

THE SHRINKY DINKS STORY

How Does a Shrinky Dinks Shrink?

- ~ The ingredients for a Shrinkable plastic are put into a large drum-like container, melted, and extruded into a, i.e., a 90 Mil thick sheet. While still warm, this sheet passes through double rollers (similar to the old ringer-washer) and becomes thinner, 10 Mil thick...cooling sets the plastic. The plastic is then processed into large 300 pound rolls.
- ~ When a Shrinky Dinks is created and put into a Conventional or Toaster Oven, the heat causes the plastic to return to its original thickness, 90 Mil, and in the process - SHRINKS to approximately 1/3rd it's original size and become 9 times thicker.

Facts About Shrinky Dinks

- ~ First sale was at a local Shopping Center, Brookfield Square, on October 19, 1973.
- ~ Originator: Betty J. Morris' partner in K & B Innovations, Inc. was Kathryn C. Bloomberg. Katie has not been involved in KBI for the past 30 years and Betty ultimately bought out all stockholders partner and owns Shrinky Dinks and KBI 100%.)
- ~ Past Licensees: SKYLINE TOYS, a Division of MW Kaasch Co. (a large Toy Distributor) 1974-1980. COLORFORMS (a Toy Manufacturer in New Jersey) 1981-1989. MILTON BRADLEY (a large Toy Manufacturer) 1990-1993...dropped Shrinky Dinks because of purchasing Parker Brothers and focusing on games. WESTERN PUBLISHING, Golden Books Division 1994-1996...Sold off all divisions. Western Publishing does not exist...K & B Innovations decided NOT to seek a new Licensee. KBI decides to pursue the craft and toy markets as they now have worldwide rights.
 - Set up production and offices in North Lake, Wisconsin.
 - Shipped in from New Jersey, a large roughening machine, purchased a Guillotine Cutter, Slitter, Fork Lift, etc. KBI Provides Shrinky Dinks plastic to the world
 - Set up a Shrinky Dinks store on the internet. (www.shrinkydinks.com)

Why is Shrinky Dinks so well known by so many?

- ~ There have been over 400 different Shrinky Dinks Kits, Books and items produced and marketed since 1973. (Betty has a personal collection on display at KBI.)
- ~ Shrinky Dinks has a Registered Trademark in 42 countries. (Unfortunately, due to non-use, lost the Trademark for United Kingdom when challenged in 1996.)
- ~ In 1994, a Market Analysis Agency conducted a survey and calculated Shrinky Dinks achieved 73% name recognition in the USA.

Nationally, various companies have become involved and Shrinky Dinks has experienced a widening exposure in Books, Crafts as well as Toys...with parents who had a lot of creative fun with Shrinky Dinks purchasing for their own children:

KLUTZ, Inc., "The Shrinky Dinks Book"...selling extremely well, first introduced in October of 1999. Year 2001 to 2003 SPIN MASTER TOYS, obtained an Exclusive Licensing Agreement for the Incredible Shrinky Dinks Maker. Sales of the Maker reached over one million units plus 600,000 supportive Shrinky Dinks kits and items. CREATIVITY FOR KIDS, ALEX, SCHOLASTIC, TARA TOY, ACTION PRODUCTS, ROSEART, NATURAL SCIENCE INDUSTRIES (NSI), STAMPT IT RUBBER STAMPS (Australia), HARLEQUIN/BRIGHTER VISIONS INC. (Canada), BIG TIME TOYS and many others have joined in on the excitement of Shrinky Dinks, including a Sell Out presentation on QVC.

In 2012, Big Time Toys is introducing a revised and upgraded oven that is designed for children's safety...they call it "The Incredible Shrinky Dinks Maker". Big Time Toys also has several Shrinky Dinks kits that are sized and created for the Maker.

Also in 2011, Pangea Brands obtained Licensing rights for Major League Baseball (MLB) and the National Football League (NFL). Pangea Brands is introducing Shrinky Dinks Sport Kits for all of the Teams...MLB and NFL. The consumer cuts out the full color images, shrinks them and then can create Pins, Magnets, Bag Tags, Zipper Pulls and Stand Up collectibles for their selected team.

MICHAELS CRAFTS (1065 stores) and HOBBY LOBBY (489 stores), and many others are selling the unprinted, creative Shrinkable Plastic sheets: Frosted Ruff N' Ready, Bright White, The Assortment, Crystal Clear and coated Bright White sheets for the Ink Jet Printer, all produced by K & B Innovations, Inc.

Shrinky Dinks not only lends itself to the Toy Activity Market but has enjoyed success in the Premium Market, The Dental Industry (they type ID on Shrinky Dinks, cut it out, shrink it and embed it into dentures), the Craft Market (Professional Artists), The Rubber Stamp Market (can Rubber Stamp with Permanent Inks), The Tole Painting Market (can paint with Acrylic Paints...looks like wood). Scrapbookers and Greeting Card makers use all of the Shrinky Dinks plastics and concepts to create dimensional accents and mini photos. The Quilting Market (they do not shrink the Shrinky Dinks plastic, but use it as templates for various projects.) The Computer Market (can print and shrink ANY graphic or photo found in the computer or scanned in.)

Fun Information

- ~ Shrinky Dinks went up in the Space Ship Atlantis as part of a First Grade Science experiment on September 8, 2000. Because the canister was to be exposed to extreme temperature changes, they wanted to see if a Shrinky Dink would shrink. (Shrinky Dinks did not shrink!)
- ~ The "Magical Shrinky Dinks" almost became a cartoon in 1986. Marvel Productions created characters and a story line and ABC was going to air a 13 segment cartoon series. No one knows why ABC canceled.

- ~ A Shrinky Dinks Art Invitational has had great success in Seattle, Washington. The invitational is a Charity Art Auction that requires professional artists to create originals with Shrinky Dinks plastics...Thousands of dollars have been raised during this annual event!
- ~ A Shrinky Dinks Art Car was created in 2001 and was entered into a contest and parade held in Houston Texas. Over 1,500 students created three inch tiles which covered the entire car. Students were from 37 different schools in the Philadelphia region as well as Virginia, Tennessee and Mississippi. (Coordinated and Created by artist Sarah Hodgson.)
- ~ In 2004 Shrinky Dinks Ornaments decorated the 50 foot Christmas Tree on Universal Studios grounds. Ornaments were created by students from surrounding schools.
- ~ In 2006 it was brought to KBI's attention that a man by the name of Andrew Romanoff had published a Book called "The Boy Who Would Be Tsar" which contains many hand drawn pictures by the author all made with our Shrinky Dinks shrinkable plastic sheets. The original artwork is displayed in a gallery in San Francisco.
- ~ In 2007 Shrinky Dinks made an impact on the Science world! Shrinky Dinks was turned into a Microfluidics research tool. Professor Michelle Khine determined that our plastics could be successfully used to do cell culture experimentation. The process allows moulds to be created from Shrinky Dinks plastics which are then used in cell research.

How Did Shrinky Dinks Start?

In 1973, Betty Morris was a Cub Scout leader in Brookfield, Wisconsin. Her co-leader, Katie Bloomberg and herself, saw an article in a craft magazine that said if you took a lid from a container, drew on it with a permanent ink marker and put it into the oven, it would shrink and make a small charm. It worked and they were amazed.

Betty took it a step further. She thought it would be great if they could get larger sheets of this shrinkable plastic so that the boys could create Christmas Ornaments large enough for their family Christmas Trees. She called everywhere, with no luck. She ultimately contacted a Plastic Consultant who provided her with the name of the plastic had so persistently been looking for.

Betty located the plastic supplier, but was told that she had to order 1,000 pounds. She readily agreed but requested twelve, 8" x 10" sample sheets to confirm that the plastic was truly what she wanted. In reality, Betty admitted that the twelve sheets would provide enough plastic for her boys to make Christmas Ornaments.

When the Cub Scouts were making their ornaments, the boys became so excited that they were fighting over the scraps. Katie and Betty, caught up in the "magic of the shrinking" decided to convince their husbands to invest in the 1,000 pounds of plastic...\$600.00 each.

Betty's husband, however, would not agree to investing \$600.00 in this venture unless they could show him how and where they were going to sell the product...thus, Brookfield Square Mall in Brookfield Wisconsin.

Betty met with Jim Patterson, Manager of Brookfield Square Mall, and set up the dates to sell product in the Mall (October 19-24, 1973). Brookfield Square was to receive 20% of sales.

Betty burned out their home oven while discovering all of the different things that could be created with the shrinkable plastic. The original pack had five sheets of Instructions and Ideas, 20- 8" x 10" sheets of Shrinky Dinks plastic and one Black Sanford Permanent Ink Pen. Sales were so outstanding that they asked Katie and Betty to return in November for ten days. Within four months, they were selling their Shrinky Dinks pack in 26 stores and had mail orders of well over \$100.00 a day. They had sales of \$50,000 over those four months.

Various companies contacted K & B Innovations in an effort to secure Licensing rights...one of those companies was MW Kaasch Company...the largest Toy Distributor in the Midwest at that time. Mr. Ben Fagen saw a write up in the local newspaper and convinced MW Kaasch Company to become involved...they formed a subsidiary called Skyline Toys.

K & B Innovations was to do everything up to marketing - concepts, costing, design etc. and Skyline would sell or market. Shrinky Dinks was presented at the Toy Fair in New York in February of 1974...three kits and a refill. Katie and Betty demonstrated the concept with a Toaster Oven and the Buyers were amazed!

We called Ben, "Uncle Ben" because he educated Betty and Katie as to how the Toy business worked and his extensive knowledge and contacts propelled Shrinky Dinks into the market place!

Who Is Betty Morris?

Betty Morris was born in Denver, Colorado, September 15, 1940. Married Charles W. Morris, August 24, 1962. Together they had three children; Gregory Todd (1963), Kendal Sue (1966) and Brenda Kay (1969). Betty was a Professional ventriloquist for 15 years, Cheerleader in High School (South High) and College (Colorado State University). She was Miss Denver and also appeared on Ted Mac's Amateur Hour with her ventriloquist dolls, George & Gloria. Betty's husband worked for MGIC (a private Mortgage Insurance Company) and was asked to work in their home office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In January of 1970, the Morris family moved to Brookfield, Wisconsin. Betty was the first woman Commodore of the North Lake Sailing Club in 1986 and has been active in the community over the years.

Currently, Betty is the Grandmother of nine and she and her husband have been married for 50 years. Chuck is now enjoying retirement. Betty is still working at K& B Innovations. Together, they enjoy life and thank God everyday for all that life has sent their way.

Comments from Betty

In a time when everything is push button, I continue to have a deep concern for the lack of creativity and hands-on experiences being provided for our children and people as a whole.

Shrinky Dinks has been a wonderful and "magical" product that has challenged millions to be creative and I feel really great about that...after all, creative thinking is the basis from which everything we enjoy is and has been created...I even suspect that many of the outstanding achievers of today, had fun with Shrinky Dinks when they were young!

The exciting part about Shrinky Dinks now being made available in a variety of markets is that hopefully it won't be long before Shrinky Dinks will be acknowledged as one of the most creative media ever to exist...it's "magical"...any artwork can be transformed into a hardened piece of plastic and when baked, will shrink to 1/3rd it's original size and will become 9 times thicker...now, doesn't that just "Shrink Your Mind"? It has mine, and I LOVE IT!!