

Art Arfons Collection
Special Collections – Akron-Summit County Public Library

ACCESSION # 2022.054

ACQUISITION: Thomas Joswick, nephew of Walt Arfons and Art Arfons, donated the material to the Special Collections Division of the Akron-Summit County Public Library in March of 2022.

ACCESS: Restricted access; materials fragile; access by request at Akron-Summit County Public Library's Main Library Special Collections Division only.

VOLUME: 3 boxes and 1 oversize folder, Approx. 1.25 linear foot.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Summit County natives Walter (1916-2013) and Art Arfons (1926-2007) built and raced jet-powered dragsters. They began building racers together in 1952, but by 1962 the brothers' careers diverged with each developing their own design innovations. Their most popularly recognized cars were named "Wingfoot Express" and "The Green Monster." Art Arfons broke the land speed record at Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah in 1964-65.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Photographs, clippings, correspondence related to drag cars and drag car racing. Of interest to researchers are photographs of both Walt and Art Arfons racing as well as press photos from the Firestone Company regarding Art Arfons' record-breaking runs. The bulk of material includes magazines from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s that feature articles about Art Arfons' career.

ARRANGEMENT: This collection is divided into four series: Biographical Info, Correspondence, and Career Highlights, Photographs, Periodicals, and Clippings. Each series is grouped by like materials and in general chronologically with undated material last.

INVENTORY:

SERIES 1: Biographical Info, Correspondence, and Career Highlights

DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: Includes DVD of vintage television features from 1950s, correspondence to or from Art Arfons or others including two (2) oversize flyers/advertisements from Sportsman Park Drag Strip in Farmington, North Carolina featuring Art Arfons at event.

Box 1

Folder 1 Biographical information and Career Highlights, undated; DVD of 1950s TV spots
Folder 2 *Speed Duel* by Samuel Hawley, 2010
Folder 3 Correspondence, 1962-1972 (span)
Folder 4 Correspondence, 1965-66, oversize folder

SERIES 2: Photographs

Box 1 2 folders of photographs, mostly 8x10" black and white.

Folder 1 Art Arfons, 1955-1975 (span)
Folder 2 Firestone News press release photos, 1965
Folder 3 Walt Arfons, undated

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SERIES 3: Periodicals 1956-2009 (span)

DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: See donor bibliography listing publications including summary of article in publication. Some titles have donor created notes clipped to cover regrading an article or photo.

Box 1

Folder 1 Periodicals, 1956
Folder 2 Periodicals, 1957
Folder 3 Periodicals, 1958-1960

Box 2

Folder 4 Periodicals, 1961-1962
Folder 5 Periodicals, 1963-1964
Folder 6 Periodicals, January 1965
Folder 7 Periodicals, February, November, December 1965
Folder 8 Periodicals, January, February, June, September, November 1966
Folder 9 Periodicals, 1969-2009 (span)

SERIES 4: Clippings

DESCRIPTIVE NOTE: Newspaper clippings. Includes two (2) foreign language newsprints in French and German. Some clippings have donor created notes attached. Publications includes inserts from newspapers like the Akron Beacon Journal's *Beacon* Sunday edition.

Box 3

Folder 1 Clippings-Foreign Language
Folder 2 Clippings-Publications, 1962-1999 (span)
Folder 3 Clippings, 1955-1964 (span)
Folder 4 Clippings, 1965-1972 (span)
Folder 5 Clippings, 1985-2013 (span)
Folder 6 Clippings, undated

MAGAZINES containing Arfons articles

(Note: "GM" = "Green Monster")

AMERICAN RODDER

JUNE 1990 pages 68 – 71 and 74 – 75 "The Arfons Legend".

AMERICAN RODDING

DECEMBER 1969 Art sets ¼ mile drag record in the J79 Monster. Small cover photo, the article on pages 54-55 claims to be written by Art, but is not his style.

AUTO TOPICS

JANUARY 1965 Art Arfons and THE GREEN MONSTER on cover, one page article, sets Land Speed Record, page 10

APRIL 1965 Paula Murphy becomes the "Fastest Woman on Wheels" driving a Walt Arfons' jet car.

AUTOWEEK

JUNE 21, 1999 (Cover and the article only) A review of the *Point of View* movie "The Green Monster". The movie is excellent, covers Art's return to Bonneville at age 64, where he crashes a jet motorcycle.

BARRACUDA

ISSUE # 17. Well-written, extensive article. Crazy but fun magazine.

CAR and DRIVER

FEB 1962 Pages 74 - 76 Walt's jet dragster, driven by Nook Bakewell, at Fontana Raceway, California.

CAR CRAFT

JANUARY 1961 Coverage of Bonneville fall 1960. The Anteater. Pages 38 -43, 52-53. Also: Akron's Otie Smith's '23 bucket T dragster at Nationals, page 25 photo.

JANUARY 1965. "31 Wild Days on the Salt" coverage of the multiple October 1964 Land Speed Records.

CAR LIFE

DECEMBER 1962 Art's Green Monster "Cyclops" sets top speed at Bonneville

JUNE 1966 Pages 70 -74 Walt Arfons rocket car Wingfoot Express 2

CAR MODEL

NOVEMBER 1967 Charlie Mayenschien's wooden model of Art's Bonneville LSR car. page 43

COLLECTIBLE AUTOMOBILE

FEB 2009 Extensive article about Art Arfons. Lots of good photos. It mistakenly identifies a photo of Romeo Palamedes and his jet as Craig Breedlove, and it incorrectly states that Art's Anteater had 24 cylinders.

CUSTOMS ILLUSTRATED

DECEMBER 1964 Pages 12 – 15. "Assault on the Salt". Cyclops and the Anteater photos.

DRAG RACER

AUGUST 1959 two mentions of Art and GM #11 breaking track records in California, one picture.

DRAG STRIP

DECEMBER 1967 Walt Arfons fleet of jet "Funny Cars"

High Performance CARS

MARCH 1980 "Last American Hero - Art Arfons" A lengthy biographical and racing history article.

HOT BIKE

AUGUST 1988 Article about Art's two-wheeled jet for Bonneville, the last car Art built.

HOT ROD

JANUARY 1957 Page 62 – the "150 MPH Club" introduced. The first member is Art Arfons.

NOVEMBER 1957 Coverage of 1957 Nationals. Art sets top speed in Number 11 at 152.54 mph, a new record on gas, page 18. One small picture, page 24.

JULY 1959 Green Monster #11 on pages 44 -46

NOVEMBER 1959 coverage of the Detroit nationals. #11 sets fast time. 4 pictures. Page 34-45 and 94 - 97. "Otie" (Otis R. Smith) of Akron wins Class A Roadster division.

DEC 1961 Bonneville 1961. Anteater sets fastest speed of the year at 313 mph.

AUGUST 1963 Pages 92 & 93 Walt's Wingfoot Express I

JANUARY 1966 All Bonneville cover, many pages of coverage of 1965 fall session

NOVEMBER 1966 Walt Arfons' steam powered dragster crashes at 250 mph ("Neptune").

AUGUST 1968 Pages 52 – 55 "The Green Monster Man" An update & retrospective on Art Arfons career.

DECEMBER 1971 "Art was my co-pilot" article. Excellent.

HOW TO BOOK of HOT RODS

1961 BONNEVILLE & NATIONALS COVERAGE, Art's ANTEATER sets fastest run at BONNEVILLE, CRAIG BREEDLOVE "STUDIES" WALT ARFONS' JET AT BONNEVILLE! Pages 5, 12, 88 -91.

MODERN ROD

JULY 1964 "All about the Wienie Roasters" Pages 9-13, 57, 59, 61. Coverage of jet dragsters.

FEBRUARY 1965 Art's record at Bonneville; Paula Murphy sets Women's Land Speed Record in Walt's car

FEBRUARY 1966 Pages 38 – 41. Art sets Quarter mile record, and Betty Skelton in Cyclops

MOTOR GUIDE

MAY 1957 "Midwest Hot Rodders Overtaking West Coast". Green Monster #5 and #6 pictured.

MOTOR LIFE December 1960

DECEMBER 1960 Doc Ostich and his jet at Bonneville on cover. "Green Monster in a Silver Shell" – Anteater at Bonneville. Mickey Thompson does a one-way 406 mph, breaks drive shaft on the return run.

MOTOR TREND

September 1961 Clipping of short article preview of Bonneville. Photo of Art & the Anteater.

June 1962 Early coverage of CYCLOPS, mentions testing it at Daytona Speedway. Pages 56 – 57.

September 1962 Pre-coverage of the upcoming Bonneville season. Focus on jet cars. CYCLOPS.

January 1965 Coverage of October 1964 Bonneville records. Pages 74 – 77.

POPULAR HOT RODDING

DECEMBER 1962 Cyclops at Bonneville, page 44. Fastest at the meet, and a new record for jet cars.

SEPTEMBER 1966 pages 38, 39 and 66. Bonneville preview; interview with Art

ROAD & TRACK Well written column by Tony Hogg ("Miscellaneous Ramblings") pages 33-35 about visiting Art Arfons at his shop. Photocopy of the article only.

ROD BUILDER

DECEMBER 1955 Volume 1, Number 1 Pictures of Green Monster #5 and #6
AUGUST 1960 extensive article about Bonneville streamliners, Anteater, starts page 34
FEBRUARY 1965 Review of 1964 Bonneville season and the multiple land speed records.

RODDING & RESTYLING

MAY 1958 Coverage of 1957 event where Art crashed. Pages 12 - 18.
APRIL 1960 Walter builds a jet car. Page 34 -36, photos include Walt and Nook Bakewell

SPEED AGE

NOVEMBER 1956 "Ten Fastest Rods in the US" Green Monster #6 is First Place. Page 40
DECEMBER 1956 Coverage of the third World Series of Drag Racing (ATAA event - Automobile Timing Assoc of America). Top speed 152.42 by GM #6. Also shown: GM # 4 and # 5

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

November 29, 1965 Part One of "Enemies in Speed Land", the Jack Olsen hit piece
December 6, 1965 Part Two of "Enemies in Speed Land"
NOVEMBER 28, 1966 Article about Art's 600+ mph crash at Bonneville. Photos.