

SHARDS OF WISDOM

“Heard it Through the Grapevine”



Clean that dirty bottle? It may reveal something you don't want to see. Ralph Finch found a surprise or two.

OK, a pop quiz (and moms can take it, too). What is the best—and worst—part of collecting black glass?

A: Best? It's black, a million times rarer than clear or aqua.

B: Worst? It's black, and you are limited in enjoying the glass.

It also means you can't see what is inside the bottle. Plus, it's easy to cover—but tough to discover—hard-to-find cracks. Same problem with pottery, and painted bottles...one of our favorite things to collect.



Recently, we bought a well-painted and pontiled, 18 inch tall demijohn with a great pastoral scene...

Now, I know that you don't wallpaper a painted bottle, but: Recently, we bought a well-painted and pontiled demijohn, with a great pastoral scene (with a cow) heavily painted on it. Not chipped but...who knows if there are fine cracks. Cowabunga!

(If there was a large rabbit painted in the scene, would we be worried that it was covering up hare-line cracks?)

Now comes not the bad news (just an amusing comment). The demijohn had been purchased from well-known collector John Joiner, who—a few years before—had purchased it from very well-known dealers Jeff and Holly Noordsy. Jeff recently said: *“I love that one! Yes, we owned it for a number of years.”*

And now the point of the story: Janet is a cleaner. Like other females, Janet cleans the house on days the cleaning woman is coming!

Janet was about to rinse the inside of the demijohn but discovered a little noise in the jar. With a wire and due patience, she uncovered a straw, bits of paper, and other crap. And when devoid of dubious detritus (I like the sound of the term), she washed out the bottle, and now all is well.

I asked Holly if she was the one who put the straw in the bottle, but she was evasive. In fact, she said: “Not I, said the fly!” Is she first checking with a lawyer?

Also, I am reminded of two times I purchased items with a surprise, not including old boxes of Cracker Jacks. Once was purchasing at a garage sale an old pendulum clock that “didn't work.” At home, I opened it up and found that mice had made a home in the clock, filling it with...hair? Fuzz? Cotton? (I don't know what mice like, aside from cheese, or if these mice were hurt running up the clock; well, I had read that “the clock struck one.”)

The other incident: I once bought a handled crock at a rundown antique shop, took it home, and realized it had contents. I dumped it out and was disgusted to find that the previous butt-head owner had used the jug as an ashtray, and it was filled with vile cigarette butts! Ugh! After de-butting it and soaking it for a few days, it was then safe to bring into our smoking-free home.

So the problem of cleaning something you can't see the inside of... what's the worst that can happen?

Well, say you are at a garage sale in the Detroit area, and you buy a jug or crock, and you think it seems to have sand or gravel in it, and you pour it out and...

After 47 years, you've found Jimmy Hoffa!

Editor's note: Oooooops; Janet has just corrected me; it is not a cow in the painting, but a horse! Hey, I'm a city boy (and sometimes a jackass) but...

Cast a vote to or “foe” to rfinch@twmi.rr.com

Exciting news! Dixie Glassworks of Tallapoosa, Ga.

The widow of an Augusta glassblower gave me the following and I felt it may be of interest. Back in my digging days, I unearthed many bottles including Cokes with DIXIE embossed on the bases.

This little pamphlet was written by a glassblower.

A short history of the Tallapoosa Bottle—The Dixie Glassworks

Antique Bottle & Glass Collector

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of Tallapoosa, Ga., by Don Lillie, Lillie Glassblowers, Smyrna, Georgia

Tallapoosa, Georgia is a small town located about 60 miles west of Atlanta, Georgia. In 1889, a major effort was made to develop the town into a major manufacturing center. By the turn of the (20th) century, it had established a major resort hotel, harness company, cement plant, a newspaper, steel mill, a wine industry and a thriving glass factory.

The glass factory started in 1889 as the Mountain City Glassworks, but changed to the Piedmont Glass Company in 1891 when it was acquired by the Georgia-Alabama Investment Company. The glassworks employed about 100 people and made bottles, lamp shades, tableware and flasks. By the late 1890s, it was known as the Dixie Glass Works and was the largest and most successful glass factory in the South. In 1918, economic conditions and lateral events resulted in its final demise.

Bottles called “picnic flasks” were made by the Dixie Glass Works about 1906 mainly for extracts and various medicines. The flask was hand blown into a two-piece mold, then held at the bottom with a device called a “snap,” hence no “pontil mark,” and finally the neck was tooled for a stopper. These flasks were packed in wooden crates padded with newspaper and shipped to an extract company in Atlanta.

In 1908, the Georgia Legislature passed prohibition laws which made it illegal to use these flasks since the extract contained alcohol. The bottles were stored and forgotten, eventually accumulating a layer of soot from the coal-burning trains that passed the warehouse.

Coca-Cola Introducing Bottles With Caps That Stay Attached

The roll-out aims to reduce bottle cap litter, but environmental advocates call for a focus on containers that can be reused.

By Katie Deighton, *The Wall Street Journal*, May 17, 2022.



Coca-Cola Co.’s British business said it would introduce packaging that keeps plastic lids tethered to bottles when opened to make it easier for consumers to recycle drinks packaging in its entirety. Plastic bottle caps can be recycled but are often lost, discarded or end up as litter, Coca-Cola said in a statement. The new design aims to reduce that, the company said. The hinged lids started rolling out Tuesday on 1.5-liter bottles of Fanta, Coca-Cola Zero Sugar and Diet Coke in Scotland, and all plastic bottles across Coca-Cola’s brands will adopt the new design in the U.K. by 2024, the company said. Coca-Cola will work with bottling partners to eventually phase the design into production lines across Europe, a company spokesman said. “This is a small change that we hope will have a big impact, ensuring that when consumers recycle our bottles, no cap gets left behind,” Jon Woods, general manager at Coca-Cola Great Britain, said in a statement. The design is part of Coca-Cola’s strategy to help create a “circular economy” for its plastic products amid regulation and calls to reduce the amount of its plastic packaging that ends up in landfills and elsewhere. We’ve come a long way since the first Coca-Cola bottles.

Pictured with the red Coca-Cola image are two bottles added by the FOHBC. The Hutchinson bottle on the left is embossed “Brunswick Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Brunswick, Ga.” The bottle on the right is one of, if not the first, labeled Coca-Cola bottles.

The Boghouse Podcast



We came across a podcast about the time Matt and Melissa Dunphy bought a magic theater from a pedophile, discovered treasure, and became accidental amateur archaeologists. Listen to *The Boghouse Podcast* on Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify, iHeartRADIO, or Google Podcasts.

Matt and Melissa found the C. Willing Bottle Seal and asked the question on page 7 of this issue. Look for a follow-up AB&GC article down the road.

