



Chapter 12

Combine Pins

A “combine” in the pin trading community is where a number of traders agree to issue a set of pins, usually to commemorate an event or activity. Some of those that have contributed so significantly to the success of our hobby are shown in this chapter. Like the series pins, the issue of “combine pins” have contributed to the increased activity at any gathering of pin traders. These pins are considered to be a swap chairman’s ally in attracting a goodly number of pin traders when it is known in advance that this category of pins will be available.

Combine Sets

The issuance of sets at a swap or convention by a designated number of traders can trace its origin to the Alternate Site Meeting held in Des Moines, Iowa in 1998. PDG **Larry Shaull, PA**, developed the set. Since then, the sets are referred to as “combine sets”, which are made available to interested traders at a specific event. The golden rule is that all participants in the set must agree to be present for the event or must be agreeable to having their pins traded for them by a trader who is present. From an historic standpoint, the first such set really became THE thing to get in Des Moines and it contributed significantly to the success of the meeting. We’re speaking of the Indian Totem Pole, shown to the left. The unique feature of this first set is that there were no members in the set from Iowa, while most all other “combine sets” since then have been dominated by the host club or State. The **Western Pin Swaps** that have been held mostly in Reno, Nevada, have issued some of the most colorful combine sets. Others, like the ones in **Pennsylvania, Northeast, and Virginia** swaps have all issued sets, and continue to do so each year. Because of space limitations, we are limiting our pictorial coverage to this first one and to examples of sets from some of the pin swaps. The pins shown herein are not actual size.



- Bill Smith, VA
- Jim Schiebel, NY
- Larry Bittner, IN
- Earl Dixon, MN
- Harry Fulwiler, VA
- Bart Phillips, ID
- Larry Shaull, PA
- Bill Russell, NC
- Gene Miller, PA

The Des Moines Totem Pole

Virginia Swap. The pins shown here are examples of the types of pins that are made available to attendees at the Annual Virginia Pin Swap that is held in Winchester in November. We have not shown each pin in the sets since the only difference usually is the dominant color used. Each year 12 members of the Virginia Board of Directors and 12 non-Board members are given an opportunity to participate. Because of the large number of Virginia traders and the demand for participation in the combine, every effort is made to allow “new” participants each year. Lion **Harry Fulwiler** has been the “commissioner” for all the sets issued to date.

Pennsylvania Pin Swap. The set you see here is an example of the ones that are issued in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Pin Swap, which is held annually in York. This particular set represents each of the Districts in the State and the Council Chairman. In addition to the set being offered at the Swap, each respective District Governor was given the opportunity to purchase the pin that represented his District. The current practice at this Swap is to have individuals who will promise to be present to trade his/her assigned pin. These sets become highly collectible and provide an air of excitement for all those present and who are interested in acquiring the set.



Combine Sets

Western States Swap. These “seed packets” are an example of the beautiful sets that are issued annually at the Western States Swap that is usually held in Reno, Nevada. As with the other combine sets at swaps across the U.S.A., there is great anticipation and excitement generated for those who attend the swaps. As a matter of fact, a number of traders attend a particular swap primarily to be assured of obtaining the combine set that will be issued. To assist the traders in their pursuit of these pins, the Western States Swap introduced the idea of having a small “flag” (with a number) on the table of the trader who has a particular pin in the combine.

Northeast Pin Swap. Both the *New York and Bermuda Pin Trading Club* and the *Massachusetts Pin Trading Club* frequently issue “combine sets” in conjunction with the Annual Northeast Pin Swap that is held in various locations of the Northeastern part of the U.S.A. Here are some examples



New York Issues



Massachusetts Pin Trading Club Issues. Issuing a different pin in the set seems to add to the collectability rather than having all pins have the same mold, except for a color change.

