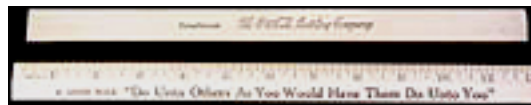




Coca-Cola Stories

Bottling Companies:

When I was a child, living in the inner city of Kansas City, MO, in the Westside neighborhood, we had a Coca-Cola® distributing company just a few blocks away. I remember our neighborhood school took us on a tour to the Coca-Cola factory. I remember seeing all the bottles going around really fast and being filled with Coke. They also gave us a free cold Coke® to drink, with souvenirs such as a Coca-Cola hand-held fan, a key chain with a miniature Coke bottle and a calendar. My family and I could see the beautiful and huge Coca-Cola signage from our duplex. Since my childhood days, Coca-Cola products are the only beverages I buy. I guess once you've had the real thing, nothing else comes close.



When I was little I got lost at the Coca-Cola factory. Most kids would be scared to death, but I wasn't. I was trying different drinks left and right, I was meeting new people and I was looking at the really cool Coca-Cola stuff. But when my parents finally found me I had to leave. I will never forget that day.



From the time my Dad was 14, he worked helping Coke® drivers take the straws out of the returned bottles at Broadview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario. Later, he worked as a truck driver in northern Ontario. He also worked in the plant, for quality control. Eventually, he made the Coca-Cola syrup, along with Fanta® and Fresca®, to be shipped to bottling plants across Canada. I went on tours of the Overlea plant. There is nothing like a fresh Coke taken off the belt before being capped. Dad worked at the Overlea Blvd. plant in Toronto until 1967, when he passed away, after spending 40 years with the company. My Mom's favorite saying was that "Dad had Coca-Cola running through his veins." I have many happy memories of Coca-Cola growing up and still have several photos taken of Dad delivering Coca-Cola on a toboggan. Thank you, Coca-Cola, for being a big part of our lives.

As a child coming to California from St. Louis in 1942, our school (5th grade) took us on a tour of the Coca-Cola plant in Hayward on Mission Blvd. It was a hot, hot day and when the tour was over, the tour guide gave us money to put in the Coke machine for a bottle. Best I've ever tasted!



Coca-Cola Stories



When I was in the seventh grade, it was a real honor to be selected to be a school patrol. In that role, we helped to load students on the buses, cross streets, etc. At the end of that year, I received a letter from the president of Atlanta Coca-Cola Bottling Company congratulating me on serving as a patrol. Enclosed with the letter was a miniature patrol pin to commemorate my service. I am now 45 years old and, while I can't find the pin, I still have the letter! This is just one of the ways Coca-Cola contributed to my elementary school experience. I also received pencils, pads and rulers throughout those years.

My grandfather retired from Coca-Cola as a delivery truck driver. I spent many summers at his house waiting and watching for him to get home with the original small bottles of Coke. What a treat! I also remember visiting the Coca-Cola plant in the second grade in Jacksonville, FL. Coca-Cola has always been part of my life.

My mother died in 1988 at the age of 96. She drank a Coke every day of her life. In the 1920s, she lived near the Coca-Cola plant in Moultrie, GA. The family had a cow and mother made excellent buttermilk, which the plant manager really liked. Every week, he would bring mother a case of Coca-Cola and swap it for a gallon of buttermilk!



My great grandmother always kept a six-pack of Coke bottles for the kids. My favorite memory of her was the way she saved the bottles and returned them to the local Coke bottling plant. I loved visiting the plant with her. She is long gone, as is the plant. But every time I drive by the building, I think of her and smile.

I grew up in Americus, GA, living with my grandfather, S.T. Warren, who was a Coca-Cola bottler. I remember watching him bottle Coke and learning all about the machinery. I always had the latest Coke toys to play with. After the War, my Uncle Tommy Warren ran the Coke plant and finally sold it before he died. Everyone in town was sorry to see the plant close, but we are still collectors of "Coke." My grandfather gave me Coke stock when I graduated from high school and it was split many times. We treasure our Coke stock!



I went to school in Grenada, WI. During the dry season, the bottling plant would close. At the start of the spring (and end of dry season), people would line up at the plant. The appearance of Coke bottles (empties) would signify spring -- prior to seeing any blooming flowers.

I just turned 40. My fondest memories in childhood are when I was 2, 3 and 4 years old. Our family was just your average working class family. My biggest treat is when my uncle took me for a tour of the Coca-Cola factory, and at the end I would get a



Coca-Cola Stories

little 6-ounce bottle of Coke! He worked there and he was my favorite uncle to visit. Today, it's still my No. 1 drink.



There used to be a Coca-Cola bottling plant in our town. When we were in fourth grade, our class took a school trip there. We each got a bottle after the tour. That Christmas my mom bought me a plastic Coca-Cola dispenser which I loved.

When I was in elementary school, once a year the Coca-Cola truck would show up and we got to leave the classroom and go to the cafeteria for our own bottle of Coke. We would always try to guess what day the truck would show up. This came to be the highlight of our school year.



As a child in 1954, we took our annual school field trip to Abilene to visit the Coke bottling plant. They always gave us red pencils with Coke emblazed on the side. Also all the bottles were the small original size.



When I went to a one-room country school in Goodhue County, Minnesota, the highlight (one of them!) of the year was when the "Coke man" would come to the school. He would give each student (probably 12-18 of us) a ruler, a tablet and a bottle of Coca-Cola. I could never drink a whole bottle when I was in the early grades. What a treasure to have my own wooden ruler that said "Coca-Cola" on it! And the tablet had a beautiful colored picture on the front! Memories, memories!

My Mom's side of the family is from a small town in North Carolina called Gastonia, where my grandfather was a doctor. Everyone called him Dr. Gus. He was an old-school doctor, a cardiologist by specialty, but was said to have delivered most of the babies in town and never quit making house calls. He had special relationships with everyone in town; doctor bill payment in those days ranged from a basket of fresh fruit to a case of Coca-Cola. The local bottler gave my grandfather one of those neat old metal Coca-Cola coolers. It's red and is embossed with the Coca-Cola logo. In addition, the bottler had Dr. Gus' name inscribed on the cooler. This cooler got so cold it sweat on the outside and seemed like the metal was too cold to touch. We used to go for a ride on the tractor on a hot summer day and then sit on the back porch and drink a wet, icy cold Coke from a glass bottle out of that cooler. It's a memory of time with family that will always stay with me and that I hope to share with other generations of our family ... with the cooler.



Coca-Cola Stories

It's also a reminder of how Coca-Cola bottlers developed meaningful local relationships with their towns and friends. The gesture always meant more than money.

When I was growing up in Wichita, Kansas, the most fun thing to do was go to the local bottling plant and watch them make and bottle Coke. As a young child, this was big stuff and I will always remember it.

I grew up in Alamogordo, NM, in the 60s. We had a Coca-Cola bottling plant downtown, next door to the movie theater. We kids would go to Saturday matinees, and stand in front of the huge glass window and watch the bottles get filled, capped and moved down the conveyer belt while we waited for the theater to open. Some Saturdays, if the group of children wasn't too large, the Coca-Cola guys would come outside and give us Cokes. I've never forgotten that plant or those men.