



Suggested Reading: Brownie Wise

Compiled by Leslie Goddard, Ph.D.

Tupperware Unsealed: Brownie Wise, Earl Tupper, and the Home Party Pioneers

by Bob Kealing (2008). Well-researched and engaging book. The definitive story about Wise's contributions and her downfall. Highly recommended.

Plastic: The Making of a Synthetic Century

By Stephen Fenichell (1996). An entertaining and very readable history of plastic. Explores the evolution of vinyl, rayon, Bakelite, polyester and more. Fun histories of Silly Putty, Hula Hoops, Frisbees, Tupperware, and Saran Wrap.

Tupperware: The Promise of Plastic in 1950s America

By Alison J. Clarke (1999). A meticulously researched cultural history of Tupperware. Explores how Tupperware became a powerful symbol of the American way of life.

As Seen on TV: The Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950s

By Karal Ann Marling (1994). An academic, but really fun, exploration of 1950s social and cultural history – from Disneyland to paint-by-numbers to Elvis's haircut – to show how everyday objects stood for American life. Recommended for those with a serious interest in the 1950s.

Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America

By Laura Shapiro (2005). A detailed, gender-based social history of how wartime food innovations and culinary luminaries like Betty Crocker and Julia Child transformed food in the 1950s.

Tupperware!

American Experience. DVD. PBS (2004). Using interviews with early Tupperware dealers and rare footage of Tupperware Jubilees, this funny, compelling documentary explores the early history of Tupperware, including Wise's astonishing rise and fall. Based on Clarke's book.

“If we build the people, they'll build the business.”

– *Brownie Wise*



Timeline

1862 – The first plastic, an organic material derived from cellulose that can be molded and shaped, is presented at the Great International Exhibition in London

1907 – Earl Tupper born in New Hampshire

1913—Brownie Mae Humphrey born in Georgia.

1936 – Brownie Humphrey marries Robert Wise. They divorce six years later.

1938 – Salesman Norman Squires proposes the “hostess home party” method of direct selling to Stanley Home Products

1945 – Earl Tupper begins experimenting with polyethylene. His first Tupperware products debut in 1946

1949 – Brownie Wise, who had been selling Stanley Home Products, begins selling Tupperware. Earl Tupper patents his “Tupper Seal”

1951 – Brownie Wise appointed general sales manager of a new company, Tupperware Home Parties, to oversee all Tupperware sales through home parties

1954 – Tupperware Home Parties Headquarters open in Florida

1958 – Brownie Wise is fired from Tupperware Home Parties, Inc.

1958 – Earl Tupper sells Tupperware for \$16 million and buys an island in Central America

1992 – Brownie Wise dies



Leslie Goddard

Historian

www.lesliegoddard.info | L-Goddard@att.net