

FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY The Cookson Company



Photos

1. Richard (left) and Bob Cookson receive IDA's Heritage Award in April 2007. (Photo courtesy of IDA)
2. (From left) Bob, Jim, Robert, and Rich Cookson, 1993.
3. Dorothy Cookson, 1947.
4. Cookson counter doors at the University of California Medical Center in San Francisco, ca. 1960.
5. Cookson's unique upward-acting rolling grilles, ca. 1960.
6. Cookson's Power Unit, introduced in the mid 1950s, featured a direct-drive motor operator similar to the European designs of today.

Milestones

- 1923 ▶ Harold W. Cookson Sr. works for Rolph Mills Company of San Francisco and sells products manufactured by Cornell Iron Works.
- 1925 ▶ Harold W. Cookson Sr. and Pearce Cromwell purchase Kennerson Manufacturing Company, one of two rolling door manufacturers in San Francisco.
- 1932 ▶ Kennerson Manufacturing is sold to Kinnear Manufacturing of Columbus, Ohio. Harold W. Cookson Sr. becomes president of the San Francisco location.
- 1938 ▶ Harold W. Cookson Sr. starts The Cookson Company with his wife, Dorothy. Operating in a 2,300-sq.-ft. plant, their first order is for an 8' x 10' service door that sold for \$92.
- 1941 ▶ During World War II, steel is rationed. Cookson makes miscellaneous steel parts to support the war effort, including fish spears used on lifeboats.
- 1946 ▶ Harold W. Cookson Jr. and Robert A. Cookson, sons of Harold Sr. and Dorothy, join the family business after returning home from the war. They start to focus on rolling door manufacturing.
- ▶ Harold W. Cookson Sr. dies. Dorothy Cookson becomes an instrumental part of the business.
- 1948 ▶ The Cookson Company expands its current location to 6,900 sq. ft.
- 1949 ▶ Dorothy Cookson makes her two sons partners in The Cookson Company.
- 1952 ▶ Cookson introduces the first extruded aluminum counter door.
- 1957 ▶ David E. Cookson, another son of Harold and Dorothy, joins The Cookson Company.
- ▶ The first counter fire door is produced.
- 1960 ▶ Cookson introduces the first prepainted slat curtain. The color gray is selected because it is the most popular color as determined by a survey of architects. The San Francisco headquarters moves to an 87,000-sq.-ft. building.
- 1964 ▶ Dorothy Cookson dies. David E. Cookson becomes an equal partner.
- 1970 ▶ Cookson introduces the FireFly, a time-delay release holder for fire doors.
- 1978 ▶ The Gastonia, N.C., manufacturing facility is started. Robert's sons, Bob and Jim Cookson, run the facility.
- 1980 ▶ Cookson introduces FinalCote, the first finish-painted rolling door. The color tan is selected to match the earth-tone buildings in the Southeast. Tan soon becomes an industry standard.
- 1985 ▶ Robert A. Cookson purchases The Cookson Company from Harold Jr. and David. Robert's sons, Bob, Jim, and Rich, assume the responsibility of running the company.
- 1986 ▶ Cookson introduces the FireStop, the first fire-labeled countertop for counter fire doors.
- 1990 ▶ Cookson's headquarters and western manufacturing facility move from San Francisco to Phoenix, Ariz.
- 1991 ▶ Bob, Jim, and Rich Cookson assume ownership of The Cookson Company.
- ▶ Cookson introduces the Featheredge safety edge, utilizing air-wave technology.
- 1997 ▶ The Phantom Featheredge is introduced, the first wireless safety-edge device with self-diagnostic logic.
- 2000 ▶ Cookson introduces the FD-2A, the first automatic resetting chain-operated fire door.
- 2002 ▶ The International Door Association (IDA) presents the Industry Member Service Award to The Cookson Company for its excellence in manufacturing, significantly contributing to IDA, and product innovations, and for displaying honesty, integrity, and quality.
- 2007 ▶ The Cookson family receives IDA's prestigious Heritage Award, recognizing Cookson's contribution to the well-being and heritage of the door and access systems industry.
- ▶ Today, the Cookson Company makes a full line of rolling door products, including service doors, insulated service doors, service fire doors, insulated service fire doors, smoke doors, counter doors, counter fire doors, counter doors with sill and trim, rolling grilles, wood rolling doors, and side-coiling partitions.