702) 683-2196 | [archangelcoins.com](http://archangelcoins.com)**



**Scan to  
visit site**

Archangel Coins is a family owned and operated business with over 75 years of combined experience. You'll find owner Christopher Shands and his uncle Joe Cavallaro, president of the Las Vegas Numismatic Society and recipient of the ANA President Award. They carry a large selection of US, foreign, and ancient coins along with gold and silver bullion. They also have a fine selection of antiques, specializing in vintage photography, Civil War artifacts, Native American items, and other historical memorabilia. The shop is located in the Charleston Heights Shopping Center, near Arizona Charlie's casino. They are very happy to share any information for free.