

FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY

Arm-R-Lite Door Manufacturing



Photos:

1. Founder Jack Dourney, 1986.
2. Wilma Dourney, 1987.
3. Jack and Wilma Dourney at the DODA show, 1988.
4. The knight image implies the armor attributes of the door.
5. An early Arm-R-Lite door, ca. 1960.
6. The South Plainfield, N.J., plant, ca. 1970.
7. The Franklin, N.H., plant, ca. 1970.

Milestones

Editor's Note: In 2008, Arm-R-Lite Door Manufacturing marks its 50th anniversary in the garage door business. Here's a glance at key milestones in Arm-R-Lite's history.

- 1948 ▶ John J. (Jack) Dourney Jr. starts his garage door installation business in West Orange, N.J., after returning from Japan during World War II.
 - 1958 ▶ Jack starts Arm-R-Lite Door Manufacturing to supply doors for his garage door installation business.
 - 1959 ▶ He designs the Arm-R-Lite aluminum and glass sectional door as a welded product to differentiate his product from his competitors'. The Arm-R-Lite name speaks to the need for a lightweight (aluminum) door that requires less maintenance. A knight's head is used as the logo to symbolize the armor of protection provided by the door's welded construction.
 - 1961 ▶ During the gas station building boom, Arm-R-Lite doors are supplied to gas stations for all of the major oil companies. Manufacturing garage doors becomes the main focus of the business, with Jack Dourney acting as president.
 - 1963 ▶ The company adds the Arm-R-Lon fiberglass sectional door to its product offering.
 - 1966 ▶ Arm-R-Lite purchases Hudson Door Mfg., a wood sectional door manufacturing company in Franklin, N.H. The majority of the firm's focus remains on aluminum doors.
 - 1968 ▶ The company moves its manufacturing facility to a seven-acre property with a 33,000-sq.-ft. facility in South Plainfield, N.J.
 - 1971 ▶ Arm-R-Lite begins to diversify its aluminum door product offerings by adding more sizes of aluminum extrusions to allow for larger doors and differing applications such as firehouses.
 - 1973 ▶ The firm lands a national account with Jiffy Lube for supply of aluminum sectional doors. This relationship extends well into the mid 1980s.
 - 1980 ▶ Arm-R-Lite enters the residential and commercial steel door market.
 - 1982 ▶ The company begins to offer additional painted finishes along with the standard anodized finish on its aluminum doors.
 - 1987 ▶ Wilma McGrady Dourney (Jack's wife) joins Arm-R-Lite as vice president of sales and marketing, bringing executive experience in the automotive aftermarket industry.
 - 1988 ▶ Shannon McGrady, Wilma's daughter, joins the family business as sales representative. She brings a business degree from Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn., and experience as a manager at UPS.
 - 1991 ▶ Jack Dourney retires, and Wilma takes the reins as president.
 - 1993 ▶ Arm-R-Lite begins to sell aluminum and glass doors for high-end residential use.
 - 1997 ▶ Jack Dourney receives Lifetime Honorary Member award from the International Door Association (IDA).
 - 2003 ▶ The company receives WBE (women's business enterprise) certification.
 - 2004 ▶ Arm-R-Lite designs an aluminum carriage house door.
 - 2006 ▶ The firm introduces the Aluminarc, an aluminum top section that conforms for use with arched headers.
 - 2007 ▶ Arm-R-Lite introduces the faux wood finish for all of its models of aluminum doors.
- Today, Arm-R-Lite doors are sold in all 50 states. As in 1958, its aluminum and glass doors are its primary products.