

Brielle Howard

Mrs. Fisher

Hometown History

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Funk's Speedway

Winchester Indiana's race track, Funk's Speedway, was built in 1914 with the final product of the track finished in 1916.¹ It is located in Randolph County right outside of Winchester off of Highway 32. It has been proven that the Winchester Speedway has the world's fastest half mile. The speedway was named after a family who owned the race track with the last name of Funk, which was passed down after Frank Funk, the owner and main manager of the speedway, passed away. In 1932, the stands were extended so it could seat 6,000 people at the track.² Eventually, 14,000 people were able to be seated in the grandstands by the end of the extension building. The track was filled with asphalt in 1952 to make a more advanced track so other people would contribute to the speedway and visit. After asphalt was laid on the track, the name was changed to Winchester Speedway.

There were many other owners after Funk left the track for sale, which consisted mostly of promoters and people to ensure the race track improved over time, and to make more profit from fans attending the speedway.

The history of the speedway continues on with a memory of the Cox family for countless decades. Everett Cox, one of the main contributors to the track, was born January 16, 1898. He was the seventh child of Sylvester H. and Ida A. Everett Cox. In his lifetime, he was married to Myrtle Cox and together they had a total of four children: two sons and two daughters. His first

¹ The Historical & Genealogical Society of Randolph County, Indiana. Randolph County Indiana Red Book: Turner Publishing Company, 1991.

² Holder, Bill. 100 Years of Speed The Centennial History of Winchester Speedway. 2012

car, which was built by Carl Summers a previous summer, was barely made of anything except a chassis, and an engine. Since it was one of the only vehicles made by hand, it was a generously small car. In the fall of 1919, Cox had his first race against other drivers. It was known that, “When it was raced, fans called it the “Little Devil” for the official name of the car”.³ Cox continued to race for four more years after his original race in the year of 1919. More enhanced cars were eventually brought into the race by his fourth year, so he lost the racing field he was in. Cox decided to change his career into something he enjoyed more. Years later, he ended up riding in an airplane and knew at that moment that he wanted to be a pilot. Cox passed away February 17th, 1977.

Many different owners were brought into the speedway, which changed the track, the layout, and everything within the property to something extravagant and more advanced for future races. Soon, a group of bikers wanted to race on the track and the owners allowed them to. This brought in more people to come and watch the motorcycles. Due to the public’s enjoyment, they built a new section of stands that could fit 500 people to keep people attending the track, increasing business for the owners.⁴

The Winchester Speedway has been passed down to many families, and many contributed to many other people over time. Different vehicles are still racing and competing against other race car drivers. The race track has turned into a historical and famous landmarker, which is even known for its fastest half mile far outside of Randolph County.

³ The Historical & Genealogical Society of Randolph County, Indiana. Randolph County Indiana Red Book: Turner Publishing Company, 1991.

⁴ Holder, Bill. 100 Years of Speed The Centennial History of Winchester Speedway. 2012