

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY MUSEUM

## Bendigo Pottery Demijohn

AHM007210



### What is a demijohn?

A demijohn is a bulbous narrow-necked bottle holding from 3 to 10 gallons of liquid (or 11.35 – 37.85 Litres). The term “demijohn” begins to appear in the literature in the early 1700s, but the word is said to have had earlier origins in Persia.

In Australia they were generally made of fired clay but could also be made of glass and were used for transporting large amounts of tonics, alcohol and other liquids. This example has a clay handle and lid. Manufacturer marks were common in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and these could either be stamped into the clay or painted on with a glaze before firing. The demijohns were very heavy, especially when full and in some cases the liquid would be decanted into smaller vessels for easier movement and use.

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