



## Thomas E. Belshaw

**D**riving by his place of work on weekend nights, Fred Woodworth sometimes noticed the lights in the office. He knew who was in there. Thomas E. Belshaw liked to listen to a classical music station as he checked on invoices or worked on bakery equipment drawings.

"If it happened on Belshaw property, he was involved in it and knew about it," Mr. Woodworth said.

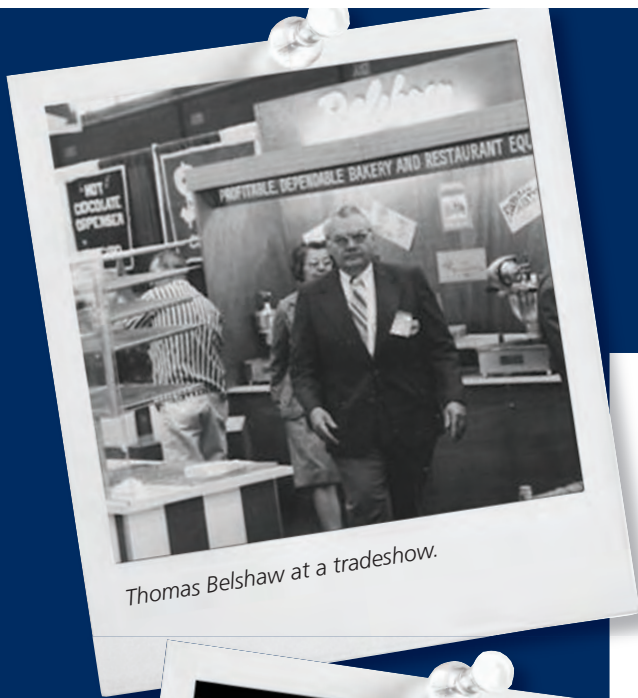
Mr. Belshaw was president of Belshaw Bros. Inc. from 1956 to 1991, during which time the company turned out some masterpieces, like the multimatic cutterhead and the Type K dispenser.

Mr. Belshaw's name appeared in

many patents as an inventor. Now, his name appears in the American Society of Baking's Hall of Fame.

The Food Network's "Unwrapped" show recently focused on the company, pointing out how every major donut chain, from Krispy Kreme to Dunkin' Donuts, uses Belshaw equipment. Today, Belshaw Bros. makes some machines that are able to drop 10 dozen donuts an hour and other machines that may drop 2,000 dozen donuts an hour, Mr. Woodworth said.

Thomas A. Belshaw and Walter R. Belshaw, the father and uncle, respectively, of Thomas E. Belshaw, founded the company in 1923 in



Thomas Belshaw at a tradeshow.



President Ford once had the pleasure of meeting Thomas and Yvonne Belshaw.



Yvonne Belshaw, wife of Thomas Belshaw, and Roger A. Faw, president of Belshaw Bros., attended the American Society of Baking's Hall of Fame ceremonies in March in Chicago. Yvonne Belshaw accepted the award for her husband.

Seattle. The elder Thomas Belshaw was known as Thomas and the younger as Tommie, Mr. Woodworth said.

Tommie worked as a machinist and toolmaker at Boeing during World War II and then turned his attention to baking equipment and the family business. He took over the company in 1956 and put his degrees in engineering and business to use. He was working on the multimatic cutterhead about that time.

"I could hardly get him to come home," said his wife, Yvonne Belshaw. "He was so determined that was going to work — which it did."

The machine, designed for multiple cutting of donuts for continuous fryers, revolutionized the donut industry, as did the Type K dispenser, which can drop donuts using a single plunger arrangement. Later modifications allowed the Type K dispenser to be used with pancakes.

Mr. Belshaw's name appeared on patents up into the 1990s. The patents involved such innovations as apparatuses for moving food objects through a frying tank and apparatuses for filling edible products.

Besides the countless hours spent at the business, Mr. Belshaw also drove as far as 400 miles on customer service calls.

"He had a verbal, handshake lifetime guarantee," Mr. Woodworth said. "If we made it, we fixed it."

Yvonne Belshaw also worked at

the company for nearly 30 years and was advertising director. Since Mr. Belshaw was physically unable to accept his Hall of Fame award in Chicago in March, she made the trip.

She said her family had time for vacations, but Mr. Belshaw checked in with the company every day. Expanding the geographical reach of the business brought on more travel. The company increased its sales overseas, beginning with Europe and Japan. Yvonne Belshaw remembers going along on a business trip to Japan.

"We sort of introduced donuts to the Japanese," she said.

Mr. Belshaw avoided executive perks, said Mr. Woodworth, who often traveled with him on business trips. Mr. Belshaw did not fly by private jet, or even first class.

"The back end of the plane got there just as quick as the front — that's what he said," said Mr. Woodworth, whose name is listed alongside Mr. Belshaw's name as inventors on several patents.

The travel included BEMA events and International Baking Industry Exposition shows. Mr. Belshaw was on the BEMA board and served as president from 1970 to 1972. He eventually earned BEMA's lifetime achievement award.

After selling Belshaw Bros. in 1980, Mr. Belshaw stayed active in the business and the industry. Mr. Belshaw and Robert Loeb, another former BEMA president, started the Belshaw-Loeb Scholarship fund in 1984 to support the education and growth of leaders in the baking industry. Mr. Belshaw was vice-chairman of the 1985 I.B.I.E. committee. 