

# der Gemütlichkeit

No. 1, Sept. 1965

A Quarterly Bulletin for Collectors of Steins

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## STEIN COLLECTORS INTERNATIONAL

### An Unusual Correspondence Club Helps Collectors Share; Dream Scheme Gives Birth to Organization

A club for the collectors of antique beer steins is a unique and different form of organization. Unlike any service club, social club, country club, key club or fraternal group, Stein Collectors International will not have the one thing that is almost a part of every club: periodical meetings. In fact, no meetings are planned albeit many stein collectors would benefit from such a gathering of collectors, even if only on an annual basis.

A common object, the purpose of any club, is what brought about Stein Collectors International. Organized to share information through correspondence, the club evolved from the conversation of two avid collectors who wanted to know more about their hobbies. Discovering the fact that stein collectors were scattered all over the United States and around the world, the club idea was practically abandoned until the correspondence scheme was conceived.

Stein collecting has been a greatly neglected field of hobby study. The club hopes to call attention to stein collecting and to make discoveries about steins: heritage, markings, customs, values, prices, craftsmanship, legends, etc.

No one authority is heading the club. It is hoped that the actual collectors, especially the knowledgeable ones, will contribute information to the quarterly news bulletin.

Even after the club was conceived, the matter of finding stein collectors presented a problem. No one antique publication seemed to reach a majority of collectors. The school teacher-organizer of the club had no excessive funds for mass advertising. One simple ad in the *Antique Trader* got "better than I expected" results. There were 23 charter members almost immediately. That's a start. Another three dozen risked a nickel stamp to ask for a free copy of this September copy that could have been titled the October or November number.

All memberships accepted before the close of the year will be considered to be charter members in the organization

The club is non-profit — and undoubtedly high loss. The self-appointed executive secretary launched into the project with more enthusiasm than time.

Future success of the club will depend on correspondence of members. The only prerequisite for joining is an interest in steins. Members are not required to write articles or compelled to share their information. However, active participation through the mails will make the club more active.

If the club fizzles because of funds, it will be the loss of the executive secretary. His wife recently said, "You've stuck your neck out this time. Now you'll have to turn out at least four releases for the folks who sent you a dollar." She's right! And subscribers to the organization can rely on the promise that they will get four releases for their dollar's worth of dues.

Belatedly and slowly, Stein Collectors' International is underway. *Ein Prosit* to the Stein Collectors International—and to *der Gemütlichkeit*.

### Enlist Now

**Stein Collectors International wants you—if you care one iota or even a great deal about steins.**

**All memberships that are started before 1966 will be considered to be charter memberships. All charter members will receive a special charter membership card with the December Christmas edition of the bulletin.**

**To join, send one dollar to Tom McClelland, 815 South McClelland, Santa Maria, Calif. 93454**

**No boxtops, no 25 words or less, no nothin'. BUT JOIN NOW!**

### German Name Given To Stein Quarterly

*Der Gemütlichkeit* was taken as the name of the SCI quarterly bulletin because the German noun represents a togetherness of spirit that is hoped to be found in the club.

*Der Gemütlichkeit* was popularized and practically immortalized by the simple German drinking song—*Ein Prosit der Gemütlichkeit*. The singing of the drinking hymn is a part of the ritual in many a *gasthaus* especially at the high point of a lively evening.

Perhaps the title should have been *Stein Viertelfährig* or *Stein Bericht* or something else *aber das macht nichts*. It is now *der Gemütlichkeit*, a quarterly printed bulletin that communicates the spirit of stein collectors everywhere.

### Once Upon a Stein



LONG TIME AGO in old Europe, people made beer containers from stone or rock materials. Those containers were called STEINS.

By definition, what most English-speaking people call steins are not really steins at all. Tankards, mugs, krugs, bechers, glasses, tobys and other holders of beverage will be objects of interest and study in the Stein Collectors International. All will be considered to be steins in a general sense.

### How to File 'em

An avid collector may want to save his or her copies of this bulletin. One of the easiest ways would be to put them in a three-hole binder.

Holes could be punched at the marks shown on the left.

## One Member and His Stein

# Bud Ferguson Becomes First Official Member

Bud Ferguson, the first charter member of SCI and an instigator in the organization's birth, runs a liquor store in Santa Maria, Calif. He has collected steins for 12 years. In fact, he has a pewter stein that was given as an award to his father for being a member of the championship rowing team at Cornell in 1910.

Most of Bud's fifty plus steins are of German origin. He does not have the largest collection or the world's greatest collection, but he is an avid collector. He strives for "character, individuality and unusualness" in his steins.

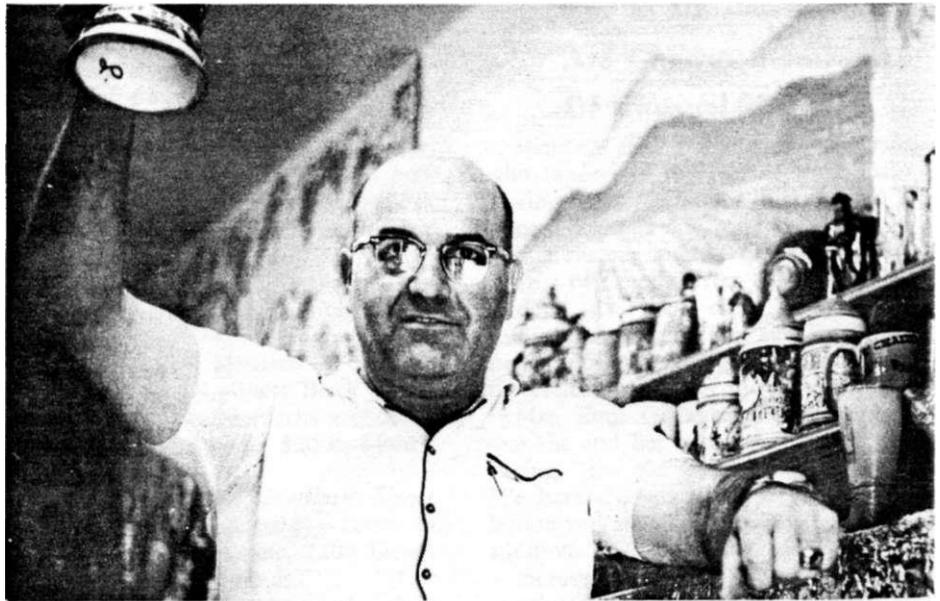
Bud's collection runs the gamut from Mettlachs to regimentals to pewter to glass to porcelain.

A possessor of many Mettlachs, Bud doesn't just buy a Mettlach because of its name. His favorite Mettlach artist is Heinrich Schlitt, a creator of comic characters on steins.

One of Bud's favorite steins is a small (approximately ¼ liter) porcelain piece in the shape of the Munich monk. The lid is actually the hooded head of the monk (with a small pewter rim). The monk has a "monkish look" and a left hand that grasps big white radishes. In his right hand the monk has a large grey stein that is easily recognized as the trademark of the Munich Hofbrauhaus, the world's largest beer hall and scene of many of Hitler's pre World War II political puschs. The pictured stein is marked "HB" for Hofbrauhaus.

Mr. Ferguson believes that his stein is Mettlach though it is not marked as such. Markings on the bottom are "JR" in capital letters and a script "M" right underneath, he words *Gesetzlich* and *Geschützt* are also on the stein.

*In each edition of the bulletin, a stein and its owner will be featured. Black and white photos of interesting steins will be considered for publication along with information of general interest about the stein and the collector.*



"Skol," says SCI's first official member, Bud Ferguson, a collector for some dozen years.



MUNICH MONK (sometimes called the Munich Maid) makes a decorative coverup for a character stein.

## Regimentals Will Be Featured In Christmas SCI Bulletin

The December edition of the SCI *Gemütlichkeit* will include information about the individualistic regimental steins of Germany. Members who would like to share secrets or hand-me-down information about regimentals or about a spe-

cific regimental stein that they have, should write the information down and send it in.

The Christmas edition will also feature gift ideas for stein collectors, original Christmas card ideas, and other information that collectors wish to share.

## Free Ads for Collectors

# Stein Exchange

Collectors wishing to find a trade, sell a stein, or locate a certain type of stein will be able to have their message printed in the bulletin. No charge will be made for messages under 25 words (counting every word as one each) until printing costs get out of hand.

Any messages that are undoubtedly commercial will be billed at \$1 a column inch. This does not mean that antique dealers who are members and collectors can not use the columns. However, mass selling or merchandising of steins in our columns will not be permitted without charge.

It is expected that the exchange section of the *Gemütlichkeit* will expand as collectors begin to share their interests.

**I'M INTERESTED** in finding a Cornell University stein (Mettlach No. 2871). Send information to Bud Ferguson, 712"A" So. Broadway, Santa Maria, Calif.

**COLLECTOR** is particularly interested in quality glass steins. Randy Reinstedt, 705 19th Street, Pacific Grove, Calif.

**WANTED!** Mettlach and other quality steins. Richards, 46 Fitch Ave., New-London, Conn.

## Guide to Mettlachs Is a Must For Dedicated Mettlachers

*Mettlach Steins and Their Prices*, an oversized paperback of 68 pages, is a collective study of Villeroy and Boch Company's steins that were produced at Mettlach in the Saar region of Germany.

Robert H. Mohr, the author, has included 729 steins in his detailed report of Mettlachs, a small book chock full of information. The research was first hand. Mohr inspected "every stein I could find." He also talked with countless collectors.

Himself a private collector with no other hobbies, Mohr makes his living as a salesman. His own steins represent what he calls a "small collection." He has not purchased in Germany and does not speak German though his name and his German-like script penmanship betray him.

Mohr's introductory remarks trace the company back to 1748 in Alsace Lorraine and follow it to its location in Mettlach (literally "between the lakes") until the pottery works were completely destroyed by fire sometime after 1914.

Mohr gives a comprehensive report of markings as they are found on the bottoms of Mettlachs. Another interesting page of the book reports on legends that pertain to illustrations on some of the more colorful Mettlach steins.

The main body of the book is concerned with a numerical review of actual Mettlachs that have been seen and investigated by the author in the United States.

Mohr's prices are based on what actual collectors have paid. West Coast antique dealers and private collectors indicate that the prices seem low. Mohr wrote in a letter to SCI that collectors should "add 20 per cent for West Coast." His book is copyrighted 1963. The prices he lists are based on his research prior to the actual publication of the book and are undoubtedly low. The trend on valuable steins is up, up, up! Mohr writes, "Prices may vary from one section of the country to another and according to the supply and the demand."

(One West Coast antique dealer said that he could sell any Mettlach for \$65. That may be the other extreme.)

Priced at \$4.50, the tiny book (6x9") was printed by offset. No type was set for the publication; the content was typed and then photographed for offset. Illustrations are limited to line drawings of Mettlach marks and one map of Germany showing Villeroy and Boch factory locations.

The price is not low. It adds up to about seven cents a page. (In contrast a typical paperback novel, *The Moviegoer*, would give a reader about three pages and a half for a penny.) Needless to say, this unusual book is not for the casual reader. It is for the collector of Mettlachs.

Though some of the information may not be 100 per cent accurate, the book is valid in most instances. It is a must for avid Mettlachers. When they find a discrepancy in the printed information, the margins are available for notations by the collector.

Most expensive Mettlach in Mohr's book: a one-liter all pottery Black Forest stein @ \$350. No Mettlachs are cheap and none are listed under \$20 in Mohr's book.

Easiest way to buy *Mettlach Steins and their Prices* is to send a check to Mohr Publishing Company, 2208 Douglas Street, Rockford, Illinois.

Easiest way to buy a Mettlach: shop around with checkbook in hand — *und viel geld in die bank*.

Incidentally, this brief critique on Mohr's book is done with all respect to his efforts and is in no way a free advertisement for him. As a matter of fact, Robert H. Mohr is not a member of SCI as yet but his charter membership is being reserved. He was asked to contribute an article on Mettlachs but he relates that he is under contract to *Hobbies* magazine.

### Thousand Copies Printed

One thousand copies of this first SCI bulletin were printed. Extra copies are being sent to members, interested people, and antique dealers so that we can increase our membership.

## How I Became a Stein Collector

By TOM MCCLELLAND

While serving in the U.S. Army headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany in 1955, several enlisted men bought one old stein each to be used in their weekend ceremonial gatherings. Though each stein was purchased with no idea of antique value (prices were exceptionally low then), each G.I. took a certain pride in his stein.

On being separated from the military in September of 1956, I returned to civilian life with one blue pottery stein, pewter lid, an inscription on the lid, dated 1898. Little old ladies told me I had a collector's item. My collection was underway.

Adding slowly at first, I eventually was able to lead a couple of student tours to Europe during summer vacations. Those two summers enabled me to become addicted to stein collecting.

My collection totals almost fifty—some junk and some worthwhile pieces. My knowledge of steins is so limited and there is so little in print about steins that I decided to organize SCI—a longshot chance to learn about steins and other collectors.

EDITOR'S NOTE—Believing that collectors will be interested in hearing about other collectors and their steins, we invite letters.

## Stein Club's First Members Show Interest

Rudin, Dr. Beistle

Are Charter Members

Of Unusual SCI

Members and "just interested" persons who replied to the one little ad inaugurating Stein Collectors International all seemed to have one common denominator: a zealous interest in steins.

First two replies from charter members through the mail came from Russell Rudin of St. Louis, Mo. and Dr. Arthur Beistle of South Bend, Ind. Mr. Rudin has collected for over thirty years.

Mrs. Emil Gislason of Seattle writes that she and her husband have been collecting "fine old steins for fifteen years. We have a small but representative collection and are always looking for worthy additions."

Emmett Byrd of Kansas, a charter member, is another thirty-year-plus collector. Says Mr. Byrd, "I know there is a lot I don't know. Maybe this will help." Perhaps Mr. Byrd will also share what he has learned in a score and a half of collecting.

Enthusiasm and interest was shown by other charter subscribers and interested parties. One gentleman's letterhead claimed that he dealt in Mettlach steins.

R. R. Stett of Kinston, N.C. asked if there was any literature about Mettlach steins.

**Addresses of members will not be printed in the bulletin if the members do not want their name and address listed. Questions that are sent in will be printed so that others can send answers directly to the party concerned.**

## What's in Future For SCI Members?

Future quarterlies will feature anything and everything related to steins.

Through the club, it will be possible to organize a buyer's guide for purchasing in the U.S. and in Europe.

Members will be able to arrange exchanges or to get together to investigate and compare collections.

We may be able to find the world's most representative collection and to present it to members through a photographic essay in the bulletin.

A search for the most valuable stein in the world would be of interest to our readers just as the purchase of a Rembrandt at auction is news to the world.

After the membership seems to reach a saturation point of collectors—and who could even guess the number of collectors?—we will conduct a survey of stein collectors to see what they have in common. It would be interesting to see what kind of people collect, why they collect, and how they got started.

The future of SCI and its bulletins is in the hands of the members. Ideas will be appreciated—and will be used! Criticism will be taken seriously and with intent to improve the club.

## Two Other Books About Mettlachs

R. H. Mohr has made photo reproductions of old Mettlach catalogues.

The 1899 catalogue has 34 pages showing 511 steins. Price is \$10.

The 1901 catalogue pictures steins, plaques, beakers, punch bowls and vases. With 24 pages it sells at \$8. Mohr offers a special price of \$15 if both books are purchased. His address is 2208 Douglas Street in Rockford, Illinois.

## Why the Lids?

Anytime an owner of a stein is asked, "Why do they have lids on those old steins?" the answer is likely to be different.

One of the worst replies is, "To keep the beer fresh."

A better reply would be that the lid keeps the beer clean, especially when carrying a full liter of brew home or when a *beirfest* is being held in the dusty outdoors.

Any collectors with other reasons for having lids on steins, should send in their words of wisdom.

## German Coaster Ads



**PAPER COASTERS** are popularly used throughout Europe to advertise products and to keep a container off the table. Travelers have been known to collect these colorful items, dozens of them, to be put to practical use at home or as accessories to set off a stein collection. A few typical coasters are displayed in the above montage.

## Accessories Set Off Steins

Many stein collections have been highlighted as part of a den, family room, or German restaurant with a decor that directs attention to the steins.

SCI's bulletin will enjoy printing information about how collectors have displayed their steins. Photographs could add to the reports.

Such extras as European paper coasters, framed prints or paintings, old advertising trays, and antique beer signs may be used to add to the appearance of a collection.

## Dealer Wants 20-30 Extras

A California antique dealer subscribed to SCI and asked for extra copies. Mrs. Lore Harris of the Old Towne Shoppe at 363 No. Blackstone in Fresno wrote, "We would be interested in getting about 20 or 30 extra ones to give to customers free, each edition."

Thirty extra copies are being sent to Mrs. Harris at no extra charge for the first edition.

Dealers wanting extra copies can get four per edition for an extra dollar a year. This offer is valid only to SCI members. All extra copies will be sent in one bundle to the subscriber's address.