

SHARDS OF WISDOM

"Heard it Through the Grapevine"



Rare soda bottle stolen from Georgia collector

By Bill Baab

COLUMBUS, Georgia – What is the absolutely worst experience collectors of antique bottles could ever suffer? Just ask Allen Woodall of Columbus. He'll tell you. When fellow collector Jack Hewitt recently visited Woodall to check out his museum, Woodall decided to show off one of his glass prizes: a cobalt blue John Ryan from the company's Columbus branch with an embossed capital R on the back. So Woodall went to its hiding place in his office and was stunned when the ultra-rare bottle could not be found. Some sticky-fingered thief had preceded him. Woodall reported the theft to the Columbus Police Department and is taking his own steps in hopes of getting the bottle returned. One of those steps is this story about my friend's great loss. So if one of you readers is offered the bottle, Woodall asks that you contact him at 706.332.6378. Another of his steps is that he is offering a \$1,000 cash reward and will ask no questions if the bottle is returned.



Update: The worst 18 days of Allen Woodall's life ended on Sunday, November 21, when he received a phone call from one of his employees who told him where to find his ultra-rare Columbus, Georgia John Ryan soda bottle stolen from his office earlier in the month. His employee had received a phone call from an unidentified woman who said, "Tell Mr. Woodall to look inside the workman's black lunch box and he'll find the bottle!" It should be noted here that Woodall owns a collection of some 2,000 lunch boxes, not all of them black. Not only is Woodall a collector of antique bottles, he also owns and operates a multi-themed museum featuring, among other subjects, historical material from the Chero-Cola Company which was founded in his hometown in the early 1900s. "We didn't touch the lunch box or the bottle because a Columbus Police Department detective we had hired to pursue the theft will dust both for fingerprints," Woodall said.

Could it be that the missing bottle was inside the lunch box from the day of its theft? "We just don't know," its owner said. Perhaps that answer will be found when footage from the museum's security system is checked to see if the perpetrator of the theft was recorded in the act.

John Ryan was a well-known Savannah soda bottler whose Excelsior Bottling Works was established in the port city in 1852. He set up branches in Atlanta, Augusta and Columbus. The bottle in question is cobalt blue and sports a large "R" on its back. There is another Columbus Ryan without that letter which is not as rare. *Note: Example pictured for reference only.*

5,800 Year-Old Egyptian Beer Unearthed

From *Vinepair*, Julia Larson

In the words of The Bangles: *Drink like an Egyptian*. According to new archaeological research, beer was widely consumed and produced in Ancient Egypt, as far back as 5,800 years ago. The study was published in the December issue of the *Journal of Anthropological Archeology*, and led by Professor Jiajing Wang from Dartmouth University. The work of Wang and colleagues determined that beer was not only a commodity in pre-unified Egypt, but used for ritual purposes.

Wang's team studied fragments of pottery found at the Hierakonpolis dig site in southern Egypt; one of the largest urban centers along the Nile before the unification of an Egyptian state. Hierakonpolis is also the same dig site where the Narmer Palette was discovered, one of the world's oldest political texts.

The fragments from the studies were dated between 3800 and 3600 BC, 600 years before the rule of Pharaoh Narmer, who historians considered to be the founder of the First Dynasty and the first pharaoh of Egypt. The research states that the beer produced at one of the Hierakonpolis sites was used for rituals at a closeby elite cemetery, proving that beer was not just a part of everyday life but symbolic of status and authority.



Microfossil residue analysis, conducted on 33 ceramic vessel fragments, found traces of yeast cells, starch granules, and "beer stones." Upon further diagnosis, the analysis suggests the ancient beer was thick and cloudy, almost like a porridge, and would have been lower in alcohol content.

"The beer was probably like a thick porridge, very different from the IPAs we drink today," Wang told the *Daily Mail*. "Beer was likely a staple food consumed by everyone, and at the same time, it was also ritually consumed on special occasions."

In data and evidence collected from previous excavations, brewing and the consumption of beers is suggested to have been a highly organized and specialized industry in Ancient Egypt. Recently-conducted excavations have found more than a dozen breweries, with some archaeologists suggesting that beer was crucial in the development of Egypt as a civilization, especially in its implications of power.

SHARDS OF WISDOM

"Heard it Through the Grapevine"



Email #1: I just returned from my first-ever visit to CMOG on Tuesday, and was stunned to see a pristine, perfect Jared Spencer on display (next to several other great rarities). The experience was almost too much for my heart to bear. I spent several hours attempting to devise a way of slipping it out of the case and into my pocket...

Email #2: I enjoyed my first-ever visit to CMOG a couple of weeks ago so much that I went back again this last weekend—this time with camera in tow. Attached are several photos, taken from various viewpoints, of my favorite display. I must have spent two hours staring at the Jared Spencer. What a flask! Museum personnel had to restart my heart several times... I'll be sending a second e-mail momentarily containing photos of several other great rarities that were on display. I hope that you enjoy! Regards,

Chris Bubash, Dayton, Ohio



A Display group shot

B GVII-1 Tippecanoe Cabin and GI-85a "Lafayette" And Bust "Covetry C-T" - Stars And Liberty Cap "S&S" Flask (Coventry misspelled)

C Binger's Great Gun Bourbon cannon display

D GX-24 "Jared Spencer" Medallions and Diamond Diapering Flask

E GX-21 "The American System" Steamboat - Sheaf of Rye Flask

F GI-59 American Eagle - Charter Oak Flask

G GX-26 American Eagle - Charter Oak Flask

