



National Inventors Hall of Fame Inducts Michael J. Owens

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Owens revolutionized the glass industry with the invention of the automatic glass bottle-making machine

PERRYSBURG, Ohio, April 3 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Everyday great inventions and the geniuses behind them go unrecognized. Then, there are some inventions making such an impact on our daily lives that they must be recognized and honored. Today, Michael J. Owens finally receives that honor.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050412/CLTU028LOGO>)

The National Inventors Hall of Fame today announced that 41 inventors will be inducted into the 2007 hall of fame. Among those are Owens and his revolutionary invention -- the automatic glass bottle-making machine.

Michael J. Owens, a glassmaker since the age of 10, moved to Ohio to join a start-up glass company founded by Edward Libbey in 1888 and began America's first industry -- glassmaking. Libbey financed Owens' dream of creating a glassblowing machine, the most significant development in glassmaking since the invention of the blowpipe more than 3,000 years ago.

Owens' success came in 1903. That's when he made the first automatic glass bottle-making machine that could create bottles so quickly and cheaply it facilitated the growth of numerous industries that bottled everything from food and beverages to household chemicals. He went on to help develop mass-production techniques for window glass and helped guide the company into research that eventually led to the production of fiberglass.

This invention made glass a commodity instead of a luxury. It also helped to eliminate child labor, which was rampant in the early glassblowing days. His work also made it possible for thousands of jobs to be created - jobs that are still in existence today.

The Owens machine, which led to the formation of the Owens Bottle Company, literally revolutionized the glass industry and the O-I family tree began to grow. Owens Bottle and the Illinois Glass Company which was started at Alton in 1873, merged to form Owens-Illinois in 1929. In 1965, the corporate name was changed from Owens-Illinois Glass Co. to Owens-Illinois, Inc., (NYSE: OI) to reflect the broader scope of operations. In recent years, the company that started by a single invention has significantly increased its worldwide operations, both through internal growth as well as acquisitions. In 2005, Owens-Illinois, Inc. began doing business worldwide as O-I.

"We're honored to recognize Michael Owens' achievements by inducting him into the National Inventors Hall of Fame this year. What he did gave rise to a whole industry and gave us a world of technology we have the luxury of taking for granted nowadays. He deserves to be better known as an inventor who played an important role in the history of our economy and our society," said Fred Allen, Vice President for Selection, National Inventors Hall of Fame.

The 2007 inductees will be honored during a recognition ceremony on Friday, May 4, at the National Inventors Hall of Fame headquarters in Akron, Ohio. The total number of inductees in the Hall come May will be 371.

About O-I

Millions of times a day, O-I glass containers, healthcare packaging and specialty closure systems deliver many of the world's best-known consumer products to people all around the world. With leading positions in Europe, North America, Asia Pacific and Latin America, O-I provides consumer-preferred products that enable superior taste, purity, visual appeal and value benefits for our customers' products. Established in 1903, the company employs nearly 30,000 people and has more than 100 manufacturing facilities in 23 countries. In 2006, annual sales were \$7.4 billion. For more information, visit <http://www.o-i.com>.

About the National Inventors Hall of Fame

The not-for-profit National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation is one of the premier organizations in America dedicated to honoring and fostering creativity and invention. Each year a new class of inventors is inducted into the Hall of Fame in recognition of their patented inventions that make human, social, and economic progress possible. Founded in 1973 by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the National Council of Intellectual Property Law Association, the Hall's permanent home is Akron, Ohio, where the inventors in the Hall are honored and from where it administers its national programs, including Camp Invention(R), Club Invention(R), Invent Now(R), and the Collegiate Inventors Competition(R).

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Copies of Owens-Illinois news releases are available at the Owens-Illinois web site at <http://www.o-i.com> or at <http://www.prnewswire.com/>

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