



LEGENDS OF THUNDER VALLEY

LARRY CARRIER

Larry Carrier, Carl Moore and Hal Hamrick built Bristol International Dragway at a cost of approximately \$1 million in 1965. Bristol International Dragway, which quickly became known as Thunder Valley due to its location in an East Tennessee valley, opened under National Hot Rod Association sanction, and, at the time, was considered a state-of-the-art Dragway. The facility included a crossover bridge for spectators, a four-story tower that housed offices, suites, the timing tower and media accommodations second to none.

In 1971, Carrier founded the International Hot Rod Association, which ran at BID until 1998. Bristol remained the flagship of the IHRA until Carrier sold to Billy Meyer in fall of 1987. Carrier's took a personal interest in the area and made a significant difference in the quality of life in the Tri-Cities Tennessee/Virginia region. His keen sense of business resulted in great success in a variety of business ventures including the building of Bristol International Dragway.

He, along with partners R.G. Pope and Moore, built Bristol International Speedway in 1960. With the first NASCAR sanctioned race held in 1961, their vision became a reality. After selling the track, and with approval from NASCAR, he was able to repurchase the facility from Warner Hodgdon in 1985. Carrier sold the racetrack to Bruton Smith's Speedway Motorsports in 1996 at the age of 74.

Carrier was honored and recognized as an outstanding citizen by the state of TN in 1990 for his achievements in Thunder Valley. Carrier was the first inductee into the Citizens Hall of Fame in 1991, and would later become a member of both the East Tennessee Hall of Fame and the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame.

Carrier was an honored member of Who's Who Worldwide and listed in the Who's Who Registry of Global Business Leaders. He owned All American Campground in Bluff City, Tenn. and Tri-Cities Golf Club in Blountville, Tenn.

In addition to his many business ventures, he had a strong commitment to the community and its young people. He organized boys boxing clubs in the region with a program, "Winning in Life -- Not Just the Ring."

Carrier passed away in 2005 at the age of 82.

For his commitment to Bristol, Tenn., and his role in the creation of Thunder Valley, Bristol Dragway officials inducted Larry Carrier as a Legend of Thunder Valley during the 2007 NHRA Thunder Valley Nationals.