



By Richard Siri

Mission Statement

The FOHBC Virtual Museum has been established to display, inform, educate, and enhance the enjoyment of historical bottle and glass collecting by providing an online virtual museum experience for significant historical bottles and other items related to early glass.

Virtual Museum News is a recently added section within each issue of *Bottles and Extras* authored by museum founder, Richard Siri, to give our membership an update on progress for this landmark project.

Work continues! As of 15 January 2018, Alan DeMaison has completed imaging for 150 bottles and is working on another grouping as I write. So far this includes bitters, historical flasks, spirits, a few medicines and even a fire grenade. Once completed, these images are embedded into the respective museum gallery where facts and other support information is added. One bottle at a time. Rome wasn't built in a day.



Alan is also lining up other shoots, one being up Illinois-way to see Jerry McCann's fruit jar collection. Lots of colors and closures I bet. It will be interesting to see what they decide to photograph. So far, if memory serves correct, Alan has been to Texas, Colorado, California, Massachusetts and Connecticut on filming expeditions. What a great opportunity to see some of the great collections and bottles and to hear some of the stories that go along with them. Now you too, will be able to visit the museum and share in this monumental experience.

I thought I would use the rest of my space in this column this issue to deal with a few questions we are sometimes asked.

Question: Is there a model you are following for the Museum development?

Answer: A good question that we ask ourselves every day or whenever we have a decision to make. We simply follow the structure of what any outstanding museum would do. Though it is virtual, it is still a museum where we want people to be excited to visit and to fulfill their quest for knowledge and inspiration.

Question: Can I have one of my bottles photographed for the museum?

Answer: When Alan sets up the Virtual Museum booth at a show, as he did recently at the 2017 Springfield National, he is able to do on-site imaging. If anyone would like to submit a bottle for museum consideration, they should contact Alan in advance to see if he has time or is working on a category where your bottle example might be needed. The plan is to have Alan set up at the 2018 Cleveland National. Alan has also been able to accept a few walk-ins too.

Question: When will the Virtual Museum open?

Answer: We plan to unveil the Virtual Museum formally at the FOHBC 2018 Cleveland National show banquet. This should really be exciting! As noted previously, the bitters gallery will open first. About sixty (60) bitters will be initially displayed. The Beta test version was revealed at the 2017 Springfield National to a lot of wows.

Question: Can anyone visit the Virtual Museum?

Answer: Our Virtual Museum board is planning to have a meeting in January to discuss museum access, membership, cost etc. Our initial thinking is to allow access to FOHBC members and to sell day passes, just like a typical museum. Of course, we want to encourage membership with the FOHBC.

Question: Can I make a donation to the Virtual Museum? I suspect this is a financially challenging project.

Answer: Donations to the Virtual Museum are welcomed as this landmark project does cost money and is separate from other FOHBC expenses. Donations are under the 501 3-C tax code so your donations are tax deductible. On page 11 of this issue, and each issue is a half page Virtual Museum 'Giving' advertisement showing our financial goals and contact information for giving.

Question: Are there different levels of giving?

Answer: There are five (5) levels of giving which include Friends, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels. We've received many gifts from individuals from \$10 or so up to \$1,000 plus. Names are listed on the FOHBC web site under the respective headings to honor the donation. Please click the bottle on the right side of the home page. Bottle clubs are also one of our many contributors. There will eventually be a donor wall within the Virtual Museum just like most museums. We even have the opportunity to have a gallery either permanently or temporary named after an individual or entity. Of course we are talking more money here. Just like any museum.

