Last Call to the Post
by Andy Shockley

The Convention 2007 was held at the historic Seelbach Hotel in Louisville, KY on July 4th - 7th. The area covered by the Thoroughbred Stein Verein chapter was a real issue because of its geographical size, as each member wanted the convention to be held in his own area. Louisville was chosen because of the location and ease of arrival by car or air. After choosing the city, the selection of the hotel was very difficult until The Seelbach said it would match any rate offered. The hotel and its staff were easy to work with and went out of their way to assure that the convention was a success.



Churchill Downs



Don Murray and Andy Shockley with a representative of Bluegrass Brewing Co.

The Presidential Suite was offered for our hospitality room with the privilege of serving our own beer, wine, and soft drinks without a corkage fee. A special rate of $89.00 for a room (rack rate $170) and a special parking fee in the city garage ($7.00 per day) were negotiated. Food service in the hotel was excellent and was always served on time. Our room block was 360 nights with the option to extend, and all who wanted rooms were accommodated at the hotel.



George Hibben at his stein table...



Flappers at the High Tea



Two gentlemen in the spirit of "The Great Gatsby"

We were able to get grants from the City of Louisville, Louisville Convention Bureau, as well as our "Travel Partners," Pilot Oil Corp., and Cracker Barrel Old Time Country Stores. We were able to get tax exempt status in Kentucky based on our application and SCI 501c 3 Federal Status. This action saved thousands of dollars that would otherwise have been paid by the members attending.

Registration

Credit cards were used again for pre-registration, however, a fee was charged to offset their cost. The Convention Bureau provided lanyard badges and holders for all. Our registration packets contained discounts to several restaurants and bars within a two block radius of the hotel as incentives for our convention attendees.

Each of the five states represented in our chapter made gift baskets designed to show the diversity and cooperation of all our members.

Pre Convention Activities
The Convention Connection Travel Service provided all our tours with a TSV member on each tour to handle any concerns and information that were needed.

The most popular was "Breakfast at Churchill Downs" with the trip to "Woodford Reserve Distillery" a close second. The visit to Louisville Stoneware surprised all of us with its popularity.

Convention Activities
German night was held at the German American Club of Louisville where authentic German food was served along with German beer by the pitcher. German music by Gerbhart Ehrler was an additional treat. Drema Harden was named Miss Beer Stein for 2007.

Traditional High Tea was done by the hotel staff with Rita Hackmiller overseeing. There were 42 people in attendance. The Great Gatsby Night Dance with the Dave Jones orchestra was a great success with many in costumes of the period when the Seelbach was in its prime. Many "flappers" competed for prizes.

Convention Auction
We saw the first auction by the newly formed Stein Auction Co. with Gary and Andre together. The highlight was the spirited bidding for a Mother of Pearl Tankard that reached a total cost of $120,850. I believe this is a record for a sale at any SCI convention.

Our Speakers	**Roundtables**
Walt Vogdes - Rookwood Art Pottery & Steins	Dick Strom - Heraldry for Collectors
Louis Foster - U.S. Cold War Military Steins	George Hibben - Mountain Climbing Steins

Larry Johnson - Seelbach Historian	Phil Masenheimer - Occupational Steins
Ron Heiligenstein - Regimental Steins	Ron Heiligenstein - Recent Trends in Regimental Steins
Norm Paratore - Spa Glass	Richard Cress - Decorating with Mettlach Plaques
	Andre Ammelounx - American College Steins
	Lee Oberhausen - Munich Brewery Steins
	Norm Paratore - Early 1800s Glass Steins

Financially the convention was a great success with 217 registered and $2,000 added to the SCI Convention Reserve Fund after all bills were paid. Our convention stein was produced with the idea that convention steins should be creative and original, not just a stein that can be sold for a profit. Stein Collectors International is listed as an educational nonprofit organization by the U.S. Government and not as a commercial venture to turn a profit.

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