



Society for Commercial Archeology

40TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

**CINCINNATI - OVER-THE-RHINE
TOUR 1 • OCTOBER 5, 2017**

Queen City

We will board the bus after exploring the Hilton Netherlands Hotel and Carew Tower. Our mid-day stop will be in Over-the-Rhine. We will cross over to Covington, Kentucky then end the day with a special celebratory dinner at the American Sign Museum.

Cincinnati

In the 19th century, Cincinnati was an American boomtown in the heart of the country and it rivaled the larger coastal cities in size and wealth. It held the position of America's sixth-largest city for a period spanning 1840-1860, by far the largest city in the west. Because it is the first American city founded after the American revolution as well as the first major inland city, it is often thought of as the first purely "American" city.

Cincinnati differs from most east coast cities in that it developed with less European immigration than eastern cities in the same period, however it received a significant number of German immigrants who founded many of the city's cultural institutions.

Tour begins at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza Hotel

We begin the tour at the hotel which was completed in 1931. The financing came from the Emery family which had made their fortune in processing the by-products of Cincinnati's stockyards. The architects were Walter W. Ahlschlager and Colonel William Starrett of Starrett Brothers, Inc. of New York for the construction. Starrett was a well-known builder of Washington D.C.'s Union Station and Lincoln Memorial, and New York City's Empire State Building (opened 1931) and Penn Station (1910). Ahlschlager designed the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, TN (1925) and the Medinah Athletic Club in Chicago (1929) which later became the Intercontinental Hotel.

The Carew Tower and Netherland Plaza Hotel were designed to be a "city within a city". The concept was new in 1929, but Emery, Ahlschlager and Cincinnati were willing to gamble that this combination of shops, department stores, offices and hotel would work, easing the life of downtown residents, workers, and visitors. The practicality of this arrangement was made apparent recently when in 1990 the complex was purchased by the Belvedere Corporation. The re-development of the Carew Tower

Shopping Arcade and Office Tower, featuring its collection of upscale specialty shops, restaurants, a 13,000 square foot fitness center complete with lap pool, and 500,000 square feet of office space. Be sure to check out Hathaway's Diner. A luncheonette on the lower level of the arcade since 1956.

Carew Tower Observatory "Queen of the Queen City"

Construction began on January 8, 1930 and initially consisted of pouring the concrete base. This base was poured in only 30 hours, with 400 men workmen assisting. Steel construction began on February 10, 1930. One thousand men worked round the clock in an attempt to build the colossus in record time. An ironworkers strike in the spring slowed construction for 49 days; however, on July 7, 1930 the American flag was raised on the top of the Tower, setting a new world's record that remains unchallenged: 15,000 tons of steel for the framework of the building had been raised in only 61 days. From the 49th floor we will have a 360 degree view of the Ohio River, Great American Ball Park, Brown Stadium, Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, Northern Kentucky and beyond. Hopefully it's a clear day!



John A. Roebling Bridge

Opening in 1867, sometimes called the singing bridge because of the hum its metal-grate frame makes when driving over it, the Roebling connects The Banks in downtown Cincinnati to Covington, Kentucky. It's a popular artery for both strolling pedestrians and commuting motor vehicles. The blue beauty was a prototype for the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City, which opened nearly two decades later.

1937 FLOOD. In the annals of Cincinnati history, no tragedy is greater than the Flood of 1937 when the Ohio River crested 80 feet above its normal pool killing 385 people throughout the Ohio Valley, and putting the entire Cincinnati Basin under water. Sand bags protected the approaches to the Roebling Bridge, which was the only bridge left open for 800 miles of flooded Ohio River.



Downtown Covington, Kentucky, is loaded with an array of Main Street commercial buildings, mid-century entrance aprons and metal box signs, including one for Richs Jewelry store advertising the Gruen watches that were once made in Cincinnati.



We will cross over the river to talk about the Roebling Bridge and floodwall murals. Later we will see downtown Covington, Kentucky.

Cincinnati Museum Terminal at Union Station

New York architects Alfred Fellheimer and Steward Wagner were chosen to design the new station and they in turn hired Paul Cret from Philadelphia to assist their designer, Roland Wank, to work out the proposed design. The construction started in 1929 and was completed in 1933. The initial proposal called for a classical structure, which was very costly and by that time, fairly out of style. Cret and Wank were tasked to bring the design into the modern style, what we now call Art Deco.



Described as a “Temple to Transportation” by local and national press, Union Terminal was in many ways a dream come true for Cincinnati. For 50 years, various plans had been put forward for a unified rail station. Finally it had arrived and one of the finest stations ever built.

Organizationally the building was a marvel. Incoming traffic was split into three ramps. The first served taxis and cars, the second buses, and the last was for streetcars. The streetcar line was never connected. Arriving and departing traffic was split on either side of the rotunda. The rotunda is second largest in the world.



Findlay Market

Findlay Market in historic Over-the-Rhine, is Ohio's oldest continuously operated public market. There are three-dozen indoor merchants selling produce, meat, fish, deli and ethnic foods. On Saturdays and Sundays the market comes alive with outdoor vendors, street performers, a farmers' market and a beer garden.



Revolutions in 1848 brought many German refugees to this area which was separated from greater Cincinnati by Miami and Erie canals. In 1850 approximately 63% of the population in this area were from German states and the neighborhood soon took on a "German" character. A very large intact 19th century historic district.

Brewing Tour

The Lager tour will start at Findlay Market and we will walk up Elm Street and learn how German immigrants built the densely populated neighborhoods, which precipitated their thirst for beer. Walking past the original Christian Moerlein brewery complex, we will learn about this historic pre-prohibition brewery that once was one of the largest in the country. We will continue to the Sohn/Cliffside brewhouse, one of the most stellar examples of brewery architecture in the city, where we will see the ornate high-bay brewing spaces inside. The final stop is deep under the Jackson Brewery, venturing through to the massive network of lagering cellars in the Clifton hillside.

Note: This is a walking tour through former breweries, and involves walking about 8 blocks outside and through old buildings. Please dress accordingly.





Cincinnati Music Hall

Overlooking Washington Park, Music Hall is home to the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Cincinnati Ballet, Cincinnati Opera, and May Festival Chorus among other local performing arts organizations. Built in 1878, from funds raised in what is believed to be one of the nation's first matching grant fund drive. The style is known to be Gothic and Venetian Gothic Architecture. The architect was Samuel Hannaford.

This entertainment venue is considered one of the best and most beautiful concert theaters in the world, and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975. It is currently closed for renovation, but it is supposed to re-open Fall 2017.



Bavarian Brewing Company

In 1870, Bavarian produced 231,000 gallons of beer; by 1914 almost 7,000,000 gallons a year. Between 1945 and 1952, the brewery was open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. By 1966 it was losing money and a decision was made to close. The community rallied and convinced the City to deny a demolition permit. A recent article says It is the future home of Kenton County Administration offices. The county purchased the site in July 2016.



Spare Time Grill, Alexandria, Kentucky



Spare Time Grill has been used in several movies. Recently in “Carol” (2014) and also “Fresh Horses” (1972).



Lunken Airport

It is also known as Cincinnati Municipal Airport and was used that way until 1947. When it opened in 1925 it was the largest municipal airport in the world.

Lunken Airport was supplanted by the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport after flooding from the Ohio River and introduction of larger aircraft that needed longer runways. The terminal was dedicated in 1938 in an Art Deco style. Two beautiful murals by William Harry Gothard, one depicting a man oppressed by gravity, the other showing him liberated by the freedom to fly.



Jerry's Turf Club



Cincinnati Subway Ruins

Cincinnati has the country's largest abandoned subway tunnel! Construction slowed to a stop in the late 1920's before even half of the 16 mile line was completed. No track was laid and no subway cars were ordered.

There are five other crossings over Ohio River:
Newport Southbank Bridge (opened 1872)
Taylor-Southgate Bridge (opened 1995)
Clay Wade Bailey Bridge (opened 1974)
Daniel Carter Beard Bridge (opened 1976)
Brent Spence Bridge (opened 1963)
Combs-Hehl Bridge



American Sign Museum

SCA participants will be treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of not only the museum's warehouse space, but the shop where many signs—both those awaiting restoration and those already restored—are on display. The majority of the photo and paper (catalogs, artwork, brochures, etc.) archives are also accessible in the shop as well as the museum's collection of vintage Signs of the Times magazines, a handful of which date from the 1910-1919 period and a healthy representations from the 1920s-1930s.

The 20,000 sq. ft. warehouse section known as the Annex houses the museum's stockpile of neon glass and related components as well an array of signs, including a late 1940s 20-ft. furniture company sign from Galesburg, IL; a circa 1910 wood and lightbulb-studded Vaudeville sign; and a circa 1920 theatre sign reading "Talkies" on its lower panel. A back room houses the museum's stockpile of individual letters—plastic, porcelain, opal glass and metal—as well as vintagepoint-of-purchase signs, sign tags and window neon signs.

A 1944 Dodge crane truck with a hand-crank crane is also stored in the museum's Annex.

There will also be ongoing upfront-and-personal neon demonstrations at Neonworks, the museum's in-house neon shop. Co-owners Greg Pond and Tom Wartman have been bending and pumping neon for a combined 50-plus years.

We will end our day with a special 40th Anniversary reception and dinner at the museum. Enjoy your visit and take lots of photos.



Downtown walking tour

We will have a Downtown walking tour on Friday, October 6 after the Paper Symposium. The hotel is adjacent to West Fourth Street Historic District which survives as an intact remnant of the turn-of-the-century streetscape and the expansion of residential, wholesale, retail and industrial uses between 1870 and 1927. Architecture is primarily Italianate, Second Renaissance Revival and Commercial. Here are some images of what you might see.



*Dixie Terminal
Building (1921)*



*Mercantile Building and
The Amelia Valerio Weinberg
Memorial Fountain*



