Record Group 48: Ford Village Industries
1926-2002
1 manuscript box, 1 half manuscript box, 3 binders

Plymouth Historical Museum, Plymouth, MI
Finding Aid Written by Elizabeth Kelley Kerstens, 17 August 2006
Updated by Paige Wojcik, 22 June 2011
Updated by Jennifer Meekhof, 14 December 2011

Creator: Ford Village Industries
Acquisition: The Ford Village Industries records were deposited in the archives at various dates from 1981-2005
Language: Materials in English
Access: Records are open for research
Use: Refer to Archives Reading Room Guidelines
Notes: Citation Style: “Ford Village Industries,” Record Group 48, Archives, Plymouth Historical Museum

Abstract
Henry Ford created 19 different “Village Industries” of small industrial centers in rural areas of Michigan; over 30 villages total in the country. These centers were intended to prevent disruption of rural living, but unite the lifestyle with factory working. Henry Ford developed the Village Industries program in an attempt to provide a stable the income flow of farm workers during the winter. All of the villages were on the banks of rivers, often on the sites of abandoned gristmills with waterwheels.

The Plymouth village industry is located at 230 Wilcox in Plymouth, Michigan. It was originally a flour mill built in 1845 by Henry Holbrook that later became Wilcox Mills. Wilcox Mills operated as a gristmill until Henry Ford purchased it. The village industry opened in 1923 and employed up to 23 people making taps and other tools used in manufacturing. The village closed in 1948, but designated a state of Michigan historic site in 1989.

Scope and Content
The Ford Village Industries record group contains information about the Village Industry in Plymouth MI as well as some additional information of the ford motor company and Henry Ford, as related to the Village Industries. The collection includes articles, books, photographs and some scrapbooks.

Entries
Entry 1: Ford Village Industries
Entry 2: Mills (pre-Ford)
Entry 3: Scrapbooks
Entry 4: Ford Motor Company
Entry 5: Articles
Entry 6: Books
Important Subjects
Ford Motor Company
Ford Village Industries

See also Record Group 21, Phoenix Mill Women’s Museum

Box 1, Shelf 100
Entry 1—Ford Village Industries
Folder 1—Wilcox Ford Plant
“Pathways to Auto History,” by Renee Skoglund, Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 24 June 1998
“Employees of the Plymouth Plant of the Ford Motor Co.,” The Community Crier, 23 February 1977
“Plymouth Plant: Ford Motor Company,” Plymouth Pilgrim, 28 October 1926
“Mill on Historic Register,” Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 16 October 1989
“Group seeks to turn old mill into art center,” Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 11 June 1990
“PCAC on hold over grant,” The Community Crier, 11 July 1990
Letter to the Editor of the Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 19 June 1990, by Bruce Richard
Michigan Historical Commission letter of 15 September 1989 announcing that the Plymouth Mill is on the State Register of Historic Sites
Story about the Wilcox Ford Plant by unknown author
Images:
Wilcox Ford Plant postcard (Acc #2002.221.04)
Wilcox Plant front view, taken 25 May 1999
Wilcox Plant rear view, taken 25 May 1999
Ford Motor Co. dynamited islands in Wilcox Lake. Wilcox (Ford Plant) in background, 1934 (Acc #L768b)
Ford Motor Co. dynamited islands in Wilcox Lake. Wilcox (Ford Plant) in background, 1934 (Acc #L768c)
Wilcox Ford Plant, Plymouth, MI (Acc #L741)
Wilcox Plant, 7 views
Wilcox Plant (Acc #L741)
Dynamiting the old Ford dam at Plymouth Plant (L768a)

Folder 2—Articles
“Northville Historic Site Picks up Tower Benefits,” by Sheri Hall, The Detroit News
“Zaytis’ Rare Personal Glimpse of Henry Ford & His Plant,” Mill Race Quarterly 17
“Ford ‘Village Industry’ was in Plymouth,” by Sam Hudson, The Observer & Eccentric, 17 October 1974
“Our Car: The Road Behind,” The Detroit News, 7 January 1996
“Henry Ford’s mills, history preserved,” *The Observer & Eccentric*, 4 September 1989
“New Ford Factory at Northville Has Been Completed,” *Plymouth Mail*, 13 November 1936
“The Last of Ford’s Renowned Village Industries Closes,” *Mill Race Quarterly* 17 (Summer 1989)
*Grist Grind*er 3, 9 October 1988
“Little Plants in the Country,” *Ford News*, July 1936
“Village Industries by Little Rivers,” *Ford News* 16 (April 1936)
“Ford Motor Company Hydro-Electric Power Plants,” *Beyond the Model T*
“Parks officials seek memories of Ford Village workers,” *The Observer & Eccentric*, 26 August 1999
“Local Ford Plants Keep Going on Full Schedule for Present, at Least,” *Plymouth Mail*, no date
Remarks made by Beth Stewart, director of the Plymouth Historical Museum, on the opening of the Ford Village Industries Exhibit at the Museum, 23 April 1989

*Folder 3—Phoenix Mill Ford Plant*
List of Phoenix Mill Employees ca. 1930s
“Another ‘Village Industry’ Opens,” *Plymouth Mail*, 18 April 1941
“They’ll Be Summer Brides,” *Plymouth Mail*, 20 June 1941
“Seizure of Ford Plant Forces Idleness Here,” *Plymouth Mail*, 4 April 1941
“Ford welcomed women workers,” *The Crier*, no date
“Another Ford Ideal to Help Mankind Crumbles to Earth with Closing of the Phoenix Plant,” *Plymouth Mail*, 2 April 1948
“Phoenix Grandmothers Honored on 25th Work Anniversary”
“Factory Employs Women Who Can’t Afford to Work at Home”
Phoenix Plant paper by Wilcox Scholarship student

Images
Digital Photo of Catherine Soja
Digital Photo of Dorthy Cook
Digital Photo of Mollie Rodman Tracy
Digital Photo of Theresa Meiden Finlan Cameron
Digital Photo of Phoenix Mill Plant
Phoenix Mill Plant, 25 May 1999
Side entrance to Phoenix Mill Plant, 25 May 1999
Side entrance to Phoenix Mill Plant, 25 May 1999
Phoenix Lake Dam in front of Phoenix Mill Plant, 25 May 1999
See Also Record Group 12, Charles Draper Collection

Folder 4—Phoenix Mill Women’s Museum
“Museum to honor women in industry,” Detroit News, 7 August 2002
“Honor the ‘Rosie the Riveters’ of Wayne County,” Community Crier, 1 November 2002
Reception to Create the Phoenix Mill Women’s Museum, folder with various documents, 5 June 2002
“Plymouth plans museum at site of all-female mill,” Detroit News, 24 April 2002
“One for the Rosies, Fundraising event for the first of its kind museum to honor women who
worked during WWII,” Your Community Crier, 22 November 2002
“5K run will benefit Phoenix Mill Museum,” Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 14 September 2003
“Phoenix Yard tapped for women’s museum,” Detroit News, 7 August 2001
“Phoenix Mill Feasibility Study” May, 2007

Folder 5—Ford Heritage Trails
“Ford Heritage Trails,” Art Beats, March 1990
“Township donates to Heritage Trail”
“Project will celebrate county’s auto heritage,” Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 24 September 2000
“Ford Heritage Trails,” Wayne County Park System
“Walking the trail: History lives in area’s backyard” Wayne County Park System brochure
Ford Heritage Trails brochure (3)
Visit Henry Ford Estate brochure
Welcome to Historical Mill Race Village, Northville, Michigan, brochure (2)
Ford Heritage Trails Tour flyer (4-green)
Ford Heritage Trails Tour flyer (4-yellow)
Correspondence concerning the creation of the Ford Heritage Trail Tour
Directions for Heritage Trail
“The Ford Heritage Trail”
Map Case 4, Drawer 1
Ford Heritage Trails

Folder 6—Miscellaneous
“Household Industries of the Ford Motor Company” (2)
“Village Industries 1941-45” (2)
List of Village Industry plants
“Case Study on Ford’s Village Industry Communities,” by Dale Yagiela
Ford taps
“An Historic Connection: Village Industries and Plymouth”
A Visit to the Ford Rouge Plant pamphlet (Acc. #2007.34.01)

Entry 2—Mills (pre-Ford)
Folder 1—Wilcox and/or Plymouth Mill
Unknown paper, “Ford Bought and Built Here”
D. B. Wilcox & Son, from Souvenir book of Plymouth, 1898
Images:
Wilcox Brothers Mill, 3 copies (one colorized) (Acc #L929)
Plymouth Mills postcard by Davis B. Hillmer (Acc #1112)
Wilcox Mill postcard, 4 copies (Acc #93.104.5, 84.2.101)
Plymouth Mills (Acc #2001.087.035)
Plymouth Mills in winter
Plymouth Mills, S Hardenbergh Pro., from 1860 Wayne County Map, 3 copies (Acc #96.43.7)
Plymouth Mills drawing
See Also Record Group 12, Charles Draper Collection

Folder 2—Phoenix Mill
Phoenix Mill receipts (Acc #95.20.7a–95.20.7f)
“Phoenix Mill Burns Down,” Plymouth Mail, 14 July

Entry 3—Scrapbooks
2. Ford Village Industries scrapbook.
3. Former Village Industries Plants, compiled by Stephen A. Vanderpoorten in 1988

Entry 4—Ford Motor Company
Folder 1—100th Anniversary literature
“The Road is Ours—100th Anniversary Celebration” Event Passport, 12-16 June 2003
2002 Annual Report—“Starting Our Second Century”
2003 Proxy Statement
My Ford, Special Centennial Edition, 100 Years of Ford
100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin
Map Case 4, Drawer 5
“100 Years of Ford Motor Company,” The Detroit News, 9 June 2003
“Fabulous Fords,” The Detroit Free Press, 16 June 2003
“Food of the Fords,” The Detroit Free Press, 10 June 2003

Folder 2—Ford Times
September 1947 (Acc #90.58.3L(a))
October 1949 (Acc #90.58.3L(b))
November 1949 (Acc #90.58.3L(c))
January-February 1950 (Acc #90.58.4L)
February 1950 (Acc #90.58.3L(d))
July 1950 (Acc #90.58.3L(e))
December 1950 (Acc #90.58.3L(f))
March 1951 (Acc. #2007.124.15)
April 1968
October 1968
December 1970
February 1971
April 1971
June 1971
September 1971
October 1971
October 1972
December 1972
June 1976

Box 2, Shelf 99
Entry 4 (continued)
Folder 3—Product Brochures, Manuals and Images
Fordson, the Universal Tractor
The Ford Mechanic November 1957
“The Making of the Model T,” a new exhibit celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Birthplace of the Model T
1928 Ford Model A Touring
1928 Lincoln Model L
1930 Ford Model 82-B Closed Cab Pickup
1931 Ford
1936 Ford Dump Truck
1949 Mercury Six-Passenger Coupe postcard (Acc. #99.149.37)
1955 Mercury
1958 Ford Owner’s Manual
1967 Ford
1968 Mercury Station Wagons
1968 Mercury (2 different brochures)
1968 Ford Cars & Trucks for Recreation
1982 Thunderbird

**Map Case 4, Drawer 6**
1954 Lincoln
1955 Lincoln
1968 Ford…Better Ideas
1968 Fairlane
1968 Fairlane Torino
Model T advertisement (Acc. #2005.017.01)

**Box 2, Shelf 99**
*Folder 4—Company Publications*
*Ford World*, September 1998
Ford Motor Company 1961 Annual Report
*Shop Talk . . . from your Ford Dealer*, 1960
Ford: An American Legend (Acc #2001.061.02)
An Anniversary Celebration, 1903-1993

*Folder 5—Images*
Ford Motor Company postcard of 12,000 employees (Acc #93.104.19)
Model of Quadricycle (several views)
Christmas Card of Quadricycle
Henry Ford (Acc #81.42.11L)

*Folders 6 and 7—Publications for Ford Motor Company Employees and Ford English School Students*
Official 100 Facts Taught by the Teachers of the Ford English School to the Graduating Class 1916-1917 (Acc # 2011.01.01)
"America" and "Help the Other Fellow" Lyrics (Acc # 2011.01.02)
Numbers to Know: A Handy Guide to Weights and Measures (Acc # 2011.01.03)
The King and You (Acc # 2011.01.04)
Happiness Doesn't Come in Pills - two copies (Acc # 2011.01.05 and #2011.01.06)
How to Drown-proof Your Family (Acc # 2011.01.07)
Photo Hints (Acc # 2011.01.08)
Before You Buy Wood (Acc # 2011.01.09)
Hay Fever and What You Can Do About It - two copies (Acc # 2011.01.10 and # 2011.01.13)
What Price Living (Acc # 2011.01.11)
Help Your Child Plan His Career (Acc # 2011.01.12)
Spending Time with Your Family (Acc # 2011.01.14)
What You Should Know About Credit (Acc # 2011.01.15)
What You Can Do to Stop Inflation (Acc # 2011.01.16)
Mr. Big Meets Mr. Small (Acc #2011.01.17)
Think Tall to Be Tall (Acc # 2011.01.18)
Spring Tips for Home Owners (Acc # 2011.01.19)
"You Don't Play Freedom Safe!" (Acc # 2011.01.20)
Weekday: The Magazine of Everyday Living Vol. 3 No. 3 (Acc #2011.01.21)
Weekday: The Magazine of Everyday Living Vol. 3 No. 8 (Acc # 2011.01.22)
Deft Driving (Acc # 2011.01.23)
The 1962 American Voter: Congressional and State Election Edition (Acc # 2011.01.24)
Landlubbers Awake! two copies (Acc # 2011.01.25 and # 2011.01.26)

Entry 5—Articles
Folder 1—Articles about Ford
“Secrets of the Model T,” by Albert B. Stephenson, American Heritage, July/August 1989
“Ford’s ‘999’ and Cooper’s ‘Arrow’,” by George DeAngelis, Antique Automobile,
November-December 1993
“Some Ford Contributions to World War II,” by Ford R. Bryan, The Dearborn Historian 43
(Summer 2003)
“Ford Jr.’s rise to the top sign of stability, profits,” by Daniel Howes, The Detroit News
“To Ford’s Most Global Division,” 1989 Crier Salute to Industry & Commerce
“Cutler Sketched the Ford Museum,” by Sam Hudson, Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 1 April
1976
“Where Fondest Memories of Motor King Will Ever Cling”
Article on Ford Village Industries, Detroit Free Press, 24 September 1972
“Ford: Bill Ford emerges as front man for the Lions stadium deal and heir apparent to the family
firm,” Detroit Free Press, 6 October 1996
“Death Returns to Ford Plant, Detroit Free Press, 19 August 1996
“Ford Almost Started Empire in Plymouth,” Plymouth Observer & Eccentric, 14 October 1974
“Plymouth Could Have Had the Ford Motor Co.,” Plymouth Observer & Eccentric
“Ford Sheldon Road Plant Certified as Corporate Wildlife Habitat”
“Henry and Edsel Ford and Detroit Designer Raymond H. Dietrich,” The Dearborn Historian 43
(Autumn 2003)
“The Road is Ours: 100th Anniversary Celebration, June 12-16, 2003,” The Dearborn Historian
43 (Autumn 2003)
“The Ford Model T 1912 Torpedo Runabout,” The Motor, 19 December 1951
“Shooting at Ford Plant,” 2nd Press Release, Plymouth Township Police Department, 18 August
1996
“Shooting at Ford Plant,” 3rd Press Release, Plymouth Township Police Department, 19 August
1996
A News Release from Saline Area Historical Society, Saline, Michigan about speaker Leo
“Henry Ford’s First Car, the Quadricycle: One Hundred Years Old,” by Joan M. Klimchalk, The Dearborn Historian 36 (Summer 1996)


“Ford,” with information about Henry Ford, the Quadricycle and the Runabout.


“Engineer Builds Replica of Rouge Plant Tugboat” Ford History, March 2009

“What’s the Story Behind The Henry Ford Penny” Ford History, March 2009

Map Case 4, Drawer 5—Articles about Henry Ford I and II


“Ford Will Be Buried Today,” The Detroit Free Press, 10 April 1937 (Acc #2005.101.01)


Map Case 4, Drawer 8

“The Ford Legacy: The cars, the companies, the community,” Crain’s Detroit Business (Summer 2003 (Acc. #2004.237.001)

Entry 6—Books


Cameron, W.J., A Series of Talks Given on the Ford Sunday Evening Hour, 1936 (Acc. #98.76.9)


Miller, James Martin. *The Amazing Story of Henry Ford*. 1922. (Acc #L2108 and 95.98.10)

Nevins, Allan. *Ford: The Times, the Man, the Company*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1954. (Acc #95.98.2)


