

# Australian reference gets ninth edition

"The" Book on Australian Coins *The Pocket-Guide to Australian Coins and Banknotes*, ninth edition by Greg McDonald. Greg McDonald Publishing and Numismatics, PO BOX 649, Lavington, NSW 2641, Australia. 2002, \$19.95.

Reviewed by George Manz

When I first started to write for *The Australasian Coin & Banknote Magazine*, I asked John Mulhall, the editor, which was the best book to get to learn more about Australian coins.

He replied there were several he would recommend.

John Mulhall then sent me a complementary copy of *The Pocket Guide to to Australian Coins and Banknotes*, which was autographed by the author.

The 416-page book, which measures 3-7/8 inches by 8-3/16 inches, is McDonald's 14th book in 17 years and is the most complete revision of the standard reference used extensively by Australian collectors and dealers alike.

There are many chapters in the book, beginning with general information on topics such as what determines price?, investing, grading, cleaning, and an excellent glossary of terms used in the book.

But what I found most interesting was the chapter on the first coins used in Australia. The book begins with what are called the Proclamation Coins.

"The British authorities re-

garded the new colony of New South Wales as an outdoor prison, a dumping ground for the seemingly endless queue of convicts that paraded through the draconian legal system of the time," McDonald writes. "All the goods and services required by the band of convicts, guards and administrators that made up the "First Fleet" were to be provided by the Government until the new settlement could become self sufficient. Money was a low priority. However, as convicts gained their freedom after serving their sentences and trading ships brought added luxuries and free settlers looking for a new life, it soon became apparent that some sort of currency was needed. Governor King was to play a decisive part in the future of Australian numismatics when, in 1800, he tried to sort out the economic shambles that threatened the very existence of the colony. What did pass for currency was a hotch-potch of coins from the four corners of the world which traded hands based on their intrinsic value. Naturally no two people could agree exactly on the right value for any given coin. The problem was made worse by the fact that even this meagre supply was continually being syphoned off by visiting traders. Governor King decided to solve both problems with his historic Proclamation of 1800. The proclamation had two

aims. He wanted to give the coins circulating an official value, higher than normal, so that the coins would stay in the colony. The theory was that no trader would want them at their inflated value," McDonald concludes.

And what a eclectic group of coins circulated in Australia 200 years ago. There were gold coins from Great Britain, Portugal, India, and the Netherlands, as well as silver coins from Spain, the Netherlands, India, and Britain. In addition, the coinage included Britain's large one penny Cartwheels struck at Matthew Boulton's Soho Mint in Birmingham. These were all now regulated by Governor King's Proclamation.

The history of Canadian coinage also includes coins from other countries, mainly from France, Great Britain, Portugal, Spain and the United States.

Another interesting coin mentioned in the book is the Holey Dollar and Dump of 1813. These were made from 40,000 Spanish dollars which arrived the previous year. McDonald writes that because these silver Spanish dollars were recognized as an international currency, the new governor, Lachlan Macquarie, soon made the coins unattractive to traders by "punching the centre out of the coin and giving both parts inflated values over and above the intrinsic value of the silver."

By 1829, the silver outer ring and smaller inner plug, called a "Dump," were "recalled and melted down. Less than 300 Holey Dollars are known to ex-

ist and about 1000 Dumps survive. They are both highly prized possessions among collectors," McDonald writes.

As are the very similar Holey Dollars issued almost 200 years ago in Prince Edward Island, long before it entered Canadian Confederation.

The pocketbook also includes chapters on Australia's pre-decimal coinage, which began to be issued in 1910 and 1911. One important feature of the book is a guide on the location of the various mint marks which easily confuse novice collectors. The mint marks are complex and were struck not only from various Australian mints, but also from mints in Great Britain, India and the United States.

While the book includes a short discussion and up-to-date pricing of some of Australia's rarest coins, such as the 1923 halfpenny and the 1930 penny, I found the section on the internment camp tokens of the two world wars fascinating.

Other features of the book include a complete listing of the new decimal coinage, non-circulating legal tender coins, mint and proof coins, and Olympic coins.

More than 100 pages at the back of the book feature every banknote issued in Australia.

All in all, I highly recommend this outstanding book to anyone who collects Australian coins and banknotes.

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## Coins of the new world

More than four centuries of Spanish circulating coins are featured in the new *Standard Catalog of World Coins, Spain, Portugal and the New World*. Written by Chester L. Krause, Clifford Mishler and Colin R. Bruce II, senior editor, this new reference with more than 35,000 price listings is available from Krause Publications.

Coverage includes Argentina, Azores, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Columbia, Cuba, Dominican Republic/Santo Domingo, Central American Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Madeira Islands, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela. This new resource offers a considerable amount of new detail on early Spanish Colonial issues. Pricing has been completely analyzed, reflecting today's market.

This premiere edition offers denomination, Krause-Mishler number, composition and other relevant descriptive information for each listing. More than 10,000 photographs depict the obverse and reverse of each coin type. A two-column format allows collectors to view the images side-by-side with minimal overlapping. Coins are listed beginning with the lowest denomination first. Many new design features appear in this volume, including the denomination appearing with each type to aid the reader in navigating more than 600 pages.

Additional resources help collectors learn more of the hobby, including a history of the colonial coinage of Spanish America and the coinage of the Latin American Republics during independence. The How to Use This Catalog section thoroughly explains all components of a listing. □