

CROSSING LANGUAGE BARRIERS

The Coca-Cola bottle, born in Terre Haute, a worldwide phenomenon

What may be the world's most recognized words has its roots right here in Terre Haute.

From Asia to South America, it's hard to find a person who wouldn't know what you're referring to when you say Coca-Cola. The classic soft drink is sold in more than 200 countries, and its red and white logo is recognized by 94 percent of the world's population (according to Business Insider).

While the language of Coke is a global phenomenon, what many people do not know

is the famous glass Coke bottle was first manufactured here in Vigo County, making Terre Haute the birthplace of the Coca-Cola bottle.

In 1915, the Coca-Cola Company realized it needed a distinctive bottle to set its soda pop apart from competitors. The Root Glass Company of Terre Haute submitted a design for consideration, which was intended as "one that could be recognized when broken

on the ground or by touch in the dark."

At a bottlers' convention in Atlanta, Georgia in 1915, all the submissions were judged based on originality, exclusiveness of design, ease of handling, production cost, and potential consumer recognition. The Root Glass Company won the competition and was patented on November 16 of that year.

While Terre Haute is known as the birthplace of the Coca-Cola bottle, the bottles have

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Payton Morgan takes a drink of his Coke at the 100th birthday celebration of the contour bottle design, which originated in Terre Haute. The festivities took place in the summer of 2015 at the Vigo County Historical Museum. (Jim Avelis) At left, the historical marker at U.S. 41 and Voorhees.



Visit

The Vigo County Historical Society's museum is at 1411 S. Sixth St. Hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday.

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become a worldwide phenomenon in the 100-plus years since it was first manufactured. Coca-Cola has developed a number of glass bottles that depict the logo in different languages to represent countries around the world.

Residents of Terre Haute are fortunate they don't need to travel across the world (or search the internet) to see these famous bottles. The Vigo County Historical Society Museum has several of these international Coke bottles in its Coca-Cola collection, including those from the countries of Russia, Ethiopia, Taiwan, Egypt, Korea and Israel.

