Lion Manufacturing Co.

Bally Manufacturing Co.

Chicago



The Bally Manufacturing Co. was founded by Raymond Moloney on the 10th January 1932 to make pinball games, when Bally's original parent, the Lion Manufacturing Co. founded in 1921, established the new company based on the division Midwest Novelty Co. founded 1925 to distribute coin games and headed by Raymond Moloney. It was a problem at the time that D. Gottlieb Co. founded 1927 by David Gottlieb (1898-1961) was unable to deliver enough Baffle Ball games to meet the growing demands from Raymond Moloney and other distributors.



The name of the new company derives from its first popular pin-game "Ballyhoo". In fact, the pin-game was named after a popular humor magazine, and the success of the game even became a promotional jingle "What'll They Do Thru '32? - Play Ballyhoo!" heard again and again in the corridors at the trade exposition in February 1931.



Raymond Thomas (Ray) Moloney (1899-1958) started out in the coin-op business as a young man wrapping punchboards at the Linehan Printing company, and with the help of Joseph Dennis (Joe) Linehan (1884-1958) and printer Charles August (Chas) Weldt (1896-1961) he started to distribute vending machines, skill games and amusement devices from the Midwest Novelty Co. at 308-310 West Erie Street, the same address as Linehan Printing Co. and Lion Manufacturing Co.. When the new company was established as a division of the parent company in January 1932, with the help and investments from Linehan and Weldt, Ray Moloney brought in some competent

management people. James Monroe (*Jim*) Buckley (1898-1952), well known in the trade for years, became sales manager, and Patrick Leo (*Pat*) Millette (1892-1954), who came from a position as superintendent of production for the radio manufacturer Grigsby-Grunow Co., became production manager, and Alfred Edward Fox (1895-1948) with more than fifteen years of experience with different agencies was now in charge of advertising for Bally Manufacturing Co.. From the beginning the two old business friends, Chas Weldt and Joe Linehan were officially registered as vice-president and treasurer, respectively.



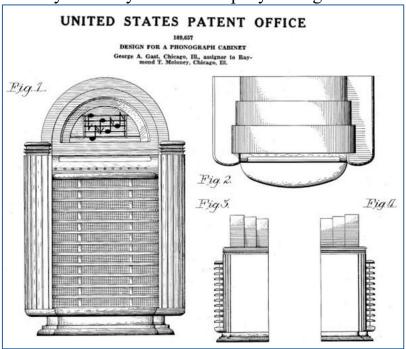
It is interesting that Ray T. Moloney brought in his father Daniel J. Moloney (1873-1940) as superintendent at the Bally production plants in 1934 due to the rapid growth of the company, although *Senior* had planned a peaceful retirement from business. At the end of 1933 the second production facility was put into operation at 4619 North Ravenswood Avenue, but in 1935 this was not even enough, and the third and largest factory was built at 2640 West Belmont Avenue. Also, Ray's brother George David Moloney (1907-1943) soon joined the Lion-Bally organization as vice-president and general manager, and the company quickly became a leading pinball and gambling equipment manufacturer.



308-310 West Erie Street

The history of the Bally Manufacturing Co. is well-described previously, especially by Made in Chicago Museum, a story still available online, but the company's venture in the commercial phonograph field ought to be mentioned further in this short story. The first attempt to enter the field of coin-op phonographs came around 1938, when George August Gast (1901-1973) assigned a phonograph design patent to Ray Moloney. At the time George A. Gast was a draftsman at the furniture factory Churchill Cabinet Co. founded by Ole Gullicksen (1867-1948), and George A. Gast also worked with several

cabinet designs together with a long-time employee of Lion Manufacturing Co., the Swedish born engineer Nels Arvid Nelson (1903-1969). The last pinball cabinet Nels A. Nelson design patented for Lion Manufacturing Co. was the "Victory Derby" of 1945. It is not known if the design patented phonograph really was produced, at least as a prototype, but the intention of entering the commercial phonograph market was there in the mind of Ray Moloney and the company management.



The Churchill Cabinet Co. is interesting, because it was a major supplier of cabinets for amusement machines made by newly established companies without woodworking departments. The major phonograph manufacturers like WurliTzer, Seeburg, Rock-Ola, and Automatic Musical Instrument Co. (AMI), had many years of experience from production of organs, pianos, and mechanical musical instruments, but companies like Exhibit Supply Co., D. Gottlieb & Co., A.B.T. Manufacturing Corp., and of course Midwest Novelty Co., needed smaller cabinets and parts for amusement and gaming machines. These cabinets could be drafted and produced on demand by the Churchill Cabinet Co., and it is interesting that many people at the time thought the company was a coin-op machine manufacturer. Maybe the reason was that the Norwegian born founder Ole Gullicksen was executive officer of the new National Association of Coin-Operated Machine Manufacturers. Other prominent executive officers during the first years of the association in the mid-thirties were Fred Leon Mills (1894-1944), Ode Douglas Jennings (1874-1953), William George (Bill) Gray (1872-1941), and Noel Marshall Seeburg (1897-1972). The Churchill Cabinet Co., founded 120 years ago, is still alive and kicking.

During the WWII years the Lion Manufacturing Co. and so the Bally Manufacturing Co. produced munitions and airplane parts, earning a three-star Army-Navy "E" Award, under the daily management of George D. Moloney. Unfortunately, he did not get the official recognition of his work he deserved, since he died much too young of post-

operative pneumonia following an abdominal operation in November 1943. It seems the second attempt to enter the market for commercial phonographs was made by George D. Moloney, working as general manager on projects to follow wartime production, but the final agreements with Robert Gabel (1899-1965) to use the latest mechanism filed for patent in 1940 by John Gabel (1872-1955) as the heart of a new Bally jukebox, were made during the management of Ray Moloney and vice-president Herbert Bernhart (*Herb*) Jones (1902-1991). In August 1945 the Lion Manufacturing Co. was granted an exclusive license to manufacture the Gabel mechanism, and the new jukebox with the name Bally was produced as a prototype 1946 and presented by sales manager George Wade (*Bert*) Jenkins (1897-1976) at the CMI Convention in Chicago, February 1947, but the cabinet was unfortunately not design patented.







George W. Jenkins, February 1947

The are some similarities when you look at the designs of the AMI "Model A" and the "Bally" cabinet plastics, but it is not known if the same designer, Jean Otis Reinecke (1909-1987) of Barnes & Reinecke Industrial Designers, was involved in both projects. After 1945 Bally Manufacturing Co. continued producing innovations in flipper-less pinball machines, bingo machines, payout machines and console slot machines through the late fifties. This is all well described in articles and magazines, and the company also designed and manufactured vending machines.



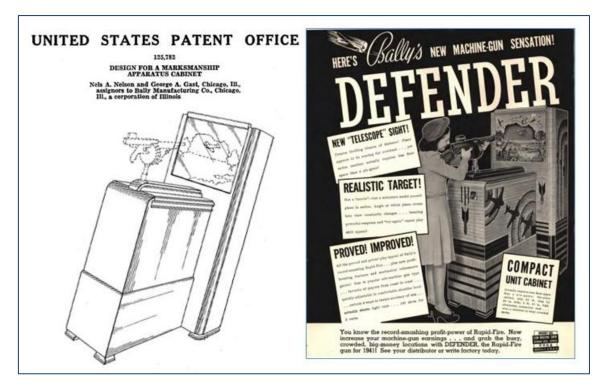
2640 West Belmont Avenue

The founder Raymond Thomas Moloney passed away in 1958, and after a few years of financial failures the Bally Manufacturing Co. was bought out by a group of investors in 1963, and continued to dominate the slot machine industry, covering over 90% of the worldwide market by the end of the decade. Finally, the Lion Manufacturing Co. was dissolved by the investment group led by long-time Bally employee William Thomas (*Bill*) O'Donnell (1922-1995) and re-formed as Bally Manufacturing Corp. in 1969, with shares offered to the public for the first time. The rest is now history, but it all started in 1932.

What will they do in '32? Play Ballyhoo! Rainbow colors catch the eye, Profits climb right to the sky! Bally-Hoo's the game for you!

Almind/Jan-25





Nels Arvid Nelson and George August Gast



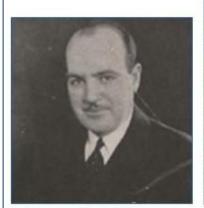
MOLONEY

Raymond Thomas Moloney 2/11 1899 – 26/2 1958

All Saints Catholic Cemetery Des Plaines, Illinois



Founder, President Lion Manufacturing Co. (Est. 1921) Bally Manufacturing Co. (Est. 1932)

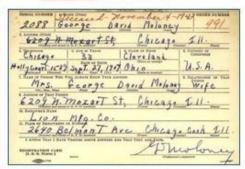


George David Moloney 27/9 1907 – 4/11 1943



All Saints Catholic Cemetery Des Plaines, Illinois

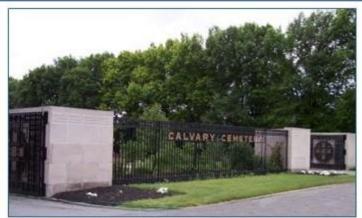




Vice-president, General manager Lion Manufacturing Co. (Est. 1921) Bally Manufacturing Co. (Est. 1932)



Daniel J. Moloney 27/12 1873 - 11/3 1940



Calvary Cemetery, Cleveland Cuyahoga County, Ohio Section 30, Lot 425A, Grave 1

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Joseph Dennis Linehan 17/1 1884 – 18/1 1958



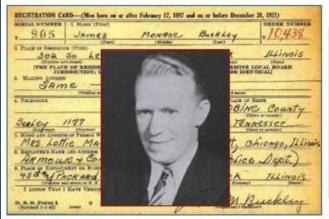
All Saints Catholic Cemetery and Mausoleum Des Plaines, Cook County, Illinois



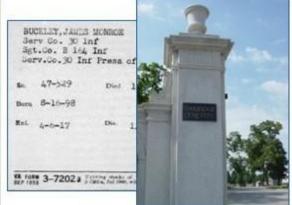
Charles August Weldt 5/9 1896 – 1/9 1961



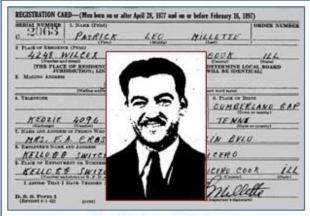
(passed away in Lakewood, McHenry County, Illinois) (Saint Thomas The Apostle Catholic Church)



James Monroe Buckley 16/8 1898 – 19/1 1952



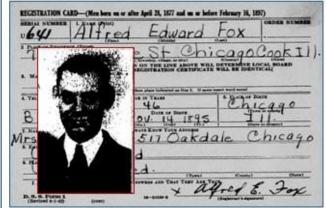
Oak Ridge Cemetery, Hillside Cook County, Illinois



Patrick Leo Millette 14/3 1896 – 24/2 1954



Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery, Chicago Cook County, Illinois



Alfred Edward Fox 14/11 1895 - 15/1 1948



Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery, Hillside Cook County, Illinois

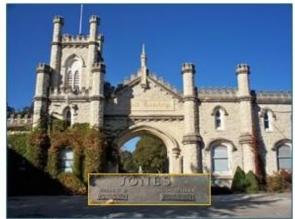


George Wade Jenkins 21/11 1897 – 28/2 1976

Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas Section W, Site 165



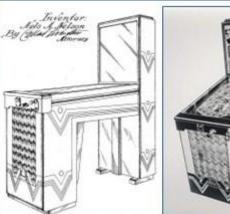
Herbert Bernhart Jones 20/3 1902 – 25/1 1991



Rosehill Cemetery and Mausoleum, Chicago Cook County, Illinois



Nels Arvid Nelson 18/2 1903 – 30/8 1969



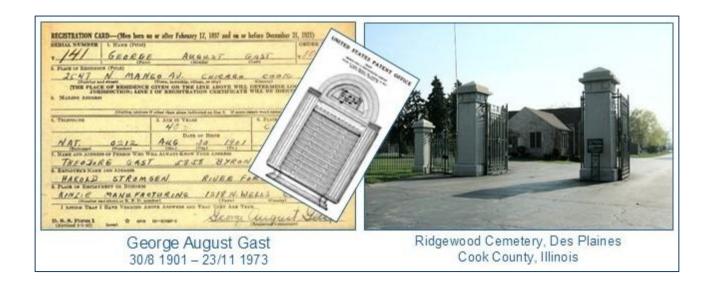
(passed away in Los Angeles, California) (burial details unknown)

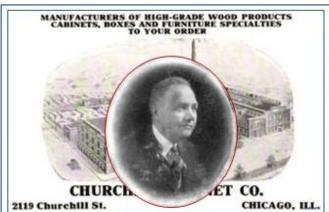


William Thomas (Bill) O'Donnell 26/9 1922 – 11/7 1995



All Saints Catholic Cemetery and Mausoleum Des Plaines, Cook County, Illinois









Forest Home Cemetery, Forest Park Cook County, Illinois

