

FAMOUS AMOS COOKIES

By: Sue Peterson

Wallace (Wally) Amos was born in Florida in 1937. In the 1970s, Wally founded the Famous Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Corporation. His company did very well. People liked the chocolate chip cookies and people liked how excited Wally was about the cookies he was selling.

When Wally was little, his family was very poor. He did not have bus money so he walked 4 miles to school every day. He walked 4 miles back home every day. After his parents got divorced, Amos went to live with his Aunt Della in New York City. His aunt loved to cook and she always made him special chocolate chip cookies.

Wally dropped out of high school to join the army and he earned his high school degree while serving in the army. After he completed his work in the army, he attended secretarial school to learn shorthand, typing, and accounting skills. He worked in the stockroom stocking the shelves of a department store in New York and later in a mailroom in a company. Another job Wally had was to help a famous musician try to get music jobs.

Wally began baking chocolate chip cookies using a recipe similar to his aunt's recipe. He borrowed money from his friends and opened a small shop in California. The Famous Amos Cookie Company started. Soon he began to make money. Within the first two years that the company store was open, he was baking six tons of cookies a week and taking in over \$4,000,000 in sales each year.

He sold his company to the Bass Brothers of Fort Worth, Texas, and his cookies were soon found in grocery stores and vending machines all across the United States.

In 1992, Wally started a new cookie company called The Uncle Noname Cookie Company that made five different kinds of cookies. Each bag of cookies also had a recipe for lemonade on the bag.

He added this recipe to the cookie bag because Wally wanted his customers to know that, "...if life hands them a lemon, they can turn it into lemonade". This expression means that if things happen that seem not to be so good at the time that later these things can actually turn into something good.

Then Wally Amos rejoined the first cookie company to work on sales. He wanted the Famous Amos Cookie Company to return to the market. He also wanted this company to sell some new flavors of cookies besides the popular chocolate chip cookie, to add graphics to the packaging, and to work on new national advertising to attract more customers.

Wally has spent time as a literacy volunteer of America and he has given money to a special program called "Cities in Schools" which helps students stay in school. Wally Amos is best known for his enjoyment in making cookies and for making so many possibilities out of his life.