



THE MAGAZINE MERGER

Bottles and Extras + Antique Bottle & Glass Collector

By now some, if not most, of our members and the antique bottle collecting world in general, are aware of the impending merger between our two hobby magazines. *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* (AB&GC) is being gifted to the FOHBC by John Pastor. This action will increase membership, increase revenue and allow the FOHBC to be more relevant to a broader group of collectors. It is problematic and redundant having two competing 1st class magazines. John's subscribers are declining, as is our membership to the FOHBC. Also, John Pastor would like to focus on his successful American Glass Gallery auction business.

The FOHBC board has discussed the possibility of a magazine merger for years and finally voted unanimously to proceed with this project in October 2021. The first issue of the new magazine will be the March-April 2022 issue. The Covid-19 pandemic stressed our hobby and membership and, at the same time, has given us opportunities for change, and this will be a big one. Many of you know John Pastor as he is a past FOHBC President and Director-at-Large.

HISTORY

The following workable parameters were acceptable to the FOHBC magazine merger committee which included Ferdinand Meyer V (chair), John Pastor, John O'Neill, Jeff Wichmann, and Elizabeth Meyer. FOHBC president John O'Neill established this investigative committee.

An abbreviated history of this project is as follows: In November 2013, then FOHBC president, Ferdinand Meyer V from Houston, was invited to the Michigan house of FOHBC board member and proprietor of American Glass Gallery and *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*, John Pastor, to see his bottle and glass collection with a next-day visit with Ralph and Janet Finch to do the same. John had also told Ferdinand that he had a business proposition to discuss in person. This conversation was when the magazine merger idea was first discussed. Both John and Ferdinand outlined a set of objectives and agreed to keep it confidential, as both wanted to wait a few years before announcing the project.

In August 2017, John Pastor and Ferdinand Meyer V presented the magazine merger idea to the FOHBC board at the FOHBC 2017 Springfield, Massachusetts National bi-annual board meeting. In May 2018, John and Ferdinand updated the magazine merger project progress to the FOHBC board at the Mansfield, Ohio bi-annual board meeting. In August 2018, Pastor and Meyer reviewed the status of the magazine merger with the FOHBC board at the 2018 Cleveland National. During that meeting, Matt Lacy, FOHBC president, established a *Bottles and Ex-*

tras committee led by board member Andy Rapoza to study all components of the magazine. In November 2019, the committee reflected positive thoughts regarding the merger. The committee report was not added to any upcoming board meeting agendas, and the project was tabled.

In August 2020, John O'Neill, now the new FOHBC president, resurrected the magazine merger project after individual calls with Lacy, Meyer, Pastor, and others. A new FOHBC magazine merger committee was established, led by Ferdinand Meyer V. John O'Neill took a position that this was a viable project and noted that a decision had to be made, one way or another. He said it was unfair to keep John Pastor in limbo and that the board should make a decision to move forward or drop the project in the foreseeable future. As a result, the FOHBC board voted unanimously to proceed on 13 October 2021. As excerpted From the subject meeting notes below:

A MOTION was made by John O'Neill that we authorize the merger; the first issue would be March/April 2022, it would use the *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* name, be a bi-monthly publication, and 72- pages plus covers in color. By January 2022, we would have a mock-up for board approval. The first issue would be the March - April 2022 issue. We would announce to the hobby as soon as possible after approval and we would inform members. John Pastor would tell subscribers, and then we will jointly issue a communique that is put together by both parties that we all find acceptable.

The MOTION was seconded by Jeff Wichmann.

Discussion was held regarding the motion with several concerns voiced regarding unanswered questions such as staffing, cost of mailing additional magazines, and refunds. We can work through any issues as they may arise. A vote was then taken by all board members present with 100% approving the magazine merger.

MOTION PASSED.

Note: All FOHBC board of director meeting and conference call notes are archived on our website FOHBC.org under the menu bar listing "FOHBC" and "Notes of Record" in the pull-down menu.

MERGER PARAMETERS [Design and Operation]

The following was presented by Ferdinand and the merger committee to the FOHBC board and approved.

1. The new magazine's name shall be *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*, a more specific and inclusive name with the additional words "Antique" and "Glass." While the FOHBC *Bottles and Extras* heritage and legacy is important, our magazine name has changed before. This name use will temper resistance with current *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* subscribers and encourage and tell followers of the FOHBC and AB&GC that something new and exciting is happening. The name also references the FOHBC Virtual Museum of Historical Bottles and Glass.
2. The present *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* magazine has subscribers. The FOHBC has members who get a subscription to the magazine, among other benefits.

3. A new hybrid look for the magazine shall follow a design effort led by Ferdinand Meyer V, as art director, working with a design staff of his choosing. This process would happen in late 2021. The FOHBC magazine committee and the board would eventually approve any new designs at various stages along the process. There is no cost to the FOHBC as these design services are donated.
4. The new magazine will be still be 72 pages, plus covers, and printed in four color which is the present format of *Bottles and Extras*.
5. The FOHBC will maintain the FOHBC *Bottles and Extras* article format, including more research-based and lengthier articles. This objective may be a result of having more pages than AB&GC. The FOHBC will contact selected authors. No authors are presently compensated at AB&GC.
6. The publication of the new magazine shall follow a bi-monthly publication schedule (six times a year) and not the *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* monthly publication schedule. The FOHBC decided that twelve annual issues was too much work for the larger format magazine. A smaller magazine was considered but discounted as the FOHBC has more membership information to convey, longer, more in-depth articles, and more support images. The foundation of the FOHBC is education.
7. The FOHBC will remind AB&GC subscribers, who are used to a magazine mailed to them once a month, that *Bottles and Extras* is twice the size and that a digital newsletter would be issued between the magazine issues. The FOHBC will stress membership benefits to the new subscribers.
8. The magazine printer will be ModernLitho (FOHBC printer). The FOHBC will consider getting a competitive price from BRD Printing, Inc. (AB&GC printer) when renewing the print contract. The FOHBC is in the midst of a 3-year contract with ModernLitho and is very pleased with their service and pricing.
9. The in-house FOHBC leadership for the new magazine shall follow the current setup with one exception as no director is leading this effort at this time. This process needs to be resolved and will be handled by Ferdinand Meyer V, who has good understanding of all components of the magazine.
10. The FOHBC will outsource the new magazine to a design studio or free-lancers working for Ferdinand and Elizabeth Meyer. Martin Van Zant, our previous editor, has decided to resign from his editor position due to conflicting commitments and his teaching profession.
11. The magazine editor has been a compensated position at \$1,200 an issue, six times a year. This arrangement shall remain in effect though the committee felt that this cost was on the low side. No action at this time.
12. John Pastor initially suggested using AB&GC staff to produce the magazine. The FOHBC asked John's designer and business manager to consider a contracted position as they will be out of work with the merger. Both graciously declined. They will continue to work with John in his auction business.
13. The new magazine should have the same group of proofreaders or something similar (Val Berry, Bill Baab, Elizabeth Meyer). We need to get some fresh eyes from the FOHBC membership. Elizabeth Lacy recently retired from this position. The FOHBC will contact AB&GC proofreaders to see if they would like to continue.
14. Elizabeth Meyer will continue to manage general FOHBC operations as FOHBC business manager. This position will be labor-intensive at first with the influx of new members.
15. The FOHBC has not had a Membership Director in many years, and Elizabeth Meyer has been filling both positions. The board is discussing a compensated \$500 a month Membership Director position to help in the transition. This person would also sell magazine ads, keep up the digital membership directory, maintain our show calendar, and manage our social media, among other tasks.
16. The FOHBC is considering an Advertising Director. This new position is critical in making money for each issue and managing a well-balanced stream of revenue for the magazine. This position could be commissioned but will still be a volunteer position. We typically make a lot of money with souvenir program advertising. We need to apply a similar strategy to the magazine.
17. The FOHBC is also considering a Social Media Director to enhance and embellish the FOHBC image and exposure. The position is for membership news, events, and the general wellbeing of the FOHBC.
18. A more robust method to solicit, nest, and plan articles for downstream use is critical. We are presently using Google Docs to hold and organize a working inventory of articles.
19. AB&GC and FOHBC subscribers and members will receive a letter of explanation at an appropriate time to explain the magazine merger. The letter will pull details from this report. The FOHBC will formally issue the letter in December 2021. John Pastor will announce similarly in early January 2022.
20. The new magazine's first issue was first scheduled for the first half of 2022. As noted previously, March/April 2022 was eventually decided. Both John and Ferdinand could not guarantee a working relationship after this date due to other commitments. The timing is right.
21. Past AB&GC magazines should be indexed and listed online within the FOHBC Members Portal for research purposes, as we do with *Bottles and Extras*.

MERGER PARAMETERS [Financial]

1. Elizabeth Meyer and Libby Smith (AB&GC counterpart) have compared magazine distribution lists to determine overlaps and net gain. John Pastor sent his latest list to Elizabeth on 06 March 2021. The FOHBC will obtain an updated list.
2. ModernLitho has budget-priced the printing of 1,500, 2,000, and 2,500 magazines.
3. John Pastor will not be giving the FOHBC any money for subscriptions except any new paid subscriptions postmarked from 01 January 2022 and out. This procedure was a stipula-

tion of the “gift.”

4. If someone wants to cancel an AB&GC subscription during the transition or if there is an overlap with a person receiving both magazines, they would be offered the opportunity to extend their subscriptions (membership) for the number of months the duplication occurs. If they do not want to do this, John Pastor will refund the unused portion of their subscriptions as he holds the money for the subscription.
5. The FOHBC will start invoicing for subscription renewals beginning on 01 January 2022.
6. Jeff Wichmann (American Bottle Auctions), John Pastor (American Glass Gallery), Norman Heckler Jr. & Sr. (Heckler), and Jim Hagenbach (Glass Works Auctions) will be offered the same magazine advertisement positions at the same cost until their year contract is up. A rate increase will be pursued. Note: The auction houses will not have to pay for ads in two magazines anymore.
7. When last counted, the *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector* subscription mail-out was 1,489.
8. When last counted, the *Bottles and Extras* membership mail-out was 786.
9. Based on the above, there is an overlap of 354 persons who receive both magazines.
10. Using the numbers above, the FOHBC could be gaining, in a best-case-scenario situation, 1,135 potential new members if they would choose to continue receiving the new magazine after their current subscription ends.
11. Should all AB&GC subscribers join the FOHBC, we could have a total of 1,921 FOHBC members. This increase would bring our total paying membership to 1,758, less 163 life members who do not pay anything each year.
12. A total membership of 1,758 at the FOHBC Standard Membership rate of \$40 would result in annual revenue of \$70,320, a net revenue increase of approximately \$45,500.
13. Two thousand magazines would cost \$4,613.96 per issue times six (6) issues a year, equaling \$27,683.76. Mailing services are a \$60 setup including NCOA certification and \$37.50 per thousand, so mailing 2,000 would be \$135.
14. \$70,320 (new income) minus \$27,683.76 (new printing) minus \$500 est. (mailing) = \$42,136.73 gain for the FOHBC.
3. Con: The mechanics of combining the two publications will take some effort. Laying out responsibilities, etc.
4. Con: AB&GC subscribers are used to getting a magazine once a month.
5. Con: With the FOHBC membership cost at \$40, the existing AB&GC subscribers will see an annual increase in cost from \$35 to \$40.
6. Pro: Redesigned effort combining the best from both magazines by an experienced design team who has worked with the FOHBC and our magazine previously.
7. Pro: The merger will help to ensure a strong, healthy, long-term viable and unified magazine for the hobby.
8. Pro: The merger will provide a financial boost for the FOHBC.
9. Pro: Additional, immediate and substantial increase of new FOHBC members.
10. Pro: FOHBC.org and fohbcvirtualmuseum.org access to a large group of new members who did not have this before.
11. Pro: Digital newsletter.
12. Pro: Membership benefit of attending FOHBC telecom video educational seminars without an additional cost.
13. Pro: AB&GC subscribers would get FOHBC membership benefits such as event discounts, magazine advertising, *Auction Price Report* access, Membership List, access to a tremendous cache of archived information, etc.
14. Pro: Annual savings of approximately \$2,000 - \$2,500 in advertising expense for what the FOHBC has paid AB&GC to advertise annual national conventions and FOHBC membership.
15. Pro: Many bottle clubs and auction houses will benefit from not having to advertise in two magazines, i.e., a cost savings to the entities.
16. Pro: Those clubs that only advertised in one of the magazines, but not both, will benefit from their ads being seen by many more people.
17. Pro: The combined magazine will enjoy a greater depth of writers, authors and articles from which to choose from. We would be combining resources.
18. Pro: A more complete listing of bottle shows and color flyers on the FOHBC website.
19. Pro: Full color, 72 pages plus covers. More pages allow for more in-depth, longer articles.
20. Pro: Indexed archiving and retrieval with search capabilities.
21. Pro: ISSUU. Issuu converts PDFs into digital publications that can be shared via links or embedded into websites. Users can edit their publications by customizing the design, using templates, or adding links and multimedia to the pages of their documents. Issuu also provides tools for measurement and monetization of content.

This financial exercise is an example of a best-case scenario. There are many other factors and components like club dues (plus \$75 annual each), 1st class mail vs. standard, 3-year discounts, overseas, associate members (wives or husbands), digital, and potential AB&GC subscribers who may drop off for any reason.

MERGER PARAMETERS [Pros & Cons]

The following list was developed and presented to the FOHBC board:

1. Con: People inherently do not like change.
2. Con: Resistance to becoming a member rather than a subscriber.

