STANCHION FOR BEVERAGE TAP

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ABSTRACT
A stanchion in two separable sections surrounds a vertical tap. A faucet opening is provided in the side wall of the stanchion at a joint between the separable sections. A detachable faucet plate is held in position in the faucet opening by interengagement between the plate and the separable sections when they are joined to form the stanchion. The tap faucet extends through an opening in the faucet plate. Faucet plates with different openings to accommodate taps with different numbers and arrangements of faucets can be fitted into the stanchion. The top of the stanchion is free to carry point of purchase advertising.

15 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures
STANCHION FOR BEVERAGE TAP

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to beverage taps and decorative covers for such taps and, more particularly, to such a cover which is further adapted to carry point of purchase advertising.

It has long been the practice to attempt to improve the appearance of taps for dispensing beer, soft drinks, and the like, and to provide some form of point of purchase advertising. One example has been the provision of decorative tap handles carrying identification of the beverage being dispensed.

This invention is concerned with this problem of improving the appearance of taps and among its general objects is to provide a stanchion for covering a beverage tap which has universal adaptability to taps of various sizes and with a variety of numbers and arrangements of tap faucets.

For the achievement of this and other objects, this invention proposes a stanchion made up of a plurality of separable sections. An opening is located at one of the joints between the separable stanchion sections and a faucet plate, detachable from the stanchion sections, is positioned in that opening. Structural members are provided on the stanchion sections to hold the faucet plate in the opening by interengagement with the faucet plate. The faucet plate is provided with an opening through which the tap faucet extends when the stanchion is assembled around the tap. The faucet plate can be removed when the stanchion is disassembled so that various faucet plates with different openings to accommodate different numbers and arrangements of tap faucets can be assembled into the stanchion. This stanchion construction utilizing a number of separable sections together with the interchangeability of faucet plates allows the same basic stanchion to be used with a variety of different tap arrangements.

It is also preferred to provide an advertisement carrying section which is held in the stanchion but in a manner allowing removal and replacement thereof to afford a means of selecting desired point of purchase advertising.

Other objects and advantages will be pointed out in, or be apparent from, the specification and claims, as will obvious modifications of the embodiment shown in the drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a front elevation of a stanchion embodying this invention and surrounding a beverage tap;

FIG. 2 is a longitudinal cross section through the stanchion of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a cross section along line 3—3 of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 4 is an exploded perspective of the stanchion.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With particular reference to the drawings, a stanchion 10 is illustrated as surrounding a beverage tap which consists of a vertical section 12 and a laterally projecting faucet assembly 14. The beverage tap can be of the type for dispensing beer, soft drinks, or the like.

The stanchion is generally elongated and includes a body 16 made up of two separable stanchion sections 18 and 20. The stanchion sections are joined to provide an elongated, generally cylindrical hollow body and abut each other along longitudinal joints 22 and 24.

Stanchion section 18 is provided with two internal lips 26 and 28 which extend the length of the section and overlap joints 22 and 24 to insure a positive interlock between the stanchion sections.

Body 16 fits over vertical section 12 of the beverage tap and a plurality of inwardly projecting tabs 30 are provided on the inside of the stanchion sections to engage and assist in locating the stanchion relative to vertical tap section 12. If desired, tabs 30 can be made relatively thin so as to be flexible and deflect against the vertical section 12 to assist in location of the stanchion relative to the beverage tap.

Stanchion body 16, in covering the vertical section of the tap, can then be treated aesthetically as desired to provide a more appealing tap. The only portion of the tap which is exposed, and of necessity this must be so, is faucet section 14. In this connection, the faucet assembly projects through an opening 32 in body 16 and a faucet plate 34 which is also provided with an opening 36. Beverage taps of this type can be provided with various arrangements of tap assemblies, for example a single tap as illustrated in the drawings or two tap assemblies can project from a single vertical section with the tap assemblies arranged either parallel or at an angle to each other. Thus the stanchion must be capable of accommodating these different tap assembly arrangements and, to this end, the stanchion of this invention is provided with an arrangement whereby faucet plate 34 can be removed from the stanchion and replaced by another faucet having a different type of tap opening to accommodate a different tap assembly or assemblies.

More specifically, opening 32 in the stanchion body is provided at joint 22. A tab 38 is provided on the inner wall of section 18 adjacent to one side 40 of opening 32. Tab 38 projects inwardly from the inner wall of stanchion section 18. Similarly, stanchion section 20 is provided with a tab 42 which is positioned on the inner wall of section 20 adjacent to the opposite side 44 of opening 32. Thus, tabs 38 and 42 are positioned relatively opposite to each other when the stanchion sections are brought into engagement and form joints 22 and 24. Stanchion section 18 is also provided with a retainer 46 which is attached to top wall section 48 of stanchion section 18. Retainer 46 depends from wall 48 and has a surface 52 which is generally parallel to the upper portion 53 of stanchion section 18 to which it is adjacent. Surface 52 of retainer 46 is spaced from the inner wall of upper portion 53 defining a groove 54 which opens downwardly in the drawings.

With the just described construction, faucet plate 34 can be inserted with its upper edge 56 in groove 54 and one of its edge 58 abutting tab 38. The lower edge 60 of the faucet plate is provided with a stepped configuration so as to seat along the lower end 62 of opening 32. The lower end of opening 32 is defined by a lip 64 which engages the stepped configuration of lower edge 60 of the faucet plate. With the faucet plate so positioned, stanchion section 20 is moved into engagement with section 18 to form the cylindrical stanchion body and tab 42 of section 20 engages edge 65 of the faucet plate to securely hold the faucet plate in opening 32.

Top wall section 50 of stanchion section 20 is provided with a tongue 57 which, upon engaging the stanchion sections together, is guided into a notch 69 provided in top wall section 48 of stanchion section 18 to insure proper alignment of the stanchion sections. It can also
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be seen that separation of stanchion sections 18 and 20 permits ready removal of faucet plate 34 and replacement with another faucet plate of the same basic size but with a different tap opening so that it be necessary to use the stanchion on a beverage tap having a different tap assembly arrangement.

The stanchion sections are held together by means of a circular band 66 which fits around the lower end of the stanchion body and is provided with hook and pin arrangement 68 to hold the band tight around the assembly section. Also, a structural arrangement is provided at the top of the stanchion to cooperate in holding the sections together. More specifically, stanchion sections 18 and 20 are provided with vertically projecting sections 70 and 72 which are in turn provided with laterally outward projecting lips 74, 76, and 78, 80. The laterally outward projecting lips define grooves 82 and 84 which open outwardly relative to the longitudinal axis of the stanchion body. A ring 86 is provided at its lower end with inwardly projecting tabs 88 and 90.

Both grooves 82 and 84 and tabs 88 and 90 of ring 86 are of limited arcuate extensions so as to provide openings therebetween. With this construction, ring 86 can be positioned on the joined stanchion sections with tabs 88 and 90 positioned between lips 74, 76, and 80, 82 and then rotated into grooves 82 and 84 to hold the stanchion sections assembled.

A retainer ring is also provided with an axial extension and is made up of clear, light transmitting material, e.g., clear Lexan. The ring can then function as a carrier for point of purchase advertising such as the name of the beverage being dispensed. In this connection, a copy bearing strip 92 is fitted around ring 86 and a light assembly 94 is provided inside of ring 86 so that when the light is turned on it glows through ring 86 and will illuminate any indicia provided on copy strip 92. In this respect, the strip can be basically opaque and provided with open areas 96 arranged in any suitable arrangement to provide the necessary copy.

To complete the stanchion assembly, a cap 98 sits on the upper edge of ring 86 and can be of a construction compatible aesthetically to the stanchion body.

With the construction described, it will be seen that the stanchion has universal applicability to various types of beverage taps. The beverage faucet plate covers the universal opening 32 provided in the stanchion and the faucet plate itself can be removed and replaced with a different plate to accommodate different types and arrangements of faucet assemblies. The stanchion thus completely houses the beverage tap in an aesthetically pleasing manner and has universal applicability to a larger number of tap arrangements.

Although but one embodiment of the present invention has been illustrated and described, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from the spirit of the invention or from the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A stanchion for surrounding a beverage tap comprising, in combination, an elongated hollow body made up of plural sections separable from each other but defining said elongated hollow body when assembled, means for holding said plural sections in assembled relationship,
9. The stanchion of claim 8 wherein said tab means includes a first inwardly projecting tab adjacent one side of said body opening and second tab adjacent an opposite side of said body opening, said first and second tabs being on opposite sides of said joint, said groove defining means includes a projection on one of said sections generally parallel to the inner wall to which it is adjacent and located intermediate said first and second tabs, and a lip adjacent said opening opposite from said groove defining means for engaging an edge of said faucet plate.

10. The stanchion of claim 9 including means at one end of said body defining spaced grooves opening laterally outwardly of said body, and a movable member having spaced inwardly turned lips arranged to register in said grooves to hold said plural sections assembled and slideable out of said grooves to release said plural sections for disassembly.

11. The stanchion of claim 10 wherein said body is generally cylindrical, said grooves are located at one end of said body and are arcuate and of limited arcuate extension to define open areas therebetween, and said movable member is generally circular in cross-section and said lips are arcuate and of limited arcuate extension to define open areas between for positioning of said lips in the areas between said arcuate groove for rotation into and out of interlocking engagement in said grooves.

12. The stanchion of claim 11 wherein said movable member carries point of purchase indicia.

13. The stanchion of claim 11 including a circular band spaced from said end and encircling and holding said plural sections assembled.

14. The stanchion of claim 10 including a plurality of tabs spaced longitudinally along the interior of said body for locating said stanchion on a beverage tap.

15. The stanchion of claim 4 including a plurality of tabs spaced longitudinally along the interior of said body for locating said stanchion on a beverage tap.