

# SHARDS OF WISDOM

*“Heard it Through the Grapevine”*



## 2022 Australian National Bottles & Collectables Show & Fair



Exciting news! The Gippsland Antique Bottles & Collectables Club, hosts to the 2022 Australian National Antique Bottles & Collectables Show & Fair, has selected the Gippsland Regional Indoor Sports Stadium, Catterick Crescent, Traralgon (Victoria) as the venue. Traralgon is 160km east of Melbourne via the Princes Freeway or by rail. The National will be held on the weekend of Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 November 2022. Set-up will be on the afternoon of Friday 25 November. A very recent \$19 million expansion makes this indoor sports complex an impressive, modern venue. The lighting is exceptional and there is ample parking. There is an on-site, staffed cafeteria to cater for traders, exhibitors and the public. Traralgon is the major centre in the Latrobe Valley, a part of Gippsland, as eastern Victoria is known. The region is famous for its proximity to National Parks of great beauty, the Ninety Mile Beach, the Gippsland Lakes, early gold mining sites including the historic mountain mining village of Walhalla, situated in a valley of the scenic Great Dividing Range of mountains, only a 45 minute drive from Traralgon, through picturesque rolling farm land and kilometers of natural bush where you might well spy a kangaroo, a wallaby, a wombat, an echidna or a lyrebird, or some of the innumerable brilliantly plumaged parrots and other native birds.

There will be an important bottle auction on Friday evening 26 November, at the venue, to be conducted by a major bottle auctioneer. There will also be a dinner on Saturday evening 27 November, for all who wish to have a social evening with like-minded people. Ross Roycroft, well-known and long-time Victorian antique bottle dealer and auctioneer, will provide free antique appraisals for the public as he has done every year for our Club's Antiques & Collectables Fair.

As the first major Australian bottle and collectables show since the Covid epidemic, this will be huge. We know that overseas collectors are already planning to attend—so please make sure that you are one of them! Inquiries should be directed to Wayne Harris (Club President and Fair Coordinator), email: [waynhbotl@yahoo.com](mailto:waynhbotl@yahoo.com)

## Research of bottles and glass through patents, trademarks, etc.

*The following information was extrapolated from a recent communication from FOHBC Western Regional Director, Eric McGuire, who has a vast amount of experience on the topic.*

Some of you may be interested in pursuing the research of bottles and glass through patents, trademarks, etc. It is a considerable resource and, admittedly, quite complex. It is even difficult to explain the multitude of resources without having you decide to give up before you begin. Let me start by saying that there is no single place to look, and there is very little Internet-based information.

Perhaps the most available body of information found online is several sites for U.S. patents. They are not easy to use, but lots of information can be found there—primarily for Utility Patents. Google Patents and the U.S. Government sites are perhaps the best for this particular resource. Utility Patents would usually cover such things as medicinal contents and “inventions” that would cover such things as bottle and jar tops or other minor things that inventors devised, which they hoped would be accepted as a new idea by the patent office. Most of these types of patents, such as for medicine, closures, etc., were not significant, but it was a big marketing deal for a proprietor to say their item was patented. Most of the Utility Patent records run from 1836 to the present. A fire wiped out most of these earlier, pre-1836, patents. The search engines for these types of patents are a real challenge to use, but, at least, the data exists.

Another significant patent source is for Design Patents. This category attempts to register and protect a particular design or shape for an item—including those made of glass. Here one can find unusually shaped bottles or other glassware. It was often used for bit-ter bottles or different bottle designs, although some designs can be very simple shapes. Again, anything someone could get patented could then be associated with the word PATENT. Also within this group are a myriad of glass tableware designs. Nearly all the old EAPG tableware had an associated Design Patent. This type of patent has only recently shown up in the few patent databases, and the search is a little more complicated. I haven't searched these much myself as it is pretty frustrating, but the information is finally becoming available. If memory serves me correctly, Design Patents began somewhere in the 1840s.

Another huge group of extant information is that of trademarks, but also very complicated. Federal trademarks were first initiated in 1870, even though one can find the earliest examples registered as Design Patents as early as 1855. These are quite rare, though. Trademark registrations are the one group that I may help the readers with the most, even though you will find very little on the Internet. A true trademark was usually defined as a device (some

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symbol or unique combination of numbers or letters) and often in combination with a unique set of words. There was lots of latitude here—which resulted in many lawsuits—but that is another story. I have indexed most of the bottle-related federal trademarks from 1870 to 1900. To complicate this trademark category more, most earlier states, say those formed until about 1870, devised their own trademark registration system. Those record groups would be held only by each state. To my knowledge, nothing is available in printed form for public consumption except for the State of California, which can be found online. Those records start about 1861 and run to about 1900. The inception of state trademarks will be unique to each state. I recall briefly looking at New York trademarks in Albany, which began in 1847.

Another massive group of records that include trademarks can be found, but currently with extreme difficulty, within the copyright records. These documents can be found in essentially two record groups. The first group was registered by the various federal district courts when each state was formed. Some of these records, beginning as early as the 1830s, can include labels for the bottles to which they were attached. This is a confusing record group as it was primarily established for copyrights. Still, some states accepted the inclusion of trademarks, even after establishing the Federal Trademark Act in 1870. By 1870, the registration of copyrights was switched from district courts to the Library of Congress. Currently, the only public accessibility of this record group is at the Library of Congress. It contains many thousands of labels for bottles. Some of the earlier District Court copyright labels appear on federal government Internet sites. Still, most are not identified as such, and I don't even think federal employees know why they have them. Again—that is another story.

I will touch upon another essential record for which I can help somewhat. That would be the Federal Label Registrations, which began in 1874. This was another attempt to isolate this hugely expanding record group that was essentially clogging up trademark and copyright registrations. Along with the federal trademarks, I have also documented most of this group. Unless you have thousands of bottles to research, I will gladly help with potential Federal trademarks and label registrations. Let me know what you have, and we can start from that point.

## Indiana's Most Famous Landmark Disappears

In the late 1800s, people flocked to the shores of Lake Michigan to play in the sand. Visitors loved to climb a 200-foot landmark dune known as Hoosier Slide in LaPorte County, Indiana. The view from the top provided an enticing vantage point, and the trip back down was even better. Thrillseekers loved to slide down the steep hill. Glassmakers soon discovered the sand produced a blue-colored glass and began to mine it—one shovel full at a time. By 1920, the sand from Hoosier Slide was all gone, and all that remains now are memories.



In the 1890s, Hoosier Slide was a destination for locals and tourists. Railroad cars packed with people came to the dunes to admire the panoramic views. An Indiana State Prison official, hoping to attract visitors from southern Indiana, offered a free marriage license, minister, and excursion to any couple willing to exchange vows on the summit of Hoosier Slide.



Around the same time, glass manufacturers discovered the sand was perfect for making glass and began to chip away at the dune. One manufacturer, the Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing Co., had recently moved from New York to Indiana to take advantage of newly discovered natural gas deposits. They believed the aqua glass made from Hoosier Slide sand produced canning jars that helped preserve fruit even longer because of its light-blocking properties.

Other blue glass products, including Hemingray glass insulators, also came from Hoosier Slide.

During the next 30 years, commercial enterprises removed nearly 14 million tons of sand from Hoosier Slide and leveled the dune. Concerns about the shrinking dune were published as early as 1894 when a paper reported that a nearby grocery store owner kept track of the shrinking dune by cutting a series of notches in the front door that coincided with the height of the dune. The Michigan City Dispatch warned that soon the dune would be nothing more than a memory. By 1920 the prediction proved correct. The disappearance of Hoosier Slide brought calls for the preservation of the rest of the dunes. In 1966, Congress authorized the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Subsequent acts have increased the size to more than 15,000 acres and, in 2019, the government re-designated the area as Indiana Dunes National Park. The blue-aqua jars and other glass objects made from Hoosier Slide are all that remain from the landmark dune. They are prized by collectors throughout our great hobby.

