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pride of place

Penn Windows & Doors

STANDING THE TEST OF TIME

According to some sources, The Keiunkan Inn in Japan is known for being the oldest existing, operating business in the world. Perhaps most impressive is that the 1,300-year-old inn, located near Mount Fuji, has been owned by 52 generations of the same family. —>

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ERIN,
RICK SR.,
& MICHAEL

The oldest American company, Caswell-Massey, a perfume and soap company, has been serving customers since 1752—24 years before the Declaration of Independence.

Others that make the list that you may recognize include King Arthur Flour (1790), Jim Beam (1795), Dupont (1802), Colgate (1806), Brooks Brothers (1818), and Pabst Blue Ribbon (1844) to name a few.

In the Lehigh Valley, names that inspire business longevity and innovation include Coopersburg Associates (1791), C.F. Martin & Co. (1833), Nazareth Mutual Insurance Company (1845), and Crayola (1864).

Through all possible challenges imaginable, these businesses weather every storm and stand the test of time. Markets are efficient and businesses that survive a generation inherently tell the story. There is always something interesting to learn. There is always something

special. When we reflect on companies we buy from locally, Penn Windows & Doors is on the same trajectory and for many of the same foundational and time-tested reasons.

Started out of their home in 1948 as Penn Aluminum Construction Company, Al and Stanley Beyer opened the company with an idea and a dream. Originally selling aluminum windows and siding, not without its fundamental challenges, they did whatever they could to get the business off the ground and keep it going. The business model was straight forward—offer a quality product at a really fair price.

In the decade to follow World War II, the Beyers purchased a building on Union Boulevard. There was a return of prosperity and the company started to grow. More and more Americans started to consider themselves part of the middle class. More homes were being built and the suburbs were born. The advancement of roadways and shopping centers connected

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homeowners and fostered the exchange of goods and services. Through advertisements, television began connecting more and more consumers with goods and services for a better life. Through the 70s and 80s, the business continued to grow, so they expanded their offerings to include doors, railings, awnings, roofing—even kerosene heaters and fuel.

Aside from a very strong work ethic and deeply rooted values like honesty and reliability, Penn Windows & Doors keeps it simple.

Today, they've moved back to a simpler approach that only includes their core competencies—selling, installing, and servicing quality windows and doors, while creating a great experience for their homeowner clients.

The Hauler's place in the company's history and future would never have existed had it not been for son Rick Jr.'s employment with the Beyers, and his knowledge of some changes going on that ultimately lead to the sale of the business to his family. And while Rick Jr. left to serve in the Coast Guard for a number of years, he rejoined the family business upon his return with a renewed excitement and plans for growth in the business. The plan included reorganizing and refocusing their offering to include only relevant, quality manufacturers. They worked on the customer experience and made investments modernizing the business. They added a ten-year Workmanship and Service Warranty to back their promise to customers and solidify

their reputation that follows installation. They revamped and updated their showroom to be more inviting and showcase products properly.

"Although we made a lot of mistakes, we got back to fundamentals," Erin humbly states.

"Above all and for over 71 years, this business has operated on three simple objectives—providing customers with quality products, delivering an enjoyable customer experience, and making sure customers are completely satisfied," Erin says. "Yes, I know. This is what all companies say," she continues. "Fortunately, for us I guess, this is not what all companies do. This is what makes us different. This is why our customers return year after year for their home improvement projects."

Aside from a very strong work ethic and deeply rooted values like honesty and reliability, Penn Windows & Doors keeps it simple. They care about their reputation in the community, they focus on what they do best, and they're fully committed.

Erin has now taken over as owner of Penn Windows & Doors as Rick was able to retire at the end of 2020, as planned, in lieu of the increased success the company has gratefully experienced. Rick still helps out part-time by running appointments and training his grandson, Michael, who represents the third generation on staff. Michael is working in the office, doing service work, and installing blinds, shades, and shutters.

Today, like the Beyers, Penn Windows & Doors continues to deliver something much more meaningful and rare—trust. This can be attributed to their knowledgeable staff and installers, all of whom are treated like family. With all this said, we look forward to their 100th-anniversary milestone. **M**

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