



Finding Aid for

**MORGAN L. GIES PRESIDENTIAL VEHICLE PHOTOGRAPHS
COLLECTION, 1939-1966**

Accession 2011.241

Finding Aid Published: July 2013



Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
20900 Oakwood Boulevard · Dearborn, MI 48124-5029 USA
research.center@thehenryford.org · www.thehenryford.org

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: 2011.241

CREATOR: Gies, Morgan L.

TITLE: Morgan L. Gies Presidential Vehicle Photographs collection

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1939-1966

QUANTITY: 0.8 cubic ft. and 1 oversize box

LANGUAGE: The materials are in English

ABSTRACT: This collection consists of photographs, press kits, clippings and other ephemera related to presidential vehicles including the Sunshine Special, the Bubble Top and the 1961 Lincoln used by President Kennedy.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: The collection is open for research.

COPYRIGHT: Copyright has been transferred to The Henry Ford by the donor. Copyright for some items in the collection may still be held by their respective creator(s).

ACQUISITION: Donation, 2011.

RELATED MATERIAL: Related material held by The Henry Ford:
- Transportation Curator files

PREFERRED CITATION: Item, folder, box, accession 2011.241, Morgan L. Gies Presidential Vehicle Photographs collection, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford

PROCESSING INFORMATION: Collection processed by Terry Hoover, July 2011.

DESCRIPTION INFORMATION: Finding aid written by Terry Hoover, July 2011, and published in July 2013.

Finding aid prepared using Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS) and local guidelines.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Morgan Gies, who assembled this collection, was born in 1908. As a young man he served in the Merchant Marine and operated a service station before becoming a member of the United States Secret Service in 1940. Almost immediately he was placed in charge of the White House vehicles, a position he held for 27 years serving five presidents. In addition to overseeing the White House fleet, he was often the driver of the presidential vehicle or as the driver of the back up car. He retired in 1967. During his service he contributed to the design of the "bubble top" and conceived a method of rapidly loading and unloading special limousines from railroad cars and later from Air Force cargo planes. When asked if Mr. Gies ever talked about his job, his son said that his father was proud to be a member of the Secret Service but he refused to talk about anything that happened while in the Service.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection is divided into three series. The **Photograph Series** (74 photographs) consists of photographs of presidential vehicles from 1939 to 1961, with many that feature the then sitting president and other luminaries in the car. Also included are photographs of presidential vehicles being transported by air and sea and photographs of the special access provided by Franklin Roosevelt's private railcar, the Ferdinand Magellan.

The **Ephemera Series** includes a press kit and press releases relating to the 1961 Presidential Lincoln.

The **Flags Series** contains three American flags and two ceremonial flags flown on the front of presidential vehicles: Franklin Delano Roosevelt's (1882-1945) Sunshine Special, Dwight David Eisenhower's (1890-1969) Bubbletop, and John Fitzgerald Kennedy's (1917-1963) 1961 Lincoln. These vehicles are in the collections of The Henry Ford. Other special flags include one for Princess Elizabeth before she was Queen flown on the Bubbletop and a special flag for Pakistan that was flown on the Bubbletop when President Eisenhower visited that country while on an eleven nation trip through Europe, Africa and Asia.

SUBJECT TERMS

Names, Personal and Corporate

Gies, Morgan L., 1908-1980.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945

Truman, Harry S., 1884-1972

Elizabeth II, Queen of Great Britain, 1926-

Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969

Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963

Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973

Hess, William C., 1906-2000.

Ford Motor Company. Lincoln Division

General Motors Corporation. Cadillac Motor Car Division

Hess & Eisenhardt Company

Subjects

Presidential automobiles

Lincoln automobile

Cadillac automobile

Railroad cars.

Parades

Flags--United States

Pullman cars

Genre and Form

Photographs

Photographic prints

CONTAINER LIST

Box no. **Description**

Box 1

PHOTOGRAPHS

Portraits

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, undated
John F. Kennedy, undated
Jacqueline Kennedy, undated

Presidential Vehicles

1939 Lincoln Special (The Sunshine Special)
1949 Lincoln (includes Harry Truman and Dean Acheson)
1951 Lincoln (includes photos of Harry Truman and Princess Elizabeth)
1956 Cadillac (follow car)
1961 Lincoln - before conversion (includes John F. Kennedy and Haile Selassie)
1964 Lincoln - after conversion (includes Lyndon and Ladybird Johnson)

Ferdinand Magellan, circa 1943 (FDR private railcar)

Aircraft Transport, 1950-1964

Ship Transport, 1947 and 1957

EPHEMERA

Lincoln Press Kit, 1961
Miscellaneous Ford Press Releases for the 1961 Presidential Lincoln
Letter from William Hess, 1966
Vehicle Registration for a 1938 Cadillac stipulating "For White House Use Only"

Box 2

FLAGS

Flag for Princess Elizabeth (flown on the Bubbletop)
Flag for the President of Ecuador
Three United States Flags Flown on Cars that are in The Henry Ford's Collection (48 star flag was flown on the Sunshine Special, the 49 star flag was flown on the Bubbletop, and the 50 star flag flew on the Kennedy Lincoln.)
Flag for Pakistan (flown on the Bubbletop during a tour of Europe and Asia in 1959)
Matchbooks from Presidential campaigns.

Box 3 (oversize)

EPHEMERA

Metal eagle which reportedly came from an Al Capone vehicle confiscated by the Treasury Department.