

78 years and going strong: The Richards Homewares Story

Richards Homewares is a staple in the homewares industry and in the IHHS North hall but many don't know the real extent of the business they see every year. Richards ability to change with the times and corner new markets year by year means it has a long and storied history, 78 years in 2017 to be exact!

1939 in Los Angeles, California, Richards Homewares was founded by Myron Freeland under the name of Richards Plastic Company. At the time, Myron took sheets of vinyl, die-cut them, sewed elastic around the edges and sold them to the dental industry as head rest covers for dental chairs.

In the late 1940's Myron's son Bernard joined the business, working to develop consumer products from the same vinyl: sweater and blanket bags, suit and dress covers, and indoor furniture slip covers among other items. These products were marketed to the notions department of department stores across local Los Angeles, and over the years more and more products were developed. Most all of these early products were developed in vinyl, at one time the product line even included a popular series of raincoats that sold to every department store chain in the Southwest.

Richards was the first manufacturer to go off-shore for sourcing, and in the early 70's had grown to become a nationwide supplier to the notions industry. In 1976, Bernard's son Robert joined the business, beginning another era of change for Richards. In the early 80's Robert began to push the company into a wider range of product lines: Wooden hangers, steel garment racks, wardrobes, and canvas garment bags were all among the new products.

In 1989, after 50 years, the name of the company was changed to Richards Homewares, Inc., which better described the nature of the business Richards had evolved into. In 1994, the company re-located to Portland, Oregon, an environment where it could afford larger facilities to handle its steady growth.

Richards has survived, and flourished in the past 23 years and is on course to keep topping itself year after year. The benefit passes down to its customers with ever expanding product lines and more reliable and affordable supplier networks. Whether you're looking for bathroom organization, bedroom organization, or for 2017 garage organization, Richards has what you're looking for.

Stop by Richards Homewares booth #N6113 to see all of the new and exciting introductions for home organization.