



Finding Aid for

SIDNEY OLSON PUBLIC RELATIONS PROJECTS, 1960

Accession 64.167.716

Finding Aid Published: 20 September 2019

Benson Ford Research Center
The Henry Ford
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OVERVIEW

REPOSITORY: Benson Ford Research Center
The Henry Ford
20900 Oakwood Blvd
Dearborn, MI 48124-5029
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ACCESSION NUMBER: 64.167.716

CREATOR: Olson, Sidney

TITLE: Sidney Olson Public Relations Projects

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1960

QUANTITY: 1.6 cubic ft. (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: The materials are in English.

ABSTRACT: Sidney Olson, while employed at the Kenyon & Eckhardt advertising agency, worked on projects associated with the Ford Motor Company. One was entitled Project Flora and related to test drives of 1961 Ford or Falcon automobiles. The Sidney Olson Public Relations Projects contains questionnaires, press documents, newspaper clippings, photographic prints, and a draft manuscripts relating to this project.

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:** Donated to The Henry Ford, 1964.
- RELATED MATERIAL:** Related material held by The Henry Ford:
-Sidney Olson Research Notes on Henry Ford, Accession 512
-Sidney Olson "The Peaceful Revolution" Manuscripts, Accession 812
-Sidney Olson *American Road* Manuscript, Accession 979
- Related collections beyond The Henry Ford:
-Sidney A. Olson papers, 1957, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University.
<https://www.worldcat.org/title/sidney-a-olson-papers-1957/oclc/27521704>
- PREFERRED CITATION:** Item, folder, box, accession 64.167.716, Sidney Olson Public Relations Projects, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford
- PROCESSING INFORMATION:** Collection processed by Benson Ford Research Center staff, November, 2011.
- DESCRIPTION INFORMATION:** Original collection inventory lists prepared by staff of the Ford Motor Company Archives, circa 1964.
- Original finding aid prepared by Benson Ford Research Center staff, November 2011, and updated in September 2013. Revised by Janice Unger, September 2019, and published in September 2019.
- Finding aid prepared using Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS) and local guidelines.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Sidney Olson (1908-1996) was a journalist, war correspondent, and a senior editor at *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune* magazines before joining Kenyon & Eckhardt, an advertising agency, in 1951. The firm was hired by Ford executives to market Ford Motor Company's fiftieth anniversary. While working on the project, Olson spent many hours with material in the Ford Motor Company Archives.

After retirement, Olson conducted independent research in the Archives, focusing for five years on a project he called *The American Road: A Picture History of the Life and Times of Henry Ford, 1863-1947*. Olson's original intent was to write several volumes telling the story of Henry Ford "plainly" and utilizing primary source documents as much as possible. His manuscript was published in 1963 by Wayne State University Press under the title *Young Henry Ford: A Picture History of the First Forty Years*.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Sidney Olson Public Relations Projects, 1960 (1.6 cubic ft.) pertains to Project Flora, a study conducted in Flora, Illinois, of 1961 Ford automobiles before they were released nationwide. Each family in Flora was given a 1961 Ford or Falcon model vehicle to test drive for a week and evaluate before the models were released to the general public. The papers include a questionnaire that was sent to all Flora residents, a draft of a study conducted by Olson entitled "The Secret Life of a Small Town," a detailed outline of the project, press documents, newspaper clippings, and a few photographic prints.

Researchers should note that there are 4 collections of Sidney Olson materials that had previously been combined on one finding aid and collectively known as the Sidney Olson Papers, PP 004. In addition to this collection, researchers may also want to consult: the Sidney Olson Research Notes on Henry Ford, Accession 512; the Sidney Olson "The Peaceful Revolution" Manuscripts, Accession 812; and the Sidney Olson *American Road* Manuscript, Accession 979.

SUBJECT TERMS

Names, Personal and Corporate

Olson, Sidney

Ford Motor Company

Ford Motor Company—Public relations

Subjects

Automobile industry and trade

Ford automobile

Ford Falcon automobile

Geographic

United States, Flora (Illinois)

Genre and Form

Case studies

Correspondence

Periodicals

Photographic prints

Press releases

Questionnaires

CONTAINER LIST

Box no.	Description
Box 1	“The Secret Life of a Small Town” by Sidney Olson, drafts and copies (3 folders)
Box 2	Anticipated acceptance Falcon questions and answers (7 folders and 3 binders) Local information Miscellaneous correspondence Press releases Publicity, suggested Press conferences (4 folders; includes 1961 National Teen Age Press Conference)
Box 3	<i>Everyday Magazine</i> , 2 October 1960 <i>Daily News Record</i> , 1960 (5 copies)
Box 4	Flora, Illinois, brochure Flora community (7 folders) Mayor’s letter and questionnaire Photographs Reports Flora Church Committee Flora Education Committee