

Fabric Newsletter



Thompson's 150th Anniversary Story Part 2- the 1900's

2010 marks the 150th year of business for James Thompson & Co! In our Winter '10 edition, the first 50 years of our history was featured. Now, here is "the rest of the story", how we got to where we are today.

Today, New York is the world center of finance, advertising and fashion, but in the early 1900's it was truly a manufacturing center for all types of apparel and sewn consumer products. Thompson was thriving as a quality supplier to this trade. In a 1905 book called "New York's Great Industries", we have this entry: "James Thompson Co. manufactures every description of twine, mosquito nets, buckram and screen cloth which are unsurpassed for quality and excellence". By 1910, the Valley Falls NY mill had 1,600 spindles for yarn-making, 200 weaving looms, 2 dyeing systems and 2 water wheels. We employed 200 people at the mill. Our

office and warehouse in NYC was at 16 Greene St.

Sometime in the 1910's, James Thompson sold the business to the Buchman family. Son-in-law Arthur Judell eventually took sole ownership of Thompson. The company survived and prospered through some very tough times-World War I and the Great Depression-adapting and adding new products. At some point around this time, Thompson Packaging Novelties was created, offering finished sewn fabric items. Since we made various net fabrics, we built-up a great business with finished net products such as marble bags, ping-pong nets and Christmas stockings. Our new base in the City became a 5 story plant & offices on Prince St., in the heart of Greenwich Village.

In the 50's, Thompson added the growing Home-Sewing market to it's mix of customers

with new basic cotton fabrics. In the early 60's, we started importing burlap, dyeing it at the mill. Robert B. Judell took over the reigns as President from his father-and continues today as our energetic "Captain"!

By 1970, the company was thriving with 3 distinct Divisions: Cotton, Twine and Packaging Novelties. Our 1 production mill couldn't handle all this business-that is when we opened our new mill in Greenwood, Delaware! We also opened a smaller sewing operation in Jersey City NJ, which was also the home of our aluminum caps business for the food industry. The Valley Falls mill continued to operate, specializing in Twine products and the hot new market for Craft fabrics and mesh. We became industry leaders in making rug-hooking canvas. Look for our next history installment in our Summer issue!

Athletic 9.5 oz. Canvas/Duck Cloth a Winner in "Bags Game"!

Have you been to a sporting event or college campus lately and seen crowds of people intently throwing beanbags onto wooden boards? What's going on? Well, welcome to the hot new outdoor game with a number of names-"Cornhole Game", "Bags Game", "BeanBag" or "Corn Toss". It's sort of like horse-shoes, but bags filled with corn are used to throw onto slanted

boards with a single hole in the middle. This is also becoming a big back-yard party game, very addictive once you play. The fabric of choice for these bags? Thompson's 60" Duck/Canvas! We have been supplying manufacturers of this game for the last 6 years with fabric, ever since it's beginnings in the Cincinnati area. It is no longer a "Midwest thing"-this game is

spreading all over the U.S.

Our line of Canvas now has 34 shades, including all the College/High School team colors. In addition to selling this by-the-yard, we now are sewing the actual bags-unfilled-at our Mexican plant. So, if you haven't yet seen our newest color card, please call or email and we will send!

NEW THOMPSON NEW YORK OFFICE ADDRESS:

We will be moving, and on April 26th will be in our new location!

JAMES THOMPSON & CO., INC.
381 PARK AVENUE SOUTH
ROOM #718
NEW YORK, NY 10016-8806
Phone# 212-686-4242
Fax#212-686-9528

4 NEW FLANNEL SHADES!

New 45" Flannel Solids sample cards now available that show our new colors- Seafoam Mint, New Royal, Grass Green and Dusty Teal. Call your Salesperson for a card.

VISIT US AT QUILT MARKET-

This year, in Minneapolis May 21st-23rd, we are going to have a special 150th Anniversary theme booth! Please stop by Booth #2915 and see Marc & Sara.

FABRIC PROJECT IDEAS NOW ON WEBSITE

Looking for creative end-uses for our fabrics? We now have 19 projects-and more coming-on our Thompson site. These ideas were done by Carol Zentgraf and Chris Malone, leading educators in the Sewing industry. Go to www.jamesthompson.com

FIESTA MUSLIN A HIT!

New 45" 78x78 count muslin in nine shades has been well received. A great new basic! We will be happy to send you samples and pricing.