



Smithsonian  
*National Museum of American History*  
*Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the Robert W. Kearns Papers

NMAH.AC.1406

Alison Oswald

2017

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# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Arrangement.....	4
Scope and Contents.....	3
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Names and Subjects .....	4
Container Listing .....	6
Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1957 - 1991.....	6
Series 2: Notebooks, 1954 - 1994.....	7
Series 3: Patents, 1957 - 1985.....	19
Series 4: Kearns and Law Engineers, 1957 - 1962.....	21
Series 5: Kearns Engineers, 1967 - 1985.....	22
Series 6: National Bureau of Standards, 1967 - 1972.....	23
Series 7: Ford Motor Company (Engineering Technical Education Program), 1964 - 1966.....	24
Series 8: Intermittent Windshield Wiper Materials (Kearns vs. Ford Motor Company), 1962 - 1993.....	25
Series 9: Subject Files, 1965 - 1999.....	32
Series 10: Correspondence, 1989 - 1999.....	34

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	Robert W. Kearns Papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.1406
<b>Date:</b>	1963 - 1999
<b>Extent:</b>	8.5 Cubic feet (24 boxes)
<b>Creator:</b>	Kearns, Robert W. Kearns, Timothy Brown, Brian Ivan Quan, John
<b>Language:</b>	Collection is in English. Some materials in German and Italian.
<b>Summary:</b>	The collection documents the inventive career of physicist and engineer Robert W. Kearns. Kearns invented and patented in 1967 the windshield wiper system with intermittent operation (US 3,351,836), among other inventions. The papers include notebooks, correspondence, reports, memoranda, photographs, patents, drawings, and trade literature.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Collection donated by the Estate of Robert W. Kearns, through Dennis Kearns and Maureen Kearns, 2016.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by Alison Oswald, archivist, 2017. These materials were previously dispersed, both physically and intellectually, at time of acquisition. An arrangement scheme for the papers was imposed during processing in the absence of a usable original order. Original file folder titles were retained in most cases.

### Preferred Citation

Robert W. Kearns Papers, 1963-1992, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Some health-related materials in Series 6: National Bureau of Standards are restricted until 2055.

## Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

## Appraisal

Over the years, Robert Kearns moved many times, carrying his papers and business records from Detroit, Michigan to Gaithersburg, Maryland, to Houston, Texas, and finally to Queenstown, Maryland. In Queenstown, these materials, comprising approximately 200 cubic feet, were located in five spaces within the home (foyer, living room, porch, bedroom, and attic). By 2016, the house, which Kearns purchased in the early 1990s, was in severe decay from vandalism, structural neglect, and water damage making identification and salvage of the documents difficult. Most of the materials, stored in metal filing cabinets in multiple locations, were patent litigation documents for the intermittent windshield wiper (US 3,351,836). Kearns sued Ford for patent infringement in 1978, seeking millions in damages and subsequently filed the same legal action against twenty-six other auto makers. Litigation—especially patent litigation—generates a daunting amount of material, including many duplicate documents. Because the Archives Center has documented patent litigation through other collections, it chose not to collect this Kearns material.

Although the Archives Center did select some materials generated by Kearns' work on the windshield wiper, it focused on other aspects of Kearns' career, such as his employment at the National Bureau of Standards and his invention activities which are documented in a near complete run of invention notebooks dating from 1954 to 1994.

Archivists examined over 200 cubic feet of material in the Kearns house and selected 8.5 cubic feet for permanent retention.

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## Biographical / Historical

Robert William Kearns was born in Gary, Indiana on March 10, 1927 to Martin W. Kearns and Mary E. Kearns. One of three children, Kearns grew up in the Detroit area, graduating from the University of Detroit, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (1952); Wayne State University, Masters of Science in Engineering Mechanics (1957); and Case Western Reserve University, Ph.D. in engineering (1964). Kearns also earned certificates in nuclear reactor control from Argonne National Laboratories (1958 and 1959). He was a Corporal in the United States Army, assigned to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the Strategic Services Unit (SSU); the Central Intelligence Group (CIG), and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA.) from July 31, 1945 to November 29, 1946.

Prior to joining the military in 1945, Kearns worked at Mercury Engineering Company (1943-1945) in Detroit as a draftsman preparing engineering shop drawings. After the war, Kearns joined the H & A Tool and Die Company (1946-1947), also in Detroit, as a draftsman preparing engineering shop drawings for the manufacture of the individual parts for machinery and special dies. Through the University of Detroit Cooperative Program with the National Bureau of Standards, he participated in an engineer in training program (1949-1952) where he executed a variety of standardized tests on engineering materials. He held a variety of engineering positions: designer/draftsman with Peerless Design Company, Detroit (1952); junior engineer with Burroughs Corporation Research Laboratories, Philadelphia (1952-1953); and engineer with Bendix Aviation Corporation, Detroit (1953-1957) where Kearns supervised and directed of a group of engineers responsible for the design of computer components, servomechanisms, control systems and related devices. Other duties included planning, liaison with other Bendix divisions,

establishing test equipment requirements, as well as technical specifications and reports. In 1957, Kearns joined the faculty of Wayne State University, Department of Engineering Mechanics, as an assistant professor (1957-1963), later becoming an associate professor (1963-1967).

Kearns also established two independent businesses, the engineering firms of Kearns and Law (1963-1976) and Computer Central (1965-1976). Founded with partner Kenneth J. Law, an electrical engineer, Kearns and Law provided industry with consultation, research, design, and development services in the fields of computers, automatic controls and instrumentation. Computer Central manufactured a series of control components such as the Linear Range Comparator, Sign or Equality Binary Comparator, Identity Comparator, Dual Brush V-Scan Encoder Electronics, Gray Code to Binary Code Encoder Electronics, and Digital Difference to Analog Converters. Kearns served as Detroit's Commissioner of Buildings and Safety Engineering (1967-1971), where he acted as an administrator, overseeing professional engineering activities such as building inspections. Kearns moved to Gaithersburg, Maryland in 1971 to become principal investigator for the highway skid resistance program at the National Bureau of Standards, now the National Institute of Standards and Technology (1971-1976).

In 1967, Kearns invented and patented an electronic windshield wiper system with intermittent operation (US 3,351,836). Previous wiper systems were controlled by vacuum tubes. He installed his device on his 1962 Ford Galaxy and met with Ford Motor Company and Chrysler Corporation in 1963 with the goal of manufacturing his idea and being a supplier to the auto industry. Kearns tried to commercialize the wiper through the Tann Corporation. In 1969, Kearns's intermittent windshield wiper was installed on Ford cars without his knowledge. He ultimately filed suit against Ford for patent infringement in 1978 (representing himself as Kearns Associates), seeking \$141 million in damages (a figure eventually raised to \$325 million). Kearns's purpose in pursuing litigation was not a cash award. Rather, he wanted the rightful ownership. In all, he filed lawsuits against 26 car manufacturers and other companies concerning the same patent (US 3,351,836). In July 1990, a federal jury ruled that Ford had unintentionally infringed on Kearns's patent and awarded him \$10.2 million. In June 1992, Kearns was awarded \$11 million from Chrysler. Kearns held over 30 patents, with the majority relating to windshield wipers.

Kearns died in 2005. He married Phyllis Hall (1932-2013) in 1953, divorcing in 1989. The couple had six children: Dennis Kearns (b.1954); Timothy Kearns (b.1956); Patrick Kearns (b.1958); Kathleen Corsetty (b. 1961); Maureen Kearns (b. 1964); and Bob Kearns (b. 1967).

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## Scope and Contents

The collection includes notebooks, correspondence, reports, memoranda, photographs, patents, drawings, and trade literature. Kearns held patents related to circuitry which are integral to electronic intermittent windshield wipers. The windshield wiper documentation consists of patents, correspondence, and a set of drawings from November 16, 1967 for Tann Company. Other documentation includes Kearns's work with the engineering firm Kearns and Law (brochures, shop orders, agreements); his National Bureau of Standards work, which consists of his personnel file and notebooks detailing his highway skid resistance research; and subject files that cover a range of topics that interested Kearns, such as radar, speed control, and electric cars. At the heart of the collection are 32 invention notebooks (1963-1986) belonging to Kearns as well as engineers he worked with including John Quan, Brian Ivan Brown, and Timothy Kearns, son of Robert Kearns. Bound, paginated, and dated, the notebooks contain sketches, schematics, calculations, data, telephone numbers, and details about materials, costs, testing data, and descriptions for many of Kearns's projects. The notebooks present a comprehensive overview of his ideas and are significant to understanding his creative process and how his ideas changed or did not change over time. The majority of the notebooks are arranged in chronological order and therefore researchers can see Kearns's work unfold. Many of the notebooks are stamped with a "PO" to indicate a "protective order" followed by a number, and many of the notebooks were used during court proceedings.

The protective order restricted access to notebooks which were filed with the court, or to be filed with the court at a future date.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged into ten series.

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1957-1991

Series 2: Notebooks, 1954-1994

Series 3: Patents, 1957-1985

Series 4: Kearns and Law Engineers, 1957-1962

Series 5: Kearns Engineers, 1967-1985

Series 6: National Bureau of Standards, 1967-1972

Series 7: Ford Motor Company (Engineering Technical Education Program), 1964-1966

Series 8: Windshield Wiper Materials (Kearns vs. Ford Motor Company), 1962-1993

Series 9: Subject Files, 1965-1999

Series 10: Correspondence, 1989-1999

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Automobiles -- Design and construction  
Inventions -- 20th century  
Windshield wipers

Types of Materials:

Correspondence -- 20th century  
Drawings -- 20th century  
Memorandums -- 20th century  
Notebooks -- 20th century  
Patents -- 20th century  
Photographs -- 20th century  
Reports -- 20th century  
Trade literature -- 20th century

Names:

Kearns and Law  
Tann Company  
United States. Bureau of Standards.

Occupations:

Inventors

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1957 - 1991

Box 1, Folder 1-2	Resumes, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Business cards, undated
Box 1, Folder 4	Wayne State University commencement program, 1957 June 13
Box 1, Folder 5	Case Institute of Technology commencement program, 1964 June 9
Box 1, Folder 6-7	Velocity and Displacement from the Response of Accelerometers and the Synthesis of Instrument Compensating Computing Networks for Inertial Navigation Systems, 1957 May 6 <i>2 Copies</i> Masters thesis from Wayne State University, Department of Engineering Mechanics
Box 1, Folder 8	Incremental computers, progress report, 1962
Box 1, Folder 9	A Digital Compensator for Automatic Control Systems, 1964 Doctor of Philosophy, Case Institute of Technology. Materials include outline for oral presentation and specifications for graduate theses (1963).
Box 2, Folder 1	Loose materials found with masters thesis, 1961 - 1961, 1965 Includes trade literature.
Box 2, Folder 2	Office of Strategic Services Veterans, 1991
Box 2, Folder 3	Writings by Robert W. Kearns, undated Includes: National Inventors Day, "Congress Should Give the Inventor His Patented Due" (1984); "Revealing the Flaw in the Patent System, It's About Time!" (undated)
Box 24	Keys, undated

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*



## Series 2: Notebooks, 1954 - 1994

There are thirty-four invention notebooks (1963-1986) comprising two cubic feet of the overall collection. The notebooks belong to Kearns as well as engineers John Quan, Brian Ivan Brown, and Timothy Kearns, son of Robert Kearns.

Bound, paginated, and dated, the notebooks contain sketches, schematics, calculations, data, telephone numbers, and details about materials, costs, testing data, bibliographic data for articles, listings of office hours, and descriptions for many of Kearns's projects and inventions. The notebooks present a comprehensive overview of his ideas and are significant to understanding his creative process and how his ideas changed or did not change over time. The majority of the notebooks are arranged in chronological order and therefore researchers can see Kearns's work unfold. Some of the notebooks are labelled and contain indices. For example, Volume 1 is labelled "Masters Thesis Accelerometers." Many of the notebooks are stamped with a "PO" to indicate a "protective order" followed by a number [PO 11159] and many of the notebooks were used during court proceedings as exhibits. The protective order restricted access to the notebooks which were filed with the court, or were to be filed with the court at a future date.

During litigation proceedings with Ford Motor Company, Kearns covered and sealed many notebook pages, blocking portions of the record for defendants review. Kearns noted that this sealed work product contained within the notebooks consisted of work that was either 1) incomplete, 2) beyond the scope of the case against Ford, or 3) not covered by patent applications. Kearns sought legal protection for these pages. Previously covered and sealed pages have been unsealed by Archives Center staff. A list citing volume/logbook number, pagination, and a description of sealed content is in Series 7.

### Subseries 2.1: Notebook (general), 1954 - 1957

#### *1 Notebook*

200 pages; includes drawings, calculations, and equations; Topics include microphones, volume control, condensers, loudspeakers, and battery power.

Box 2, Folder 4                      Notebook (general), 1954-1957 (bulk 1954-1955)

Box 2, Folder 5                      Loose materials from notebook, 1954 - 1957

### Subseries 2.2: Volume 1 (Masters Thesis Accelerometers), 1956 - 1957

300 pages; [PO 10000-PO 10240]; topics include accelerometers and inertial navigation.

Box 2, Folder 6                      Volume 1 (Masters Thesis Accelerometers), 1956-10 - 1959-01  
*1 Notebook*

Box 2, Folder 7                      Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 111) [PO 10123]

Box 2, Folder 8                      Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 113) [PO 10125], 1957-02-06 -  
1957-02-06

Box 2, Folder 9                      Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 119A) [PO 10141], 1957-02-16 -  
1957-02-16

Box 2, Folder 10	Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 120A) [PO 10145]
Box 2, Folder 11	Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 124A) [PO 10150]
Box 2, Folder 12	Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 132A) [PO 10160-PO 10162]
Box 2, Folder 13	Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 141)
Box 2, Folder 14	Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 143) [PO 10174-PO 10180A], 1957-03-06 - 1957-03-06
Box 2, Folder 15	Loose materials (page 160A)
Box 2, Folder 16	Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 166A) [PO 10205]
Box 2, Folder 17	Loose materials from Volume 1 (page 171A) [PO 10211-PO 10214], 1957-03 - 1957-03
Box 2, Folder 18	Loose materials from Volume 1 [PO 10248-PO 10249], 1957 - 1957

### Subseries 2.3: Volume 2 (Financial), 1957 - 1958, 1976 - 1976

300 pages; [PO 10250-PO 10376]; topics include expenses and receipts, money paid in, and general bids for Kearns and Law Engineers from 1957-1958; the 1976 data in the notebook relates to a power supply for a road sign, flashing lights for a highway sign, and wiper motor-related work.

Box 2, Folder 19	Volume 2 (Financial), 1957 - 1958, 1976 - 1976 <i>1 Notebook</i>
Box 2, Folder 20	Loose materials from Volume 2 [PO 10251-PO 10268], 1958 - 1958
Box 2, Folder 21	Loose materials from Volume 2 (page 63) [PO 10331]
Box 2, Folder 22	Loose materials from Volume 2 (page 83) [PO 10353], 1976-07 - 1976-07
Box 2, Folder 23	Loose materials from Volume 2 [PO 10373-PO 10376], 1958 - 1958

### Subseries 2.4: Volume 3, 1957 - 1957

300 pages; [PO 10379-PO 10520]; topics include analog commutator project and servo motors.

Box 3, Folder 1	Volume 3, 1957-04-19 - 1957-08-22 <i>1 Notebook</i>
Box 3, Folder 2	Loose materials from Volume 3 (pages 70A-70D) [PO 10430-PO 10433]

- Box 3, Folder 3            Loose materials from Volume 3 (page 74A) [PO 10438]
- Box 3, Folder 4            Loose materials from Volume 3 (pages 96A-96B) [PO 10461-PO 10462]
- Box 3, Folder 5            Loose materials from Volume 3 (page 98A) [PO 10465], 1957-05 - 1957-05
- Box 3, Folder 6            Loose materials from Volume 3 (pages 110A-100D) [PO 10478-PO 10481],  
1957 - 1957
- Box 3, Folder 7            Loose materials from Volume 3 (pages 134A-134B) [PO 10504]
- Box 3, Folder 8            Loose materials from Volume 3 (page 136A) [PO 10505]
- Box 3, Folder 9            Loose materials from Volume 3 (page 150A)

#### Subseries 2.5: Volume 4, 1957-05-25 - 1959-08-31

300 pages; [PO 10522-PO 10844]; includes office hours, bibliographies, patent searches, automated coil winding machine, dryer control, vapor pressure gauge, and Wrigley check-out system proposal.

- Box 3, Folder 10            Volume 4, 1957-05-25 - 1959-08-31  
*1 Notebook*
- Box 3, Folder 11            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 18A [PO 10541], 1957-06 - 1957-06
- Box 3, Folder 12            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 44A-44F) [PO 10568-PO 10573]
- Box 3, Folder 13            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 113)
- Box 3, Folder 14            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 136A-136D) [PO 10668-PO 10671]
- Box 3, Folder 15            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 204A-204C) [PO 10740-PO 10742]
- Box 3, Folder 16            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 226A) [PO 10765]
- Box 3, Folder 17            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 254A-254D) [PO 10794-PO 1797]
- Box 3, Folder 18            Loose materials from Volume 4 (page 275)

#### Subseries 2.6: Volume 5, 1959-08-02 - 1960-12-05

296 pages; [PO 10847-PO 11156]; topics include telemetering, abstract data from journals, and variable resistors.

- Box 3, Folder 19      Volume 5, 1959-08-02 - 1960-12-05  
*1 Notebook*
- Box 3, Folder 20      Loose materials from Volume 5 (page 108A) [PO 10963]
- Box 3, Folder 21      Loose materials from Volume 5 (page 159) [PO 11015-PO 11018]
- Box 3, Folder 22      Loose materials from Volume 5 (page 258A) [PO 11131]
- Box 3, Folder 23      Loose materials from Volume 5 (page 267A) [PO 11142], 1960 - 1960

**Subseries 2.7: Volume 6, 1961-06-25 - 1962-10-17**

302 pages; [PO 11159-PO 111462]; topics include patent licensing, dissertation idea, and expenditures.

- Box 4, Folder 1      Volume 6, 1961-06-25 - 1962-10-17  
*1 Notebook*
- Box 4, Folder 2      Loose materials from Volume 6 (page 49A) [PO 11210]
- Loose materials from Volume 6 (page 300A) [PO 11463], 1962 - 1962

**Subseries 2.8: Volume 7 (Room 106 Bingham, Case Technological), 1962-10-19 - 1963-06-16**

300 pages; [PO 11501-PO 11813]; topics include Digital Differential Analyzer (DDA).

- Box 4, Folder 4      Volume 7 (Room 106 Bingham, Case Technological), 1962-10-19 - 1963-06-16  
*1 Notebook*
- Box 4, Folder 5      Loose materials from Volume 7 (page 260A) [PO 11765]

**Subseries 2.9: Volume 8 (Doctoral Thesis), 1963 - 1963**

300 pages; [PO 11815-PO 12119]; topics relate to Kearns's doctoral dissertation.

- Box 4, Folder 6      Volume 8 (Doctoral Thesis), 1963 - 1963  
*1 Notebook*
- Box 4, Folder 7      Loose materials from Volume 8 (page 204A) [PO 12021]
- Box 4, Folder 8      Loose materials from Volume 5 (page 248A-248B) [PO 12066-12067],  
1963-02-11 - 1963-02-11

**Subseries 2.10: Volume 9 (Bingham 106, Case Institute of Technology, thesis notes)**

*1 Notebook*

300 pages; [PO 12121-PO 12440]

- Box 4, Folder 9            Volume 9 , 1963-02-14 - 1963-06-09
- Box 4, Folder 10        Loose materials from Volume 9 (pages 3A-3D) [PO 12125-PO 12128], 1963 - 1963
- Box 4, Folder 11        Loose materials from Volume 9 (pages 117A-117B) [PO 12245-PO 12246]
- Box 4, Folder 12        Loose materials from Volume 9 (pages 148A-148B) [PO 12280-PO 12281], 1963-03-25 - 1963-03-25
- Box 4, Folder 13        Loose materials from Volume 9 (page 164A) [PO 12298], 1963 - 1963
- Box 4, Folder 14        Loose materials from Volume 9 (pages 176A-176C) [PO 12311-PO 12314]

**Subseries 2.11: Volume 10 (Daily Log Book), 1963-09-16 - 1964-05-18**

300 pages; [PO 12442-PO 12750]; relates to windshield wiper development

- Box 5, Folder 1        Volume 10 (Daily Log Book), 1963-09-16 - 1964-05-18  
*1 Notebook*  
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 5, Folder 2        Loose materials from Volume 10 (page 48A) [PO 12493]
- Box 5, Folder 3        Loose materials from Volume 10 (page 71) [PO 12517]
- Box 5, Folder 4        Loose materials from Volume 10 (page 87A)

**Subseries 2.12: Volume 11 , 1964-03-19 - 1965-02-26**

300 pages; [PO 12754-PO 13081]; relates to windshield wipers.

Pages previously sealed include: pages 143-148 [PO 12907]; page 149 [PO 12908-PO 12913]; pages 157-170 [PO 12924-PO 12938]; pages; pages 209-213; [PO 12978-PO 12982]; pages 215-220 [PO 12986-PO 12992]; pages 223-224 [PO 12995-PO 12996]; pages 267-280; and pages 287-296 [PO 13066-PO 13076].

- Box 5, Folder 5        Volume 11, 1964-03-19 - 1965-02-26  
*1 Notebook*  
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 5, Folder 6        Loose materials from Volume 11 (page 89) [PO 12845]

Box 5, Folder 7            Loose materials from Volume 11 (page 223) [PO 12995]

Box 5, Folder 8            Loose materials from Volume 11 (page 262) [PO 13039]

Box 5, Folder 9            Pages used to seal notebook contents

### Subseries 2.13: Volume 12, 1964-04-01 - 1966-01-06

300 pages; [PO 13101-PO 13414]; relates to windshield wipers.

Pages previously sealed include: pages 25-38 [PO 13129-PO 13143]; pages 59-76 [PO 13164-PO 13182]; pages 81-84 [PO 13187-PO 13191]; pages 85-112 [PO 13196-PO 13220]; page 240 [13351-PO 13352]; and page 276 [PO 13389-PO 13390]

Box 5, Folder 10            Volume 12, 1964-04-01 - 1966-01-06  
*1 Notebook*

Box 5, Folder 11            Loose materials from Volume 12 (page 3) [PO 13420; PO 13422; and PO 13426A]

Box 5, Folder 12-13        Pages used to seal notebook contents

### Subseries 2.14: Volume 13, 1965-08-26 - 1967-05-01

300 pages; [PO 13417-PO 13707]; relates windshield wipers

Pages previously sealed include: pages 78-80 [PO 13507-PO 13509]; pages 93-98 [PO 13524-PO 13528]; pages 109-110 [PO 13539-PO 13542]; pages 113-116 [13546-PO 13549]; pages 123-126 [PO 13556-PO 13560]; pages 153-156 [PO 13588-13592]; pages 191-192 [PO 13628-PO 13632]; page 193; pages 207-212 [PO 13644-PO 13650]; pages 217-228 [PO 13655-PO 13667]

Box 6, Folder 1            Volume 13, 1965-08-26 - 1967-05-01

Box 6, Folder 2            Pages used to seal notebook contents

### Subseries 2.15: Volume 14, 1966-01-22 - 1967-05-13

300 pages; [PO 13710-PO 14067]; relates to windshield wipers

Pages previously sealed include: 91-1-02 [PO 13805-PO 13817]; pages 193-195 [PO 13952-PO 13956]; pages 213-214 [PO 13974-PO 13976]; pages 257-258 [PO 14019-PO 14020]; pages 261-266 [PO 14024-14030]; pages 297-300 [PO 14061-PO 14065]

Volume 14, 1966-01-22 - 1967-05-13

Box 6, Folder 4            Loose materials from Volume 14 (page 102), 1966 April 11

Box 6, Folder 5            Loose materials from Volume 14 (pages 123A-123B) [PO 13869-PO 13870]

- Box 6, Folder 6            Loose materials from Volume 14 (pages 131) [PO 13880]
- Box 6, Folder 7            Loose materials from Volume 14 (pages 169A-169G) [PO 13921-PO 13928],  
1966 December 3
- Box 6, Folder 8            Loose materials from Volume 14 (pages 193A) [PO 13952]
- Box 6, Folder 9            Loose materials from Volume 14 (page 300)
- Box 6, Folder 10           Pages used to seal notebook contents

**Subseries 2.16: Volume 15 (Kearns Engineers), 1967-05-18 - 1968-04-14**

300 pages; [PO 14074-PO 14076]; relates to windshield wipers

Pages previously sealed include: pages 29-36 [PO 14101-PO 14109; pages 49-52 [PO 14122-PO 14127]; pages 55-58 [PO 14130-PO 14134]; pages 91-104 [PO 14167-PO 14181]; pages 107-114 [PO 14184-PO 14192; pages 123-150 [PO 14201-PO 14229]; page 172 [PO 14253-PO 14254]; pages 181-194 [PO 14263-PO 14277]; pages 221-222 [PO 14304-PO 14306]; pages 225-228 [PO 14309-PO 14313]; pages 233-237 [PO 14319-PO 14324]; pages 241-252 [PO 14328-PO 14338]; pages 273 [PO 14363-PO 14367]

- Box 7, Folder 1            Volume 15 (Kearns Engineers), 1967-05-16 - 1968-04-14
- Box 7, Folder 2            Loose material from Volume 15 (page 271)
- Box 7, Folder 3            Loose material from Volume 15 (page 288) [PO14380]
- Box 7, Folder 4            Loose material from Volume 15 (page 290) [PO 14384]
- Box 7, Folder 5            Pages used to seal notebook contents

**Subseries 2.17: Volume 16 (Brian Ivan Brown), 1967-07-21 - 1970-09-28**

300 pages; [PO 14761-PO 14933]; relates to work by Brian Ivan Brown about an RCA CA 3008 integrated circuit operational amplifiers to make small portable instrument function. The works relates to Kearns' masters thesis about velocity and displacement (1957).

- Box 7, Folder 6            Volume 16 (Brian Ivan Brown), 1967-07-21 - 1970-09-28
- Box 7, Folder 7            Loose materials from Volume 16 (page 145) [PO 14907]
- Box 7, Folder 8            Loose materials from Volume 16 (page 149) [PO 14907]

**Subseries 2.18: Volume 17 (J. Quan), 1968-09-20 - 1974-12-28**

300 pages; [PO 14704-PO 14759]; topics include digital analog converter, and web weather signing.

Box 7, Folder 9                      Volume 17 (J. Quan), 1968-09-20 - 1974-12-28

**Subseries 2.19: Volume 18 (Robert W. Kearns), 1969-03-01 - 1969-09-13**

300 pages; [PO 14398-PO 14701]; work done for Link Engineering, satellite computer concept, windshield wiper circuits, and rifle system.

Pages previously sealed include: pages 131-300 [PO 14531-PO 14701].

Box 8, Folder 1                      Volume 18 (Robert W. Kearns), 1969-03-01 - 1969-09-13

Box 8, Folder 2                      Loose materials from Volume 18 (page 129)

Box 8, Folder 3                      Loose materials from Volume 18 (page 297)

Box 8, Folder 4                      Pages used to seal notebook contents

**Subseries 2.20: Volume 19 (Robert W. Kearns), 1969-12-03 - 1971-05-10**

304 pages; [PO 14935-PO 15247];

Pages previously sealed include: pages 281-285 [PO 15222-PO 15227]

Box 8, Folder 5                      Volume 19 (Robert W. Kearns), 1969-12-03 - 1971-05-10

Box 8, Folder 6                      Loose materials from Volume 19 [PO 14936]

Box 8, Folder 7                      Loose materials from Volume 19 (page 21) [PO 14957]

Box 8, Folder 8                      Loose materials from Volume 19 (page 149) [PO 15087]

Box 8, Folder 9                      Loose materials from Volume 19 (page 211) [PO 15150]

Box 8, Folder 10                     Loose materials from Volume 19 (page 219) [PO 15159-PO 15160]

Box 8, Folder 11                     Pages used to seal notebook contents

**Subseries 2.21: Volume 20 (Bob Kearns), 1971-02-05 - 1971-04-22**

300 pages; [PO 15301-PO 15367]; relates to work at Code Engineering Services, Inc.

Box 8, Folder 12                     Volume 20 (Bob Kearns), 1971-02-05 - 1971-04-22

Box 8, Folder 13                     Loose materials from Volume 20 (photocopies of news clippings)



**Subseries 2.22: Volume 21(Bob Kearns), 1971-05-21 - 1972-09-16**

300 pages; [PO 15369-PO 15638]; windshield wiper related

Pages previously sealed include: pages 25-30 [PO 15399-PO15406]; pages 33-80 [PO 15409-PO 15453]; pages 155-182 [PO 15534-PO 15562]; pages 183-218 [PO 15565-15599]; pages 225-230 [PO 15606-PO 15612]; pages 239-296 [PO 15621-PO 15679]

Box 9, Folder 1	Volume 21 (Bob Kearns), 1971-05-21 - 1972-09-16
Box 9, Folder 2	Loose materials from Volume 21 (page 10) [PO 15380]
Box 9, Folder 3	Loose materials (pages 24-25) [PO 15397-PO 15398]
Box 9, Folder 4	Loose materials from Volume 21 (page 123) [PO 15502]
Box 9, Folder 5	Loose materials (page 208)
Box 9, Folder 6	Pages used to seal notebook contents

**Subseries 2.23: Volume 22 (Robert W. Kearns), 1972-09-17 - 1975-10-09**

300 pages; [PO 15685-PO 16036]; relates to windshield wiper

Pages previously sealed include: pages 5-56 [PO 15690-PO 15730]; page 57 [PO 15743-PO 15744]; page 59 [PO 15748-PO 15749]; pages 67-124 [PO 15757-PO 15815]; pages 129-138 [PO 15820-PO 15835]; page 139; page 142 [PO 15834]; pages 175-202 [PO 15871-PO 15899]; page 206 [PO 15919]; pages 207-218 [PO 15930-15943]; pages 255-258 [PO 15982-15986].

Box 9, Folder 7	Volume 22 (Robert W. Kearns), 1972-09-17 - 1975-10-09
Box 9, Folder 8	Loose materials from Volume 22 (page 169)
Box 9, Folder 9	Loose materials from Volume 22 (page 200)
Box 9, Folder 10	Loose materials from Volume 22 (page 203)
Box 9, Folder 11	Loose materials from Volume 22 (page 206)
Box 9, Folder 12	Loose materials from Volume 22 (page 253)
Box 9, Folder 13	Loose materials from Volume 22 (page 271)
Box 9, Folder 14	Pages used to seal notebook contents

**Subseries 2.24: Volume 23 (Robert W. Kearns), 1967-10-23 - 1978-03-20**

- Box 9, Folder 15            Volume 23 (Robert W. Kearns)  
304 pages; [PO 16045-PO 16339]; relates to windshield wiper system
- Box 9, Folder 16            Loose materials from Volume 23 (front cover) [PO 16043]
- Box 9, Folder 17            Loose materials from Volume 23 (page 31) [PO 16076-PO 16077]
- Box 9, Folder 18            Loose materials from Volume 23 (page 94) [PO 16142]
- Box 9, Folder 19            Loose materials from Volume 23 (page 145) [PO 16197]
- Box 9, Folder 20            Loose materials from Volume 23 (page 210) [PO 16264]
- Box 9, Folder 21            Loose materials from Volume 23 (page 215) [PO 16270-PO 16271]
- Box 9, Folder 22            Loose materials from Volume 23 (page 244-245) [PO 16302; PO 16304]
- Box 9, Folder 23            Loose materials from Volume 23 (page 258) [PO 16320-]

**Subseries 2.25: Volume 24 (Robert W. Kearns), 1978-03-27 - 1979-03-17**

300 pages; [PO 16342-PO 16664]

- Box 10, Folder 1            Volume 24, 1978-03-27 - 1979-03-17  
300 pages; [PO 16342-PO 16664]; relates to windshield wiper system.
- Box 10, Folder 2            Loose materials from Volume 24 (front cover) [PO 16341]
- Box 10, Folder 3            Loose materials from Volume 24 (page 83) [PO 16434-PO 16437]
- Box 10, Folder 4            Loose materials from Volume 24 (page 84) [PO 16439-PO 16440]
- Box 10, Folder 5            Loose materials from Volume 24 (page 270) [PO 16530A-PO 16530F]

**Subseries 2.26: Laboratory Notebook (Timothy B. Kearns and Robert W. Kearns), 1989-04 - 1989-04, 1989-08 - 1989-08**

192 pages; [PO 16665-PO 16696]; relates to windshield wipers.

- Box 10, Folder 6            Laboratory Notebook (Timothy B. Kearns and Robert W. Kearns), 1989-08 -  
1989-08, 1989-04 - 1989-04

**Subseries 2.27: Laboratory Notebook (Timothy B. Kearns)**

192 pages; [PO 16698-PO 16756], relates to the windshield wiper.

Box 10, Folder 7            Laboratory Notebooks (Timothy B. Kearns), 1978-09-15 - 1980-10-18

### Subseries 2.28: Laboratory Notebook (Kearns Engineers)

192 pages; [PO 16757-PO 16747]; relates to windshield wiper.

Box 10, Folder 8            Laboratory Notebook (Kearns Engineers), 1980-03-12 - 1980-04-11

### Subseries 2.29: Laboratory Notebook (Kearns Engineers), 1980-08-25 - 1982-05-13

Box 11, Folder 1            Laboratory Notebook (Kearns Engineers), 1980-08-25 - 1982-05-13  
192 pages; [PO 16775-PO 16818], relates to flasher electronics

### Subseries 2.30: Laboratory Notebook (R.W. Kearns), 1980-03-08 - 1980-04-22

Box 11, Folder 2            Laboratory Notebook (R.W. Kearns), 1980-03-06 - 1980-04-22  
192 pages; [PO 16826-PO 16907]; relates to clean energy generation.

Box 11, Folder 3            Loose materials from laboratory notebook  
[PO 16866, 16884, 16886-16887, 16889, 16895, 16899, 16905, 16907]

### Subseries 2.31: Laboratory Notebook (Timothy B. Kearns), 1981-06-17 - 1981-06-17

Box 11, Folder 4            Laboratory Notebook (Timothy B. Kearns), 1981-06-17 - 1981-06-17  
192 pages; [PO 16908-PO 16916]; relates to moisture variable windshield wipers.

### Subseries 2.32: Laboratory Notebook (Robert W. Kearns)

Box 11, Folder 5            Laboratory Notebook (Robert W. Kearns), 1983-03-26 - 1983-03-26  
192 pages; [PO 16919-PO 16932]; relates to wiper control systems using air vacuum motors and includes one drawing from page 8 for wiper arrangement windshield (TRICO), 1975-1979.

### Subseries 2.33: Laboratory Notebook (Robert W. Kearns), 1986-11-18 - 1986-11-18, 1987-01-06 - 1987-01-06

192 pages; [PO 16937- PO 16956A]; relates to windshield wipers.

Box 11, Folder 6            Laboratory Notebook (Robert W. Kearns), 1987-01-06 - 1987-01-06,  
1986-11-18 - 1986-11-18

Box 11, Folder 7            Loose material from laboratory notebook (page 5) [PO 16953-PO 16955]

Subseries 2.34: Notebook (Robert W. Kearns), 1991-03-25 - 1994-05-02

504 pages; relates to windshield wipers.

Box 12, Folder 1          Notebook (Robert W. Kearns)

Box 12, Folder 2          Loose materials from notebook

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 3: Patents, 1957 - 1985

Primarily materials include issued patents and patent applications files for Robert W. Kearns. Issued patents of David Tann, of Tann Corporation, Detroit. Tann Corporation was a small manufacturing company that supplied carmakers with parts and tools.

### Subseries 3.1: Robert W. Kearns Patents, 1957 - 1985

Box 12, Folder 3-4	US 2,959, 347/Means for Extending the Useful Frequency response of Measuring Instruments, 1957 - 1968
Box 12, Folder 5	Structure and method of surface condition sensing and indicating motor speed, 1967 - 1973
Box 12, Folder 6	Bathroom light and ventilation circuit disclosure, 1969
Box 12, Folder 7	US 3,123,753/Bi-directional step motor drive voltage divider switching apparatus, 1960 - 1960
Box 12, Folder 7	US 3,259,706/Magnetically actuated control device, 1962 - 1962
Box 12, Folder 7	US 3,422,331/Motor speed control systems, 1969 - 1969
Box 12, Folder 7	US 3,500,159/Electronics control for windshield wipers, 1970 - 1970
Box 12, Folder 7	US 3,529,227/Windshield wiper control, 1970 - 1970
Box 13, Folder 1	US 3,564,374/Intermittent control device, 1971
Box 13, Folder 1	US 3,573,584/Motor speed control, 1971
Box 13, Folder 1	US 3,581,178/Windshield wiper control device, 1971
Box 13, Folder 1	US 3,582,747/Intermittent windshield wiper system with electrodynamic braking, 1971
Box 13, Folder 1	US 3,593,090/Intermittent windshield wiper control, 1971
Box 13, Folder 1	US 3,602,790/Intermittent windshield wiper system, 1971
Box 13, Folder 2	Variable bias logic circuit, 1973
Box 13, Folder 3	US 3,737,750/Motor speed control, 1973

- Box 13, Folder 3 US 3,744,091/Intermittent windshield wiper system with eletrodynamic braking, 1973
- Box 13, Folder 3 US 3,796,936/Windshield wiper control device, 1974
- Box 13, Folder 3 US 3,876,919/Structure for and method of surface condition sensing and indicating and motor speed control, 1975
- Box 13, Folder 3 US 3,902,106/Intermittent windshield wiper control device, 1975
- Box 13, Folder 4 Oscillating motion-to-rotary motion rectifier and an oscillating energy medium to electrical energy medium converter and a wave energy to electrical energy generating system, 1980
- Box 13, Folder 5 Serial No. 604,640/Windshield wiper control system, 1982
- Box 13, Folder 6 US 4,339,698/Control apparatus for windshield wiper system, 1982
- Box 13, Folder 6 US 4,494,059/Structure for and method of surface conditioning sensing and indicating and motor speed control, 1985
- Box 13, Folder 6 US 4,494,107/Digital to Analog Converter, 1985
- Box 13, Folder 6 US 4,544,870/Intermittent Windshield Wiper control system with improved motor speed control, 1985

### Subseries 3.2: David Tann Patents, 1972 - 1972, 1969 - 1969

- Box 13, Folder 7 US 3,643,145/Intermittent control device, 1972 - 1972
- Box 13, Folder 7 US 3,458,889/Intermittent windshield wiper cleaning system, 1969 - 1969

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 4: Kearns and Law Engineers, 1957 - 1962

This series consists of materials from Kearns and Law Engineers, a company founded by Robert Kearns and Kenneth Law (1957-1962) to provide engineering, prototype fabrication, research, design and development services in the fields of computers, automatic controls, and instrumentation.

Box 13, Folder 8	Background brochure, undated
Box 13, Folder 9	Quotation and shop order number assignments, 1957 - 1962
Box 13, Folder 10	Document sign-out sheet, undated
Box 13, Folder 11	A Brief Introduction to Accelerometer Instruments Functions for Inertial Navigation Systems, 1957
Box 13, Folder 12	A Proposal and Analytical and Experimental Studies of Compensating Networks for Accelerometers of Inertial Navigation Systems, 1958
Box 13, Folder 13	A Synthesis of Instrument Functions, 1960
Box 13, Folder 14	Partnership dissolution and finances, 1962

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 5: Kearns Engineers, 1967 - 1985

Box 14, Folder 2	Mileage and expense reports, 1977 - 1979
Box 14, Folder 1	Parallel binary comparator, 1967 - 1968
Box 14, Folder 3	Correspondence, 1979 - 1985

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*



## Series 6: National Bureau of Standards, 1967 - 1972

This series documents Kearns's work at the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) from 1971-1976 as a mechanical engineer and principal investigator of skid resistance and measurement of pavements under wet-weather conditions. Kearns implemented a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) effort to establish a hierarchical program for standardization of the skid resistance measurement of pavements under simulated wet weather conditions. The activity was part of the FHWA skid accident reduction program. The materials include Kearns's personnel file from the NBS, and two notebooks detailing his work.

Box 14, Folder 4-5	Personnel File [PO 38548-PO 38616], 1967 - 1976
Box 14, Folder 6	Notebook, Volume 1, 1971-06-29 - 1972-02-15 <i>1 Notebook</i> 200 pages
Box 14, Folder 7	Loose materials from Notebook, Volume 1
Box 14, Folder 8	Notebook, Volume 2, 1972-02-15 - 1972-10-12 <i>1 Notebook</i> 192 pages
Box 14, Folder 9	Loose materials from Notebook, Volume 2
Box 15, Folder 1	Notebook, Volume 3, 1972-10-12 - 1973-01-03 <i>1 Notebook</i> 200 pages
Box 15, Folder 2	Loose materials from Notebook, Volume 3
Box 15, Folder 3	<i>Dimensions</i> (NBS newsletter), 1975-08 - 1975-08
Box 15, Folder 4	Skid resistance test vehicles , 1975 - 1975 <i>2 Photographs</i>
Map-folder 1	Tachometer housing for skid trailer, 1974 - 1974 <i>1 Drawing (18 x 24)</i>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 7: Ford Motor Company (Engineering Technical Education Program), 1964 - 1966

Box 15, Folder 5-7	Design of Experiments , 1964 - 1964 <i>1 Binder</i>
Box 24	Design Experiments (binder only) <i>1 Binder</i>
Box 16, Folder 1	Automatic Controls, II, 1964 - 1966 <i>1 Binder</i>
Box 16, Folder 2-6	Automatic Controls, II, 1964 - 1966
Box 24	Automatic Controls, II (binder only) <i>1 Binder</i>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 8: Intermittent Windshield Wiper Materials (*Kearns vs. Ford Motor Company*), 1962 - 1993

Plaintiff Robert W. Kearns asserted that defendant Ford Motor Company infringed his US patent 3,351,836; US 3,564,374; US 3,581,178; US 3,582,747; US 3,602,790; and US 3,796,936 relating to electronic intermittent windshield wiper (IWW) systems. Kearns filed suit in 1978, alleging that Ford began its infringing activities in 1969. The series consists of patent applications files, early patent searches, reports, correspondence, notes, product literature, drawings (originals and copies). There are typescript notes Kearns maintained on specific persons involved in the litigation. For example, the Ciupak, John, file contains typed notes about Kearns's relationship to Ciupak and a chronology of events if applicable. These files are arranged alphabetically by surname. Many of the documents in this series are labelled with a protective order (PO) number and were used during litigation.

Box 16, Folder 7	Kearns windshield wiper control system, 1965, undated
Box 17, Folder 1-2	<i>Kearns vs. Ford Motor Company</i> (notes), 1978 - 1980
Box 17, Folder 3	<i>Kearns vs. Ford Motor Company</i> (notes), 1968 - 1982
Box 17, Folder 4	Chronology of activities at Ford , 1962 - 1968
Box 17, Folder 5	Chronology of facts underlying claim, 1963 - 1982
Box 17, Folder 6	Analysis of driveline system progress report, 1966 January 15-1966 April 1
Box 17, Folder 7	Index to General Motors document production, undated
Box 17, Folder 8	Notes made at Ford deposition, 1983 July 13
Box 17, Folder 9	Hypothetical negotiations for settlement, undated
Box 17, Folder 10	<i>Kearns vs. Ford Motor Company</i> , partial judgment, 1990 March 9
Box 17, Folder 11	<i>Kearns vs. Chrysler Corporation</i> , judgment, 1993 - 1993, 1992 June 11
Box 17, Folder 12	US 3,351, 836, windshield wiper system with intermittent operation, patent wrapper and file, 1964 - 1967 [PO 21000-PO 21184]
Box 18, Folder 1	US 3,602,790, intermittent windshield wiper system patent wrapper and file, 1969 - 1973 [PO 22000- PO 22192]
Box 18, Folder 2	Automatic windshield wiper control (notes and drawings) [PO 24023-PO 24183]

Box 18, Folder 3	Windshield wiper product literature, 1965 - 1965, 1969 - 1969, 1978 - 1978 [PO 24184-PO 24255]
Box 18, Folder 4	Basis of the Ford Motor Company complaint, 1966 - 1968 [PO 28151-PO 28269]
Box 18, Folder 5	Kearns Windshield Wiper Control System presented by Tann Company [PO 24316-PO 24315]
Box 18, Folder 6	Notes, undated [PO 28270- PO 28300]
Box 18, Folder 7	Early patent searches [PO 28301-PO 28420]
Box 19, Folder 1	Early patent searches [PO 28241- PO 28574]
Box 19, Folder 2	Early patent searches [PO 28575- PO 28656]
Box 19, Folder 3	Windshield Wiper System, 1967 - 1968 [PO 40560- PO 40738]
Box 19, Folder 4	Windshield Wiper System, 1963 - 1968 [PO 40739-PO 40877]
Box 19, Folder 5	Product literature, 1971 - 1971, 1967 - 1967, 1978 - 1978
Box 19, Folder 6	Kearns notebook sealed pages (correspondence about), 1979 - 1980
Box 19, Folder 7	S.W.F. (German auto components supplier), 1979 - 1979
Box 19, Folder 8	Patent references and filing dates, undated
Box 19, Folder 9	Burby, Bob
Box 19, Folder 10	Case Institute of Technology
Box 19, Folder 11	Chosid, Stuart (Tann Corporation)
Box 19, Folder 12	Chris, Steve
Box 19, Folder 13	Chrysler

Box 19, Folder 14	Ciupak, John
Box 20, Folder 1	Daykin, Ted
Box 20, Folder 2	Duke, Ralph
Box 20, Folder 3	Dealer installation of intermittent windshield wiper system
Box 20, Folder 4	Elicon (Microdot Company), 1974
Box 20, Folder 5	Elkin (American Motor)
Box 20, Folder 6	Farison, Glen (Chrysler)
Box 20, Folder 7	Feahney, Thomas
Box 20, Folder 8	General Motors
Box 20, Folder 9	Harris, Florence
Box 20, Folder 10	Ford Motor Company
Box 20, Folder 11	Gasiorek, L.S.
Box 20, Folder 12	Gibson (Chrysler)
Box 20, Folder 13	Gilkey, George
Box 20, Folder 14	Grenier, Frank
Box 20, Folder 15	Grubbs, David
Box 20, Folder 15A	Gvazda, Ida
Box 20, Folder 16	Innis, Joe and Rachel
Box 20, Folder 17	Jacoby, Eugene (Chrysler)
Box 20, Folder 18	Jenks, John
Box 20, Folder 19	Jones, Bob
Box 20, Folder 20	Kearns, Martin J.

Box 20, Folder 21	Keeler (Chrysler)
Box 20, Folder 22	Kraizman, Jack
Box 20, Folder 22	Kraizman, Jack
Box 20, Folder 23	Lambert, Gil
Box 20, Folder 24	Lai, Harry
Box 20, Folder 25	Lane, Joe
Box 20, Folder 26	Lavi, Dave
Box 20, Folder 26A	Lemon, Joe
Box 20, Folder 27	Lindquist, Eric A.
Box 20, Folder 28	Long, George
Box 20, Folder 29	Luiso, Juan C.
Box 20, Folder 30	Mayer, W.
Box 20, Folder 31	Marks, M.
Box 20, Folder 32	McElwee, Bob
Box 20, Folder 33	Milligan, Ed
Box 20, Folder 34	Neill, Joe
Box 20, Folder 35	Newell, Mike
Box 20, Folder 36	Nuffer (Prestolite Company)
Box 20, Folder 37	Peters, Ralph
Box 20, Folder 38	Pheiffer
Box 20, Folder 39	Presanti, Dick

Box 20, Folder 40	Place, Dick
Box 20, Folder 41	Powell, Gene
Box 20, Folder 42	Proudfoot, Jerry
Box 20, Folder 43	Rogers, Bob
Box 20, Folder 44	Riley
Box 20, Folder 45	Riechel, Marv
Box 20, Folder 46	Quan, Jim
Box 20, Folder 47	Rogers, Bob (International Harvester)
Box 20, Folder 48	Roethel, John
Box 20, Folder 49	Ryff, Tony
Box 20, Folder 50	Snow, Neil (Chrysler)
Box 20, Folder 51	St. John, Jerry
Box 20, Folder 52	Sadler, Clifford L.
Box 20, Folder 53	Sherman (Prestolite Company)
Box 20, Folder 54	Shipman, Roger
Box 20, Folder 55	Simmons, Chuck (Ford)
Box 20, Folder 56	Skrbina, Frank
Box 20, Folder 57	Sophie
Box 20, Folder 58	Sterner, M.F.
Box 20, Folder 59	Strebendt, Richard
Box 20, Folder 60	Tann, Dave
Box 20, Folder 61	Thorington, John R.

Box 20, Folder 62	TH-243
Box 20, Folder 63	Tann, Ed
Box 20, Folder 64	Wagner (Chrysler)
Box 20, Folder 65	Walaskay
Box 20, Folder 66	Ward, S.R.
Box 20, Folder 67	Walter, Frank
Box 20, Folder 68	Ward, Bob
Box 20, Folder 69	Waterhouse, Larry
Box 20, Folder 70	Webb, John
Box 20, Folder 71	Williams, Bill
Box 20, Folder 72	Willsie, Mr.
Box 20, Folder 73	Wood, Larry
Map-folder 1	Windshield wiper control drawings , 1964 - 1965 <i>35 Drawings (24" x 26" or smaller)</i> [PO 29386-PO 29396A]; includes drawings by Kearns Engineers for Tann Corporation.
Map-folder 1	Windshield wiper control drawings , 1965 - 1966 <i>11 Drawings (17 x 22)</i> [PO 29397-PO 29430]; includes drawings by Kearns Engineers for Tann Corporation.
Map-folder 2	Windshield wiper control drawings, 1967 - 1967 <i>40 Drawings (24' x 36" or smaller)</i> [PO 29431-PO 29469]; includes Ford Motor Company, General Parts Division, Product Engineering drawings.
Map-folder 3	Windshield wiper control and automotive controller drawings , 1968 - 1968, 1978 - 1979 <i>68 Drawings (24" x 36" or smaller)</i> [PO 29492-PO 29560]; includes drawings by Kearns Engineers for Tann Corporation.



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

**Series 9: Subject Files, 1965 - 1999**

Box 20, Folder 74	Articles, 1999 - 1999, 1980 - 1980, 1971 - 1971, 1967
Box 20, Folder 75	CellMate (Seven Science, Inc.), 1974
Box 20, Folder 76	Chevrolet product literature (Chevette), 1978
Box 20, Folder 77	Chrysler product literature (New Yorker, LeBaron and Plymouth Horizon), 1977 - 1979
Box 20, Folder 78	Computer Central (unsolicited proposal), 1976 October 18
Box 21, Folder 1	Design of the Digital Compensator and Plant Simulator, 1965
Box 21, Folder 2	Design Handbook, Digital Difference to Analog Converter DD/A Model 840, undated
Box 21, Folder 3	Dodge truck catalog, 1991
Box 21, Folder 4	Electric cars, 1995 - 1995, 1969
Map-folder 1	Ford F-Series product literature, 1991 - 1991
Box 21, Folder 5	Ford product literature, 1978 - 1980
Map-folder 1	Porsche product literature , 1978 - 1978
Box 21, Folder 6	General Battery and Ceramic Corporation (Titan batteries) , 1967
Box 21, Folder 7	General Electric Company (lamps), 1975
Box 21, Folder 8	General Motors (Chevrolet vans, blazers and suburbans), 1991
Box 21, Folder 9	General Motors (Chevrolet compact and full size pick-ups), 1991
Box 21, Folder 10	GTE Sylvania (lamps), undated
Box 21, Folder 11	Globe-Union, Inc. (Globe Battery Division), undated
Box 21, Folder 12	Hoffman, Ronald J. , 1992 - 1993
Box 21, Folder 13	Invent America!, 1992

Box 22, Folder 1; Box 21, Folder 14	Kustom Signals, Inc. (radar), 1972, 1973 - 1973
Box 22, Folder 2	Kearns, Robert W., [1967?], 1997 - 1997 <i>2 Photographs</i>
Box 22, Folder 3	Martin, Charles A. , 1970
Box 22, Folder 4	Measurement and size tables, undated
Box 22, Folder 5	Plymouth (Volare) product literature, 1978
Box 22, Folder 6-7	Radar, 1971 - 1978
Box 22, Folder 8	Speed control research, 1966 - 1967
Box 22, Folder 9	3M Company (Traffic Control Products Division)
Box 23, Folder 1; Box 22, Folder 10	Trade literature, 1978
Box 23, Folder 2	Viel Elettromeccanica S.p.A product literature, undated
Box 23, Folder 3	Arthur Young and Company, 1982 - 1982

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

## Series 10: Correspondence, 1989 - 1999

This series consists of correspondence and memoranda, both incoming and outgoing, that includes documentation about patent actions, court motions, financial matters, and settlement agreements. Some of the incoming correspondence is from individuals seeking inventing and patenting advice from Kearns.

Box 23, Folder 4	Correspondence, 1990 - 1991
Box 23, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1992 - 1993
Box 23, Folder 6	Correspondence, 1991 - 1993, 1989, 1999 - 1999

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*