



Finding Aid for

FLETCHER N. PLATT PAPERS, 1951-2004
Accession 2005.97

Finding Aid Published: January 2011



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SUMMARY INFORMATION

CREATOR: Platt, Fletcher N.

TITLE: Fletcher N. Platt papers

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1951-2004

BULK DATES: 1951-1974

QUANTITY: 0.4 cubic ft.

ABSTRACT: Publications, pamphlets, presentations, proposals, and research reports documenting Platt's career with Ford Motor Company and automotive safety planning.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: The papers are open for research

ACQUISITION: Donation, 2005

PREFERRED CITATION: Item, folder, box, accession 2005.97, Fletcher N. Platt papers, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford

PROCESSING INFORMATION: Finding aid prepared by Kathy Steiner, January, 2006

HISTORICAL NOTE/BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Fletcher N. Platt joined Ford Motor Company in the Truck Sales Department of Ford Division in July of 1950. In 1952 he was transferred to the Office of Product Planning. In 1954 Platt was appointed manager of the newly created Traffic Safety and Highway Improvement Department and began developing a long range traffic safety plan for Ford Motor Company. Platt reviewed and evaluated product design for the reduction of traffic accidents and crash injuries. He coordinated Ford Motor Company's activities in the promotion of safe and adequate streets, highways, and related facilities and worked with governmental, civic, and private agencies engaged in traffic safety and highway improvement programs. Platt served as the technical editor of a book, film, and dealer promotion promoting traffic safety called *Freedom of the American Road*, published in 1956. That same year he also helped organize the first public showing of an instrumented crash test with dummies. Between 1962 and 1964 he received four patents including patents for a driver alertness aid called "Owl" and an impact force recording instrument. Fletcher N. Platt retired from Ford Motor Company February 28, 1974.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The bulk of the Fletcher N. Platt papers includes published articles, pamphlets, presentations, proposals, and research reports regarding traffic safety, some of which were written by Fletcher N. Platt. Also included are Platt's reminiscences of working at Ford Motor Company; a brief history of traffic safety research sponsored by the company; memorandums and subject files regarding his patents for a driver alertness aid called "Owl;" an impact force recording instrument; and a book called *Freedom of the American Road*. The papers also include thirteen black and white 8x10 photographs documenting the highway system's research car; astronaut James McDivitt, who test drove the highway system's research car; and various traffic safety demonstrations, exhibits, and promotions.

BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

Box no. **Description**

Box 1

Ford Traffic Safety History and Reminiscences, 1988-2004 (2 folders)
Ford Motor Company Memorandums, 1951-1963
Photographs, 1957-1972
Proposals
 Proposed Areas of Research to be Conducted at the Ford Traffic Accident Research Center, 1963
 Proposal for Prototype Driver Performance Measurement and Analysis System, 1973
Publications and Article Reprints, 1953-1973 (2 folders)
Research Reports
 Traffic Safety, 1958-1966
 Evaluation of Ford Employee Skilled Driving Program, 1974
Retirement Letters, 1974
Speeches and Presentations, 1957-1967
Subject Files
 Driver Alertness Aid "Owl," 1962-1969 (2 folders)
 Freedom of the American Road, 1955-1956
 Impact Force Recording Instrument, 1961
 Product Planning Presentation
 Slide Printout, 1954
 CD-ROM, 2004