

Collection #  
P 0147

**M. D. MCCARTER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION,  
CA. 1900-1958, N.D.**

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

**VOLUME OF COLLECTION:** 1 folder of photographs

**COLLECTION DATES:** Ca. 1900–1958, n.d.

**PROVENANCE:** Purchased from M. D. McCarter of Camp Verde, AZ, March 1984

**RESTRICTIONS:** None

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**ALTERNATE FORMATS:**

**RELATED HOLDINGS:**

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** 1984.0308

**NOTES:**

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

M. D. McCarter was a professional photographer and a railroad fan. In the late 1940s, he began selling photographic prints from his collection of railroad negatives and kept collecting more negatives from others as well as taking his own photographs of trains, interurbans, and streetcars.

Malcolm “Mac” David McCarter was born on 26 August 1923 in Rochester, Fulton County, Indiana, to Max David McCarter and Mary Elizabeth Wolf McCarter. The Nickel Plate Railroad ran through Rochester, prompting Malcolm’s love of trains at an early age. By 1930, the family was living in Peru in Miami County, Indiana.

As a child, Malcolm had a newspaper route. He became friends with one of his customers whose sons were photographers and owned the Lentz Bros. Studio in Peru. Malcolm already had some photographic experience because his mother operated a studio from home. He went to work for the Lentz brothers in 1940. He graduated from Peru High School in 1941.

In April 1945, Malcolm enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a Photographer’s Mate. After he was discharged from the Navy in 1946, he returned to work at Lentz Bros. In 1947, he bought the business from the Lentz brothers and continued to operate the studio under the same name. One day Wilma Snyder went to the studio to have a portrait made. Malcolm married her in December 1949. They had a daughter named Susan.

In 1953, Malcolm and nine other men pooled their money to purchase Indiana Railroad lightweight interurban #65 and founded the Illinois Electric Railway Museum in Union, Illinois. It is currently known as the Illinois Railway Museum. Malcolm attended the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversary celebrations of the museum’s founding.

Malcolm and Wilma ran the Lentz Bros. Studio until they sold it in January 1956 and moved to Tucson, Arizona. They ran a studio there until 1960 when they moved to Phoenix, Arizona. There they opened a hobby shop called Hobby Den. After several years, their business partner, Eugene Van Dusen, bought them out, trading his collection of railroad negatives for Malcolm’s half of the business.

Malcolm would photograph trains throughout his life, whenever he could. He was a lifelong member of many railroad museums. For decades he ran a photo reprint service from his Arizona home, providing photographs to other railroad enthusiasts.

At the time of his death on 12 December 2016, Malcolm had been in business for more than seventy-five years and had more than 53,000 black-and-white railroad negatives, 2,100 color slides, and 46,000 prints. He also had an extensive research library. His collection covered all of the United States, Canada to Central America, and some of Europe. He also had negatives of circuses, covered bridges, and Chicago World’s Fairs. His family donated the M. D. McCarter Rail Photography Collection to the Mount Lowe Preservation Society in California.

Sources:

Ancestrylibrary.com (Accessed 24 April 2025):

Indiana, U.S., Birth Certificates, 1907–1944  
Indiana, U.S., Marriages, 1810–2001  
United States Federal Census, 1930–1950  
U.S., School Yearbooks, 1900–2016  
U.S., World War II Navy Muster Rolls, 1938–1949

“Malcolm ‘Mac’ McCarter.” M. D. McCarter Rail Photography Collection  
<https://www.mccarterrailphotos.com/about-the-mccarter-collection/> Accessed 24 April 2025.

M.D. McCarter Photograph Catalog, 22 September 2008  
<http://www.mccarterrailphotos.net/PDF/web%20catalog.pdf> Accessed 24 April 2025.

“Welcome to the Collection.” M. D. McCarter Rail Photography Collection  
<https://www.mccarterrailphotos.com/> Accessed 24 April 2025.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection consists of eighteen black-and-white photographs of streetcars, interurbans, and freight trains in Indiana that were purchased from photographer and railroad enthusiast M.D. McCarter. Eight of the photographs were taken in Indianapolis. The other ten were taken in Fort Wayne, Garrett (DeKalb County), Knox (Starke County), Mentone (Kosciusko County), Michigan City (LaPorte County), Peru (Miami County), and South Bend.

The dates in this collection reflect the dates of the original photographs and not necessarily the dates the prints in this collection were made. In the Contents listing below, each description is followed by an “N” number in parentheses; these are M.D. McCarter’s negative numbers from his catalog.

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### CONTENTS

**Fort Wayne** – Indiana Railroad interurban at Fort Wayne station, 3 August 1936. (N25277)

**Garrett (DeKalb County)** – Streetcar in shed, 19 February 1956. (N1019)

### **Indianapolis**

1) Streetcars and pedestrians at the intersection of Ohio Street, Pennsylvania Street, and Massachusetts Avenue, ca. 1900. (N10502)

2) Streetcars on Washington Street at Illinois Street, by the Claypool Hotel, ca. 1905. (N10494)

3) Indiana Service Corporation streetcar #375 by Capitol, ca. 1929. (N1061)

4) Electric locomotive with crew at freight terminal, 1931 copy. (N7008)

5) Traction Terminal shed, looking south, August 1937. (N23175)

6) Engine #778 pulling a New York Central gondola and a Baltimore & Ohio boxcar at industrial center, 24 September 1938. (N23179)

7) Indianapolis Railways streetcar in Broad Ripple at Monon crossing, 3 July 1950. (N21970)

8) Streetcar at Fairfield Avenue and College Avenue, 3 July 1950. (N21973)

**Knox (Starke County)** – Engine #759 with freight train at Knox depot, n.d. (N20532)

**Mentone (Kosciusko County)** – Freight train at Mentone depot, 18 May 1958. (N10882)

### **Michigan City (LaPorte County)**

1) Chicago, South Shore & South Bend Railroad interurban, “Railfans Special,” by sand dunes near Michigan City, 30 May 1940. (N24953)

2) Interurbans at the west end of Michigan City yard, 1941. (N21618)

### **Peru (Miami County)**

1) Freight train, 1940. (N680)

2) Nickel Plate Road engine #669 with freight train, 9 May 1949. (N5709)

### CONTAINER

Photographs,  
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**South Bend**

1) Chicago, South Shore & South Bend Railroad --  
7-car interurban on a South Bend street, fall 1935.

(N24935)

2) Chicago South Shore 2-car interurban at South  
Bend yard, ca. 1930s. (N24930)

Photographs,  
Folder 1 of 1