

Western Regional Button Association is pleased to share our educational articles with the button collecting community. This article was generously shared with WRBA by the author and the Minnesota State Button Society, first appearing in their newsletter. It appeared in the May 2017 WRBA *Territorial News*. Enjoy! WRBA gladly offers our articles for reprint, as long as credit is given to WRBA as the source, and the author.

Greek Mythology #22—PEGASUS *by Joy Journey*

Pegasus is the offspring of the mortal gorgon, Medusa, and Poseidon, god of the sea who raped Medusa in Athena's temple.

When Perseus beheaded Medusa, Pegasus, the beautiful winged horse, and Chrysaor, a sword-wielding giant sprang from her body.

Like most of the Greek myths, there are several versions of the birth of Pegasus, which is said to have taken place at the edge of the earth.

In one version the two spring from the earth doused in the blood from Medusa's neck, reminiscent of the birth of Athena from Zeus. Another version says they were formed from the gorgon blood, pain and the sea foam of Poseidon. This second version reminds us of the birth of Aphrodite from the sea foam created when Uranus's genitals were thrown into the sea by Cronus.

Pegasus was captured and tamed by Bellerophon, a Greek hero. Bellerophon rode Pegasus to victory on multiple occasions, before deciding to ride him up to Mount Olympus. Zeus did not approve the attempt at Olympic entry and dismounted Bellerophon enroute. Pegasus continued to the seat of the gods, and was housed with the horses of Zeus. Pegasus was soon faithfully carrying the thunderbolts of Zeus. For his service, Zeus transformed Pegasus into a constellation and set him in the night sky.



Pegasus among the clouds. Extra large copper colored button. Made in China. Courtesy of Louella Yeargain.

Pegasus and another fabulous animal on a double crest silver button. Collection of Deborah Hanson.



RIGHT: Pegasus in the clouds with a lute playing rider. The BBB associates this button with a poem by Schiller, in which a minstrel identifies Pegasus in the possession of a farmer, mounts him and they fly away. Large, openwork stamped brass. Courtesy of Byron Buttons. LEFT: Stamped brass button of Pegasus. Large. Courtesy of Connie & Bud Weiser.

LEFT: The same image on a small brass openwork button. Original tint. Collection of Louella Yeargain.



Aluminum. Medium. Division III. Chalmers.



Transparent blue glass. Medium. Division III. Chalmers



Glass, molded and painted on reverse, mounted in brass and set on leather. Medium. Applied plastic shank. Courtesy of Claudia Chalmers