



The 2010 SCI Convention

What I Learned Over My Summer "Vacation"

by Ginger Gehres

The 2010 SCI Convention in Myrtle Beach was, by many accounts, an immense success. The presentations and entertainment, as well the venue, were a hit with attendees. We certainly couldn't have asked for better weather.

Although I sometimes felt that I was one of those persons turning knobs and pulling levers behind the green curtain in OZ, I did find some time to enjoy the main speakers and the three dinner nights. I also learned some interesting tidbits.

I've visited the Ripley's Aquarium a few times before, but each time is magical. How often does one get the chance to have sharks, moray eels and a plethora of underwater sea creatures swim next to, and over you? I even took the opportunity to "pet" a sea ray (stingers removed). It felt like wet velvet, or as my daughter had once said, "Thick jelly in a bag." That doesn't sound as romantic but what a thrill!

Edward Myers, "The Robert Ripley Stein Collection"

Ed admitted he knew nothing about the steins he was going to show but he knew a lot about Ripley. He is in the process of buying back a lot of the stein collection that had been auctioned off in the 70's. He also discovered he was ripped off on a few of the items (they weren't even manufactured until after Ripley's death). As one person from the audience told him... "Believe It, Or Not!"

Beverly Straube, Senior Archaeologist at Jamestowne Virginia

Beverly's insightful presentation told us the history of the settlement and showed us

pieces from some recent finds – including whole pieces of pottery. She also suggested we stop referring to the "Bartmann krugs" (bearded man jugs) as "Bellarmines" because it was actually a turn of phrase that was a mean-spirited slight against a religious official named "Bellarmine." Folks joked that the ugly faces looked like him, and the name stuck.

Brian Sanders, "Regimental Steins of the Kaiser's Calvary"

I learned about the Hessian Death Squads who proudly sported skulls on the uniforms, hats and even on their horses' blankets. The uniforms they wore were of a certain color as to tell others from a distance who they were and that they were of high status. I also learned that opossum fur was more highly prized on their uniforms than fox and others. Maybe I'll think more highly of my husband's winter "possum" fur hat. But then again, I doubt it.

Frank Loevi, "Dümler and Breiden Steins"

Frank masterfully went through the history of the Dümler and Brieden manufacturing company. He also helped us visually understand the subtle nuances of the handles, the finishes and the "look" of some of their pieces in order to better understand what we have in our collections or what we might find in the future.

Phil Masenheimer, "Occupational, Trade & Guild Steins. So... What's The Difference?"

I enjoyed how Phil explained what the three different levels meant and how we sometimes call a stein an "occupational" stein when it could actually be something else. His visual references using steins, from his and other collections, helped me understand so much more than just words on a page. I also like his analogy that a "Guild" is like a bank, a "Trade" is like the dollars and the "Occupation" is like the coins that make up the dollars.

Les Paul, "Character Steins, The Best & Most Unusual"

Our scheduled speaker, Ron Fox, was ill and could not attend the convention. I am grateful that Les Paul stepped forward and offered to speak. He brought out some of his collection; we took photos and put together a PowerPoint presentation in time. I know that Ron's speech would have been good, but I must say, Les' presentation was quite interesting. Two items that really stayed with me were the suggestions of making changes to widely-accepted mis-



nomers for some steins as we now know them to be. Or at least some people know. I say, let's spread the knowledge.

This porcelain character stein by E. Bohne Söhne is not a sulky driver. Les credits Dave Harr for finding the answer. This is a "Chauffeur". It makes sense when you think about it. Driving cars back then could get you quite muddy. The mask, goggles and hat are great facesavers.

Next Les asked us to consider two of the pig steins also made by E. Bohne Söhne, the Singing or Whistling Pig, and the Smoking Pig with a pipe. These pigs were made in a variety of sizes, configurations and colors. Here we see the blue and white version of the Singing Pig, and the music box form of the Smoking Pig.

Les suggested that, as he is from farm country in Iowa, the pig doesn't sing, it squeals. And, when you put them side by side, they are quite suggestive as a sow and a boar and should be referred to as such.

Personally, I concur. However, I wondered why the "sow" has its mouth open. (Draw your own conclusions).



Stump the Steinologists, moderated by Jerry Berg

I found this to be a unique opportunity for the audience to ask questions about our collections and get answers from a collective "brain trust." A panel of Master Steinologists consisting of Steve Steigerwald, Phil Masenheimer, Ron Heiligenstein, Les Paul and Beatrix Adler fielded questions from the audience. I would suggest that future conventions have access to more microphones because some people had difficulty hearing the questions. In any case, this was a wonderful learning experience.

The Roundtables

I did not get a chance to attend these but I heard they were well-received. I have heard some of these before so I know they were enlightening! Thanks go out for the hard work of Ron Heiligenstein, A.L. Honeycutt, Don Franz, Ken Etheridge, Barney, Russ Keiser and George Schamberger.

German Night - Carolina Style and Beach Party Night.

Jody Wyse lined up some great bands for us to enjoy: *The German Connection* and *the Out Of Towners* bands. They were quite good at getting some seat-warmers out on the dance floor. By the way, we have some great dancers in our Chapter. Who knew?

The Hilton also offered up a nice selection of tasty, Carolina cultural classic dishes. Someone asked me why the "soup" was so thin. I explained that it wasn't soup and what a seafood boil actually was. Maybe we should have explained what we were serving before dinner. Funny how we become so comfortable with our surroundings that we forget others might find it all a bit "foreign."

Each time I've attended a convention, I truly enjoy seeing the festive outfits on "German Night." A wild hit of the "Beach Party" night had nothing to do with the Carolina Seiners planning. Fred Irtz and Debbie Reed made



a splash when they arrived in cheap, eye-popping, semi-Hawaiian outfits (in the loosest of terms). What an ice-breaker! I was wondering about people who could dress like that and stick out in a crowd. And then again, maybe I was just jealous that I wasn't able to feel that kind of freedom and enjoy looking that silly. By the way, Debbie was quite fetching in her island garb.

Miss Beer Stein 2010, Margie Brune

"All Hail" the new reigning Miss Beer Stein, Margie Brune! She certainly deserved the award for all of her hard work. Last year's Miss Beer Stein, Suzanne Elliott, crowned her during the first night's festivities. Thanks also go out to Claire Hill for making yet another amazing crown from beer cans. They are truly great works of art.

On the last night of the Convention, Drema Harden, Loretta Franz and I wore our crowns as past honorees. Today, we are all members of the Carolina Steiners chapter. During the evening, other past Miss Beer Stein ladies approached us and wanted to get in on the fun. We discovered earlier this year that there was no "list" of past Miss Beer Stein recipients so we didn't know who to get in contact with. By next year, the Providence Chapter will have a complete list. What a great tradition to get started!



The "Queen" and her court. R-L, reigning Miss Beer Stein, Margie Brune, Drema Harden, Loretta Franz and Ginger Gehres.

In the end, I learned that although you can't please everyone, you can please most; you make stronger friendships with your fellow Chapter members and renew acquaintances; you cheer on people's successes and mourn some losses; you leave exhausted but arrive home with the satisfaction that you've done the best work you know how to do. I'm so proud of everyone in our Chapter from the beginning planning stages, to the final moments. If it hadn't been for all involved it wouldn't have been the successful event it truly was.

Here's to next year. Hope to see you in Providence, Rhode Island!