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Langan and Koscherak

Seal-Again and Again By Don Thornton

William B. Langan, a Hawley, Pennsylvania inventor, went from bottling soda to helping drinkers re-cap their bottles. At the turn of the 20th Century, Langan was the owner and operator of the Mountain Spring Bottling Works in nearby Palmyra Township.

The transformation from bottler to re-capper began on December 9, 1919 when he was awarded Patent No. 1,324,256 for a "bottle stopper" so "constructed that it can be used a great many times and is particularly adapted for beer bottles, root beer, sarsaparilla bottles, etc." It was the last of five "bottle stopper" patents granted Langan dating back to 1890.

Dec. 9, 1919. W. B. Langan 1,324,256
BOTTLE STOPPER
Filed August 17, 1918

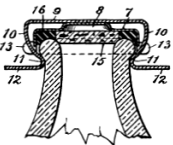


Fig. 1

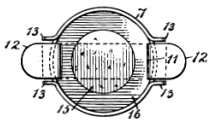


Fig. 2

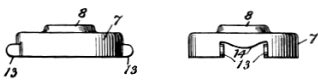


Fig. 3

Fig. 4

INVENTOR
William B. Langan
BY
Hauff & Marland
ATTORNEYS

He assigned the 1919 patent to Koscherak Siphon Bottle Works, Hoboken, New Jersey. Otto L. Koscherak then took over, having trademarked the brand name SEAL-AGAIN on August 19 of that year. He began production of the stoppers at Seal Again Products Company in Hoboken. The stopper cap is 1-inch diameter and overall 1/2-inch deep. Most have no identification although some later models are marked: **TRADEMARK SEAL-AGAIN REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.**

Koscherak re-noved the Seal -Again trade-mark August 19, 1936, saying the firm was then doing business as Seal-Again Bottle Stopper Company of New York City.



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Newspaper ads first appeared in early 1919 (retail 10 cents) and into the 1920s. Then only a few scattered ads appeared until the about 1945 (on sale 6 cents) when dozens of stores launched sales and promotions. All ads (free) faded in the 1960s.

SEAL—AGAIN
The Ideal
Bottle Stopper



Sealagain
Bottle Stopper

The ideal stopper for preventing the carbonic acid gas in beverages such as Ginger Ale, Soda and Mineral waters, etc., from escaping.

Attached to nursing bottles after being filled and placed on ice, removes every chance of the infant's food becoming contaminated.

Price, 10 cents each.

W.W.Diamond & Co. LTD.
THE HOUSE OF HOUSEWARES
53-65 KING STREET, HONOLULU

10¢ Seal Again
Bottle Stopper

A handy cap for re-sealing bottles..... **6¢**



At some point an important addition was made to the stopper – a 2-inch hinged hook to open bottles was attached to one side. These models were marked on the crossbar: **TRADE-MARK SEAL-AGAIN REG. U.S. PAT. OFF, BOTTLE STOPPER PATENT 1324256 DEC. 9, 1919**, when not branded with a product name. For example, one is marked: **KILLARNEY** (ginger ale). The cap is 1 1/8-inches in diameter, with the opener hook measuring 1 3/4-inches.

FREE
Seal-Again
Bottle Stopper



Here at last... a bottle stopper that really works! Our famous SEAL-AGAIN bottle stopper has proven to retain all of the carefully added carbonation that makes Suburban Club Fine Drinks the delicious refreshment you love so much. With a SEAL-AGAIN, its magic freshness is yours 'til the last sip. Get 3 Suburban Club labels and send for yours today!

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY!

DON'T BE CAUGHT SHORT

SUBURBAN CLUB
CARBONATED BEVERAGE CO., INC.
P.O. Box 1111, Baltimore 3, Maryland

Enclosed are 3 large labels from Family Size Suburban Club Bottles. Please send me the FREE Seal-Again Bottle Stopper.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____



It is not known if Otto Koscherak played a role in the development of

the opener hook attachment, but he was responsible for another attachment. He was awarded Patent No. 2,157,937 on May 9, 1939 for his own bottle cap with a “snap-on bracket ... having spring fingers which pass around and grip the neck of the bottle.” The engaged spring fingers, he said, allowed “the liquid poured in the usual manner without requiring the cap to be held out of contact with the pouring liquid,”

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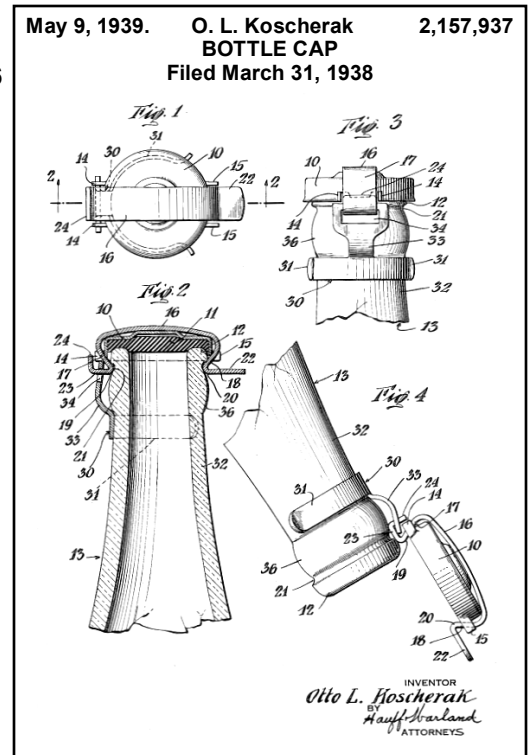
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For unknown reasons, Koscherak did not mention Langan's original 1919 patent in his 1939 patent, although the bottle caps were exactly the same. The 1919 patent had expired by then, and Koscherak had had the license for two decades, but patent courtesy called for an acknowledgement.

However, when the cap and neck flange model hit the market it was marked with both patent dates. One model is marked on the top bar: **TRADE MARK REGD. SEAL-AGAIN BOTTLE STOPPER PAT. No. 1324256 DEC. 9, 1919.** The spring finger bracket is marked: **SEAL-AGAIN BOTTLE STOPPER CO. NEW YORK PATENT No. 2157937.** This model also was branded with product names, including: **DRINK CHEER UP**, a St. Louis soft drink bottled in St. Louis in the 1930s.

It should be noted that Langan's 1919 patent has been at times incorrectly attributed to a later but similar bottle stopper marked: **TITE-FIT**. The TITE-FIT is based on a 1923 patent by Henry P. Roberts. (See *Inventors Henry and Maurice Roberts JFO News 2025.*)



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Meanwhile, the search continues for the patent (if it exists) for another stopper from the Seal-Again company, branded the **PRO-TEX-IT**. These 3-inches long beauties, with 1 3/4-inches long expandable rubber stoppers, have colorful, painted about 1-inch in diameter round tops, featuring different dogs, a jumping fish, a tall ship and a golfer, among others. One model is marked on the top of the metal round center: "**PRO-TEX-IT**" **TRADE MARK SEAL AGAIN BOTTLE STOPPER CO. NEW YORK** and another is marked around the bottom of the center piece: "**PRO-TEX-IT**" **STOPPER SEAL AGAIN BOTTLE STOPPER NEW YORK**. A 1932 newspaper ad listed the price at \$1 a set.

PRO-TEX-IT bottle stopper. Seals partly emptied bottle air tight. Decorated tops, \$1.00 a set. In gift box. Florence LaFortune, 90 Main St.

SIDEBAR: There is a bit of mystery surrounding Langan's Mountain Spring Bottling Works. The *Pike County Dispatch*, Milford, Pennsylvania, reported November 18, 1909 that the two-story, 10-year-old bottling works building was "totally destroyed by fire ... believed to have been of incendiary origin." The news story continued: "It is said that an attempt was made to burn the building about a year ago. A box containing waste saturated with oil and a partly burned candle were found in the building at that time." There were no follow up stories. Langan died in 1944 at the age of 77.

