



PANS Eaglet

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Coinage of the Free City of Danzig from 1923 to 1939 and the 25 Gulden Gold Coins of 1923 and 1930

By Les Rosik

The city of Danzig, known today as Gdańsk in Poland, is located in northern Poland on the coast of the Baltic Sea. It was founded in the tenth century by Poland and remained connected to Polish history for over one thousand years. Due to its strategic location and importance as a seaport, neighboring powers such as the Teutonic Knights, Prussia, and Germany repeatedly attempted to claim control of the city over the centuries.

From the thirteenth through the seventeenth century, Danzig was one of the most important port cities on the Hanseatic trade route. This powerful trade network connected more than one hundred cities along the Baltic and North Seas. Goods traded through Danzig included salt, grain, furs, fish, and timber, making the city a major commercial center in Northern Europe.

After World War One, the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 separated Danzig from Germany. In 1920, it became the Free City of Danzig under the protection of the

League of Nations. Although politically independent, the city maintained close economic ties with both Germany and Poland.

The Free City of Danzig existed from 1923 until September 1, 1939. On that date, Germany invaded Poland, and on September 2, 1939, Danzig was annexed back into Germany. Following Germany's defeat in World War Two, the city was returned to Poland in 1945 and officially became Gdańsk.

Before the introduction of its own coinage, the German Mark was used in Danzig until the end of 1923. During the early 1920s, the German Mark suffered from severe inflation and rapidly lost its value. As a result, the Danzig Senate introduced a major monetary reform in 1923.

The new currency was the Gulden, which was divided into one hundred Pfennig. The value of the Gulden was based on the British monetary system, with one Gulden equal to one twenty fifth of a British pound. From 1923 to 1939, the Free City of Danzig issued its own coinage, which was minted primarily in Berlin and Danzig.

The following coins were issued during this period:

The 1 and 2 Pfennig coins dated 1923 to 1937 were struck in bronze.

The 5 Pfennig coins dated 1923 to 1928 were struck in nickel.

The 5 Pfennig coin dated 1932 was struck in aluminum bronze.

The 10 Pfennig coin dated 1923 was struck in copper nickel.

The 10 Pfennig coin dated 1932 was struck in aluminum bronze.

The one half Gulden coins dated 1923 and 1927 were struck in .750 silver.

The one half Gulden coin dated 1932 was struck in nickel.

The 1 Gulden coin dated 1923 was struck in .750 silver.

The 1 Gulden coin dated 1932 was struck in nickel.

The 2 Gulden coin dated 1923 was struck in .750 silver.

The 2 Gulden coin dated 1932 was struck in .500 silver.

The 5 Gulden coins dated 1923 and 1927 were struck in .750 silver.

The 5 Gulden coin dated 1932 was struck in .500 silver and exists in two different designs.

The 5 Gulden coin dated 1935 was struck in nickel.

The 10 Gulden coin dated 1935 was struck in nickel.

The most famous and sought after coins of the Free City of Danzig are the 25 Gulden gold coins dated 1923 and 1930. Both were struck in .917 gold, contain .2355 ounces AGW, measure 22 millimeters in diameter, and weigh 7.99 grams.

The 1923 Danzig 25 Gulden gold coin had a total mintage of only 1,000 pieces. Of these, 200 were struck as proof coins and were never released into circulation. These coins were intended to back banknotes held in reserve, and some were sold directly to collectors during the 1920s and 1930s.

The obverse of the 1923 25 Gulden gold coin features the two crosses of the Danzig coat of arms. The reverse depicts the famous Neptune Fountain, a landmark located in the city of Danzig.

The 1930 Danzig 25 Gulden gold coin carries the same obverse and reverse designs as the 1923 issue. Its mintage was larger, with 4,000 coins struck. However,

the 1930 issue was never officially released into circulation.

A small number of 1930 dated 25 Gulden gold coins were presented to high ranking German officials of the NSDAP, the National Socialist German Workers Party, in presentation cases when Germany invaded Danzig in September 1939.

The remaining 1930 gold coins were placed into coin bags and hidden in the Juliesturm, or Julius Tower, at the Spandau Citadel near Berlin. This location was used by Germany to store gold reserves during World War Two. At some point during the war, the Danzig gold coins, along with other German gold coinage, were moved from Spandau to an undisclosed location.

When Soviet forces entered Berlin in 1945, the vaults at Spandau were found to be empty of all gold coins.

World coin catalogs published from the 1950s through the 1980s listed the 1930 Danzig 25 Gulden gold coin as rare, while the 1923 issue was described as scarce. In the late 1980s, several bags of 1930 dated Danzig 25 Gulden gold coins were discovered in an undisclosed location in Germany.

In the early 1990s, these coins were offered for sale to collectors through a German bank at a price of approximately six hundred dollars each.

Today, in 2026, the 1930 Danzig 25 Gulden gold coin is more commonly encountered, particularly in NGC holders graded MS 63, with a market value of approximately three thousand six hundred dollars. By comparison, the 1923 Danzig 25 Gulden gold coin remains significantly scarcer. In an NGC holder graded MS 63, it commands a value of approximately six thousand eight hundred dollars.

References

1. Wikipedia

I had intended to give him one of the 1981 East Detroit medals, but unfortunately could not locate my example in time for the event.

The 1981 East Detroit Coin Club medal depicts a portrait of Lech Walesa on the obverse, with a portrait facing right. The inscription “POLANDS FREE TRADE UNION” hugs the upper rim of the medal, whereas the inscription “PRESIDENT LECH WALESZA” appears near the bottom rim under the portrait. The designer’s initials “RES” appears at the truncation of the Walesa portrait. Unfortunately, I could not locate the name of the designer/engraver, although I suspect it represented Ralph Schwartz who built the hand-operated press used to strike the medals.

The reverse of the medal depicts the traditional Polish Eagle with crown. The inscription “EAST DETROIT COIN CLUB” appears along the rim on the upper side of the design, and the dates “1958-1981” appear below the central design. The dates refer to the founding date of the club, with the 1981 being the date of issue.

Both the obverse and reverse of the medal were struck from hand-engraved dies, and by today’s standards, are rather crudely done, yet the medals are attractive.

Both the East Detroit Coin Club and the City of East Detroit no longer exist.

The City of East Detroit officially changed its name to Eastpointe in 1992, following a voter-approved charter amendment which was intended to distinguish the city from Detroit and align it with the more prestigious neighboring Grosse Pointe communities.

At one time, East Detroit, like many of the first-ring Detroit suburbs, had a fairly high percentage of residents of Polish heritage. Lucian Chojecki (March 1, 1924 – September 28, 1999), founder of PANS (1981), had served as club president for the

East Detroit Coin Club and was also involved in the production and promotion of the medal.

Long-time collectors will remember that the East Detroit Coin Club held its annual shows at the Fraternal Order of Eagles Hall located off East Eight Mile, near Gratiot in what was then East Detroit. Over many years, the club annually struck 30 mm medals in both copper and silver for sale to collectors at the show. The club used a hand-powered press built by Ralph Schwartz, a member of the club. The press wasn’t very big, and the medals were actually struck at the show. Thus, you could watch your medal being made. These medals had very limited mintages, likely around 200 or so, but mintages were different every year. Both the silver and copper medals were struck from the same dies which were hand-engraved.

As I recall, the copper medals were moderately priced and collectors could reserve a specific serial number and obtain succeeding issues as they were produced. The silver issues were struck over silver Canadian 50 Cent coins of early 1960s vintage, and are sometimes referred to as “overstrikes.” I don’t recall exactly what the initial issue price of the silver medals were, but they show up with some frequency on eBay and sometimes Dealer’s junk boxes, with prices usually reflective of the silver price at the time. Often times portions of the Canadian 50 cent designs show through the overstrike.

My father bought my brother and I the bronze medals every year, we actually had the same serial numbered medal that we would get each year. The serial numbers would be engraved on the edges of the medals. Various examples of the East Detroit medal show up with some frequency on eBay, including the 1981 medal. The Walesa medal naturally has wider appeal due to the subject matter and I’ve seen

examples of this medal offered on eBay by sellers from a number of U.S. States, including countries such as Canada and Poland.



one dated May 18, 1907 featuring the “new” Denver Mint which had opened on February 1, 1906.



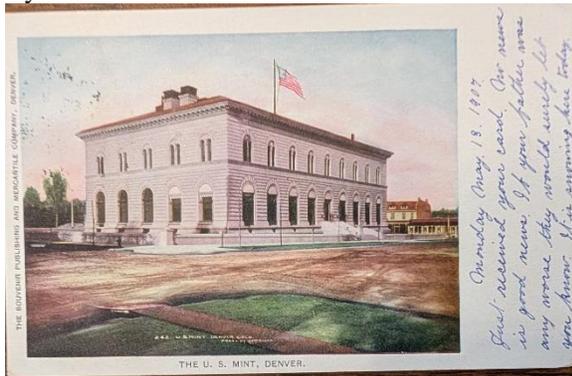
Get Ready for Easter with Offerings from the Polish Mint

By Mark Benvenuto

Right now, in early February, Easter might seem like a long way off, but this year it comes at us rather early. Believe it or not, the Polish Mint has an offering on their website that might be right up the alley of any of us in PANS who both get into the spirit of Easter, who want a neat gift for friends or loved ones, and who want to make at least an occasional purchase right from the Mint. Take a look at the coin shown here:



Ron Slobodnik Makes Presentation on Postcard Collecting at January Meeting By Steven Bieda



Our January 17, 2026, meeting featured member Ronald Slobodnik, who spoke on postcard/postal card collecting, sharing examples made of cardboard, wood, leather and even metal that he has collected over the years.

Ron also noted a difference between postcards and postal cards, with postcards typically being a privately printed card that features pictures or a design on one side, and requires a separate stamp to mail it, whereas a postal card is issued by a postal authority (U.S. Post Office), with pre-printed postage on the card.

Among the many cards shared, Ron presented a postcard, with a numismatic twist –



Yes, this piece is from Niue, one of those absolutely tiny nations out in the southern Pacific. But the Polish Mint has become a major player in producing coins for nations that do not have the size or means to warrant a Mint of their own. And for this item at least, they have gone in for an image of one of the best – an egg from the House of Fabergé.

For those unfamiliar with the famous eggs made over a century ago by the House of Fabergé for the Russian czar, we’ll not tell the story again here, but rather suggest a google search or a trip to the library for all the basics. We’ll say only that for anyone who wants to land one of these gorgeous eggs today, either as an original or a modern copy, you can basically do one of three things: 1 – sell everything you own to see if you have enough cash to bid on an original in some auction, 2 – go on-line to a site such as Etsy and buy a modern reproduction, 3 – see if you are as brazen and larcenous as those thieves who broke into the Louvre recently, and steal an original (upon reflection, we don’t

recommend this too strongly, as it comes with an uncomfortably close association with the French police, and very small, permanent living quarters).

But, back to our coin, the Polish Mint, and the Fabergé connection. This beauty is a silver piece, and is really not all that expensive. Both of those facts can be put in the proverbial 'win' column. So good luck to anyone who wishes to buy one – and an early, Happy Easter!

► Spot prices as of 4 February, 2026
Gold: \$ 4,902.20/troy ounce
Silver: \$ 85.35/troy ounce
Copper: \$ 6.00/pound
Platinum: \$ 2,230.90/troy ounce
Palladium: \$ 1,775.30/troy ounce
\$US-Złoty exchange: 3.57

Have you been able to join us on the web? Try: www.pans-club.org. Or, on Facebook? If not, please go to Facebook, find PANS, and see what events are coming up for our society.

Once again, come to the meetings and win

Your PANS meets once a month, except for July and August, and is generous in raffling off one Polish coin per meeting. Why not attend a meeting, and see if you can add something to your growing collection?

Send in your finds.

Have you found any Polish coins of note, perhaps squirreled away in some dealer's stock of foreign coins, or at an estate sale, or elsewhere? If you have found a hidden treasure, or one hiding in plain sight, e-mail Mark a photo and a brief write-up of how you came upon it. The PANS members will most likely be interested in hearing about it.

Remember folks, please pay your dues for the year 2026! That's \$20 for the year – \$30 if you'd like the PANS Eaglet mailed quarterly.

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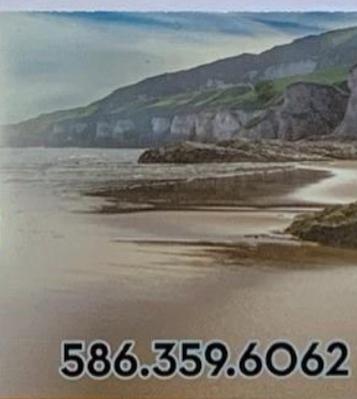


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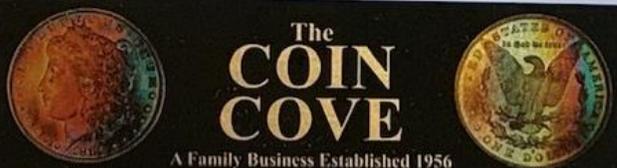
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COIN SHOW

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Join Our Club

We meet on the first Saturday of the month at 12:00 PM at the American Polish Cultural Center located at 2975 East Maple Road (15 Mile Road) at Dequindre Road in Troy, Michigan. Visit the PANS Club website at www.pans-club.org for details. We currently have 10 meetings per year (August through May) with 2 months off during the summer. The Polish American Numismatic Society also plans a Christmas Oplatek Dinner during the Holiday Season. Meeting agendas include business matters and informative lectures from renowned guest speakers on topics including error and variety coins, significant coins in Polish history, Hamtramck scrip, coin photography. Open and lively member discussions about US and Polish numismatics are encouraged. Of course, the meeting would not be complete without coffee and delicious Polish pastries. The Polish American Numismatic Society hosts two very successful public coin show at the American Polish Cultural Center. Our primary show always takes place on the third Sunday of February. PANS also hosts a second show in August. Shows have been co-hosted with other clubs in the region. If you have any interest in numismatics, please attend a meeting and sign up as a member. PANS dues are only \$20.00 per year or \$30 per year if you would like the PANS Eaglet newsletter sent to your mail on a quarterly basis. PANS Club Membership is a great way to meet collectors with similar interests and knowledgeable dealers willing to share their experiences in a hobby that we all enjoy. To become a member-in-good-standing, plan to attend a minimum of 5 meetings per year and perform club-related duties at PANS Club sponsored Coin Shows.

 Membership Application *I hereby make application for membership in the Polish American Numismatic Society, subject to the rules and regulations set forth in the Constitution and By-laws.*

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DATE ACCEPTED: _____

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Attend a meeting or mail to: PANS, PO BOX 80515, ROCHESTER, MI 48308