2006 SCI Convention Report

The 2006 SCI Convention
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
submitted by John Strassberger

The Pennsylvania Keysteiners are to be congratulated for conducting a highly successful, well organized convention. Total attendance reached 300, well more than originally expected, and included 33 First-Timers and 11 children/grandchildren. The Revolutionary Convention began with pre-convention activities on the 3rd through the 5th of July. First was a bus trip into downtown Philadelphia to view the historic sites. The weather in early July 1776 was hazy, hot and humid and that is exactly what our members experienced. On the 4th, attendees boarded three buses for a day long trip to central Pennsylvania to visit the exceptional stein collections in the homes of three Keysteiner families - John and Delores Hataloski; Clarence and Cindy Riley; and Dagmar Rives. There was one more house and collection, that of Dave and Candace Abel, for which adequate words fail me. Ask anyone who toured their house and you will probably get the same reaction - where to begin? Not only does Dave collect steins (nearly all Mettlach or Royal Vienna), but he also collects large, museum quality models of ships, airplanes and trains. Equally, if not more impressive, is the work he and his wife do to support the adoption of at-risk children from around the world. They have adopted twelve children themselves and several were our guides through their home. Food during the day was provided by Clarence Riley through his Spring Garden Reception Center. A huge box lunch on the bus was followed by an excellent German buffet in the evening. (Clarence must have thought none of us had eaten since Long Beach!)

The highlight of the 5th of July was the Gary Kirsner auction.

Formal convention activities began on 6 July with the General Membership Business Meeting. Nominees for office were submitted, and the following people will hold office for 2006:

- President - Phil Masenheimer

- Executive Director - Les Paul
- 1st Vice President (Conventions) - Martin Estep
- 2nd Vice President (Membership) - David Harr
- Treasurer - Ravi Patel
- Secretary - Beatrix Taus
- Editor of Prosit - Ron Fox
- Chapter Development - John Kelly

Dr. Beatrix Adler's accomplishments and contributions to stein collecting were acknowledged by her selection as SCI Master Steinologist. **John McGregor** received the Editor's Award for best article in 2005. **Dagmar Rives** was selected as Miss Beer Stein and reigned over the convention.

Ginger Gehres presented an excellent multi-media presentation on the Covered Container Law. Frank Loevi gave an amusing presentation of the television commercials that are behind the popular Schultz and Dooley steins. That afternoon saw the annual feeding frenzy in the members' stein sales room. Dinner that evening was Philadelphia food with Tasty Cakes for dessert preceded by the appearance of Ben Franklin. He assured us that although he had recently turned 300 years old, he did not feel a day over 200. His wit and wisdom have not diminished with age. We were then entertained by the Philadelphia Mummers.

The next day, presentations were made by Dr. Beatrix Adler on Early Stoneware Steins; Lyn Ayers and Phil Masenheimer on Anri Wood Carvings; and Kurt Siemon on military marksmanship steins. That afternoon while the ladies went to High Tea, other attendees raided the members' stein sales room again. The sales room was opened to the public for the first time.

The evening meal and entertainment was in the Lily Lantry Restaurant where we watched the next to the last show ever put on in the theater.

The last day of the convention began with two presentations by Ron Fox, one on Wedding Cups and the other on kid's steins.

Round table discussions followed, including Keith Lyle on Mettlach PUGs; Jim Sauer on Glass Steins; Steve Smith on Drinking Vessels for the other German Drink - Wine; David Bausch on Antique Toys; and Mildred Detrick

on Antique Half Dolls. The convention closed with the traditional German Night. We had a visit from George Washington, a German Buffet, and dancing to Walt Groeller's German Band.

Next year the convention will be hosted by the Thoroughbred Stein Verein in Louisville, Kentucky. Pre-convention activities will include a tour of the Bluegrass horse country and a Kentucky Bourbon distillery. Sounds like a good start for the convention to me! See you in Louisville.

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