



Finding Aid for

**RESEARCH CENTER DRAG RACING PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION,
1955-1963**

Accession 2006.54

Finding Aid Published: May 2016



Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
20900 Oakwood Boulevard · Dearborn, MI 48124-5029 USA
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OVERVIEW

REPOSITORY: Benson Ford Research Center
The Henry Ford
20900 Oakwood Blvd
Dearborn, MI 48124-5029
www.thehenryford.org
research.center@thehenryford.org

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2006.54

CREATOR: Henry Ford (Organization) (collector)

TITLE: Research Center Drag Racing Photographs Collection

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1955-1963

QUANTITY: 0.2 cubic ft. (1 box)

LANGUAGE: The materials are in English.

ABSTRACT: The Research Center Drag Racing Photographs Collection contains 10 black-and-white 8x10 inch photographic prints taken by photographers for *Hot Rod Magazine* during National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) events held between 1955 and 1963.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

- ACCESS RESTRICTIONS:** The collection is open for research.
- COPYRIGHT:** Copyright for some items in the collection may still be held by their respective creator(s).
- ACQUISITION:** Acquired by The Henry Ford, 2006.
- ALTERNATE FORMS:** Digitized material from the collection is available at:
<https://www.thehenryford.org/collections-and-research/digital-collections/search-results#advancedSearch=1&tab=artifact-results&s.0.in=collectionTitle&s.0.for=Research%20Center%20Drag%20Racing%20Photographs%20Collection&years=0-0&perPage=10&pageNum=1&sortBy=relevance>
- PREFERRED CITATION:** Item, folder, box, accession 2006.54, Research Center Drag Racing Photographs Collection, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
- PROCESSING INFORMATION:** Collection processed by Janice Unger, May, 2015
- DESCRIPTION INFORMATION:** Original collection inventory list prepared by staff of The Henry Ford, circa 2006.
- Finding aid written by Janice Unger, May, 2015, and published in May 2016.
- Finding aid prepared using Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS) and local guidelines.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

The National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) was founded in 1951 by Wally Parks, whose aim it was to take drag racing from the streets and into a safer environment. Staging its first official race in 1953, the NHRA later held its first national competition, known as “the Nationals,” in 1955 in Great Bend, Kansas. Over 50 years later, the NHRA has over 35,000 licensed competitors and 140 member tracks around the country.

Hot Rod Magazine was founded in 1948 by Robert E. Petersen, who was integral in establishing the first hot rod show held at the Los Angeles Armory that year. Later, Petersen created dozens of other magazines related to the automotive world. Eric Rickman, one of the photographers Petersen hired for the magazine, documented many of the inaugural events in drag racing, including the 1955 NHRA Nationals and the first Bonneville Speed Week in 1949.

Note content adapted from the following sources:

- “NHRA history: Drag racing’s fast start.” Online article accessed on 25 May 2015 at <http://www.nhra.com/nhra101/history.aspx>
- “Robert E. Petersen, Founder of Hot Rod, Passes On at 80.” Online article accessed on 25 May 2015 at <http://www.hotrod.com/news/hrdp-petersen-passing/>
- “Remembering Eric Rickman.” Online article accessed on 25 May 2015 at <http://www.hotrod.com/features/history/stories/hrdp-0807-eric-rickman/>

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Research Center Drag Racing Photographs Collection contains 10 black-and-white 8x10 inch photographic prints reprinted from the original negatives, circa 1985. The original photographs were taken by Eric Rickman and Bob D’Olivo for Petersen Publishing Company’s *Hot Rod Magazine*. The prints are organized chronologically by year, and then in alphabetical order by subject.

The collection also contains a small amount of background information on the photographs assembled by Bob Casey, former Curator of Transportation at The Henry Ford, and Zach Waske an intern at The Henry Ford in 2006 and 2007.

SUBJECT TERMS

Names, Personal and Corporate

Arfons, Art

Rickman, Eric

Thompson, Mickey, 1928-1988

National Hot Rod Association

Petersen Publishing Company

Subjects

Automobile racing--United States

Automobile racing drivers

Drag racing

Dragsters

Race car drivers

Geographic

Detroit (Mich.)

Great Bend (Kan.)

Indianapolis (Ind.)

Kansas City (Mo.)

Genre and Form

Photographic prints

CONTAINER LIST

Box no.	Description
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Box 1

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTS

- 1955 NHRA Nationals, Great Bend, Kansas, September 29-October 2
 - Bean Bandit Dragster (Object ID 2006.54.3)
 - Cal Rice (Object ID 2006.54.1)
 - Cal Rice and Mickey Thompson (Object ID 2006.54.2)
 - Sunflower Rod and Custom Association (SRCA) Sign (2 photographic prints; Object IDs 2006.54.5 and 2006.54.6)
 - Unknown Competitor (Object ID 2006.54.4)
- 1956 NHRA Nationals, Kansas City, Missouri, August 21-September 3, Unknown Competitor and Calvin Rice (Object ID 2006.54.7)
- 1959 NHRA Nationals, Detroit, Michigan, September 3-7
 - Art Arfons, Dale Arfons, and Others (Object ID 2006.54.8)
 - Art Arfons and Wally Parks (Object ID 2006.54.10)
- 1963 NHRA Nationals, Indianapolis, Indiana, September, Connie Kalitta in "Bounty Hunter II" (Object ID 2006.54.9)

COLLECTION RESEARCH

- Background Information (contains research notes on each photographic print compiled by Bob Casey, former Curator of Transportation at The Henry Ford, and Zach Waske, former intern at The Henry Ford)