

Since 1919

COASTTM

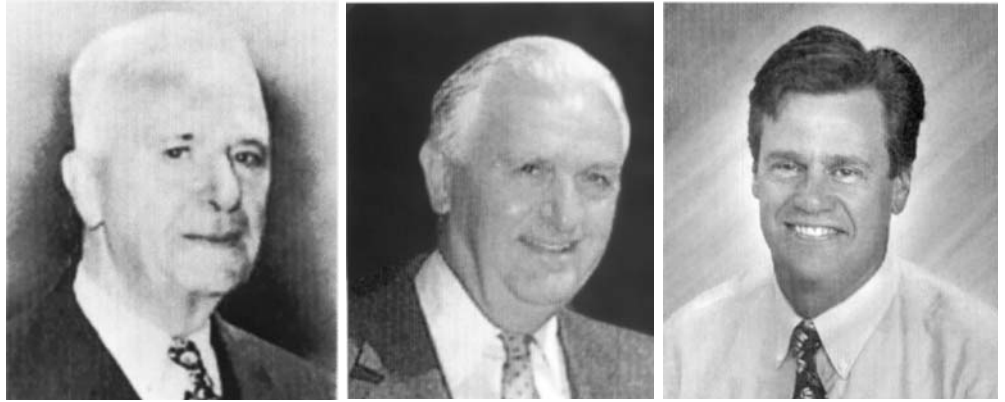
A History of Quality and Innovation

Henry W. Brands—the first of three generations of the Brands family who would operate this Portland manufacturer and distributor—founded Coast Cutlery Company in 1919.

For several years, Mr. Brands had worked as a sales manager for a large wholesale hardware company in the Midwest. While in this position, he traveled to the Northwest and found it to be a land of opportunity. He transferred to Portland, Oregon in 1915. Brands traveled to large and small towns throughout the Northwest selling hardware products—including cutlery—to local merchants.

During this time, Brands received numerous requests from his customers for special types of knives, including fillet knives for Northwest salmon fishermen and working knives for loggers. Brands decided that he could supply these knives himself by founding Coast Cutlery, one of the nation's first cutlery companies.

Brands located his new company just two blocks from the Willamette River in downtown Portland. Today, Coast's headquarters are located near Portland International Airport, while its products are sold all over the world. The original product line included fillet knives, traditional multi-bladed pocket knives, hunting knives, and butcher knives.



Three generations have guided Coast Products Inc., since it was established in 1919. From left to right they are: Henry W. Brands, founder; his son, Henry Brands, Jr.; and his son, David Brands, today's company president.

Mr. Brands himself served as designer, production manager, sales manager, and bookkeeper. In those early days, his sales trips consisted of filling his car with products, calling on local merchants, and returning home only when all his products had been sold.

Coast continued as a small specialty manufacturer through the 1920s, the depression years of the 1930s, and into World War II. During World War II, materials were hard to obtain since most available steel was being used in the war effort.

Shortly after the War, Brands' twin sons, Henry and Dwane, joined him in the business. The increase in manpower enabled Coast to expand its production and sales efforts. During the late 1940s and 50s, Coast's product lines expanded significantly and included products made in Germany,

Switzerland, and Japan, in addition to its U.S.-made products.

Soon, Henry Brands Jr. was handling most of the operations and expanded Coast's business throughout the Western U.S. Customers included such prominent retailers as Fred Meyer, Payless Drug, Meier & Frank, and Northern Wholesale Hardware. During this time, Coast received wide acclaim in the cutlery industry for its high-quality products and innovative merchandising displays. At one period in the 1960s, Meier & Frank displayed over 200 Coast products in their sporting goods department.

In the late 1970s, Henry Brands Jr.'s youngest son, David, joined the business. Together, they expanded the company's distribution nationwide and dramatically increased production capabilities. New production techniques included the use of high-density plastics for knife handles, new, easier-to-sharpen



Coast's "Grandpa Brands' Old Pro" heritage pocketknife

stainless-steel blades, and the use of aluminum alloys for knife linings and bolsters.

Next Coast became a pioneer in the multi-tool business. Borrowing ideas from the multi-function products his grandfather sold, David Brands designed and developed a new line of multi-function pocket tools. These tools included pliers, scissors, screwdrivers, wrenches, saw blades, files, and other tools—all in small, compact, easy-to-carry units. Today, Coast is one of the world's largest manufacturers of multi-tools under the names Pocket Pliers, Pro Pocket Pliers, and Micro-Pliers.

Coast continued its tradition of designing and producing innovative, high-quality products with the introduction of Coast LED Lenser LED flashlights.

These hand-held lighting devices use state-of-the-art, LED technology and patent pending reflector systems to create some of the brightest, most energy efficient lights available. Coast LED Lensers can provide up to 100 hours of light from one set of batteries and up to 100,000 hours of light from the light chip. There are no bulbs to break or burn out. These revolutionary Coast LED Lensers are the new benchmark in the hand-held light industry.

From fine cutlery products to multi-tools to innovative lighting devices, Coast products are known throughout the world for their high quality and durability. Each product is backed by Coast's lifetime guarantee, a policy that was started by Coast founder, Henry Brands Sr. As a result of quality like this, Coast



The C24TK, one of Coast's "New Generation" pocketknives

products have been selected for use by the U.S. Olympic Team, the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds flight team, the National Football League, the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, the U.S. Army, the Navy Seals, the CIA, and the FBI.

Today, Coast has a distribution network of over 10,000 retail outlets in the U.S. and in 30 foreign countries. The company that began with a desire to provide specialty knives to fishermen and loggers in the Pacific Northwest has grown to become a world leader in the design, production, and distribution of an innovative line of quality products.



Coast's multi-function Pro Pocket Pliers

In addition to the company's lines of quality knives and multi-function tools, Coast is one of the leading manufacturers of advanced-technology LED lights. These patented lights offer a brighter, deeper, longer lasting beam of light than standard LEDs.

