

# PITTSBURGH STEIN SOCIETY NEWS

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*September is here !! . Warm days,  
cool nights, and yard sales !!*

## Next Meeting Schedule

Our next meeting will be at the end of this month, September 30<sup>th</sup>. A very nice buffet lunch will be offered for the low price of \$7.00 for stein club members (correct change please) and \$10.00 for non-members. As always, the meeting will begin at 12:00 noon with the luncheon, followed by a short business meeting and then show-n-tell. Stein sales tables can be set up as early as 11:30 am. We will not have a guest speaker at this meeting so please bring in your favorite stein or two or one that has an interesting story behind it to share with your fellow stein club members.



## Happy Birthday Wishes



## Happy Birthday To:

*Scott Allen ..... September 7*

*Bill Dimmock ..... September 23*

*May your special day be filled with  
happiness and good health !!!*

## Tip of the Month

This may sound as if it is obvious to most stein collectors but surprisingly, because a lot of people do not do this, the most damage done to a stein occurs on the top rim of the stein. So, this month's tip is, *always handle a stein with two hands, one supporting the bottom of the stein and the second one holding down the lid*. When lids are allowed to bang down on to the stein top rim, bad things happen to the stein, the least of which is chipping our cracking of the rim. Please, do not de-value your beautiful stein, or even worse, someone else's, by letting the lid come down hard onto the top rim. Be gentle, the stein and the stein owner, will appreciate it.

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Society

### **OFFICERS**

President .....Tom Levenson  
Vice President ..... Bill Boss  
Treasurer ..... Joyce Hoffman  
Secretary ..... Mark Paden  
Guest Speaker Coordinator.. Tom Weber

Newsletter Editor ..... Tom Levenson

### **Congratulations**

Congratulations to our own PSS member, Frank Glazer who, at the recent Stein Collectors International convention held in Dayton, Ohio, was elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Memberships for SCI. Frank will report directly to the Executive Director of SCI and will be charged with promoting and expanding the membership of SCI along with other membership functions of that organization.

Good luck Frank in your position of VP, Memberships for SCI. The Pittsburgh Stein Society is proud to have another one of its members serving on the Executive Committee of SCI.

### **News From SCI**

The 55<sup>th</sup> annual convention of Stein Collectors International was held in Dayton, Ohio on July 27 – July 29. A new Executive Committee of Stein Collectors International was elected during this convention and the following are the new officers and their positions:

Executive Director .. Eric Salzano  
President .. Ron Fox  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Conventions .. John Kelly  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Memberships .. Frank Glazer  
Chief Financial Officer .. Celia Clark  
Membership Database Manager .. Tom Levenson  
Secretary .. Chris Gatz  
Editor of Prosit .. Steve Breuning  
Chapter development Support Officer .. Walter Swett  
Director SCI Research Library & Museum .. Harry Gruss  
Ethics Committee Chair .. Pat Jahn  
Bylaws & Standing Rules Chair .. Roy Kellogg  
Parliamentarian .. Fred Irtz

Good Luck to all the new officers of SCI in performing their important duties.

### **Did You Know**

Did you know that our very own PSS member, Kevin Varrato, is the Hausmeister of the Teutonia Männerchor Club? So, what the heck is a “Hausmeister”? Well according to German Wikipedia, a Hausmeister is a caretaker or someone who repairs and maintains a building. Everything that you see outdoors as well as indoors at the Teutonia Club is maintained, repaired, replaced, or modified by Kevin and his small crew of volunteers. Great job Kevin. We are proud to include you in our PSS membership.





### November Meeting

Our Fall/Winter meeting is scheduled for November 11<sup>th</sup>. This will be our last meeting of 2023. Look for more details in future newsletters.

### Members Directory

If you have not received the new Members Directory or new inserts for the Master Directory, please let this Editor know. Some new members who joined after June 2023 may not have received the directory information. Please email me at [thomaslevenson@yahoo.com](mailto:thomaslevenson@yahoo.com).

### News from Teutonia

The Teutonia Männerchor club is holding a Public Oktoberfest on September 1, 2, & 3. Admission is \$5.00 at the door per day and the times are Friday, 5:00-10:00 pm, Saturday Noon-10:00pm and Sunday, Noon-5:00pm. Membership to the Teutonia Club is not required for admission. Real German beer, food and live music under the big tent will be featured on the club grounds. If you have never attended one of these Oktoberfests, you are missing out on a fun time. Plan on attending this one. Music by The Barons (Fri., Sat, Sun) and The Polkameisters (Sat.).

### Membership Renewals

September, October, November, and December are months when many PSS memberships are up for renewal. Email reminders will be sent out to those of us

whose memberships are up for renewal in these months. A renewal form will be attached to the emails and we kindly ask that you fill out the form and send it along with your due's payment to our Treasurer, Joyce Hoffman. The price of all membership levels will remain the same as last year. Please renew early. Thank you for your continued support of the PSS.

### Featured Article of the Month

This month's featured article is not about a beer stein, a famous stein designer, nor even a beautiful occupational stein. No, this month's featured article has nothing to do with steins or stein collecting. So why is it in a newsletter of a stein collecting club? The answer is because this month's featured article is about one of the most beautiful and delicate drinking vessels that you will ever find. In addition, this drinking vessel poses somewhat of a puzzle as to how to drink out of it. This month's featured article is all about the "WEDDING CUP."

This article is written by Salvatore Mazzone and first appeared in the September 2022 issue of *Prosit* magazine. If you ever get an opportunity to see a WEDDING CUP up close and feel the delicateness of these cups, please do so. You will not be disappointed.







*The PSS Representatives to the 2023 SCI Convention,  
Dianne & Leo Grace, Frank Glazer, Justina & Tom Levenson*



## My Jungfraubecher "Family"

By Salvatore Mazzone

Florida Sun Steiners

My first beer steins were simple souvenirs brought back from trips abroad in 1979. When I started collecting seriously, I chose to form a broadly eclectic collection. Then, in 2015, I pushed my collection's eclecticism beyond beer steins, though still within the bounds of drinking vessels, and acquired my first *Jungfraubecher*, which is shown in Figure 1.



In German, *Jung-frau-becher* literally means young-woman-cup, and, as can be seen from Figure 1, that indeed accurately describes this drinking vessel. It is marked "925", indicating its 92.5% silver content, thus achieving the percentage required for the Sterling standard. It also has hallmarks showing it was made by the Ludwig Neresheimer firm of Hanau, Germany and British import marks of the Chester assay office showing it was imported by the Boaz, Moses, Landek Company in 1911. It is 9-3/4" tall and weighs 9.55 troy ounces, or 10.5 avoirdupois ounces. Somehow it ultimately made its way to the USA.

Also known as *Jungfrauenbechers*, *Brautbechers*, *Hochzeitbechers*, marriage cups, wedding cups, and wager cups, these drinking vessels appear to have had their origin in Nürnberg, Germany. In a June 1987 *Prosit* article, John A. Ey, Jr. asserted that the "first known wedding cup (was) made in 1540 by the master goldsmith Hans Kellner of Nürnberg." However, my research showed Kellner was born later than this, either in 1551 or 1553, became a master goldsmith in 1582, and died in 1609. I was able to find reliable documentation that Kellner did indeed manufacture at least one

*Jungfraubecher* during his illustrious career as a master gold and silver smith. Figure 2 is a magnificent 24.8 cm tall Kellner-made cast silver, embossed, gilded, and hallmarked *Jungfraubecher* from the Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany. They date its creation as between 1595-1602. Kellner certainly could have created others as well, both earlier and later than this one.



There is a more romantic legend of the origin of the *Jungfraubecher*, which goes something like this:

*Centuries ago, in old Nürnberg, the noble mistress Kunigunde fell in love with a young and ambitious goldsmith. Although Kunigunde's wealthy father, a powerful nobleman, did not approve of this pairing, it was clear that she wanted only the goldsmith as her husband, as she refused many titled and rich suitors who asked for her hand in marriage.*

*Her father became so enraged that he had the young goldsmith thrown into the darkest dungeon. Not even his daughter's bitter tears could change her father's mind.*

*To her father's dismay, imprisoning the young man did not end his daughter's love for the goldsmith. Instead, he could only watch as his daughter grew paler and paler as a result of the separation from her true love.*

*The wealthy nobleman reluctantly made the following proposal: He told his daughter, "If your goldsmith can make a chalice from which two people can drink at the same time without spilling one single drop, I will free him and you shall become his bride".*

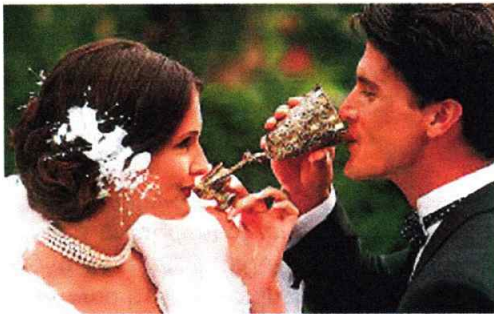


Of course, he was certain no one could perform such a task.

Inspired by love, and with skillful hands, the young goldsmith created a masterpiece. He sculpted a girl with a smile as beautiful as his own true love's. Her skirt was hollowed to serve as a cup. Her raised arms held a bucket that swiveled so that it could be filled and then swung towards a second drinker.

The challenge was met. The goldsmith and the nobleman's daughter joined hands in marriage, and with the bridal cup set forth a romantic and memorable tradition as charming today as it was originally, hundreds of years ago.

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The next *Jungfraubecher* I acquired is shown in Figure 4. Instead of a young woman, this example is in the form of a bearded man. (Since this vessel depicts a man instead of a woman, a more appropriate term might be *Jungmannbecher*, but I'm not going to belabor the terminology, you will know what I mean.)

Although not truly rare, male *Jungfraubechers* are vastly outnumbered by females. This one is quite tall, measuring 11

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inches in height. It weighs 14.14 troy ounces or 15.5 avoirdupois ounces. Its only marking is ".925", indicating Sterling quality silver. It was probably manufactured in Germany in the early 1900s, but I am unable to ascertain beyond reasonable doubt by whom that might have been.

My next *Jungfraubecher* purchase was the young lady shown in Figure 5. Her cups are made of blown cranberry glass and her body is brass. She stands 8-1/4 inches tall and features some very nice ornamental gilded scrollwork. She is of Bohemian origin and was likely made by Fritz Heckert (1837-1887) of Warmbrunn, Silesia. Founded in 1866 originally as a refinery of mirrors and carved glass chandelier pieces, the Heckert Company expanded to produce magnificent glassware and grew to play an important role in the Bohemian glass industry.

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My most recent *Jungfraubecher* acquisition, purchased to complete my *Jungfraubecher* "family", is shown in Figure 6. She is a simple yet attractive diminutive *fraulein* made of cast pewter. She is of German origin, dates somewhere between the early to mid-1900s, and stands 6-1/2 inches tall.

The right hand side of Figure 6 shows a hallmark that appears on the bottom of the small raised cup. It depicts an angel with a sword in one hand and a balance scale in the other. The words "FEINZINN" and the letters "ZMN" are imprinted around the angel. The symbolism of a woman with a sword and scales dates back to Justitia, the ancient Roman goddess of justice. The winged angel with sword and scales symbol, however, represents Saint Michael the archangel; it came into use by continental European pewterers in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and was applied only to lead free pewter of the finest quality. The term "FEINZINN" came into use by German pewterers beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century also to indicate high quality no-lead pewter.





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The initials "ZMN" connote the manufacturer, Zinn Menna Nürnberg. Founded in 1899 by Johann Baptist Menna, the firm was destroyed by the war in 1945, re-established in 1949, changed its name in 2006, and was dissolved in 2017. There is a great deal of *feinzinn* in this piece: she weighs in at a hefty-for-her-size 11-3/4 avoirdupois ounces.

Since their inception, these novel drinking vessels have been made from many materials – gold, silver, glass, pewter, ivory, and, reportedly, even wood. Today you can easily find them, new and old, on the internet. They range from nice looking, well-made expensive European and American silver and gold heirloom pieces to cheap Asian knock-offs.

Figure 7 was taken from an eBay "Marriage Cup" listing. It was represented as "like-new," came with the original box and had an accompanying tag bearing the name F. B. Rogers Silver Company, Taunton, Mass, which noted that it was "Printed in Japan". I suspect the cup itself also was made in Japan as several other identical marriage cups listed on eBay actually had "Made in Japan" stickers on them. It carried a Buy-It-Now price of just \$21.25. I've seen it reported that the plating on these, whatever it may be, is exceedingly fragile and has a tendency to flake off; there was a warning tag with this one saying not to use silver polish on it.



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At any given time, one can usually find a plethora of these F. B. Rogers marriage cups and similar lookalikes listed on eBay, some misrepresented as "antiques from Nürnberg, Germany" with a hefty asking price. This one doesn't look bad in the photo, and it should serve the purpose in a wedding cup ceremony, but it is not one I would choose to own as a collector.

Hundreds of years old, the *Jungfraubecher* and the wedding cup ceremony are still alive and well today, as is the belief of the legend that love, faithfulness and good luck await the newlywed couple who drink from this cup.

The ceremony, I am told, is performed as follows:

*During the reception dinner, at the appropriate time, the best man stands and lets everyone know that he has a special toast for the bride and groom and holds up the Jungfraubecher for all to see. The wedding couple then stands and faces each other and the groom takes the Jungfraubecher and turns it upside down so that the large skirt becomes a cup.*

*Champagne, or whatever may be the beverage of choice, is poured into the now upright hollow skirt. The jungfraubecher legend is sometimes read by the best man or other wedding party member as this is being done.*

*After the large skirt is filled, the bride takes the smaller cup in hand, swivels it upright, and allows it to also be filled.*

*The best man now gives the toast.*

*Together, the wedding couple raises their cups to their lips to drink together, being careful not to spill a drop, for if they can drink without spilling a drop, love, faithfulness and good luck will be theirs forever!*

*Some choose to delve even deeper into the old tradition and add "Who Rules the Nest" to the ceremony, wherein, just before the bride and groom drink from the wedding cup, the maid of honor stands and boldly announces: "Whoever finishes first without spilling a drop will Rule the Nest!"*

*Of course, since the bride has the smaller cup, she is likely to come out the winner. Which is entirely appropriate since she will undoubtedly be the Ruler of the Nest in any event!*

