



**2013
INDUCTEE**



GEORGE STEPHEN SR.

Business/Industry Category

During the 1940s and early 1950s, George Stephen, Sr. worked for Weber Brothers Metal Works in Illinois. There, he gained experience in shaping and fabricating metal parts while building buoys for the Chicago harbor. An avid barbecue enthusiast, George became increasingly frustrated with the uneven and uncontrollable flame of his open brazier grill. Back at the factory, his passion for grilling merged with his skills as a metal worker.

"We were making dome shapes at the shop," George once said. "I took one of the domes, drilled some holes in the bottom and lid, welded supports to hold two wire grates and gave my strange looking kettle-shaped grill a try. It worked great."

He began selling "George's Barbecue Kettle" in 1952 and formed the barbecue division of the Weber Brothers factory. By the late 1950s, George's invention was so successful he was able to buy out the company, becoming the sole owner. Soon thereafter, he changed the company's name to Weber-Stephen Products Co.

George devoted his professional career to manufacturing and selling the Weber Kettle. He died in 1993, but Weber-Stephen Products LLC remains the world's leading manufacturer of outdoor gas, charcoal and electric grills and grilling accessories.