

Organised by the Historical Medallion Society for Saturday 10th July, the seventh holding of this annual event was a welcome return following its postponement in June 2020. It was held at the M40 J15 Warwick hotel (ex- Hilton). This writer was informed by its management that following a refurbishment, this hotel will soon be rebranded as part of the Marriott chain. Our allowed maximum attendance of thirty was achieved. Those present were able to comply with the wearing of masks when in locomotion, and social distancing when seated. Everything was manageable and without fuss.

A programme of nine talks had been arranged by the organisers, John Cumbers and Andrew Wager. Philip Attwood opened the proceedings when he spoke about 'Three Medal Collectors', who have bequeathed their collections to the British Museum. Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode went for quality and artistic merit, Sara Sophia Banks collected cheap, contemporary and disposable medals, tokens and passes, in essence she was a social scientist of her day. Edward Hawkins concentrated on pieces portraying political history. Neil Beaton's talk, 'Smeaton's Lighthouses: tokens or historical medals?' opened a general theme which was to develop during the day, this was around: 'just what is a medal?'. He showed a medallic token, a Private token issue and a worker's Freedom from the Press Gang pass.

After the morning break, Peter Clayton delivered 'Remember Nelson: Commemorative medals and medallions of Horatio Viscount Lord Nelson'. A number of the pieces showed known dates, and others dates the reason for which is not currently known. Peter Glews gave us 'Thomason's Medallic Parthenon Frieze: an update'. This contribution was Part 3 following on from his previous talks on the Elgin Marbles pieces. He has carried out much research on the main catalogues published to date, by Brown, Eimer and Fearon. There are differences here between them over the number of listed as against actually struck pieces, and the reverses, both with and without a legend. Peter has now identified 48 struck in white metal, and 49 in copper. He announced that he needs more information on the illustrations of the Elgin Marbles medallions, and to contact him at peter.glews@gmail.com with any information that the reader might have. John Cumbers' contribution, 'The Minchinhampton National Schools Prize Medal' related the establishment of the National Schools in 1811, which charged a small Quarterly fee, and the issuance of named award medals. In 1833 the State became involved, and from the 1870s they were taken over by School Boards.

After lunch, Alan Cope spoke on his favourite County, 'A Tour around Nottinghamshire in medals – Part 2'. His talk covered Nottingham, Newark, Retford and Mansfield. Alan posed to us the question: 'Were some of the pieces medallic tokens or medallets?'. Andrew Wager next also posed to the audience a question in the title of his talk 'Are engraved coins tokens or medals?' He admitted to being a collector for about half a century, and to being undecided at times about what to collect (haven't we all been there?). We were informed of his byways into different numismatic collecting fields, but now related his fascination (finally?) for engraved coins. The speaker told us how they were used and the main types identified today – memento mori, love tokens, and 'one-offs'. At the conclusion of his talk, the speaker answered his own title question: 'both, and neither'. Gary Oddie spoke about 'Admiral George Brydges Rodney'. He showed some medallions, tokens and checks, and 'Rodney for Ever' inscribed laudatory pieces. This 18th century British sailor was a very great naval commander, he saw action against French and Spanish fleets in the Atlantic and Caribbean throughout his long and illustrious career.

After the tea break, Frances Simmons presented 'Keepsakes, keep safe – medals as amulets'. She described her contribution as 'The Twilight Zone', amulets as talismans, as protection against

sickness or evil, as touch pieces, the representation of belonging to a religion, faith or secret society, etc., masonic pennies.

The business of the AGM was next conducted, and the existing management was elected 'nem con'. It was agreed that the Society amend its name from 'The Historical Medallion Society' to The Historical Medal Society, this is to accord with the title of its publication, the 'Historical Medal Journal', and which, we were informed, was now becoming an international success. It was also announced that the planned establishment of a website was currently on hold, it was nascent, but it would undergo development when we were able to return to more 'normal' times. Philip Attwood, retiring Keeper of Coins & Medals at the British Museum, graciously accepted the Society's nomination of him as the Society's Honorary President.

Following the evening meal, which was served to us at table, a large room, to allow for social distancing, was provided for the six stallholders at the Bourse.

All of those who attended this Congress were given a copy of the 'Historical Medal Journal Number 3', dated July 2021. Worldwide distribution has reached one hundred. It is a fat sixty-four pages worth, and we were informed that this is probably the maximum thickness for a stapled publication sized A5. The journal contains ten articles. Judging from past experience, this writer feels that copies (for sale) will probably be available in the Autumn at Token Congress. In any case, for contact, one of its Editors is the same as for the TCSB herein.

These Historical Medal Society Congresses can stand on their own, they provide a good complement to the Token Congress. All types of congresses are important for meeting up, and, especially in today's digital world, for escaping the parallel realities of the internet. Our thanks must go to everyone involved in either organising, running or attending this yet another successful Congress.

Anthony Gilbert