

FOHBC

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



FERDINAND MEYER V

FMG Design, Inc.
101 Crawford Street
Studio 1A
Houston, Texas 77002
713.222.7979 x115
fmeyer@fohbc.org

This is an interesting issue of Bottles and Extras because the word or feelings associated with the color brown and amber are evident throughout. First, I write this message after Thanksgiving on 30 November.

November is a brown month as many of the leaves have changed from the gorgeous yellow and red ambers to a darker amber or they have fallen altogether, depending on where you are from. Thanksgiving is a brown holiday for me because of the ceremonial turkey and his amber feathers, the pilgrims and, of course, Indians.

Brown is also represented on this issue's cover with a Brown's Celebrated Indian Herb Bitters in chocolate brown coloration superimposed over an image of the Brown's Indian Queen Hotel in Washington, D.C. Wow, that's pretty cool, isn't it? Inside you will find on page 24 my next installment on antique bottle and glass colors called "The Color Amber – Not Brown." Hey, we are not finished yet as there is also a killer digging story on page 56 called "A Silver Lining in that Storm – Brown's Aromatic Bitters," a super rare bitters from Hannibal, Missouri. You know, where Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) is from.

Jim Bender has also hit another home run with his "Springfield Bound" article on page 32. We get so many compliments about Jim and his writing style. He certainly has a knack for connecting with the core group of collectors in our hobby. So proud to be able to work with that guy. The 2017 Springfield National Co-Chairs (Jim Bender & Bob Strickhart) asked if we would also put the Springfield National contract within this issue for folks without a computer. Well, we thought, what a great idea! Why not just put the whole "Information Packet and Contracts" within because the document is so full of information for our upcoming mega event. We sure hope you will make every attempt to come. We are far ahead of table sale projections and really plan for this to be our best convention yet.

Next, I would like to get something off my chest so to speak as it is a concern I have with our membership and our future. The catalyst for my comments were a series of communications and a long talk with fellow collector Chris Hartz from Arroyo Grande, California. You can see his words called "Some Good Ideas" on Page 9 of Member News. Some may have attended the fine seminar that Chris gave at the 2016 Sacramento National on American Scent Bottles as he is certainly an authority in this area. He is also writing what he calls the "best ever" scent bottle article in a future issue of Bottles and Extras.

When I first read Chris's wonderful ideas in an email, I thought to myself that some of the ideas have already taken roots and are part of the new FOHBC. When I asked Chris and noted specific examples in Bottles and

Extras and referenced our robust web site, he replied that he was not a member of the FOHBC. I scratched my head on that, mulled it over and realized it was the crux of my concern as many collectors kind of feel they are either already members by default with their association with our hobby and organization or worse yet, feel that they do not need to be a member.

As an American, we are inherently and proudly independent. Just look at our celebration on the 4th of July. America was built by independent thought, ideas and actions. Our recent presidential elections certainly prove that. As with our country, being a collector is all about independence. We choose what we collect, how we collect and whom we associate with. We are passionate and love to share by nature. We like to learn too as every bottle has a story.

Here is the paradox. With this independence we still need unity. That is why there are political parties, religious institutions, community efforts and family at all levels. We make decisions as a group as every vote and thought counts.

With that said, we are only as strong as ourselves in this hobby, but proportionally stronger with the FOHBC. While collecting alone may be enough to some, we must realize that the sum of all of us working together is much greater than one. The FOHBC cannot continue to put together our fine magazine, have our great national events with seminars, displays, auctions, banquets, meetings, tours etc., build our Virtual Museum or provide outreach and assistance to collectors on a unit basis. Our power is in our numbers. You can certainly be yourself, but you must realize that we need you to move forward with our hobby. Times are changing and you can do so much alone on your computer. That is fine but antique bottle collecting is about people. We always hear that. Get your collecting friends to join the FOHBC, spread the gospel and we can all tackle the many challenges ahead as a team.

We are fortunate to have so many great board members and others wanting to donate their time and experience to the betterment of our hobby. The FOHBC is all-inclusive. It doesn't matter what you collect or how you collect. The value of your collection is meaningless as long as you have the passion and fire to be an antique bottle collector.

Oh, Chris is now a proud member of the FOHBC and will be working with us moving forward.

With the success of our Member Photos section (page 64) we are contemplating adding a new department within Bottles and Extras dealing with recent finds. You know the bottles we dig, find in the basement or barn or just plain fall in our laps that seem to be exceptions. Please send your images to the FOHBC and a brief description of what you found and where and we will consider the entry. We need to always get better and evolve as we go. Let's give it a try next issue.

Merry Christmas and have a super New Year. I look forward to seeing many of you in Baltimore or Morro Bay in March and continue to work with various teams on the multitude of things that the FOHBC is doing. Oh, and you individual clubs, it's time to put together your entries for the Club Contests. A full-page notice is on page 60.

In closing, let's all row together and play from the same sheet of music.