

Oh, Those Cameos!

There was a time, long, long ago, back in the early 1980s, when all of the ‘Fancies’ were in demand. Universal was cranking most of them out (Foilites, Jewelites, Filigrees, Signets, Florentine, Uniglos, etc.), and collector were gobbling them up just as soon as they could be found. Ah, those were the days!

One of the most prolific issues was Universal’s *Cameo*, taking second place, as far as numbers are concerned, only to Foilites and Uniglos. They first appeared around 1965 and ran through 1987, when Universal, on the verge of extinction, ceased producing all of its Fancies. They were an instant hit with both customers and collectors. The vast majority are metallics, but the defining characteristic of Cameos is that they all have debossed (opposite of embossed) designs. *Very* attractive! And many were even more so, as they were combined with Foilites or Uniglos as conjunctives.

Another differentiating factor about Cameos in general, although not as obvious as the debossed designs, is that, whereas most other categories are either mostly or entirely 20-strikes, the vast majority of Cameos are 30s. Twenty-strikes are relatively rare in comparison. There are a few 10-strikes, a few Jewels, more 40s.

Cameos can advertise anything, of course, but, as a Bank collector, I can attest that they absolutely abound in Banks and Savings & Loans.

And, speaking of abounding, there are 7,497 Cameos listed, but no one has updated the listing since 1983, so who knows?

