

# A TRULY REMARKABLE STORY



Frank Hasenfratz, founder and chairman Linamar - the parent company of Skyjack - passed away on January 8th of this year at the age of 86. When researching his obituary, it soon became clear what an incredibly tough and interesting life he had led, facing and overcoming challenges and adversities that would have stopped many of us in our tracks. He then went on to build an incredibly successful business, while cultivating some amazing managers. As part of our research we learnt that a biography had been published a few years earlier, entitled 'Driven to Succeed' by Rod McQueen and Susan Papp.

We obtained a copy and discovered not only a truly informative book, but also a really good read, well written and fascinating. The authors have gathered an enormous amount of detail on Frank's life, starting with his early years in the town of Szár, Hungary, where he was born in 1935 with the name Ferenc. It moves through his teenage years when he repaired bikes to earn extra money, leading to technical school and an apprenticeship with an engine manufacturer. This was disrupted by national service during which time he became enmeshed in the 1956 Hungarian uprising when the country broke away from the Soviet Union and began opening up to the west.

After seeming to tolerate the changes in Hungary, in 1957 the Soviet government decided that enough was enough and invaded. The parallels with what Russia is doing today with Ukraine are uncanny. The book details the impact it had on the Hasenfratz family and their neighbours and sounds very similar to what we see and hear today in the news reports from Ukraine.

Having sided with the 'rebels' Hasenfratz concluded that he had no choice but to leave the country. The book details his attempts to cross the border into Austria, and how he managed to work his way north to the French coast, before taking a ship to Canada. Arriving in a strange country with no money and speaking no English he survived the first few weeks on his wits and personality eventually making his way to Guelph to find an uncle he had never met.

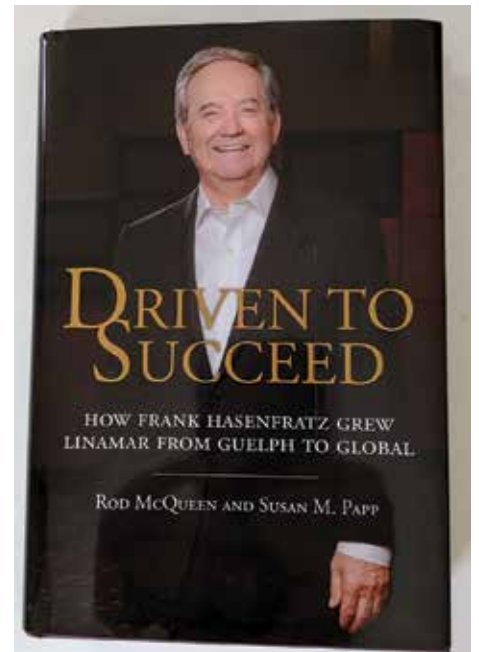
Landing a job as a toolmaker and machinist he was soon promoted, meeting his wife, another Hungarian immigrant before starting his own business in the basement of their new home.

The book then covers the many ups and downs he faced to build his business into the highly successful multibillion dollar global business it is today with 26,000 employees. It includes

coverage on many of his key managers, and how he insisted his daughter Linda work her way up through the company, mastering each job along the way before moving on. It covers acquisitions he made, the good ones as well as the bad and the ugly, highlighting how he overcame setbacks with his unshakable personal and business philosophies.

In summary this is a wonderful book that not only tells a truly remarkable personal story, but also demonstrates how strong principles, hard work, open honest dealings and dedication pays off. I would whole heartedly recommend this book to anyone.

The book 'Driven to Succeed - How Frank Hasenfratz Grew Linamar from Guelph to Global' can be purchased from Amazon and other



bookshops for around £22/\$25 for the hardback with Kindle or other eBook formats also available for downloading.

