

COINSWEEKLY

XV INC TAORMINA

Special Issue



The Perfect Press Release

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Cari colleghi e amici Numismatici,

quando nel 1967 la mia maestra, la prof. Sebastiana Consolo Langher, entrò nell'aula universitaria e ci annunciò di aver vinto la cattedra di Numismatica greca e romana, ero ancora una studentessa. Non sapevo di cattedre ma la sua gioia lasciò in me una profonda impressione. La Consolo Langher partecipò al primo concorso a cattedra di Numismatica che credo si sia mai tenuto. Insieme a lei vinsero Laura Breglia e Attilio Stazio, che andarono a ricoprire le cattedre di Roma e di Napoli.

Da quel giorno ha avuto inizio un lungo percorso di studio e di approfondimento della Numismatica nell'Università di Messina, che oggi ci dà la gioia di potere accogliere tutti Voi per condividere un sogno.

La moneta è stata da sempre strumento di giustizia sociale e vettore di cultura, mezzo di scambio e di comunicazione. Essa testimonia relazioni e reciproche influenze, scelte politiche e processi di autolegittimazione. Tra tutte queste funzioni la più straordinaria credo sia quella di aver messo in relazione i popoli fra di loro, con reciproco vantaggio e contribuendo a creare il senso dell'identità e dell'appartenenza.

Con la speranza che i nostri studi contribuiscano a valorizzare la moneta come strumento in grado di ricreare una storia comune e condivisa, saluto tutti e vi ringrazio per la vostra partecipazione, in attesa di presto incontrarvi a Taormina.

Maria Caltabiano Caccamo



Künker Auction Sale 203
Russian Empire, Nikolaus I., 1825 – 1855.
1½ Rouble (10 Zlotych) 1835, St. Petersburg.
Family Rouble.
Estimate: € 150,000. Hammer price: € 650,000.



Künker Auction Sale 239
Wallenstein. Albrecht, 1623 – 1634, Duke of Friedland.
10 Ducats 1631, Jičín.
Estimate: 150,000 €. Hammer price: 180,000 €.



Künker Auction Sale 180
China. Hsuan Tung, 1908 – 1911, Dollar n. d. (1911),
Tientsin. Pattern with GIORGI.
Estimate: € 10,000. Hammer price: € 460,000.

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The INC President's Welcome

Welcome to Taormina and to the XVth International Numismatic Congress! As you know this is one of the most important events in our field both from a scholarly point of view but just as much because of the unique opportunity to meet so many colleagues in person and to establish long lasting relationships. The Congress takes place every six years in a country of one of our member institutions. The last one in Italy happened in Rome in 1961. So we are delighted and immensely grateful to the University of Messina and the Organizing Committee to host us all in their beautiful island where in a way western coinage was born and where die engraving reached its highest artistic level.

The INC first founded in 1927 includes according to our constitution public numismatic collections, universities, non-commercial numismatic organizations, institutions and societies (local, national and international), and mints from all over the world. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all you to join: we still have very few mints as members, very few members from Asia and South America. In the present economy the membership fee may seem a burden. I can assure you, however, that the largest proportion of our funds goes towards grants for young budding numismatists. We have been very careful with our finances and we were able to offer fifty travel grants of 750 Euros to come to Taormina. The INC operates as an umbrella organization to foster communication and contacts but we can only operate efficiently with your cooperation and support.

I won't be able to meet you all in person but reach out to as many people in all branches of our disciplines to whom you had never spoken before. Enjoy the program of talks, our receptions and our excursions. The INC and the IAPN are also

organizing a Round Table to discuss the future of numismatics in the 21st century and to make young people aware of the multiple, rewarding professional possibilities that the study and passion of coins can open.

This is also my farewell as President: by the time you read this Special Issue of Coins Weekly, a new Committee and a new President will be in place. I wish to thank you for the opportunity you gave me to serve you and the numismatic community. We have worked hard and I am proud of our accomplishments: a new E-Newsletter that appears now twice a year with Swiss punctuality and gives you all the news about exhibitions, teaching, new publications, and personalia, whatever you want: just send your news to our wonderful editors. Our new website has been launched in an attractive and user's friendly version and it will help you connect with numismatists and coin lovers all over the world. We have extended our membership though not far enough yet to other continents to call ourselves truly international. Our finances are solid.

The next Congress will take place in Warsaw, Poland in 2021 and we can all look forward to that.



Carmen Arnold-Biucchi
Damarete Curator of Ancient Coins
Harvard Art Museums
Outgoing INC President

CoinsWeekly looks forward to Taormina

I love the International Numismatic Congresses organized by the International Numismatic Council! I have been one of the party in Berlin, in Madrid, in Glasgow. And I will attend every upcoming congress as long as I am able to walk!

For me, there is no better chance to meet old friends and make new ones. It is almost like a family celebration because relationships between numismatists last for many decades.

In a family, you likewise talk about worries. I hear about young, promising researchers who grow old until they finally get a permanent job. I hear about positions that are axed due to lack of funds, and about problems museum people have in trying to bring the entertainment value of a numismatic exhibition home to their own boss.

Things have become difficult. Being a good numismatist simply is not enough anymore. We constantly have to sell both ourselves and our discipline, doing things we have never been trained for. And this is what this Special Issue of CoinsWeekly is about, giving some information about things we never have talked about at university. How to write the perfect press release? How to establish a professional network? What are the alternatives to a job at university or in a museum?

To give you something funny as well, Claire Franklin contributes with a selection of her best numismatic cartoons.

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www.coinsweekly.com

And I have to admit: this issue has a special purpose, at least for us. We want to demonstrate to you that CoinsWeekly is useful for every numismatist. Therefore, do not hesitate to subscribe to the free CoinsWeekly Newsletter! And if you like it, bring it to your colleagues' and friends' attention! We are only as good as our readers. The more readers we have, the more advertising we can acquire, hence the more colorful CoinsWeekly will get!

We see ourselves as a bridge connecting all those who are interested in numismatics. Scholars, museum curators, coin dealers, coin collectors, mints, and many, many more! Read us regularly and, above all, use us as a platform! Send us your (perfect) press release and reach more than 30,000 readers from 120 countries every month.



Yours
Ursula Kampmann

The perfect press release

Public-relations specialists make flower arrangements of the facts, placing them so the wilted and less attractive petals are hidden by sturdy blooms.

Alan Harrington

by Ursula Kampmann and Björn Schöpe
translated by Teresa Teklic

Writing the perfect press release could be so easy. All it takes is a few basic rules. And still, at CoinsWeekly we receive sorry efforts, which repel rather than attract the reader, week after week. Not only is this counterproductive but also unfortunate for the simple reason that writing a good press release does not take any more time than writing a bad one. Before you start, you should simply keep in mind a few things.

General framework

Journalists are by definition always pressed for time. Which means you should make their work easier, not harder, if you want to see your press release published. While journalists of general news media and the daily press usually take the time to rephrase press releases (which, due to a lack of expertise regarding the subject, is not always advantageous), it is common practice to publish press releases true to original in popular numismatic media. Once pu-

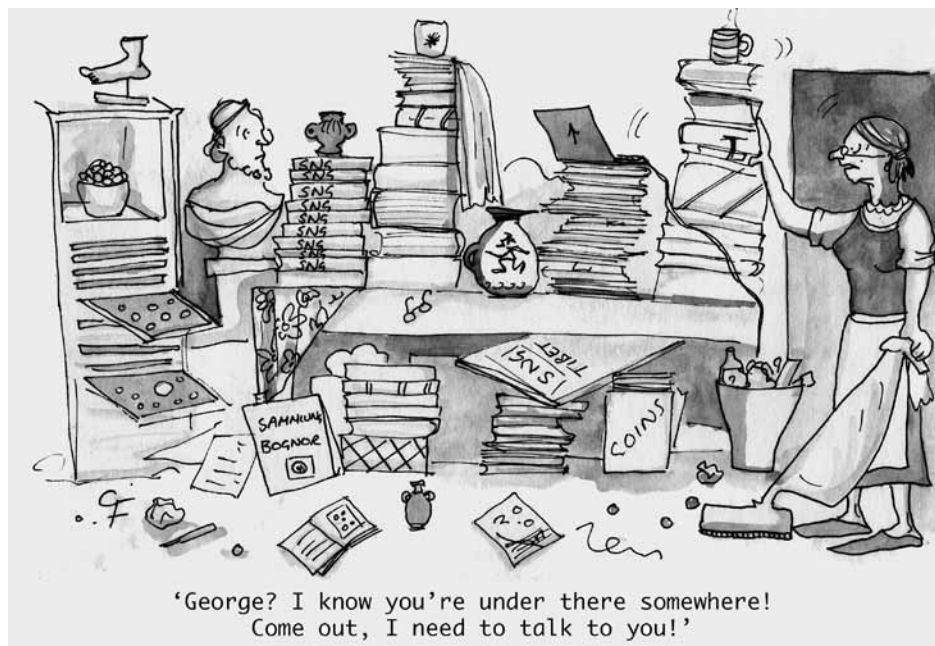
blished, they compete for the readers' attention with numerous other texts. Unfortunately readers, much like journalists, also suffer from one of the great evils of our time: not having enough time. That means you need to not only attract but also hold the reader's attention. The most captivating headline will not do you much good if the article itself is so boring that the reader decides it is not worth his time after the first paragraph.

Content: Be short and concise, and leave out unnecessary details

More than a page and a half for a press release? Forget it. Not even the most bored pensioner will bear with you until the end of the article. One and a half pages are the maximum. Better still, make it one. If you think there is no way you can break down your 10-page text to just a page, remember the Six Ws: Who? What? When? Where? How? and most importantly Why? There is

a reason why they are so ubiquitously quoted. Use these questions to make your way through the jungle of information, separating the essential from the unnecessary by selecting details only if they help answer the questions. Let's face it, no one cares who will be at-

time reading it. I am sure there are good reasons but you need to name them. If you are promoting a new exhibition, tell your reader what makes the exhibition so exciting and which fascinating objects he will get to see. Who the people behind the exhibition are may be



tending a congress (perhaps apart from those mentioned by name), and which attractions will be admired during the Ladies' Programme. What really interests the observer is the question how this congress differs from other congresses. What was the main focus and how is it relevant to the broader public? What were the results of the debates? You have written a book? Great. Now explain to your reader in 10 sentences tops why he should spend his precious

important for the self-esteem of those people but hardly for potential visitors.

Target audience: Too simple is better than too complicated

A decisive factor for the success of a text is the question how carefully it is graded according to the target audience. Why not quickly send the text you put in the in-house newsletter to Coins-Weekly? Two reasons. First of all, print and internet are fundamentally different

media. Second, all readers in the company know what you are talking about anyway whereas the average reader of CoinsWeekly, despite his assumed general interest in numismatics, is not necessarily a specialist in your field.

Always keep in mind your target audience when writing a text. What does your average reader know? What is he interested in especially? Which points require clarification? Better under- than overestimate your reader's previous knowledge. I have been crisscrossing all fields of knowledge for years now and am still taken by surprise every time I realise how little knowledge even leading authorities display as soon as the talk is of a field other than their own. And remember that you do not want to write the text exclusively for people who are in the know already.

One little trick I have personally come to rely on is reading every text I write to my deceased mother. Her speciality was apple strudel. The only thing she knew about numismatics was that her daughter studied this subject with the weird name. That makes her an ideal first reader, though imaginary, thanks to whom I realise where I have gotten lost in the labyrinth of specialist terminology. Using her as a concrete example made me see much more easily which parts would be hard to grasp.

So read your text through the eyes of an outsider or, better yet, give it to a representative of this species. Make him feel that you will take his criticism

well. And you will be surprised how many questions will pop up.

Medium: Each has its own language

That a newspaper article is written in a fundamentally different way than a three-minute radio feature seems obvious enough. Still the average provider of press releases continues to err in the assumption that the internet is no different from the ubiquitous print media. In reality, the attention span of this medium is considerably shorter and long sentences are harder to read on the screen.

On the other hand, the internet offers new possibilities. While your average magazine reader will hardly jump up from his seat and hasten to the computer to call up a website, internet users will be happy to click on provided links in order to access extra information.

Authors who want to work time-efficiently write a text that works for both media right from the start. That means simple language (see below), many paragraphs (to keep the eye better focused on the screen), and, for print, a short paragraph with the most important general information. Online versions can do without such a paragraph and correspondingly substitute it with the most important links as well as a brief comment informing the reader what to find under the respective web address.

Language: Not a matter of style

How many times in my role as editor have I dealt with huffish authors, who

felt that my corrections were mutilating their “style”. Saying what you want to say in simple words, however, is not a question of style, it is a question of respect for the reader.

Flowery phrases and a plethora of foreign words can easily create the impression in the unknowing layman that he is too stupid to understand this scientific text. Only that this form of scholarly vanity is entirely misplaced in a press release whose aim it is to reach and interest precisely this layman.

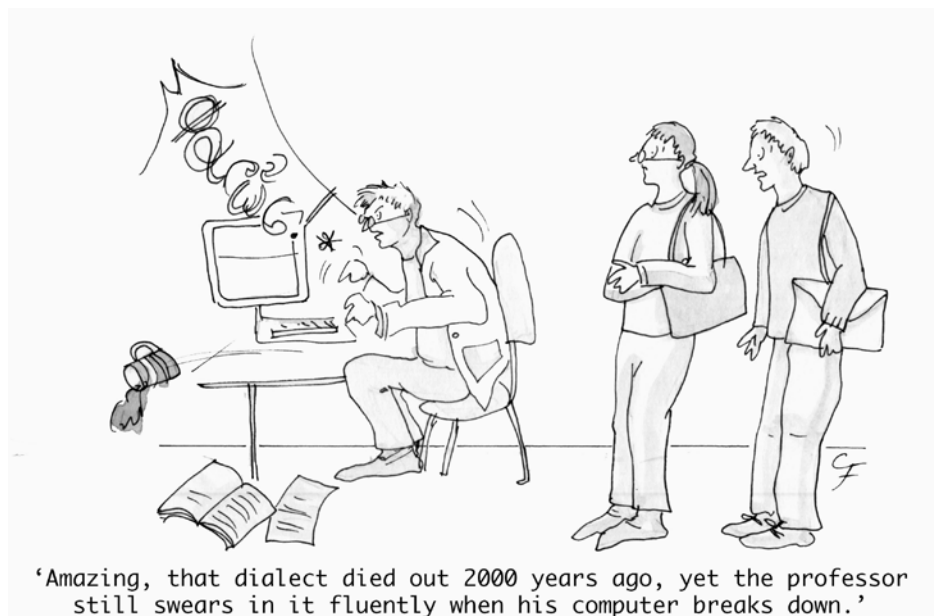
So ban all loanwords from your vocabulary! Make short, concise sentences

Finally, ask your imaginary first reader once more for his opinion and you should be fine.

The headline: Funny but not lurid

Coming up with a good headline is an art form as the headline plays a considerable role in deciding if the reader will read the contribution or not. So please avoid something like “The 598th congress of the xy society” but choose something that will arouse the reader’s curiosity.

Let’s take CoinsWeekly’s news 1 from July 2, 2015. It was about a Sotheby’s



with one subordinate clause at most! Go through your text paragraph for paragraph to ensure there are no jumps or discontinuities in the fabric!

auktion sale in which 21 works of influential pop-art artists were sold for an estimated 64 to 89 million. What all pieces had in common was that they refe-

renced the dollar in one way or another. Of course we could have written “Sotheby’s auctions off 21 artworks which depict the dollar” or “The dollar in pop-art – a Sotheby’s auction”. We went with “Dollars, dollars, dollars – but not for your purse!” Other options could have been “Expensive decoration: Dollars on the wall” or “Warhol’s first dollar at Sotheby’s – estimated at 28 million”.

Coming up with a good headline is not easy. The headline should pick out what is spectacular and exciting about your article and condense it into a single line. You can even play around with it a little if you have the time. But do not go overboard with your creativity. Especially too lurid headlines can often be more miss than hit. And that would once again be counterproductive.

The composition: clearly structured wins

Do you remember what they taught us in elementary school? Every composition is made up of an introduction, a main body, and a conclusion. Essentially the same also holds true for any press release.

The introduction should state the main facts and therewith answer the first four W-questions: Who? What? When? Where?

The main body deals with the How? and Why? This part of the text leaves room for interesting details, but only as long as they answer either of the two questions.

The final part should not only provide some sort of conclusion but also the necessary information to help the reader do what it is you want him to do.

In other words, if you are promoting a book, you should include a reference stating the price and where to get it at the end of your article. If you are promoting an exhibition, include details such as opening hours, address, ticket prices, and duration of the exhibition.

The right picture says more than 1,000 words

Sometimes you still see press releases which resemble epic ink battles, texts without even one little picture. Those texts stand little chances of ever being read. Nothing which otherwise runs danger of being drowned in a flood of letters cannot be made more attractive with the right illustration.

And if you do send us pictures, please spare yourself and us shots of local politicians at a gallery opening/ a congress/ a book release party. Such images are great for local rags but not for an international audience. Someone reading about an exhibition, for example, wants to know what the exhibition looks like and what rare or special objects are on display.

For book reviews remember a scan of the front cover as well as one or two shots of representative pages in the book.

A congress is great for pretty group pictures. A recent trend in the US is to show participants in action: everyone is



‘These child-emperors! I showed him the prototype for the new coin – and he promptly swallowed it!’

running, jumping, or doing something to avoid just standing there. Granted, that is not everyone’s cup of tea.

Instead you may also consider a shot of the conference hall or single out an important moment of the conference.

I still want to make a case for the old-fashioned group picture, against an interesting background if you will. Not only is it an ideal picture for a press release but also a nice memory of a successful conference.

The right in-house contact

A good press release should always let the editor know which person to contact in case of further inquiries. This should quite obviously not be the colleague who is currently on vacation,

nor the colleague who only works one day a week due to his 20% part-time job. (Sadly it is not always that obvious.)

The right timing

Let me briefly say something about the right timing for the press release. The text should of course be released in a timely manner, not half a year after the event happened. Nobody will care about it then. Nevertheless, you can also be clever and profit from the fact that numismatic publishing, just like the daily press, has a well-known slack season. Numismatic magazines generally do not publish many auction previews in the December edition right before Christmas as well as

in their June and July editions. Which means other news articles get a better chance at publication.

When we are talking about print media, you should expect that editing and printing will take an additional six weeks, generally speaking. So if you want to publish a piece in the March edition, you should have handed it in by January 15 at the latest.

The right press contact

The database in which you save editors who might be interested in your press release is an integral part of press work. So note down the names, email addresses and phone numbers of such people carefully. A press release that reaches the right person is much more likely to be published than one coming in to the editorial department at random.

So much about the content. In what follows, my colleague Björn Schöpe summarises the technical Do's and Don'ts for you.

Now that you have written the perfect press release, the only remaining question is how to perfectly “prepare” your text for distribution.

Make it functional, not pretty!

I love a good layout, for press releases and elsewhere. Generally speaking. Unfortunately, I have to substitute your beautiful layout with our boring Coins-Weekly layout. That means above all work for me, sometimes more, sometimes less.

The one thing I hate most is museum brochures in fancy, multi-column-layout and PDF. The only thing this means is that the text will be an utter mess after you have exported it. That data mess is a lot of work. If it were up to me, every museum brochure would end up in my electronic recycle bin just as quickly as the glossy brochure in its real counterpart ...

If you do not want to tempt the editor to chuck something, keep it simple! Use as little formatting as possible! Logos, images, mixed fonts, fixed frames and other gimmicks offered by modern software – all nonsense.

The editor is interested in the content and content only, not in the layout. Consequently, he prefers a text with as little formatting as possible so that he does not need to spend hours reformatting it.

A press release should not give you the creeps. (Just thinking about what they may have sent me this time, the sight of certain names in my mailbox gives me goose bumps...) Save your editor work and your piece will get published almost certainly.

Images: Boon or bane?

Never embed images in PDF or word documents because they have to be extracted again afterwards. Which means you lose time and often quality.

Always send images as JPG or TIFF. Print publications require 300 dpi if you have the original. That is also sufficient for online publications. If you

want to enlarge a coin, just send a high-resolution file.

Think of the poor editors who cannot tell a bracteate from a US coin. If you are attaching a larger number of images, either name the files unambiguously or include a PDF with images and corresponding captions. That, however, only serves as an additional guideline. The actual images still need to be added individually as JPG or TIFF.

Always keep in mind copyright and name authors if necessary.

So that is done and the ready material right in front of us! Now we just need to get the information to the “distributors”, our contacts in the media who will in turn publish the material. Or at least we hope so.

Post, mail, or telegram?

To send or not to send, that is not the question here. But how to get your material from A to B? Forget about printed press kits. No editor wants to type up your texts, he needs everything digitally. How to transfer your content to the editorial departments? Apart from the CD-ROM via airmail, there is of course the option of email attachments.

Whether you prefer sending a circular to a list of 1,500 subscribers or personalising individual emails is up to you. Though the personalised version may be more likely to be well received. Major institutions like the Royal Mint of course prefer circular emails. But! But! 1st but: If you are using circulars, make sure that not all receivers can see who



‘In 1903 Professor Dr Binningen-Witterswil lost the only known example of a 12th century Argovian double-horned pfennig in a book somewhere in this library.’

else also got this email. Every email software provides a function called blind carbon copy, short BCC. Disclosing all your contacts is not exactly an indication of professionalism.

2nd but: This goes for large companies all the same: No matter how little time you have got, reread your email once more before hitting “send”. You will simply not make a good impression if you have to send a second, corrective email just five minutes later. So before you click the button, make sure that the attachments are complete and the information is correct.

Do not stop here but keep checking with the responsible contact that everything is in order: check the dates, ask if this or that image really satisfies his expectations, etc. Even more so if you are “only sending” the material.

My personal recommendation for emails is: keep it short but not too short. After reading it the receiver must be able to tell what the point of your email is and whether he is interested in the attached text. But please, do not just copy the entire press release into the email (yes, that happens!) because a different language, operating system, or mailing software can easily interfere with the formatting and make a huge mess of your text, which is painful to reverse.

And by the way, it cannot hurt to ask for a quick feedback if and when an article on the matter will be published. Especially when you are maintaining good relations with your contacts, it should not be a problem to get this feedback.

Now to the attachment. You can attach smaller files but abstain from doing the same with larger images. Nothing is more annoying than waiting several minutes to download a 15 MB email that you are not even interested in. No, wait a second, it is even more annoying when the same email that you have just deleted appears again on a second account. But that is a different story.

Quick recap: brief email with the key points, in the attachment our previously created word file, if you want to you can also add PDF(s). So far, so good. I know what you are going to say next: But I have all those great pictures! What do I do with them?

Graphic material: You don't mind just 1 MB more, do you?

Congratulations! You have great pictures! That is guaranteed to make (almost) every editorial department happy, especially those in digital media, which can integrate graphic material much more easily than print media.

My recommendation: Anything bigger than 1 MB can be transferred in more elegant ways than email attachments.

First of all, you need to decide whether you want to allow your contact direct access to the graphic material or control the access by only granting it upon request. There are good reasons for both options. If the matter is urgent, I urge you to choose option one. Especially when you are dealing with different time zones, things can become

very stressful for everyone involved. Larger institutions provide press material on their own FTP server. Good solutions for smaller companies can be Hightail or WeTransfer. You upload files from your company server (the software is free of charge up to several GB) and

the email addresses that you have entered receive a link that enables them to download the complete package.

If you send out your perfect press release as described above, you will make your editors perfectly happy. Promise.

Do's and Don'ts for the perfect press release

<i>How long</i>	1–2 pages
<i>Content</i>	Whatever you want, but not too many details! Think of the following questions: Who? What? When? Where? How? Why?
<i>Style</i>	Short sentences, clear structure, no professional terminology Adjust the press release to your audience Adjust the press release to the medium
<i>Headline</i>	Funny, but not lurid
<i>Picture</i>	No unknown local politician! Choose subject-related images
<i>Forwarding</i>	By e-mail Directly to the person responsible Text not formatted, but as simple as possible in a word file Images as jpg and tiff – not as pdf Don't include images in the text Don't send large amounts of data; better prepare a link for download via WeTransfer, your FTP server or Dropbox
<i>Afterwards</i>	Be available for requests

And don't forget:
Send us your perfect press release
at info@muenzenwoche.de

Franklin's World

Philologist and numismatist Dr. Claire Franklin is the gifted cartoonist of CoinsWeekly whose funny cartoons give insights in her numismatic daily routine. A selection of them is distributed in this printed issue.

Be careful, her cartoons are dangerously addictive. If you want to see more, subscribe to the weekly newsletter of CoinsWeekly for free. Claire Franklin's fantasy is so rich that she is drawing one cartoon each week for our issues.

By the way, in our archive you can see all the cartoons Claire Franklin has made during the last years. It's a good therapy, when numismatic life seems

to get too hard. (After one application only, you might be able to laugh at yourself!)



‘It’s a new energy system developed in Syracuse.’



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Round Table on numismatic career choices

What do you actually do as a numismatist or a coin dealer? Can you live on that? Is there enough work for you to do? I have been asked those questions a few times myself. After having satisfied initial curiosity, the next questions are raised: how did you end up being a numismatist or a coin dealer, and how did you become one of those two?

As for me, it was a happy coincidence when a neighbor of mine was not only a coin dealer but needed somebody to assist her. So, as a pupil, I began identifying coins and doing everything that task required. Hence, my professional path was marked out at an early stage, and I found myself in the coin trade, after having taken my A-levels and doing an apprenticeship – that was 35 years ago.

In all these years, however, I have come to know other numismatic “careers” as well. Many people choose studying History or Classical Archaeology at some point. When they realize that they enjoy coins they specialize in numismatics then. After graduating from university, though, they find that is not that easy to get a job with that kind of education. Frequently they take what is on offer,

and, as often happens, daily routine unveils whether or not they really take pleasure in their work.

We, and I, think that this is a pity, because the numismatic training is so varied and, as a matter of fact, there is something available for every talent. The easiest way to get access to a business is to establish contact as early as possible and to learn the ropes – to intern at different employers. Due to their education, many students focus on university or the museum too much and thus overlook the fact that they have other options elsewhere.

Apart from a career as an academic, the so-called private economy sector keeps offering job opportunities as well. The coin trade constantly looks for new, skilled numismatists for the various areas of work. The spectrum ranges from writing catalogues to caring for customers, and an academic background is often much appreciated. To me, every day is exciting – I face new challenges, I travel a lot, I constantly get to know new and interesting people, I often hold the most magnificent coins in my hands, what more do you want?

Another area that offers a whole bunch of new possibilities is the dissemination of knowledge to collectors. That range covers working as a traditional journalist for a numismatic journal as well as collaborating with exhibition architects for specific museum projects.

As I said, there are many options and opportunities, yet you have to take advantage of them. That is why we, the IAPN – International Association of Professional Numismatists – together with the INC – International Numismatic Council –, have initiated a platform which addresses the many different possibilities you have when being trained in numismatics. We have asked insiders from every numismatic area to tell us something about their daily business routine, what natural abilities and what kind of previous knowledge are required.

We would like to thank Carmen Arnold-Biucchi, President of the International Numismatic Council, for co-ope-

rating with us and for promoting the project with many ideas and personal effort. Thanks also to Maria Caccamo-Caltabiano who likewise contributed to making this event possible in the first place.

And, of course, we likewise thank all those who are introducing their profession here. They are all volunteers, who came here at their own expense since they consider it important to elaborate on the options our young numismatic talents have to shape their own future.

Numismatics is a fascinating subject, and it makes history come alive. Whether you work as a museum curator, a university professor, a dealer or a specialized journalist, though, is really not that important at the end of the day.

Arne Kirsch
President of the
International Association of
Professional Numismatists
Sincona / Zurich

Job profile: Professor of Islamic Numismatics

Job opportunities: It is never easy to become Assistant-professor (or “Researcher” as it’s called in Italy), and even less so to be a University Professor, as the competition is great – but that’s no reason not to try, and I am the proof that hard work can pay. My field, Islamic numismatics, is especially problematic because there are very few chairs, and the colleagues that hold them are relatively young.

Job location: Europe (especially England and Germany); Middle East; Russia; United-States

Earning opportunities: Numismatics belongs to humanities, and this will define your salary-range, which can vary greatly between countries. It will usually start below \$25,000 p.a. (before tax), and is unlikely to reach \$100,000 by the time you retire: academic jobs are not to be chosen for financial reasons – especially if you consider the long preliminary studies.

Field of activity: Your subject of research, within the vast areas covered by “Islamic numismatics”, will be of your own choice. But your students, at MA and PhD levels, will have to be taught a more general vision of the field.

Indispensable character traits: Passion for learning and research; accuracy and sen-

se of responsibility; love for history and objects; ability to communicate.

Absolute no-no’s: Believing those who say: “knowing 250 words of Arabic is sufficient to read coins”. In order to go further than cataloging common coins, you must have a solid linguistic and philological base, as well as a deep knowledge of regional history. Academic research on Islamic numismatics requires working with varied written sources such as printed edition of ancient texts, manuscripts, epigraphs, etc.

Occupational career: After learning Arabic at university and finishing your masters-degree, you should apply to become a PhD-student (within a Department of Oriental Studies), with a thesis devoted to a numismatic subject. Hopefully, you will afterwards obtain a post-doc contract, and then a position at university.

First step: Look for universities that offer a proper curriculum in Oriental studies (comprehending: languages, history, art history, and ideally numismatics too)

I love my job because: Researching is a way to expand your knowledge and to improve the perception of what you are studying; teaching is sharing what you know and give birth to curiosity.

I hate my job because: You are deprived of precious research-time by ever-increasing bureaucratic tasks.

Arianna D'Ottone
Associate Professor of
Arabic Language and Literature
Sapienza – University of Rome



Job profile: Museum curator coin cabinet/ numismatics

Job opportunities: established posts in major museums and coin cabinets, often also temporary posts as assistant or trainee as well as for exhibition or research projects in collaboration with universities etc.

Job location: museum offices

Earning opportunities: in major museums and in the major international coin cabinets regular posts with 50–100 % contracts; in all other museums considered to be just a minor part of the collections and integrated as part of a post as historian, art historian or archaeologist.

Today there is the tendency to consider

coins and medals as minor and less attractive parts of the collections so that particularly in general museums and with the boom of temporary exhibitions the importance of numismatics tends to be reduced.

Field of activity: depending on the collection, very often the whole range of numismatics, from ancient Greek to modern coins, as well as medals, paper money, until the latest hunting society pin; only in major international collections specialized fields like just ancient, medieval and modern coins or medals

Indispensable character traits: open-minded, with the ability to interact with different disciplines within and without the house; pragmatism; patience with colleagues of “superior” disciplines, administration, contractors and collectors; absolute security with texts and languages; pleasure in interacting with others and communicating the importance and “messages” of the objects

Absolute no-nos: self-referential research; conflicts of interest with trade, collecting and detectorists

Occupational career: Often the career starts with a post as (general) museum trainee or assistant, alternatively also by working for an exhibition or research project in collaboration with a museum. Obtaining one of the few (and still fewer) permanent posts as curator is

not only a matter of competence in numismatics, but also of chance, i.e. that you have just the right specialization or combination with non-numismatic museum experience for the up-coming post. For this it is very practical being competent also in other and more popular museum disciplines.

First step: For getting one of the already relatively rare posts as general museum trainee or assistant it is helpful to be already in contact with museums and having collected some experience as a volunteer or as student doing your practice. Naturally, your academic specialization and thesis should also fit.

I love my job because: There is such a wealth of historically significant and unexplored material you can dispose of, make accessible and communicate in creative ways.

I hate my job because: It is rather annoying to be obliged to convince always everybody again and again that numismatics really matter and can contribute so much for any kind of subject.

Michael Matzke
Curator Coin Cabinet, CH-Basel

Job profile: Specialist in numismatic auction and dealing house (Classical Numismatic Group)

Job opportunities: I am employed. Many in the business are self employed or part time.

Job location: I am based for the most part in our London office. Occasionally I am in the US office. I frequently travel to attend trade shows, conventions and auctions.

Earning opportunities: I receive a salary and a performance related bonus.

Field of activity: Purchasing coins for resale. Taking consignments of coins for auction. Advising clients on their collections and representing them at auction. Attribution and cataloguing of coins. Assisting with auction and fixed price catalogue production. Make valuations and appraisals for individuals, estates and institutions.

Indispensable character traits: Love of coins, numismatics and the business. An eye for quality and a feel for value. Desire to learn. Discretion. Good people skills. Some understanding of the collector mentality also very useful.

Absolute no-no's: Not doing your homework when you've got something good. Assuming you know more than the collector and forgetting that the client is always king.

Occupational career: No academic qualifications are required to enter the coin business. Although the coin business is relatively small in terms of numbers of people involved and total value there are many different opportunities for developing a career. You can become a specialist or general cataloguer, an auctioneer or dealer or a combination of all three. This can be done working for an established company or creating your own one. I would recommend focusing on building specialist knowledge in a series you enjoy the rest should follow though there is no fixed career path. It is up to you to shape your career.

First step: Many start off as collectors and become involved in the business that way. A good start is internship in an established dealership/ auction house. Alternatively helping out an independent dealer. It is essential to handle as many coins as possible as this give you a feel for range and quality. Viewing public and private collections is very important. Read whatever you can find on the subject especially old sale catalogues but beware much of what is on the internet only scrapes the surface. Join a local or national numismatic society and try and attend meetings where you can meet collectors and dealers. Attend coin fairs. It is a small world and a friendly one.

I love my job because: The coin business is a wonderful business. One never knows what will turn up next and one never stops learning. In this business the more you learn the more you can earn.

David Guest
Specialist,
Classical Numismatic Group, Inc,
London, UK

I hate my job because: Hate is far too strong a word however too many weekends are spent at coin shows!



Job profile: Specialized Journalist for Numismatics

Job opportunities: freelance for the most part; employees are extremely rare

Job location: home office for the most part, hence anywhere

Earning opportunities: that depends
The income largely depends on how much and how effectively you work. In Germany, the usual payment for a typeset page in A4, including photographs, is 60 euros. In the US, the work is often paid by the word, with a rate of 10 to 20 cent. Hourly rates for commissioned work are open to negotiation.

Field of activity: virtually unlimited
Writing articles for journals, press releases for companies, editing popular numismatic journals and academic books, writing texts for websites, collaborating with museums...
Commissioners include publishers, coin dealers, mints, private clients, museums...

Indispensable character traits: insatiable curiosity; ability to write in a simple but not oversimplifying style; absolute reliability; pleasant manners and pleasure in interacting with others; willingness to put the client's needs before your own ego

Absolute no-no's: strive for perfection, stay-at-homes

Occupational career: This is a kind of occupation you can already start during university, as a side job. The bigger your network of clients the more contracts you can land. Those with talent acquire more orders than they can deal with and thus mark-up the price.

Be in no doubt about it – this is a self-employed profession that requires economic thinking and great willingness to take risks!

First step: Look at suitable commercial journals and identify what kind of articles they publish. Work out one or two suggestions for possible contributions. Make sure to contact the editor in advance – firstly, to ask him whether or not your idea has a decent chance of getting published, and, secondly, to discuss the kind of the contribution, its length and technical specifications.

I love my job because: I cannot think of anything more varied. You are constantly facing new tasks, new people, new topics, new technologies, and you can enhance your own knowledge.

I hate my job because: For a journalist there are deadlines around every corner. You are constantly under deadline pressure.

Ursula Kampmann
Freelance journalist, Lörrach

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Out of the ivory tower – and into the social network

When it comes to landing jobs, nothing is more important than an extensive, well-functioning network. But how to build one? Especially at the very beginning of your career?

by Ursula Kampmann
translated by Teresa Teklic

Networking is the magic key – every coach will tell you that. Managers often spend several days and a lot of money on learning how to best build your own social network. Those less well-off do not necessarily have to go without one. They just have to follow seven steps.

Why network?

You could be the next Einstein but as long as nobody knows your name no one will ever know about your talent. A network can be thought of as a kind of register based on reciprocity, a mental list of people to ask for help or favours and who, in return, will ask you for help should they require it. A network is a community of like-minded or nearly like-minded who together are able to achieve more for the community, and thereby for every individual, than alone. Let's be honest: nobody is good at everything. Consequently, not every job, every task that is being offered to you

will correspond precisely to both your abilities and expectations. A good network will always include someone who is just the person you are looking for. Ideally you will become an intermediary between two members of your own network. How you profit from this? By binding two members of the network to you who will surely return the favour one day.

Step one: Selecting co-networkers

As a rule of thumb, you should attempt to know as many people as possible from as many different areas as possible. The emphasis here is not on “as many people as possible” but on “from as many different areas as possible”. The most common networking mistake is establishing relations exclusively with people from your own field. Integrating a large number of professional fields related to the own profession is much more desirable. The acade-

mic is better off also knowing dealers, curators of museums, journalists, and perhaps even IT-specialists, window dressers and mechanics. The more diverse the network, the greater are its advantages.

Step two: Finding co-networkers

The reason why networks are often one-sided is that certain groups tend to stay among themselves. Scientific colloquiums are usually attended by scientists only. If you want to find other people, you need to look in other places. Where, that remains to be seen. How? Well, simply by asking. Or surfing the net. Just remember to be proactive because social networks do not build themselves. You have to do something for it.

Numismatists should remember the following basic rules: Go to congresses to meet academics and curators of museums. To coin shows for collectors and dealers. Exhibition openings are a good place to meet the local who's who. A special feature of the numismatic field are the clubs and societies which regularly organise events. They usually offer a decent mix of dealers, collectors, academics, and curators.

Step three – and this is when it becomes difficult: How to talk to strangers

Let's be honest: Deep down we are all shy. I hate entering a room full of people and not knowing a single person. Suddenly, standing in a corner seems like a very good idea.



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So never attend these events alone. You hear that an acquaintance is going to an event where you believe you could meet a lot of interesting people? Ask him if you can accompany him. And when he meets someone there, ask him to introduce you. Or be brave and introduce yourself.

If you have to go alone, at least take a look at the list of participants. Simply knowing that someone you know will be there can be reassuring. And if you do spot a familiar face in the crowd of strangers, approach your acquaintance, talk to him, but do not occupy him completely. After all, you want to meet new people, right? Do not block yourself and your partner by facing each other directly during the conversation but imagine a circle and try to stand

next to him on that circle's perimeter so that other people desperately searching for a familiar face can join you.

And should you really end up all alone, asking yourself why the hell you put yourself through this, remember that there is always an easy way to get in contact with others. Just ask someone something. It does not matter what you ask. But it does matter who you ask. Pick someone who looks friendly and also somewhat lost. He will most likely be so relieved to finally have someone to talk to that a conversation will develop easily.

Step four: Possible shortcuts

For extremely shy party guests, there is yet another way out. New acquaintances are best made in the kitchen. This



is no different in the reality of everyday working life. Friendly acquaintances are most likely to happen where the least spectacular, organisational work is being done. So say yes when you are asked to help with the organisation of an event. Become involved in the editing process of a magazine. You will be surprised to see how quickly the number of people with whom you regularly exchange mails grows.

Step five: Be memorable

We all meet tons of nice people every day. The real difficulty here is not just keeping in touch but deepening the relation. Having your own business cards is an indispensable prerequisite. Making an appearance at an event without any is unprofessional, full stop. So do not forget to hand your new potential network contact your business card and make sure to get his as well, otherwise you will not be able to start phase two after the initial contact: making a lasting impression.

The more you have found out about your new acquaintance the better you know now how to help him out. You were talking about a specific article? Send him the bibliography. You hear of an event that could interest your business contact? Send him an email. You happen to be in town where the other works? Ask him whether he would like to meet up.

Just like any other friendship, a network thrives only when people stay in touch – by email, phone or meeting up in per-

son. Be sure to keep in touch, otherwise you will lose your new contacts quickly.

Step six: Realistic expectations

Do not expect that participating in just one event will suffice to build a strong network. Far from it. Networks are built over decades. In the beginning, you can be glad to take home three to five new contacts from a multi-day event.

Step seven: A thorough follow-up

Some people have a photographic memory. The rest of us will have to sit down and do a proper follow-up for every event. That includes a well-kept register with email address and phone number but also the date you met as well as a few keywords about the person. Think of things you talked about, a laugh you shared, whatever sticks in your mind.

Before your next event, you will go through the list of participants and make a mental note of who you have met before. And believe me, it will work small miracles for you when your conversation partner notices how well you remember your last encounter.

Building an efficient network is a time-consuming project that takes skills to be mastered if you want to be successful. In order to advance your professional career, your network is at least as important as your subject-specific expertise. Unfortunately, much more time is usually spent on developing this expertise than is spent on developing a network that would enable you to best market your skills.

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