



E.E. Kelley Jr.

To E.E. Kelley Jr., the most important precept for a service organization like the Quality Bakers of America is the principle that the group exists for the benefit of the members. While such an idea may seem basic or obvious, the pursuit of that goal by Mr. Kelley and others involved with the Q.B.A. led to considerable turmoil but ultimately success for the group.

For his work as a baker (the owner of ButterKrust Bakery, in Lakeland, Fla.), in strengthening the Q.B.A. and for his contributions to the American Bakers Association, Mr. Kelley has been elected to the Baking Hall of Fame.

A native of Mason City, Iowa, and the son of a baker, Mr. Kelley returned to his hometown in 1924 after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania.

A year later, though, he moved to Florida, attracted by exciting opportunities there. A few years later he purchased the ButterKrust bakery in Lakeland.

In a history of the Q.B.A. written several decades later, he said he purchased a two-route bakery in St. Petersburg and immediately sought to join the Q.B.A., which he had witnessed operating in Mason City.

The Q.B.A. had been established in 1922 in response to the emergence of three dominant baking companies — Ward, General and Purity. In addition, Continental Baking was growing rapidly and chain supermarkets were building large baking plants. These competitive challenges for independent bakers were compounded by the lingering effects of a financial crisis in 1920 that featured a collapse in the price of bakery flour.

When he sought to join the Q.B.A., membership was “by invitation only,” and the organization’s staff told him they would be unable to serve Florida yet and he would need to wait awhile.

When he did join a year later, he quickly helped the Q.B.A. recruit additional members in several Florida cities.

Mr. Kelley was Q.B.A. president from 1938 to 1945, the

period of Q.B.A.’s greatest growth. Norm Trapp, executive vice-president of the Q.B.A. today, noted that the group had 11 member companies when Mr. Kelley joined and 120 when he left the organization in 1951.

Still, the period was not always smooth. A couple years into his tenure as president, tensions within the membership base came to a head.

“The feeling had been evident that the Q.B.A. staff felt that Q.B.A. was being operated for the benefit of the staff instead of for the benefit of the members,” Mr. Kelley said in the Q.B.A. history, recounting the view prevalent among those on the board and other members. “After all, the staff were all experts, the dumb bakers could not run their own businesses, so why shouldn’t the staff enjoy the benefits?”

After a number of steps were taken to try to make things



From left, E.E. Kelley, with his sons, Mike Kelley and Dennis Kelley.

2011 Baking Hall of Fame

better, Mr. Kelley said the board decided to take action.

"Sometimes a house cleaning is necessary," he said.

Mr. Kelley said he was instructed by his board to inform the general manager and secretary they were fired immediately as was the head of the ad department. Dick Ludlow, head of the engineering department, was named the new general manager, who Mr. Kelley described as an "excellent choice for the job."

Of the transition, Mr. Kelley said it was a "most distasteful but necessary job." Still, the board felt strongly.

"We were all 100% sold on the potential of Q.B.A. and we all felt we had not been getting nearly the benefits that we were entitled to," he said.

In addition to stronger governance, Mr. Kelley also passionately believed in the need for the cooperative to own a strong bread brand. In his telling of the story, the need for such a brand was widely understood among the Q.B.A. staff and even membership. He described taking a train trip from Baltimore and looking at advertisements for Koester Baking,



Denise Crenshaw, granddaughter of E.E. Kelley, accepted the award on his behalf.

featuring images of twin girls.

"I went to George Graf (who headed the Q.B.A. advertising department) and asked him if there wasn't some way we could establish a trademark for all our members, perhaps using the Koester idea of a little girl," he said. "Imagine my surprise when George told me they were already working on such a design at the insistence of George Huber in Wilmington, Delaware, and that Huber had already agreed to give Q.B.A. the name Sunbeam if and when such a design was created."

Several months later, the Sunbeam design was conceived by Ellen Segner, a commercial artist. Following World War II, the brand "really took off," he said, becoming the nation's top selling bread brand for many years.

When Mr. Ludlow died, Mr. Kelley was hired to serve as general manager but left when it was decided a full-time manager was needed. Having moved back to Florida where his sons had been running ButterKrust, he was recruited to lead the American Bakers Association, a post he held for 10 years.

According to Mr. Kelley's nomination letter, he led

2011 BAKING HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES:

JIM APPLE
BUTTER KRUST BAKING
COMPANY

E.E. KELLEY
BUTTERKRUST BAKERY
LAKELAND

KEN KLOSTERMAN
KLOSTERMAN BAKING CO.

ALEXANDER WEBER
CARAVAN PRODUCTS



ABA Congratulates the 2011 Baking Hall of Fame Inductees

and thanks them for their contributions in
leadership and innovation to the baking industry.

American Bakers Association

www.americanbakers.org

A.B.A. during a formative time for the group's involvement in policy matters.

"Most of its (A.B.A.'s) energy was directed into quietly promoting the benefits of bread and enrichment through an educational program aimed at school dieticians," Mr. Kelley's nomination said. "Mr. Kelley was instrumental in broadening A.B.A.'s educational program, taking the positive nutritional messages about bread directly to consum-

ers through a national public relations campaign, a step similar to that taken decades later by the industry's Grain Foods Foundation."

Mr. Kelley died in 1993. Accepting the award for Mr. Kelley, his granddaughter Denise Crenshaw noted the timing of the ceremony on March 7, 2011, could hardly have been more apropos — falling on the 110th anniversary of Mr. Kelley's birth in 1901. MBN



E.E. Kelley



Mr. and Mrs. E.E. Kelley Jr.

Sorghum

The Whole Grain, Gluten-Free Baking Solution



Grain sorghum originated in Africa centuries ago and is known as one of the oldest grains in the world. It can be used to make breads, cookies, muffins, tortillas and much more. Sorghum has numerous nutritional benefits including high levels of antioxidants and polyphenols. American sorghum flour is tannin-free and has a light color and neutral flavor, making it ideal for use in many foods.

For more information about sorghum flour suppliers and applications visit www.sorghumcheckoff.com

