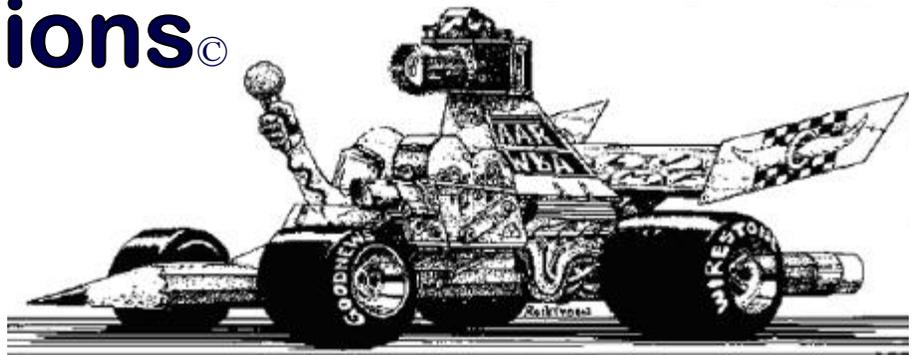


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The Official Newsletter Of The American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association

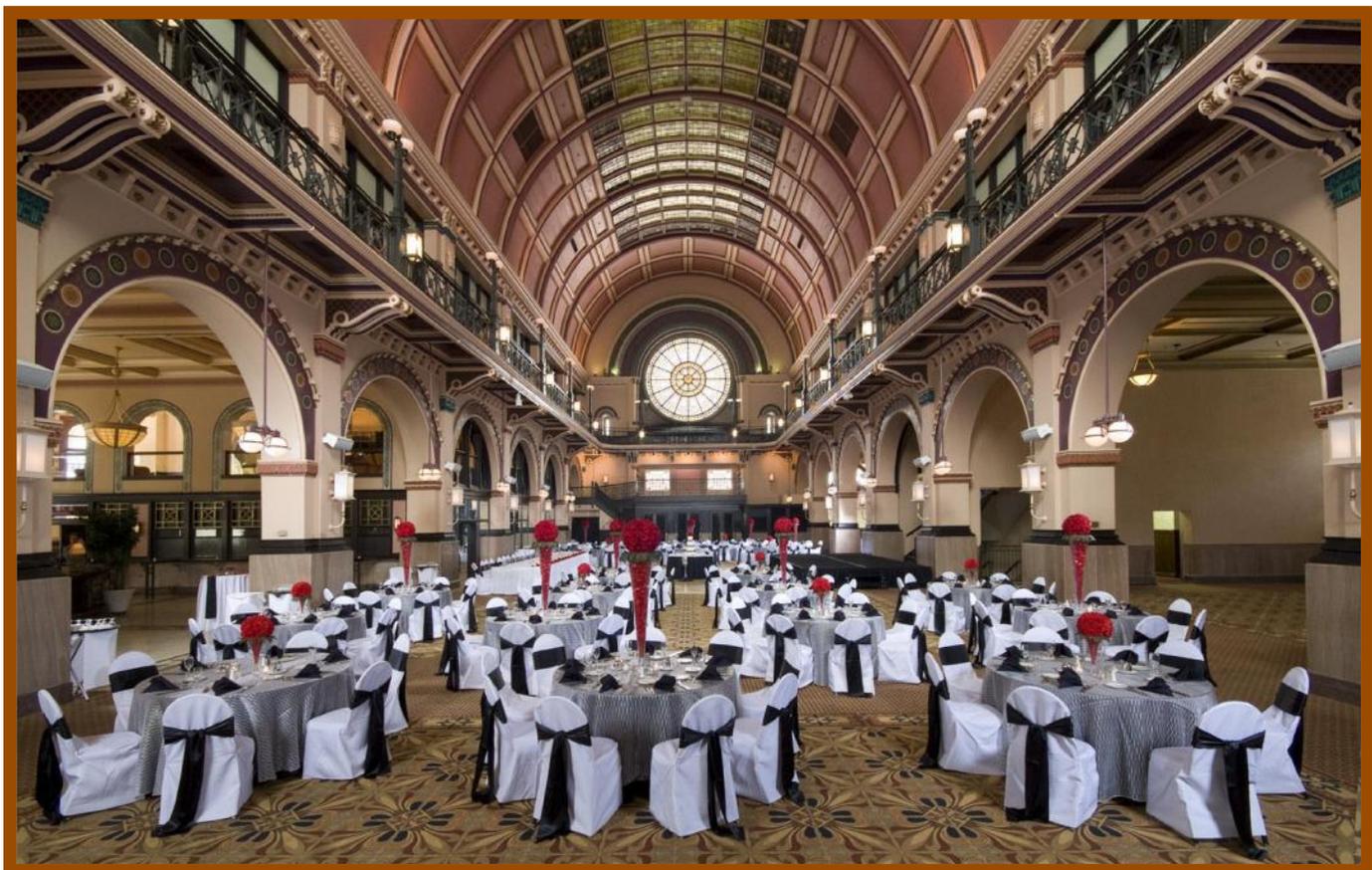
September 2011



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## Annual AARWBA All-America Team Banquet January 8, 2012

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"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage Of Motor Sports"

# McQUEENEY'S HARD WORK PUT IMS GREATS INTO FOCUS FOR 40 YEARS

## Legendary IMS photography director retires

By Paul Kelly - Photos provided by IMS Photo

Ron McQueeney stood adjacent to Turn 4 on Opening Day for the 1972 Indianapolis 500, snapping pictures of cars with a sleek, new 35-millimeter motorized Minolta and a boxy, traditional 3 x 5 Speed Graphic camera.

He was on top of his world on his first day as an Indianapolis Motor Speedway track photographer, seemingly at the peak of his creative abilities as a racing photographer.

Then he was assigned to shoot the Garage Area on Race Day, away from the action on track. McQueeney, who took up photography as a U.S. Army motorcycle policeman in Okinawa in the 1960's, was mad.

"First of all, I thought I was better than that," McQueeney said. "Secondly, I thought it was not a very good assignment because not much goes on after the race in the garage area other than people being not too happy."

Veteran IMS photographers Chuck Duffy and Bob Scott told McQueeney that he needed to improve his technique and buy better equipment if he wanted to stay on the job for the 1973 Indianapolis 500.

"It turned out that I look back on the photography that I did earlier in my career, and it wasn't quite as good as I thought it was," McQueeney said. "They obviously saw that. But they also saw potential."

So McQueeney got to work. He bought expensive, top-of-the-line Nikon equipment and traveled extensively through the summer and fall of 1972, shooting races featuring USAC Champ Cars, Can-Am, Formula 5000 and more.

McQueeney returned to the track in 1973 with better gear and improved skills, and he was hired in 1974 as a full-time IMS photographer.

That driven, focused work ethic during 1972 and 1973 paid off. And it hasn't stopped for McQueeney at the Speedway - until now.

McQueeney, 66, retired Sept. 9 after a legendary, 40-year career behind the lens at IMS, including serving as director of photography since 1977.

He will continue to shoot races and selected other events, and participate in various historical photography projects at IMS.

He has been seemingly omnipresent and tireless during his Speedway career. Look high above Turn 1 in the crowd's nest above the grandstands at the start of the Indianapolis 500 - you'd see McQueeney. Look at the start-

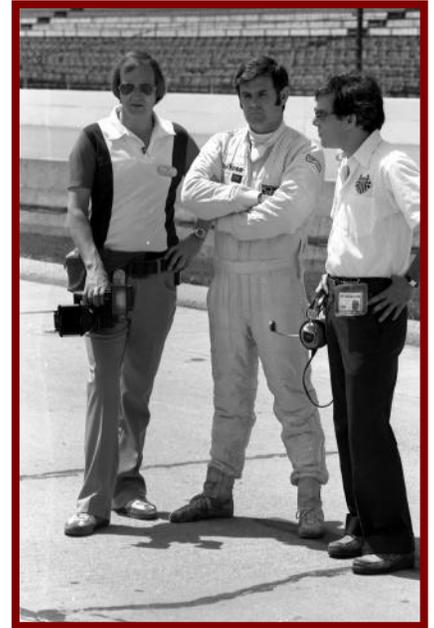
er's stand during the Brickyard 400 - you'd see McQueeney. Look at a guy with four cameras slung over his back, scurrying around Gasoline Alley to shoot drivers and teams or climbing the grandstands at sunset to capture a perfect shot after a test session at the track - you'd see McQueeney. Look into the photo shop or photo office in the Media Center from sunrise to often after sunset - you'd see McQueeney.

It has added up to what he estimates are more than a million presses of the shutter button at IMS. He has photo-

graphed Indy cars. NASCAR. IROC. Formula One. MotoGP. Sports car tests. Celebrity visits to the IMS Hall of Fame Museum. Various scenes and landmark Speedway structures.

"I would say almost every event that I've been to here at the Speedway, I've enjoyed one way or the other," McQueeney said. "For me, this has just been a labor of love."

It's an apt description. McQueeney will be the first to admit that there's nothing like the thrill and inside access of shooting pictures of racing vehicles at speed or shooting legends of the sport at the most iconic track in the world.



Ron McQueeney (I) with Al Unser - 1980



But there's also been an endless amount of work that doesn't involve lenses, camera bodies and flash bulbs. McQueeney has organized and led teams of photographers for IMS events since the mid-1970's and all INDYCAR events from 1996-2010. He also has spent hours with his staff placing slides and negatives into a detailed organization system and also has led an ongoing project to convert approximately 5 million negatives in the IMS photo archives into digital images.

"These are things people don't see," McQueeney said. "It's behind-the-scenes work."

But McQueeney and his staff have stayed on top of every major project during his tenure. And they've also adapted to the ever-evolving technology of photography.

## IMS' McQUEENEY Continued



**Ron McQueeney and his wife, Marsha, enjoy the All America Team Banquet at John Force Racing.**  
*Photo by Kay Nichols*

McQueeney created a huge technological leap in his photography career when he upgraded from his \$300 motorized Minolta - still a very pricey camera in 1972 - to professional-grade Nikon gear early in 1973. That risky investment helped him flourish in May 1973 during the Indianapolis 500 and led to full-time employment at the Speedway.

But perhaps the biggest overall technological change during his 40 years at IMS came in the transition from film to digital photography from the late 1990's through the early 2000s.

McQueeney first shot digital images at IMS in 1998, with a Canon camera that cost \$20,000. It shot 1-megapixel images, lower quality than photos from a typical cell phone today.

From 1998-2002, McQueeney carried three or four different kinds of cameras in a juggling act as the tectonic plates of photo technology collided. He shot slide film for magazines, negative film for photos to sell to the public from the IMS Photo Shop and digital images for the rapidly emerging World Wide Web.

IMS abandoned film photography and shot all-digital starting in 2003. That eliminated the camera shuffle for McQueeney and his staff, but it created other challenges.

"Always before we had a delay of a day or two between when we turned our film in and we got to see the images," McQueeney said. "Now you could see the images not only in the back of the camera, but you could work with those images and send them to the magazines and people who needed them around the campus here almost instantly.

"So it came to where they expected that instant gratification. We were out shooting, we'd have to come in more often, download them to the computer and upload them to the media sites and the website's where people could see them."

While technology is an important marker to frame the eras of McQueeney's career at IMS, he savors the personal relationships he has made as much as any discussion of ISO speed, depth of field or color saturation.

He has been a part of the fabric of the Speedway since the days when winged Indy cars were still considered a new trend. He is a familiar face to everyone around the

grounds and in Gasoline Alley, even if his desire to get that next great picture caused him to never stand still in one place for very long.

"These people are my co-workers," McQueeney said of race drivers and team members. "They're my friends. I don't know many people in my neighborhood, but I know all of these people. At least if they don't know me real well, they know me by name. That's always a thrill to me, that I have this relationship with not only the drivers but the team members and the people involved in the sport.

"I cherish all of that and the 40 years of memories I have from that, too."

McQueeney has shot 40 Indianapolis 500's, 18 Brickyard 400's, eight United States Grands Prix and four Red Bull Indianapolis Grands Prix at IMS. He has photographed hundreds of the world's most famous motorsports competitors. He also has shot CART, INDYCAR and USAC races, and drag racing, motorcycle racing and boat racing - more than 1,000 events overall.

Yet he is coy about choosing any favorite races or drivers. But his pride as a longtime Hoosier eventually seeps through.

"I would say that my favorite race of all time would be any Indy 500 that I've been involved in," McQueeney said. "That's where I shine, and that's what I feel I do best. I've been fortunate that I've been to a lot of events around different parts of the world and seen a lot of things, and I still come back here and you can't express what the enjoyment is and how I feel about this place.



"There is no other place like Indy."

And anyone who knows Ron McQueeney understands there's no way he will get Indy out of his blood or his camera lens any time soon, even in retirement. He's only traveled on three vacations during his 40 years at IMS, the last in 1987.

There's been too much work, too much sweat, too many pairs of worn shoes and too much joy at the Brickyard to simply put the place into the rear-view mirror of his life.

"I have no hobbies," McQueeney said. "This was my hobby before it became my career. One of the reasons I think I stayed around long enough was that I was afraid of what the heck I was going to do after I retired because I have no hobbies."

He plans on visiting a few car shows with his wife, Marsha. He might even enter his beloved 1998 Chevrolet Corvette Indianapolis 500 Pace Car into a few shows.

But IMS still will fill the shutter of his life's eye as large as ever. Not just every day.

# News & Notes

## Members Get Hit By Irene

Dusty asked several of our members living on the east coast how they fared with Hurricane Irene. Here are some of the replies:

*"We made it through the hurricane in good shape. I was fortunate to never lose my power, or even cable, until the next day when a tree hit the wires near my house, and they had to shut off the power for a little over an hour. Lots of people in Connecticut weren't nearly so fortunate."*

*- Dan Jack*

*"We are doing just fine... Could not get to Richmond, but other than that... Reading is still here.  
Thanks for checking. "*

*- Dean Patton - RIS-news*

*"We did just fine as the major damage was just West of us. We had some river flooding in lower areas but not any fast moving water. We actually had worse flooding from rains labor day but nothing worse than a quick spring thaw."*

*- David Moulthrop*

*"Thanks for checking up on us. In a five day period, we had a 5.8 earthquake followed by a Cat 1 hurricane. Then a week later the remains of a Gulf Hurricane blew through bringing us lots of rain. The main impact on this immediate area was the loss of a lot of trees. We live in a 4 story tall condo so our main personal impact was 15 hours without electricity. Many around here were without power for up to 5 days so we are not complaining."*

*"BTW, while a 5.8 earthquake is no big deal in SoCal, it is a BIG DEAL on the East Coast. Fortunately there was no adverse impact on either the Baltimore GP or the Last Race Before the Chase at Richmond."*

*"Saw and spent some time with AARWBA East Coast VP Joe Jennings. Learned that Dave Reinninger dumped a motor scooter at Baltimore and broke the other leg from the one he broke a few years ago. Again, thanks for checking in!"*

*- Rich Romer*

*"Greg and I survived both Irene and Lee (which was worse) with a total of 14-15 inches of rain in about a week's time. There were a lot of roads and bridges washed out in our region of southern Maryland. In fact, Greg had issues getting to and from Richmond for the NASCAR race and one of the bridges Rich Romer takes near Maryland International Raceway (Budd's Creek) was destroyed. That made his trip to Richmond much longer."*

*"Wish we could have sent all the rain to the west and Midwest, especially Texas."*

*"Thanks for thinking of us. "*

*- Barb Gage*

## New Website for Writers

Melissa Nabung sent this note to Dusty

Thanks for the email. Sure you can include our email address on your newsletter. It is [support@thumbtack.com](mailto:support@thumbtack.com)

Here's a little more info about us for your reference.



Thumbtack is a marketplace for local services and is a simple way for you to find new customers. Once you post some information about what you do, people can find you on our website. You just have to post your service once, and it stays up permanently so you don't have to post and re-post every week.

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Simply follow this link to enter some basic information about what you do. It just takes a couple minutes:

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If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. Thanks!

~Melissa

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## Were you there? Ken and Keith Truitt Were!



*"Keith is my oldest son and he and I were at Indy this year. We ran into Mario and had a nice visit. Mario remembered me from my days at Louis Meyer, Inc in the '60's and he was glad to meet Keith."*



## Dan Lanier Takes a Vintage Spin

*"Curt Liposcak and I raced his 1931 MG C-type Midget at Blackhawk Farms on Father's Day weekend. It's a VSCDA organized event and they really do a great job."  
(www.vscda.org)*

*We had a fantastic event. I ran the sprints and he ran the enduro. I finished 6th out of 16 in the feature sprint. Curt's was the smallest displacement car in the Small Bore Enduro, and finished 6th out of 10 finishers.*

*I drove the car 60 miles from Madison WI to Blackhawk. We raced it all weekend, and then I drove it back home to Madison. Not bad for a 70 year old race car, eh?*

*By the time I got back to FI. the following Tues. I was completely exhausted!"*

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*"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage Of Motor Sports"*



**American Auto Racing Writers & Broadcasters Association Inc.**

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**Phone: 818-842-7005      FAX: 818-842-7020**

**"Dedicated To Increasing Media Coverage of Motor Sports"**

The AARWBA is the oldest and largest professional organization of its kind. Founded in 1955 in Indianapolis, it has grown to more than 400 members throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Each year the AARWBA members select a 14-driver All America Team from Open Wheel, Stock Car, Sports Car, Drag Racing, Short Track, Touring Series and At Large championship categories. An annual banquet is held to honor these drivers each January. AARWBA also sponsors several contests for its members and established the "Legends in Racing" auto racing hall of fame.

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<b>Phone:</b>	<b>E-mail:</b>	<b>FAX:</b>

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

<b>Home address:</b>		
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<b>Phone:</b>	<b>E-Mail:</b>	<b>FAX:</b>
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<b>Media Professional (\$45.00)</b>	<b>Affiliate Member (\$65.00)</b>	<b>Associate / Corporate (\$300.00)</b>
<b>Signature of applicant:</b>		<b>Date:</b>

**Active Media Member**

Applicants for active media membership status must submit the following materials to the membership committee for consideration. Materials must be submitted with your check.

- ✓ A fully executed membership application. **(This information will appear in the membership directory unless you specify otherwise. Attach a note to this application if necessary.)**
- ✓ Two 1" x 1.5" head shot pictures for use in the directory and for an I.D. badge.
- ✓ Tear sheets or samples of work as follows:
  - Two published articles on the subject of auto racing in a publication of general circulation within the past year.
  - Photographs on auto racing appearing in two publications of general circulation or two separate times in one publication, within the past year.
  - One video or audio tape of any race broadcast where spectators attended and exhibited the applicant's work within the past year.
  - One book on the subject of auto racing within the past year or three books on the subject of auto racing, or one book contracted from any trade publisher for a book on auto racing



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**Mail completed application, photos, and your check to the address shown above.**

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