

2016 Convention Report

by
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During the week of August 14th to the 20th our society traveled to the Land of Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois. Many of us took advantage of all of the historical places to visit: Lincoln's house, the wonderful Lincoln Museum, Union Station, and his burial site. These were all great places to see and well worth the trip even if we weren't there for the convention. Wayne Eadie and I even attended the Illinois State Fair and got to see the full size butter cow.

Charlie Specht did three TV interviews leading up to the convention; I did two radio interviews and a TV spot; and Charlie and I were interviewed for the local *Journal Register*, and a nice article appeared in the Thursday edition.

Although many members were there from Sunday on, and the dealer and grab tables, registration, bingo, and a silent auction were available, the first actual convention event was Tuesday night with an Ice Cream Social. We were treated to a terrific visit by a special guest, President Abraham Lincoln. The actor who portrayed him did a wonderful job and even took questions when he was finished with his presentation. Wednesday, the real business of the convention got going with the specialty club meetings and the first of four auctions. Marc Edelman, our auctioneer, and his team did a terrific job and brought in \$23,447 for the week, \$4,688.75 of which will go to the host club and RMS.

We had 123 members registered, with Illinois having the most (21), followed by Pennsylvania (15), Ohio (14), and New York (7). There were 7 members from Canada. We had 7 dealers who had a lot of great items for sale, and Bob Hofacker once again did a great job of keeping the grab tables packed high with covers and boxes.

There were 103 displays submitted by 23 people, and they were all great to see. Charlie Specht also had a display of match cases and historical and interesting items for all to enjoy. This was my 33rd RMS convention, and I'm still amazed when I see items I've never seen before. Loren Ross and his fine group of helpers did a super job of setting up and overseeing the display room.

The week went very fast, and before we knew it it was time for cocktails and the awards banquet. The hotel served a very nice meal, with choices of ribs or salmon. The table centerpieces were very well done, with Lincoln's top hat filled with confetti and matches. After dinner, we moved on to presenting the awards. The big winners were Rich Greene with 5 RMS and 4 Club awards; Charlie Specht with 5 RMS and 4 Club awards; Ellen Gutting with 5 RMS awards; Dick Hagerman with 2 RMS and 5 Club awards; Tom Gray with 4 RMS awards; Gayle Hofacker with 3 RMS and 3 Club awards; and Marc Edelman with 1 RMS and 3 Club awards.

The "Peoples Choice Award" went to Charlie Specht for his "Old Movies and Movie Stars" display, and the "Best of Show" award went to Dick Hagerman for his "Times Remembered of Traveling" display. Congratulations to all of them and to those other winners not mentioned.

Wally Mains was given the Outstanding Collector of the Year award, and Penny Smith and Bob Cigrang were elected to the Hall of Fame. All of these were much deserved.

The awards were followed by a lively raffle conducted by Nora Van Tol with two free room nights and money prizes. We then adjourned to the cocktail lounge where Bob Borton once again made the toast "Not goodbye, but until we meet again next year in Hagerstown."

Congratulations go out to Charlie Specht, Bob Cigrang, and Charles Bressler for all the work and planning they put in to make the convention a success. They did a fantastic job, and all who attended really enjoyed themselves. I'm already looking forward to our 77th in Hagerstown next year.