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Industry Loses Two Leading Entrepreneurs

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Industry Loses Two Leading Entrepreneurs



Bob Barnard

1931-2010



Bob Schram

1935-2010

Bob Schram and Bob Barnard Die in August

By Tom Wadsworth

In early August, our industry lost two leaders: Bob Schram, president of Napoleon-Lynx, and Bob Barnard, chairman of National Door Industries. Schram, 75, died on Aug. 2, and Barnard, 79, died on Aug. 6. Each executive had more than 40 years of entrepreneurial leadership in the garage door industry, and their companies are known throughout North America and internationally.

"Two pillars of our industry were toppled in the same week," says Larry Pahlow of Canimex, who knew both men for 40 years and was president of NAGDM from 1983 to 1985. "Our industry has lost some wonderful people who made a great impact."

Bob Schram: Milestones

Robert G. Schram was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on July 15, 1935. He attended Cleveland schools, John Carroll University in Cleveland, and The Ohio State University in Columbus. After Ohio State, he worked for Sinclair Oil, Cities Service Oil Company, and The Arvin Corporations in New Jersey.

In 1967, he entered the garage door industry and served as the national sales manager for Automatic Doorman, a manufacturer of residential and commercial door and gate operators in Paterson, N.J.



In 1975, he bought Jarry Precision in Montreal and changed the name to Lynx Industries. The company soon began producing residential and commercial garage door openers, springs, and some stamped products.

In 1980, Schram purchased Ambass-a-dor Manufacturing in St. Lambert, Quebec, and started producing the first steel insulated garage doors in Canada.

In 1986, he purchased Napoleon Spring Works of Archbold, Ohio, a manufacturer of garage door springs and hardware.

In 1987, he opened Lynx New Jersey, a residential and commercial garage door opener factory, and Lynx California, a distribution center. In 1993, he opened Lynx Arizona, a hardware and spring manufacturing company.

Over the last 40 years, few people have been more active than Schram in industry associations. Through this involvement, Schram amassed a vast network of friends and colleagues throughout the United States and Canada.

Known by Association

From 1972 to 1975, Schram served on the Far Western Garage Door Association (FWGDA) board, serving as president from 1974 to 1975. From 1978 to 1981, he served as president of the Door Operator & Remote Controls Manufacturers Association (DORCMA). He also served on the board of the Door and Operator Dealers Association (DODA) in 1977, 1978, 1983, and 1984.

Schram was also active in the Door & Access Systems Manufacturers Association (DASMA), National Association of Garage Door Manufacturers (NAGDM), International Door Association (IDA), and Canadian Door Institute (CDI).

"I believe that he was one of the most well known and liked persons in the industry," says his son, Mark Schram. "He was friends with competitors, customers, and suppliers. He personally knew people in our industry in all 50 states as well as the 10 provinces in Canada and many other countries."

In recognition of his dedication to the industry, he was the recipient of the DODA Distinguished Service Award in 1989 and the IDA Distinguished Service Award in 2010.

Schram was president of Napoleon/Lynx, with manufacturing facilities in Canada and the United States. The company has 300 employees, more than 500,000 sq. ft. of manufacturing space, and customers in all 50 states, all 10 Canadian provinces, and in 30 other countries on five continents.

He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Doris, and their six children: Mark, Daniel, James, John, Robert, and D'Arcy.

Bob Barnard: Milestones

Bob R. Barnard was born Feb. 14, 1931, in the small town of Hale Center, Texas, 30 miles north of Lubbock. Having served in the U.S. Naval Reserve and the U.S. Air Force, he was founder and chairman of National Door Industries.

In 1968, at age 37, Bob Barnard and a college buddy established JoBa, Inc., an importer and distributor of glass in Fort Worth, Texas. In 1970, Barnard took over management, changed the company name to JoBa Plastics, and began manufacturing and distributing Stylecraft garage door window trim to garage door manufacturers and dealers.

In 1977, Barnard formed a new company, National Door Supply, and began importing and selling fasteners and other components to the garage door industry. The company began a period of rapid growth and expansion.

In 1982, National Door designed and manufactured the first plastic window frames for the garage door industry, capturing the tidal wave growth of residential steel garage doors in America. In 1989, the company was renamed National Door Industries and expansion continued.



Bob and Bob: Similar But Different

"Bob Barnard grew up as a Texas country boy, while Bob Schram grew up in Cleveland. Bob Barnard was a morning person, and Bob Schram was a night person. They both worked hard, worked smart, built lots of lasting relationships, and became a great success."

-Larry Pahlow, U.S. Sales Representative, Canimex

"The business is a lot different today. These two built their business on relationships. People did business with them because they were so likeable. They were risk-takers, classic examples of people who pursued and realized the American Dream."

-Larry Pahlow

"I have the utmost respect for both men; they achieved a great deal in their lifetimes. Both men were able to raise large families, and both were more than just the dad. They were the focal point of their families."

-John Jellá, President, First United Door Technologies

In 2001, National Door Industries acquired the Bevelite product line of leaded acrylic lites used in the fast-growing high-end garage door market. The company soon invested in upgraded and high-speed manufacturing equipment.

In 2006, adapting to changes in garage doors, National Door began fabricating and importing its own line of carriage-style hardware and created the industry's largest stock of windows and trim for carriage house doors.

Customers Everywhere

"Bob Barnard's customer list includes everyone in the industry," says John Jellá, president of First United Door Technologies. "Very early on, Bob realized the industry's need for door trim, plant-ons, window designs, and a host of other products. National Door was the original ancillary component supplier for the industry."

Today, National Door Industries and its 165 employees operate in 200,000+ sq. ft. of space, serving more than 35 garage door manufacturers and 7,000 dealers in North and South America and many foreign countries. Stocking more than 70,000 parts, National Door is considered the world's largest manufacturer and distributor for garage door components.

For 25 years, Bob Barnard served on the board of Happy Hill Farm Academy in Granbury, Texas, a Christian boarding school for disadvantaged students that prepares them for higher education. He is survived by his wife, Joyce, and their sons, Mike and Britt. His son, Ken, died in 2008 at age 50.

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Remembering Bob Schram

"Bob was a great salesman who was driven. He was a key part of our growth, and he gave me a different outlook on business."

— **Artie Mockler**, *president and part owner of Automatic Doorman in 1967, where Schram began working in the garage door industry*

"Bob had the ability to set goals and the tenacity to achieve them. He was a great motivator, and his optimism was infectious. He was a man of great integrity who had the courage of his convictions. He was a true example of living and achieving the American dream."

— **Mark Schram**, *Napoleon/Lynx*

"Bob had a great passion for this business and was a fierce competitor. When I was with Collier, I directly competed with Bob. I can tell you firsthand that he never gave up one customer without an all-out battle. I greatly respected Bob and that toughness."

— **Chuck Miller**, *Vice President – New Business Development, Overhead Door*

"He was a fun and funny person. His heart and passion could fill a stadium."

— **Richard Brenner**, *CEO, Amarr Garage Doors*

"Bob did more business after 7:00 p.m. than most people did in a full day. He was a master of the art of conversation and great at gathering information."

— **Larry Pahlow**, *U.S. Sales Representative, Canimex*

"Some of my earliest memories in the garage door industry are with Bob and my father at NAGDM meetings. Those guys were some real characters. Bob did things his way; he was one-of-a-kind."

— **Ray Neisewander III**, *President, Raynor*

"Bob was a great competitor and very serious about his business, but he never forgot to have fun. He had a talent for putting on a great party. One year at Expo, he handed out roses to all the ladies entering his party. Bob was really a class act."

— **John Jellá**, *President, First United Door Technologies*

"Bob Schram was a salesman at heart and a strategic thinker. He built an organization around knowing more about the industry than anyone else and having the right solutions at the right time."

— **Doug Kidd**, *President, Re-Source Industries*

"He loved the business world and the feel of the deal. He was driven by it. It wasn't a job to him; it was a passion."

— **Bearge Miller**, *President, Miller Edge*



Schram



C. Miller



Brenner



Pahlow



Neisewander



Jellá



Kidd



B. Miller

Remembering Bob Barnard

"Barnard was intimately involved in the workmanship of the parts and machinery, including his extruders. You could always contact Bob for help on any difficult project and get worthwhile and valuable input from him."

— **John Jellá**, *President, First United Door Technologies*

"Both men were committed to their businesses, working six and seven days a week, 12 to 16-hour days. I can't tell you how many times I would get a call at 5 or 6 p.m. on a Friday night. Bob (Barnard) would be on the other line with a two-hour difference in the time zone, and he would be working on one of our projects."

— **John Jellá**



"Bob Barnard once told me that if everyone else was going home at 5:00 p.m., he figured he was going to have to work twice as hard to reach his goals. And he did, every day. He was humble, yet driven to succeed."

— **Doug Kidd**, *President, Re-Source Industries; VP/sales and marketing at National Door Industries from 1991 to 2001*

"Bob Barnard was a true gentleman. He treated people with respect and dignity no matter if you were a small or large customer. I really enjoyed my visits to Bob and seeing his dogs, Holly and Lacy, at his Fort Worth office. Bob's vision and spirit will be sorely missed."

— **Richard Brenner**, *CEO, Amarr Garage Doors*

"Bob was just an old country boy from Texas who worked his tail off. I never saw anyone with a stronger work ethic. He started with nothing but determination, and he made it happen."

— **Larry Pahlow**, *U.S. Sales Representative, Canimex*