

**Awards Issued  
by  
The Medal Collectors of America**

The **Carl Carlson Award**, named for a true pioneer in the field of researching medals, is awarded to individuals who have made major long term contributions.

**Recipients**

1999	John W. Adams
2000	Joe Levine
2001	Bob Julian
2002	Christopher Eimer
2003	Tony Terranova
2004	George Fuld
2005	David Menchell
2006	Michael Hodder
2007	David T. Alexander
2008	Hank Spangenberger
2009	Stephen K. Scher
2010	Mashiko
2011	Scott Miller
2012	D. Wayne Johnson
2013	Warren Baker
2014	Tony Lopez

The **Georgia Stamm Chamberlain Award**, named for a writer known for exploring uncharted waters, is awarded to promising newcomers in the field of researching medals.

**Recipients**

2004	Vicken Yegparian
2005	John Kraljevich
2006	Max Spiegel
2007	Leonard Augsburger
2008	Tony Lopez
2009	Anne Bentley
2010	Skyler Liechty
2011	Wayne Homren
2012	(none)
2013	Larry Baber
2014	Ruth Britt

**For more details on the lives and contributions of Carl Carlson and Georgia Stamm Chamberlain, see below.**

## **MCA NAMED AWARDS: CARLSON AND CHAMBERLAIN**

**By David Thomason Alexander**

Time marches on, and we are sometimes reminded of this reality in our numismatic pursuits. Recently an MCA officer who was not born when Franklin D. Roosevelt was President reminded me of the truth of this adage by observing that he was not really familiar with the careers of Carl W.A. Carlson and Georgia Stamm Chamberlain, for whom our MCA awards are named.

Our first award was named for Carlson in recognition of his decades of in-depth research in ancient, U.S. Colonial and early Federal coinage and his significant pioneer efforts to promote medal research and raise the overall level of medal cataloging in U.S. numismatic auctions.

I knew Carl from 1974 until his retirement in the early 1990's. He was a remarkable man, proud of his academic achievements, his membership in MENSA and of his family, which included his musically talented wife Pat and his three remarkable daughters Valerie, Melinda and Larissa.

Carl occasionally talked about his own family. His father was a colonel in the U.S. Army during World War II and the family moved frequently as a result. When in the mood, Carl would describe a family tradition which asserted that his grandfather had been a natural son of King Carl XV of Sweden.

A unique strain of humor also ran in the family. On one occasion, his father was guiding a visiting Scottish officer around Washington, D.C. and took him to see a baseball game. The Scot asked why the crowd was loudly cheering one player and Col. Carlson explained, "Why, that man has three balls on him." The overseas visitor leaped to his feet and yelled to the player, "Three balls!! Walk proudly, mon!!"

Carl graduated from Vermont's Middlebury College in 1963 and received his Master's degree in Classics from the University of Illinois in 1965 before going on to advanced study on the Ph.D. level at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In 1965-68 he served with the U.S. Army Security Agency as a cryptographer.

His numismatic career included four years as curator of the Garrett Family Collection at The Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in Baltimore, 1972-1976. This vast collection had been assembled by three generations of the Garrett family and was later presented to the university and sumptuously situated in elegant Evergreen House. Citing security concerns in an increasingly crime-ridden world, JHU began liquidating the collection in an epic series of auctions, the first including rare U.S. gold, conducted by the New York firm of Stack's. The bulk of the U.S. holdings were sold in four sales conducted by Bowers and Ruddy of California.

Carl began work in the commercial sphere at the rapidly expanding firm of Paramount International in Englewood, Ohio, 1976-1977. Paramount had little use for a numismatic scholar and Carl's unique sense of humor accompanied him. He spooked the firm's treasurer by walking up to the man at an office Christmas party holding a large snifter of brandy, gazing down into the swirling fluid to intone, "I see your future in a glass, darkly!"

In 1978 he joined the newly organized Numismatic and Antiquarian Service of America (NASCA) as Director of Research. This firm was heavily influenced by veteran dealer John J. Ford Jr. and was based on Ford's experiences with New Netherlands and strove to set a new standard in preparation, description and handling of consignments.

Here Carl launched his concept of "research cataloging" that provided in-depth descriptions of such items as medals that were traditionally given short shrift by established firms. Among great sales that showed what the new firm could accomplish was the classic Kessler-Spangenberger Sale of April, 1981, that was especially rich in Washingtoniana, U.S. Mint and American historical medals.

He later joined other past NASCA staffers at Herbert I. Melnick Inc. (HIM), and after Melnick's death, joined Stack's in Manhattan where he served until ill health forced his retirement in 1992.

A tireless researcher, Carl was unceasingly generous in assisting other writers and catalogers such as R.W. Julian, who labored to create the great *Medals of the United States Mint, the First Century*. He was the initial co-author of *the American Numismatic Association Centennial History* and was appointed ANA historian. This had once been a significant ANA office but, by Carl's time and that of his successors Michael J. Hodder and David T. Alexander, Historian dwindled to a meaningless honorary title.

He had assembled an extensive roster of publications, including the ANA's journal *The Numismatist*, the Society for Ancient Numismatics' *SAN Journal*, and the Token and Medal Society's *TAMS Journal*. He played an active role at the Numismatic Literary Guild writers' competitions and was in demand as a convention speaker on such subjects as numismatic auctions, rare coin pedigrees and numismatic photography.

His years at Stack's were highlighted by innumerable historic auctions including the John L. Roper, Floyd T. Starr, Richard Picker, Herman Halperin, Herbert M. Oechsner and James A. Stack collections to name but a few. By 1992, however, his health had begun to fail. Harvey, Norman and Larry Stack were remarkably supportive.

Carl's friends had long been aware of his devotion to Dionysus, God of Wine, but neurologists found that under the love for ardent spirits, a very fast-moving Alzheimer's-like dementia had begun to ravage Carl's system. By 1993 it had incapacitated him completely, and death came at a hospice in Lee, Massachusetts, on Feb. 12, 2002, ending a career that included many great achievements and final disappointment.

The career of Georgia Stamm Chamberlain was far less public, but her role in setting the stage for the rebirth of serious interest in the medal should never be forgotten. She was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Feb. 16, 1910 and died in Alexandria, Virginia, on Dec. 12, 1961. She was educated at Smith College in 1930-1932 and at Columbia University after 1932.

Following a long line of distinguished artists she also studied at New York City's Art Students League.

She married Robert Stoner Chamberlain in October 1941 and the couple had one son. She was a practicing sculptor with a primary interest in portraiture. She also excelled as a researcher, seeking material in the National Archives after finding that there were few secondary sources in print in the 1930-1950 era of the overall field of the American medal.

After her death and burial in Greenlawn Cemetery in Uniontown, Stark County., Ohio, her husband sought out and brought together 25 of her published articles in a memorial volume, *American Medals and Medalists*, printed by Turnpike Press, Annandale, Virginia, in 1965. Their titles give an idea of the range and depth of her interests at a time when few readers knew who Salathiel Ellis, Moritz Furst, Ferdinand Petrich or Charles Cushing Wright might have been.

The articles were grouped in four divisions, the first titled "Essays on American Medalists," which included "American Medals," published in *Hobbies Magazine*, Sept. 1950; "Medal Revival Boon to the Art of Sculpture," *Coin World* Sept. 29, 1961; "Medals Commemorative of American Heroes and History, U.S. Mint Philadelphia," *Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine*, May 1955; "Medallions of America's Old Masters," *Antiques Journal*, Nov. 1958.

Under "National Medals" were placed an unpublished and undated article, "The National Medals"; "Salathiel Ellis: Cameo-Cutter, Sculptor, Artist of Nineteenth Century America," *The Antiques Journal*, Feb, 1954; "Bas Relief Portraits by Salathiel Ellis," same publication, Oct. 1954; "Indian Peace Medals," *The Spinning Wheel*, April 1956; Charles Cushing Wright, Distinguished Medalist," same publication May 1958

Published in *The Numismatist*, journal of the American Numismatic Association, were "Moritz Furst, Die-Sinker and Artist," June 1954; "Medals made in America by Moritz Furst," Oct. 1954; "Ferdinand Petrich, Sculptor of the President Tyler Indian Peace Medal," April 1957; "John Reich, Assistant Engraver to the United States Mint," March 1955; "More John

Reich Medals," June 1955; Joseph Willson, American Medalist," Nov. 1955; Joseph Wright, First Draughtsman and Die-Sinker to the U.S. Mint," Dec. 1954; Gen. Taylor's Gold Medal for Rio Grande Victories, April 1959; "Charles Cushing Wright and the Scott and Taylor Medals," June 1960; "Gen. Taylor's Gold Medal for Monterey," April 1959; "Compromise of 1850 Medal," Jan. 1961; President Zachary Taylor's Indian Peace Medal," May 1959.

The third section was entitled "United States Coinage," and comprised "Robert Ball Hughes, Sculptor, and the U.S. Coinage of 1840," *The Numismatist*, Aug. 1958; and Horatio Greenough's Proposed Designs for the U.S. Coinage," *The Art Quarterly*, Detroit Museum of Art, Autumn 1959.

The fourth section entitled "Privately Issued Medals and Medallions" included "Circle of Friends of the Medallion, 1909-1915" in *Numismatic Scrapbook*, Feb. 1962; "The Hopper Medal by Salathiel Ellis" *The Numismatist*, June 1958; A New York Washington Medal," *Hobbies Magazine*, June 1953; "Tercentenary of New York Medals," same publication, Dec. 1953; "Early American Portrait Medallions on Glass Paperweights," *Bulletin of The Paperweight Collectors' Association*, April 1955.

This valuable title is long out of print today, but well worth acquiring as a milestone in the development of medal interest in the United States and a noble expression of a husband's grief for a departed mate.

Both Carl Carlson and Georgia Stamm Chamberlain rank high in and carefully prepared roster of medal researchers and were thus honored on the first recognitions implemented by Medal Collectors of America.