



OBJECT ID	2011.7.208
OBJECT NAME	Bottle, Medicine
OBJECT COLLECTION	Alex's Candy Shop (is part of)
DATE CREATED	1930s
MATERIAL	Glass; Metal
OBJECT ENTITIES	Rassogianis/Franks families, By (owned by) Franks, Rassogianis; (is related to)

OBJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a tubular alka-seltzer bottle made of glass. Tall and narrow with a blue metal lid, it has a label which practically covers every part of the clear glass. The label is entirely intact, albeit stained, and is of navy blue, light blue and white colors. Across the label is the brand name, ingredients list and directions as to how to use the product.

ORIGIN

Paulina Franks' grandfather, John Rassogianis, came to Chicago in the 1890s. He began his life in the new city by peddling fruits and later, with the help of his sons Alex and George, would open a candy store. In the 1920s Paulina Franks' father Constantine became a part of the family business and the store was able to prosper. When the second business closed Paulina Rassogianis chose to hold as many of the candy store's items as possible and, later, donate them to the National Hellenic Museum.

The Rassogianis family began their candy business in Chicago proper, working out of their own shop named "St. Louis Ice Cream Parlor." Eventually, the shop was closed and the Rassogianis' chose to continue their candy store venture in Berwyn, Illinois. The new shop they chose to open was named Alex's Sweet Shop.

Paulina Franks' father was a key contributor to the success of the Rassogianis candy stores. While Constantine Rassogianis was a noteworthy entrepreneur, he also had many other accomplishments. Among these was his four years of involvement in the Greek national military during World War I wherein he obtained the rank of sergeant. Also, he was a published author and poet, an experienced mandolin player, a church officer and had extensive knowledge of psalti.

Alka-Seltzer is an antacid and pain reliever first marketed by the Dr. Miles Medicine Company. It was developed by Maurice Treneer, head chemist at Miles, in Elkhart, Indiana. Alka-Seltzer is marketed for relief of minor aches, pains, inflammation, fever, headache, heartburn, sour stomach, indigestion, and hangovers, while neutralizing excess stomach acid. It was launched in 1931 and was originally marketed by Mikey Wiseman, a company scientist of Dr. Miles Medicine Company, who also helped direct its development. A spin-off of Alka-Seltzer made to relieve colds and flu, Alka-Seltzer Plus, was later introduced. A short-lived antacid non-aspirin variant, Alka-Mints, was introduced in 1994 and discontinued in 1997. Miles Laboratories was bought by

Bayer in 1979 so Alka-Seltzer is currently owned by Bayer Schering Pharma AG, Germany.

The name "Alka-Seltzer" has been extended to incorporate an entire line of medications sold over the counter and taken by means of rapidly dissolving tablets that form a carbonated solution in water. Today there is plain Alka-Seltzer along with nine effervescent varieties of Alka-Seltzer Plus, four kinds of liquid gel caps, and three varieties of liquids. Most brands do not contain aspirin today, but instead use acetaminophen. It is caused when an acid mixes with the baking soda whose chemical name sodium bicarbonate.

Miles Laboratories was founded as the Dr. Miles Medical Company in Elkhart, Indiana, in 1884 by Franklin Miles, a specialist in the treatment of eye and ear disorders, with an interest in the connection of the nervous system to overall health. Miles operated as an independent firm from 1884 until 1979 and as a wholly owned subsidiary of Bayer AG from 1979 until 1995, when it was consolidated into the parent corporation. By 1890, the sales success of his patent medicine tonic, Dr. Miles' Nervine, in treating "nervous" ailments led him to develop a mail order medicine business. Miles also published Medical News, a thinly disguised marketing vehicle for Nervine. Nervine remained on the market as a "calmative" until the late 1960s. In 1935, the name of the company was changed to Miles Laboratories.

CITATION

Bottle, Medicine, 1930s, Alex's Candy Shop, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 05/02/24.
