



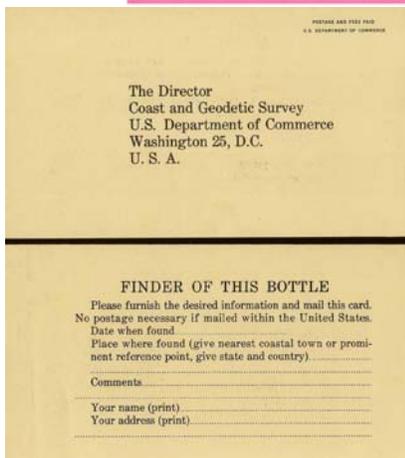
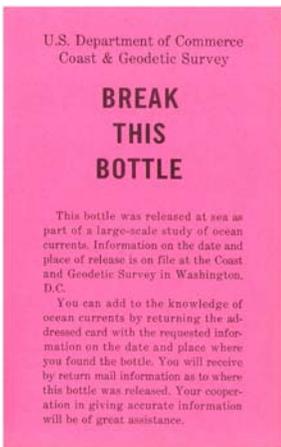
Floating for fifty years....

## Drift bottle found on Martha's Vineyard has quite a story to tell

Keith Moreis likes to walk the beaches of Martha's Vineyard, often finding pieces of sea glass. Occasionally he finds other treasures. On December 22, 2013, during a routine walk on Long Point Reservation in West Tisbury, he found a glass bottle resting in the sand next to some seagrass. After brushing aside the sand, he was surprised to see that the bottle was intact.

The clear glass soda bottle, about 8 inches tall, had a black stopper on top and contained some papers. Inside the bottle, a pink sheet printed with the words "Break This Bottle" caught his attention. He took the bottle home.

Intrigued by the message and not wanting to break the bottle, Moreis managed to get the black top off with a corkscrew. It was not easy. With a wire, he pulled out the pink sheet and a postcard with printing on both sides. One side of the postcard had an address; the other side had instructions to the finder and some stamped and handwritten information.



Moreis, who was born and raised on Martha's Vineyard, remained curious about the bottle and its contents and showed it to friends, who suggested he bring it to Woods Hole to see if anyone knew about it. On February 20 he went to the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), which had reported

finding another drift bottle a few weeks earlier. Since the postcard had Coast and Geodetic Survey, Department of Commerce in the return address, WHOI staff suggested that Moreis contact oceanographer Jim Manning at the Woods Hole Laboratory of NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC). He did, and brought the bottle to the Center later that day.

The postcard had both stamped and handwritten information on the top: U.S.C.&G.S. HYDROGRAPHER was stamped on the left corner, and Sep 19, 1959 on the right corner, with the day handwritten. In the middle, just above the printed words "FINDER OF THIS BOTTLE" and instructions below, was the handwritten number 279B, written twice.

USCGS refers to the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. The U.S. Coast Survey, created by President Thomas Jefferson in 1807 as the Survey of the Coast, expanded as the nation grew westward to include surveys of the interior of the country. The agency was renamed the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1878. Today the Office of the Coast Survey and the National Geodetic Survey are both part of the National Ocean Service within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA was created in 1970 in the Department of Commerce.

Manning reviewed copies of drift bottle records through 1958 published by the Fish and Wildlife Service and compiled by Dean Bumpus of WHOI. However, the release date for this bottle was 1959 and therefore was not in these records.

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