

Convention 2019

by Joe DeGennaro

The 79th RMS Convention is in the books and I thought it was great. It was my 33rd convention so I think I'm qualified to make that evaluation. We had 140 registered. We always get a good turnout when we hold our convention in Ohio since there's a large amount of collectors in the area or surrounding area. The largest contingent was from Ohio with 33 followed by Pennsylvania with 18, Canada with 12, Michigan 10 and New York with 8.

Everyone registering received a very nice large Cleveland shopping bag that I believe were donated by the Forest City Matchcover Club. Inside was the program book, a smaller size schedule, name tag, a nice bag of covers, a flyer for a scavenger hunt and a small blue ticket. Each day one of those tickets was drawn with the winner receiving a free room night. On the final day of the convention a ticket was drawn with the winner receiving an album chock filled with great matches assembled by Bill Gigantino from our collectors.

We had 14 dealer tables that were heaped high with great items for sale. I think this might be the largest number of dealers we've had in many years. The grab tables were always overflowing thanks to the efforts of Greg Wolf and Bob Hofacker.

There were 82 displays entered by 22 collectors and, as you will see by the pictures there were some really wonderful displays, many of which I had never seen before. The display room was once again manned by Loren Moore and his terrific group of volunteers. I feel the display room is very important not only for our fellow collectors to view but also for any new people and outsiders so they can get a feel of what our covers and boxes are all about.

There were four great auctions with a multitude of matches that lent themselves to some vigorous bidding. Once again our auctioneer, Marc Edelman, did a superb job aided by a strong group of wonderful volunteers who are always there to assist. The four auctions brought in \$25,350 with the Society getting a 20% share which came to \$5,770.

We had 87 at the banquet. It was a very nice buffet with plenty of selections to serve everyone's taste. With our Friday night banquets the buffet has been a big hit with all attending.

The awards started with the local and specialty club awards. The winners were a mix of many people with Denise McKinney winning 4, Ellen Gutting 2, Bill Evans 2 and Marc Edelman 2. The RMS awards also had a wide mix of winners. Bill Evans had 6, Marc Edelman had 4 Denise McKinney 3, Rich Greene 2, Joel Acus

2, Ellen Gutting 2, Bob Borton 2 and Morris Pasternak 2. The People's Choice went to Joel Acus for his wonderful display of features and the Best of Show award went to Bob Borton for a fantastic display of Silver Screen Stars.

The Outstanding Collector Award went to Richard Giardini and, for the first time in our history a husband and wife, Gayle and Bob Hofacker, were elected to the Hall of Fame at the same time. Congratulations to all.

Following the banquet we adjoined to the bar for our usual farewell drink. Bob Borton was in good voice and, joined by Dave Carr, gave us a great rendition of Old Man River. Bob ended the night with our usual farewell toast "Not goodbye but until we meet again"

Let me close by commending our President, Nancy Smith, for a job well done. She went out of her way to make sure all went well and it did. See you next year in Scranton