

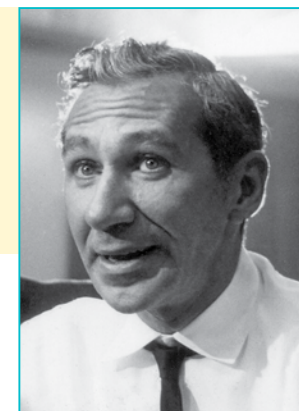


**LEFT** Pictured here is the floorplan revealing all nine rooms the company finally acquired on the first floor. Room #5 was very small and used for designers and graphic artwork. Dalia Verbickas, Henry Stan and Judd Reed worked in this area for a time. Room #6 was called the “mockup room” and had desks and additional modelshop machines like a mill for fabricating prototypes. Some of the designers and modelmakers who worked out of this room included Sam Cottone, Hans Jernstrom, Dalia Verbickas and Tony Janisewski. Room #7 became the main designer headquarters where many of the top designers worked out of like Burt Meyer, Gordon Barlow and Carl Ayala. This room was the most secret idea room so no photos exist of it. Room #8 was added for book-keeper Walter Fisher and the file cabinets. Room #9 was a very large multi-purpose room used for graphic design, working on prototypes and storage.



## An Ideal Decade: 1960–1962

*“It’s the knowledgeable people who hold back progress in the toy industry. They have all the answers, and the answers are always wrong.” –Marvin Glass*



**W**hen the 1960s began, Marvin was expanding all aspects of his company. Nothing was holding him back now. Oh, he still worried about things; he was always worried about something. Instead of losing sleep over past financial issues—as devastating as they were—Marvin fueled his desire to grow a successful company. As of March 1960 the toy industry was a \$1.65 billion-a-year business, and Glass was acknowledged as the toy industry’s “most important and prolific independent designer and idea man.”<sup>1</sup> At forty-five and weighing in at 127 pounds, this little man had become a giant in his field.

Having money made things a lot easier. Marvin took on additional rooms in the Alexandria Hotel for his growing company. This also meant hiring

new employees to fill these rooms—and more employees to create successful products. Burt Meyer explained how Marvin kept acquiring additional workrooms on the main floor of the hotel. “It kept expanding. There was a main shop, and then we had to get some more machinery and things so we’d rent another room and move some more benches in there for people to work on. Then we’d rent another room.”

For extra security Marvin added two or three locks to each room’s door and changed them often.<sup>2</sup> The company originally started with three rooms: Marvin’s office, a reception room, and a single workroom. Between 1960 and 1962 they filled seven rooms, with the final two rooms coming soon after.

### The Alexandria’s Unique Environment

Being a workaholic, Marvin had a two-room \$325-a-month apartment at the hotel whose sole access was through his office. To go in and out of his apartment one would have to first enter the hotel, then enter the MGA reception room, which

**RIGHT** Notice the uniquely private way a person had to access Marvin’s hotel apartment. First you had to enter the reception area (room #2) then enter Marvin’s office (room #3) to finally unlock the one door in and out of his apartment (room #4). There were no windows to any of these rooms because Marvin ordered them boarded up so no one on the street could see what was being worked on inside.

