



Finding Aid for

WILLIAM CLAY FORD EDISON INSTITUTE RECORDS, 1950-1981

Accession EI 90

Finding Aid Published: November 2013



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: EI 90

CREATOR: Ford, William Clay, 1925-

TITLE: William Clay Ford Edison Institute records

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1950-1981

QUANTITY: 12.0 cubic ft., and one oversize box

LANGUAGE: The materials are in English

ABSTRACT: William Clay Ford, the son of Edsel and Eleanor Ford, worked for Ford Motor Company from 1949 to 2005. Mr. Ford's involvement with The Henry Ford began in 1951 where he has served in various capacities, including Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The majority of the collection relates to The Henry Ford. The collection is composed of manuscript material, newspaper clippings, magazines, an audio recording, and photographs.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

- ACCESS RESTRICTIONS:** The collection is open for research. Original audio materials are not available for use. Digital copies are available for use in the reading room.
- 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:** Donations, 1964 and 1979.
- RELATED MATERIAL:** Related material held by The Henry Ford:
- United Cerebral Palsy Foundation records subseries, 1952-1955, Accession 592
- William Clay Ford records series, Accession 773
- William Clay Ford records, Accession 921
- One for the Money (film), Accession EI 065
- PREFERRED CITATION:** Item, folder, box, accession EI 90, William Clay Ford Edison Institute records, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
- DESCRIPTION INFORMATION:** The original finding aid was prepared by Alene Soloway in 1999.
- Finding aid updated by Karen Krepps, November 2013, and published in November 2013.
- Finding aid prepared using Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACs) and local guidelines.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

William Clay Ford (1925-) was in born in Detroit, Michigan on March 14, 1925. He is the youngest child of Edsel and Eleanor Clay Ford and the grandson of Henry and Clara Ford. His grandfather, Henry Ford, founded Ford Motor Company in 1903. Ford attended Detroit University School in Grosse Pointe, Michigan; Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, Connecticut; and graduated with a degree in economics from Yale University in 1949.

William Clay Ford was named to the Board of Directors of Ford Motor Company in 1948 and became an employee of the company in 1949, where he worked in the Sales Division. In 1952, the Executive Committee of Ford Motor Company established the Continental Division and named Ford as its head. In 1956, he was named Group Director of the Lincoln and Continental Division of the company. In 1957, Ford was appointed Vice President - Product Planning and Styling. These positions allowed William Clay Ford to continue his father's legacy of the Continental, which was developed and introduced by Edsel Ford in 1939. In 1978, Ford was named Head of the Executive Committee of Ford Motor Company. He retired as Vice-Chairman of Ford Motor Company in 1989 but remained a member of the Board of Directors until his retirement from the Board in 2005.

William Clay Ford's interest in football began in 1934 when his father took him to see the first Detroit Lions football game. He became a club director in 1956 and President of the Detroit Lions in 1961. In 1963, William Clay Ford bought the Detroit Lions and has remained sole owner for over 45 years.

Another of William Clay Ford's interests is the Edison Institute, which operates The Henry Ford, Dearborn, Michigan. In 1951, he became President of the Edison Institute Board of Trustees and in 1968 was named Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He retired from the Board of Trustees 1989 at which time he became Chairman Emeritus of the Institute, a position he continues to hold.

WILLIAM CLAY FORD CHRONOLOGY

March 14, 1925	Born to Edsel and Eleanor Clay Ford, grandson of Henry Ford in Detroit, Michigan
1934	Attended first Detroit Lions football game with his father
1943	Enlisted in the United States Naval Air Corp
1945	Enrolled at Yale University
1947	Married Martha Firestone, granddaughter of Harvey Firestone
1948	Named to Board of Directors of Ford Motor Company

- 1949 Graduated Yale University with a major in Economics
 Began working at Ford Motor Company in the Sales Division
- 1951 Named President of the Board of Trustees of the Edison Institute
- 1952 Named manager of Special Product Operation in charge of advanced
 automotive planning. This section later became the Continental Division
- 1953 Elected a vice president of Ford Motor Company
- 1956 Named Group Director of the newly created Lincoln and Continental
 Division of Ford Motor Company Named a club director of the Detroit
 Lions
- 1957 Appointed Vice President - Product Planning and Styling
- 1961 Became President of the Detroit Lions
- 1963 Purchased the Detroit Lions
- 1968 Became Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Edison Institute
- 1978 Named head of the Executive Committee of Ford Motor Company
- 1989 Retired from Ford Motor Company
- 2005 Retired from Ford Motor Company Board of Directors
 Director Emeritus, Ford Motor Company Board of Directors
- 1989 Became Chairman Emeritus, The Henry Ford Board of Trustees

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The William Clay Ford Edison Institute records are composed of manuscript material, newspaper clippings, magazines, an audio recording, and photographs. The majority of the collection consists of manuscript material. Material from EI 65 has been incorporated into this accession.

The Personal Papers series, 1950-1978 (2.6 cubic ft.), contains correspondence between Ford and various individuals and organizations not related to the Edison Institute or Ford Motor Company. The series also contains photographs, newspaper clippings, and an audio recording of the KDKA program of "Voices for 1979".

Of particular interest is the audio recording, which is a copy of a radio broadcast originally aired on November 9, 1959 and rebroadcast in 1979. The program featured prominent men from various segments of industry and their predictions of how their industry would change in twenty years. The predictions of David G. Hill, H. J. Heinz II, Roy A. Hunt, William Clay Ford, and General Matthew B. Ridgeway are featured on the recording.

The Ford Motor Company series, 1950-1978 (1.4 cubic ft.), contains manuscript material, photographs, and magazines relating to the fiftieth and seventy-fifth anniversaries of Ford Motor Company. Included in the series are photographs of the ground breaking ceremony for the plant and office building of the Special Product Division of the company in 1954. The photographs were taken by Ford Motor Company's Photographic Department.

The Edison Institute series, 1951-1981 (8.0 cubic ft.), is the largest of the series. It contains correspondence and administrative material relating to the organization, planning, development programs, and exhibits held at the Institute. The series also contains manuscript material relating to the fortieth and fiftieth anniversaries of the Edison Institute. Found in this series is manuscript material describing the process by which the Decorative Arts Gallery was redesigned to create an aesthetic and functional exhibit. Also included in the series is a proposed theme for the Interpretive Center and a description of the finished exhibit.

ARRANGEMENT

Records are arranged chronologically within three series:

1. Personal Papers, 1950-1978
2. Ford Motor Company, 1950-1978
3. Edison Institute, 1951-1981

SUBJECT TERMS

Names, Personal and Corporate

Ford, William Clay, 1925-
Edison Institute Schools
Ford Foundation
Ford Motor Company -- Anniversaries
Henry Ford (Organization)
Henry Ford (Organization)--Anniversaries
Henry Ford (Organization)--Exhibitions
Hotchkiss School
McCarthy, Eugene J., 1916-2005
Wayside Inn (Sudbury, Mass.)

Subjects

Business Planning
Grand Prix racing
Presidents--Election

Genre and Form

Sound recordings
Photographs

CONTAINER LIST

Box no. Description

PERSONAL PAPERS

Box 1

Correspondence
1950-1951; 1953
1955-1959
1960-1964
1965
1966
1967
1968-1969
1970
1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976 (2 folders)
1977

Box 2

1978
Hotchkiss School Development Fund, Hotchkiss Committee Meeting (General)
1950-1951; 1953; 1961
1962
1963
Hotchkiss School Development Fund
General File, 1961
Solicitation File, 1963
Miscellaneous, 1964
McCarthy Campaign
1968 (2 folders)
1976 (2 folders)
Miscellaneous
Audio recording, "Voices for 1979," November 9, 1959 (audiotape reel and
audiocassette)
Award, July 30, 1968

Box 2A

Miscellaneous, Certificate & Plaque, November 6, 1954
National Football Foundation and Hall of Fame Annual Awards Dinner, November -
December 1962-1967

Newspaper article, "Grandson of Ford is Cadet at St. Mary's," April 17, 1945
Photographs of Grand Prix of Spain, 1951 (2 folders)
Van Patrick Memorial Invitational Certificate, July 16, 1979; July 14, 1980

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Box 3

50th Anniversary
Committee Meeting, July 29, 1953
Plans, Report, November 28, 1951
The *Ford Dealer Story*, 1953
Correspondence
1950-1952
1953
Periodical, Miscellaneous, May - June 1953; June 1953; July 1953
Television Show, February 25, 1952
Proposal for a Conference, October 16, 1952
100th Anniversary: Clippings, Henry Ford Centennial Publicity, 1963
April - July
July - August
Photographs: Groundbreaking Plant and Office Building Special Product Division,
May 20, 1954 (2 folders)

Box 4

75th Anniversary
License Plate, 1978
General, 1976-1978
Program Report, 1974-1978 (2 copies)
Program, Fourth Press Clipping Report, March - July 1978

EDISON INSTITUTE

Box 5

40th Anniversary
Correspondence, 1969-1970 (2 folders)
Press Release, 1969
50th Anniversary
The Centennial of Light and the Golden Anniversary of the Edison Institute,
Program, Dinner, 1979 (5 folders)
Dr. Philip Handler's Remarks, October - December 1979
Correspondence
1974; 1977
1978 (2 folders)
1979 (2 folders)
Annual Report
1958-1959
1959-1960
1960-1961

Box 6

Exhibition

Display Graphic Standards, 1977
Industrial Heritage U.S.A., 1972; 1974 (2 folders)
Preparing Label Copy, Memoranda, July 6, 1977
Schoolroom Progress Correspondence, 1956-1960

Box 7

Decorative Arts Galleries, 1980
Design Committee Minutes
1976-1978
1978-1980
Display Systems Original Plan, August 5, 1975
Gallery of American Style, undated
Interpretive Center, 1977
Museum Story Lines, 1976-1977

Box 8

Correspondence

1951-1952
1953-1955
1956-1959
1960-1962
1964-1965
1966 (2 folders)
1967-1968
1969 (2 folders)
1970
1971
1972
1973 (3 folders)
1974
1975
1976 (2 of 4 folders)

Box 9

1976 (2 of 4 folders)
1977 (2 folders)
1978 (4 folders)
Thomas Alva Edison Foundation
1951; 1956-1957; 1966; 1966
1967; 1970-1973; 1978-1979
Village School Closing
1952; 1957
1968
1969 (3 folders)

Wayside Inn
1954; 1956
1957-1958

Box 10

Development Program
Herb Rosenthal & Associates, 1971-1973
Completed Projects
Volume 1, 1974-1979
Volume 2, 1974-1979
Development Program, 1968-1971

Box 11

Project
Lovett Hall Central Office Space Study, 1979
Maintenance and Storage Buildings, 1974
Proposed Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village Rearrangement, October
1970 (slides)
Village Center, 1974
Visitor's Parking, 1974

Planning

Long Range Planning
1967
1974
1975-1977
Summary of Plans and Needs Report, 1979 (2 folders)
Study, Greenfield Village in the Eighties, December 24, 1979

Miscellaneous Project

Food Service Study, 1972; 1974
Study of Food Services Operation, Photographs, July 8 - August 2, 1974

Box 12

Organization

Organization, 1954-1980
Biographies and Replacement Inventory, 1969-1980
Salaries and Pensions/General, 1964-1980
Membership Program and Advisory Committee, 1970-1980
Search Committee, 1980

Box 13

Miscellaneous Reports

Reports to Ford Foundation, 1966-1974
Status Reports
November 1971 - December 1975
January 1976 - December 1979

Box 14

January 1980 - January 1981
Operating Reports
1969-1979
1979-1981

Box 15

Planning
Long Range Planning, 1978-1980
Plans and Needs, 1974-1975
Miscellaneous Projects, 1972-1980

Box 16

40th Anniversary House Resolution No. 252, October 9, 1969
Miscellaneous Project, Major Maintenance for the Edison Institute, November 1979