

Meadowdale International Raceways Preservation Association About the Organization

Welcome to the website for Meadowdale International Raceways Preservation Association (MIRPA). Our organization is dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the history of the track as well as that of all Midwest racing. In 2008, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Raceway. We were inspired to find that Meadowdale holds such a place of import in the hearts and memories of so many. Drivers, crew and workers from the days of the track were all in attendance. Many dug out old trophies, programs, photos and most of all long since filed away memories of a special time.

Meadowdale International Raceway is located within Raceway Woods near the corners of Route 31 and Huntley Road in the far Northwest Corner of Carpentersville, Illinois. Meadowdale Raceway was a 3.27 mile road course racetrack which opened for its first race on September 14, 1958. Interestingly, only six months elapsed from the time construction permits were issued until the running of the first race.

Meadowdale Raceways was the dream of Leonard W. Besinger who was a developer of commercial and residential properties in that locale. Leonard's vision was to make the track a destination in the national racing community thereby bringing people to the area to live, work and relax.

The majority of the asphalt from the track still remains. The silo, which once displayed the Pure Oil logo, was on the verge of demolition but has now been completely restored and stands at the Route 31 entrance as a notable symbol of what once was. Unfortunately all other buildings that were on the track course have been removed. In addition to the silo, one steel structure that was an overpass across the track allowing pedestrian access to the infield also remains.

Meadowdale International Raceways was home to many events including United States Auto Club (USAC) Races, Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) Divisional and National Races, Midwestern Council Car Club Races, American Motorcycle Association (AMA) Races, Kart, and Snowmobile Races as well. In the mid 60s Meadowdale was home to the National Police Driving School.

Meadowdale Raceways saw the early years of many a car, driver and/or race team. Notable figures from the racing community who raced here include Carl Haas, Roger Penske, Bobby Unser, Al Unser, Lance Reventlow, Augie Pabst, Harry Heuer and the famous and historic Scarabs of the Meister Brauser Racing Team; Fred Lorenzen – first NASCAR driver to win \$100,000 in a year; Mark Donahue, Sam Posey, Peter Revson, Jim Jeffords and the Nickey Chevrolet Racing Team, Roger Ward, Lloyd Ruby, Curtis Turner, Dan Gurney, Parnelli Jones, Ricardo Rodriguez, Tony DeLorenzo, Tony Adamawicz, Paul Goldsmith, Gary Nixon, and George Follmer as well as many others. Meadowdale International Raceways operated from September 1958 through 1968. Attempts to continue the racing after that time failed. The track sat quiet until early 2000 when the property was purchased by the Kane County Forest Preserve, Dundee Township and the Dundee Park District.

Meadowdale Raceways is the only intact “ghost track” in the United States, as clean-up by volunteers has kept invasive destructive foliage at bay. The Racetrack is used by a large number of hikers and history seekers at this time.

MIRPA's vision is to continue to promote and educate the local, state and national community on the importance of Meadowdale International Raceways. Meadowdale was a destination spot fifty years ago and still is today. Meadowdale Raceways brought people to live and work in the area, providing people a place to relax, recreate, and share stories and memories just as it does today.

As interest in our vision has grown these past few years, so has our mission. We seek to foster the knowledge and appreciation of the American Motorsports Culture. To this end, we are currently gathering resources toward a future National Motorsports Museum and Resource Center.

We hope to offer a glimpse to the past. More than one person has mentioned as you walk what remains of the track, “you can still hear the race cars roaring in the distance.” If you turn around will you see them coming? Only in memories and history that is preserved and shared.