A Brief History of Wooden Nickels

A Presentation by
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The First Wooden Money

On December 5, 1931, the Citizen's Bank of Tenino, Washington failed and created a shortage of money. This left the merchants of the area unable to get change without traveling about 30 miles over mountainous roads in automobiles ill suited to that purpose, on roads that were built for horses and mules to traverse. The average round trip was about four hours. A meeting of the Chamber of Commerce resulted in the local newspaper printing up the first issue of wooden money in the United States.
The First Wooden Coins

In 1933, Blaine, Washington issued round wooden coins when their bank failed. These were the first issues of wooden money in the U.S.

Several other places, mostly in the Pacific North-West, issued wooden money after that.
The Growth of Wooden Money

• The Century of Progress in Chicago in 1933 was the first place to use wooden money pieces as souvenirs. Several issues were made - all round. Some are the size of a silver dollar and others are about three inches in diameter.

• In 1934 a new use for wooden nickels was found - a combination of advertising for civic celebrations and providing souvenirs of the celebration. Binghamton NY was one of first places to embrace this concept. Wood continued to be used to enhance civic celebrations such as centennials through the mid 1930’s.

• In 1938 when the J. R. Rogers Company of Fostoria, Ohio obtained a copyright on their design for wooden money. While the Rogers Company had competition and the competition also issued wooden money, woods produced for Rogers continue to be the most readily found.
Scouting Wooden Nickels
Financial Institutions Woods

- Xchange National Bank
- American Express
- Financial Advisors
- 600 N.W. 5th
- P.O. Box 6309
- Moore, OK 73153
- 794-5311

- Bank of Petaluma
- Series 1
- Series 2
- 7999
- 2000

- Moola Bit

- FDIC Federal Credit Union
- Call Clark Blackwell Bank of Canton
- 770-926-6166

- The Bank of New Mexico
- Member FDIC

- The Havana National Bank
- 1875-2000
Wooden Flats
Supersized Wooden Coins

These 3" wooden coins are shown with a normal 1.5" wooden nickel.
Canadian Wooden Money

• There are also quite a few other forms of wooden money produced in Canada. Among them are the Spruce Dollar of Prince George, B.C. with about 150 different issues, approximately 86mm in diameter. The extra large Maritime Dimes are about 140mm in diameter. The thin wood veneer or balsa wood flats are issued mainly for Christmas, and come in various sizes.

• In Canada, there are over 5500 different woods listed in catalogues and supplements, with more every day.

• The Canadian Association of Wooden Money Collectors is located in Newmarket, Ontario.
Celebration!
The King
Fast and Casual Food
Healthy Food
Thirst Quenchers
Election-Related
Holiday Greetings
Really Super-Sized!

This 2002 wooden nickel at the San Antonio, TX, Wooden Nickel Museum is 13 feet 4 inches in diameter and 5.5 inches thick, made from 6x6 lumber, and weighs about 2,500 pounds, enough wood to make about 400,000 standard Wooden Nickels.