



History buff keeps money where his longtime hobby is

By Dave Vargo
staff writer

Not many people would know what to do with a \$10 bill engraved with the name "First National Bank of Birmingham" and a picture of John Sherman on it.

Jack Clemmons of Birmingham does. He would put it with the other bank notes he has collected during 50 years of buying and "horse trading" paper currency.

Clemmons is president of the Birmingham-Bloomfield Coin Club which will hold its 21st annual coin show 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday at the Birmingham Masonic Temple in Bloomfield Hills.

His collection includes about 1,000 bills from various parts of the country and the world. But his specialty is bank notes from different Michigan cities — some rare, some not.

His hobby allows Clemmons to keep up on another favorite pastime.

"I've been a history buff all my life," said the 60-year-old man. "It constituted a majority of my reading."

"WHEN I STARTED collecting these things were 15 to 25 cents. That's the main reason I started collecting them. They were very cheap, and I think they're very historic."

The history he has learned in his experience as a collector could fill a book.

For instance, one bank note from the Clinton Canal Bank in Pontiac is a somewhat rare bill that was drawn against a project that never made it.

The Clinton Canal was supposed to be a water thoroughfare running from Mount Clemens to Kalamazoo in the late 1830s, Clemmons said. The bank was started to finance the project.

But the project "never got off the boards," Clemmons said, because railroad construction was increasing in popularity as a cheaper method of transportation. Also the depression of 1837, which broke many a bank, undermined the potential financial success of the Canal Bank.

AS WITH A limited number of other "broken bank" notes, the Clinton Canal currency was used up by advertisers who would imprint slogans to sell tobacco or advertise their clothing and tailor shops on the essentially worthless bills.

"These bills are usually worth more now," Clemmons said. "At one time they were considered damaged (because of the imprints), and they were thrown away. So, naturally they became more valuable."

Another reason for Clemmons' interest in collecting this currency — largely \$1, \$2, \$3, \$4 and \$5 bills — is the often-beautiful engravings used by state-chartered banks to print currency. (Before 1932, he explained, the federal government did not print currency, but empowered the states to do it.)

Among the popular engravings by local banks was an Indian who appears ornately posed as "Pontiac" on a note from that city's bank. The Indian later appears as "Tecumseh" in an engraving on a currency note from a bank in that Michigan city.

ANOTHER interesting bill shows a train heading down the tracks in the foreground of one bill, with another train heading the opposite way on the same tracks in the background.

Some notes, like his currency from the Bank of Singapore, Mich., come from towns that no longer exist. (Singapore is buried beneath the sand dunes in western Michigan, he said.) That \$2 note, which he said is probably his most valuable, is probably worth about \$50, he said.

Other notes, like those from the Bank of Royal Oak and the Bank of Niles, are extremely rare. It would be a collector's dream to come across one, but Clemmons said it's that unreachable goal that keeps him going.

"That's the one thing. The possibility of completing a collection (of all Michigan city notes) is really remote. So you're always searching. And it's not like you can just go out and buy a complete set," he said.

About that Birmingham currency, Clemmons said a dealer came to one coin show asking \$1,500 for the \$50 bill dated 1910. Clemmons said he thought the price exorbitant so he would not pay it.

That's OK. "Most collectors would much rather trade than buy or sell," Clemmons said.

SUNDAY'S SHOW will occupy the entire floor space of the Masonic Temple, 357 N. Woodward about a quarter mile north of Quorton.

About 27 dealers from Michigan, neighboring states and Canada are expected to participate. Many specialties will be represented.

According to club officials, the show has a multiple purpose. It presents an opportunity for the dealers to get together and at the same time, the general public may learn about and view rare coins while the collectors buy, sell and barter.

There is a great interest in all gold and silver coins, both U.S. and foreign, according to the club. Gold bullion coins, Kruggerands, pesos, maple leaves and others will be available for purchase.

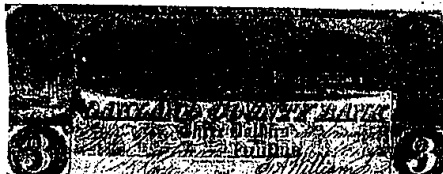
Also available will be uncirculated silver dollars, paper money and all kinds and types of numismatic material for the collector.

Washington Commemorative half dollars, both proof and uncirculated will be available.



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Jack Clemmons of Birmingham has about 1,000 bills of paper currency in 50 years of collecting. He's president of the Birmingham-Bloomfield Coin Club which is advertising a show this week-
end.



Jack Clemmons' collection of currency from defunct banks includes two from the Oakland County Bank of Pontiac. Both \$3 bills, above and upper left, show harbor scenes of this landlocked community.

memory lane

MEMORIES, MEMORIES... have you got the memories. And we'd like to share them with you. Using local newspaper files, we're dishing up generous slices of life from the Farmington community from 40, 30, 20 and 10 years ago.

FEB. 1, 1945 —

JOHN W. HUNT, who lived on Oakland in Farmington, was re-elected Council Scout Commissioner for the sixth straight year at the annual meeting of the Clinton Valley Council, Boy Scouts of America.

"THE GALS ARE spending considerable time in front of the mirror these days in order to be 'fascinating' for furloughs," or else our predictions are a good deal further off than we think they are," said an item in the Around the Block column on the front page of the Farmington Enterprise. "The reason is very obvious for no one can miss all the handsome G.I. boys and the men of the Navy now about town. Some of the faces we've been missing for a long, long while are back, and brother it's good to see you."

SAID ANOTHER Around the Block item: "Cupid in a jeep may sound a bit far fetched but Cupid is going to be doing a lot of queer antics this year in order to deliver those Valentines to the many remote places on this globe."

SHORT ITEM: "The girls bowling team of Hutton's Farmington Hardware spent a most enjoyable weekend at Grand Rapids where they participated in the Michigan State Bowling Tournament. "Averil Green, a member of the Hutton team, placed in second position in the doubles, and in third position in the singles."

CLASSIFIED AD: "WANTED — Riders to Willow Run, No. 3 shift. Redford 7034-R11." Another classified: "WANTED: Ironings to do. \$60 per hour. 20201 Anglin Rd. Call 1270."

FEB. 3, 1955 —

BAD WEATHER halted construction on all three new elementary schools in the Farmington School District. A lack of steel because of a strike also slowed construction.

TRAFFIC AT Grand River Avenue and Power Road was snarled because of a break in a water main. Officials said the break was in an old four-inch main that runs underneath the center of Grand River from Power to Brookdale.

CANDIDATES FOR Farmington Township Clerk in the Feb. 21 primary election were incumbent

Harry McCracken, a farmer; Floyd A. Cairns, a trucking company owner; Edward J. Jarvis, a pattern maker for the Hudson Motor Car Co.; and Robert H. Ridgway, a real estate agent and building contractor.

CLASSIFIED AD: "FOUND — The right man for Supervisor, Farmington Township — Fred Menke."

ITEM IN THE Springbrook Area Briefs, written by Mrs. Howard Legg, "Mrs. Marie Taylor of 25280 Westmoreland has had a time trying to talk for the past few days. Her voice refused to cooperate."

"SOONER OR later," read an advertisement for Conroy's Market and Food Lockers at 23534 Farmington Road, "it had to happen! With this shanty beln' run by a liddle named Conroy who is as Irish as Paddy's pig — how could he resist when he came out with 'Shamrock' coffee. Sure and begorra we got it! When you can get a pound of it for 79¢ one would almost think they'd kissed the Blarney Stone 'cause they're so lucky — don't you think."

FEB. 3, 1965 —

THE FARMINGTON Post Office handled a record number of mail during the Christmas holidays. In the 15 days preceding Christmas, 2 1/2 million pieces of mail — 5 percent more than during the previous year's rush — passed through the post office.

A NAME CHANGE was accomplished by a local human relations group. At a Jan. 28 meeting at the Farmington Universalist-Unitarian Church, Farmington Citizens for Better Human Relations became the Farmington Human Relations Council. Guest speaker at the meeting was Robert Tindal, executive secretary of the Detroit Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

"OAKLAND COMMUNITY College will open its Farmington Township branch in the fall of 1966," said an article in the Farmington Observer. "Its campus will be completed exactly a year later at a cost of 10 million dollars."

"When the campus is completed in September 1967, it will have a total enrollment of 4,500 students. In September 1966, it will already handle approximately 2,000 students."

Current plans call for a core of buildings to be opened on the 147-acre site on the corner of Orchard Lake Rd. and I-696."

JAN. 30, 1975 —

ANNA JANETTE DOLAN, known to most of her

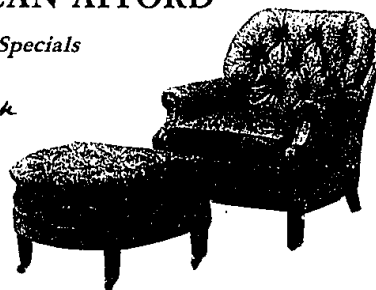
Please turn to Page 8

CHOOSE THE STYLE YOU WANT AT A PRICE YOU CAN AFFORD

Here are the Genuine Leather Specials priced to suit your budget
On Sale Now at *Stewart-Glenn*

Choose the style you want and relax in luxurious comfort with a genuine leather chair from the fabulous Hancock & Moore leather collection. These are truly hand-crafted pieces from the 8-way hand tied springs to the hand driven solid brass nail head trim.

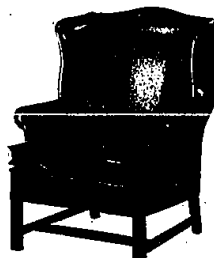
Available in any of their 33 Glazed or Glove Soft Top Grain leather colors. You'll love the comfort, style and quality — and you won't believe the price. But hurry, this sale ends February 28.



RICHMOND CHAIR & OTTOMAN
Reg. \$1392 SALE \$849



QUEEN ANNE WING CHAIR
Reg. \$1044 SALE \$599



RALEIGH WING CHAIR
Reg. \$1212 SALE \$699

Fine Furniture Since 1917

Stewart-Glenn
2600 N. WOODWARD AVENUE
Just South of Square Lake Rd.

BLOOMFIELD HILLS

Phone 332-8348