

ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

During surveys, archaeologists often find artifacts resting on the surface that have remained undisturbed for years. This month's artifact of the month, an Ancient Age Bourbon bottle, recovered by the Tribal Archaeology Section (TAS) on the Big Cypress Reservation, is one of many examples.

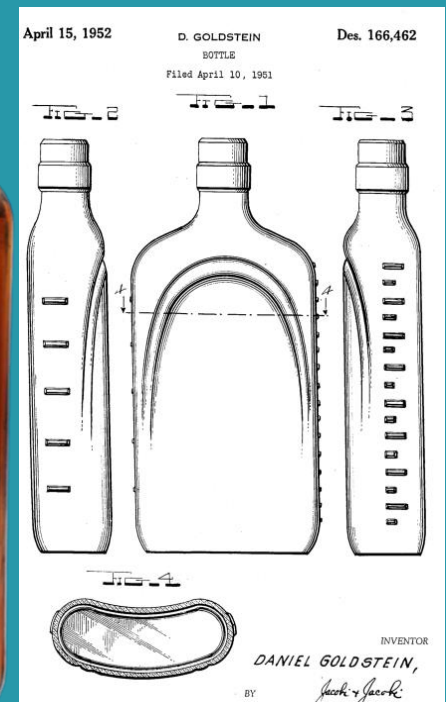
Although the bottle was recovered in South Florida, the story begins much farther north. Ancient Age Bourbon was produced at Buffalo Trace Distillery in Kentucky; one of the oldest continuously operating distilleries in the United States ([Distillery Trail, 2022](#)). The bottle itself was manufactured in Indiana before being distributed across the country. Artifacts like this show how communities in South Florida were connected to larger American markets during the twentieth century.

At first glance, the old liquor bottle may not seem especially interesting. However, The markings molded into the bottom of the glass can help identify who made the bottle and when it was produced.

One of the easiest markings to spot is the phrase, "Federal Law Forbids Sale or Reuse of This Bottle." This warning was required on liquor bottles sold in the United States between 1935 and 1964 ([Lockhart et al., n.d.](#)). Introduced after the end of Prohibition, the law was intended to discourage people from refilling bottles and selling homemade liquor. Because this phrase appears on the bottle, we know it was made before 1965.

Another important marking is the "F" inside a hexagon on the base of the bottle. This was the maker's mark of Fairmount Glass Works, an Indiana company that manufactured glass containers for breweries, distilleries, and other industries ([Lockhart et al., n.d.](#)). The company used this logo from 1933 to 1971, giving us another clue about the bottle's age.

Several other codes molded into the base help narrow the date even further. Together, these markings indicate that the bottle was likely manufactured in 1964. The inscription "DES. PAT. 166,464" refers to a bottle design patented in 1952, which supports that date.



THPO [April 1952 D. GOLDSTEIN Des. 166,462](#)



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This bottle is a good reminder that artifacts do not have to be rare or hundreds of years old to be important. Everyday objects can provide information about when a site was used, the products people purchased, and how goods moved across the country.

Lockhart, B., Schriever, B., Bill Lindsey, B., & Serr, C. (n.d.). Fairmount Glass Works - Society for Historical Archaeology. <https://secure-sha.org/bottle/pdf/files/FairmountGlass.pdf>

Distillery Trail. (2022, April 25). *The Complete Buffalo Trace Distillery Timeline – 1773 to today*. <https://www.distillerytrail.com/blog/the-complete-buffalo-trace-distillery-timeline-1773-to-today/>

Liquor bottle permit numbers. GLASS BOTTLE MARKS. (2026, March 23). <https://glassbottlemarks.com/glass-industry-liquor-bottle-permit-numbers-numerical-list/>

