

Convention 2023, Dayton OH

SCI's 2023 Convention, its 56th, was terrific. Collectors gathered in Dayton, Ohio to greet old friends and make new ones, listen to an excellent group of informative speakers, buy, sell or trade beer steins, and enjoy the *Gemütlichkeit* of the gathering.

Attendees began to arrive as early as Friday, July 20, as groups of friends collected in the lobby of the Marriott Hotel at the University of Dayton. "Hey, how are you?" "Long time no see." Over the course of the week, the hotel lived up to Marriott standards, especially the hotel shuttle bus whose friendly drivers were happy to drive convention goers to local restaurants or museums.

The Dayton Air Show, held on Saturday and Sunday, was kicked off Friday night when the U.S. Army Golden Knights parachuted into the area right behind the Marriott Hotel. Saturday was the next in what seemed like an endless stream of summer days, sunny and hot. For those who opted to attend, the Air Show, which started around 10AM and ran until 4PM, was replete with flyovers of all sorts of aircraft, ranging from the Wright II replica to the Red Bull helicopter (which in



fact flew upside down!), various propeller driven planes, a C-130 cargo plane, a Russian MIG-17F fighter jet and the capstone performance by the Navy's Blue Angels, known for their close formation, high precision flying.

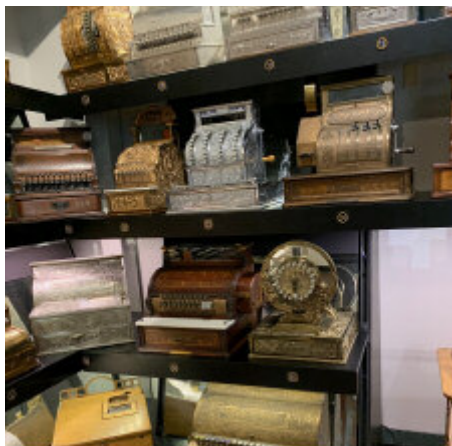
Early-bird options included tours to Carillon Historic Park, a Dayton City Tour, and the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.



The museum at Carillon Park was a "don't miss" event. Beginning in the mid-1800s, Dayton established itself as a center of manufacturing and entrepreneurship. The museum tells the story of companies such as NCR, the Barney & Smith Car Company, McCall's Publishing, DELCO, the Wright Company, and the Davis Sewing Machine Company, predecessor of the Huffman Manufacturing Co., manufacturer of Dayton and Huffy Bicycles! Of special interest to stein collectors, the Roger Glass Stein Collection, consisting of more than 450 steins, is on permanent display. This collection includes a broad selection of types, from old to new, character to regimental, glass to pewter.



Also in the museum is a large collection of cash registers made by National Cash Register, a firm founded in Dayton in 1884. The Wright Brothers established a printing busi-



ness in 1889 and the Wright Cycle Exchange in 1892, before turning their attention to aviation.

The National Museum of the United States Air Force is the largest air museum in the world. It spans exhibits from the Wright Brothers era to space capsules, rockets and declassified stealth aircraft of today. It displays aircraft, engines and interactive exhibits that include the training capsules from early space flight. It also contains an impressive collection of war planes and guns from the early 1900's to the present. Dayton is famous for the early flights of the Wright Brothers so this museum shows the early attempts to make aircraft that could be used for transportation as well as war. Large hangers, repurposed for this museum, showcase an array of planes categorized by their era of production.

Wednesday of course was dominated by a stein auction by Fox Auctions. Over 500 items were offered to eager bidders, including a number of rare pieces. Hammer prices were generally strong, although as usual there were a number of surprises: the beautiful, mysterious and always popular Schierholz Masquerade Lady was passed at \$1200; Mettlach 20" etched plaque #2750 sold for almost twice the high estimate; the schizophrenic Schierholz Chinese/German soldier was passed at \$2000; the rare Mettlach flower pot #201 sold for almost 50% above the high estimate; while the etched Mettlach butterscotch Imperial eagle stein sold within the estimated range at \$5500, less than 1/3 the price it sold for one year ago; the handsome one-of-a-kind stone stein (ca. 1740) sold for more than twice the estimate.



Elections were held and award winners announced at the General Membership meeting on Thursday, followed by two excellent informative presentations: Albert Nemeth spoke about Franz Zach, an exceptional glass engraver, followed by newly-minted Master Steinologist Eric Salzano discussing silver steins. Attendees were able to shop the Stein Sales Room in the afternoon, or relax in the well-stocked Hospitality Room,



Above, Boyd Bissell and Sandy Allred impressed in their German costumes (*Trachtenmode*).

before preparing for German Night. A fine meal was accompanied by German dancing and costumes. One of the highlights was the announcement of Miss Beer Stein for 2023, Vicki Guay. Vicky wore the special crown fashioned from a beer can by Clair Hill, with great aplomb and dignity.

Friday morning several Roundtables were held, again all were excellent. Eric Salzano, filling in for David Harr who was unable to attend, titled his Roundtable "Jesus Christ, Superstar!" He showed multiple examples of the unique work of Anton Lang, a potter who portrayed Jesus in the Oberammergau Passion Play for many years. Bob Hurley made the connection between historical drinking scenes in fine art to beer steins, and Don Franz spoke about American Patriotic steins. The traditional Afternoon Tea was held in the afternoon, while others had the opportunity to view the Roger Glass stein collection in Carillon Park.

Saturday morning Master Steinologist Ron Fox shared his knowledge of the Traits of 18th Century German Faience. Ron's main tent presentation was followed by three more highly informative Roundtable sessions: Bernd Hoffmann spoke in detail about the history of August Saeltzer steins,

Master Steinologist Les Paul spoke on the subject of Miniature Steins, and Mike Adkins spoke about Feline Character Steins. Mike provided the most memorable truism of the morning when he referred to a quote by Terry Prachett:

"In ancient times cats were worshipped as gods; they have not forgotten this."

The members' auction was held Saturday afternoon, followed by the final dinner of the convention with music and dancing. This was a good time to seek out friends to say "Goodbye, safe travels, let's do it again next year."

Looking Ahead Madison, WI in 2024

David Bruha has done some initial planning to hold the 2024 SCI Convention in Madison, Wisconsin, over the fourth of July. Madison is the state capital, located on an isthmus between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona. The proposed convention hotel is The Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club, located within one quarter mile of center city and the capital building. Tentative plans include all the usual events and amenities, including an auction by Fox Auctions.

Wisconsin is an outdoor paradise for vacationers, with many opportunities for family activities on the water or just sight-seeing. A zoo, museums, festivals and fairs, the University of Wisconsin, concerts and dining opportunities, breweries, wineries and distilleries — Madison is full of energy. Start making your plans now to join

**SCI on the Isthmus
Madison Wisconsin
July 4-6, 2024**