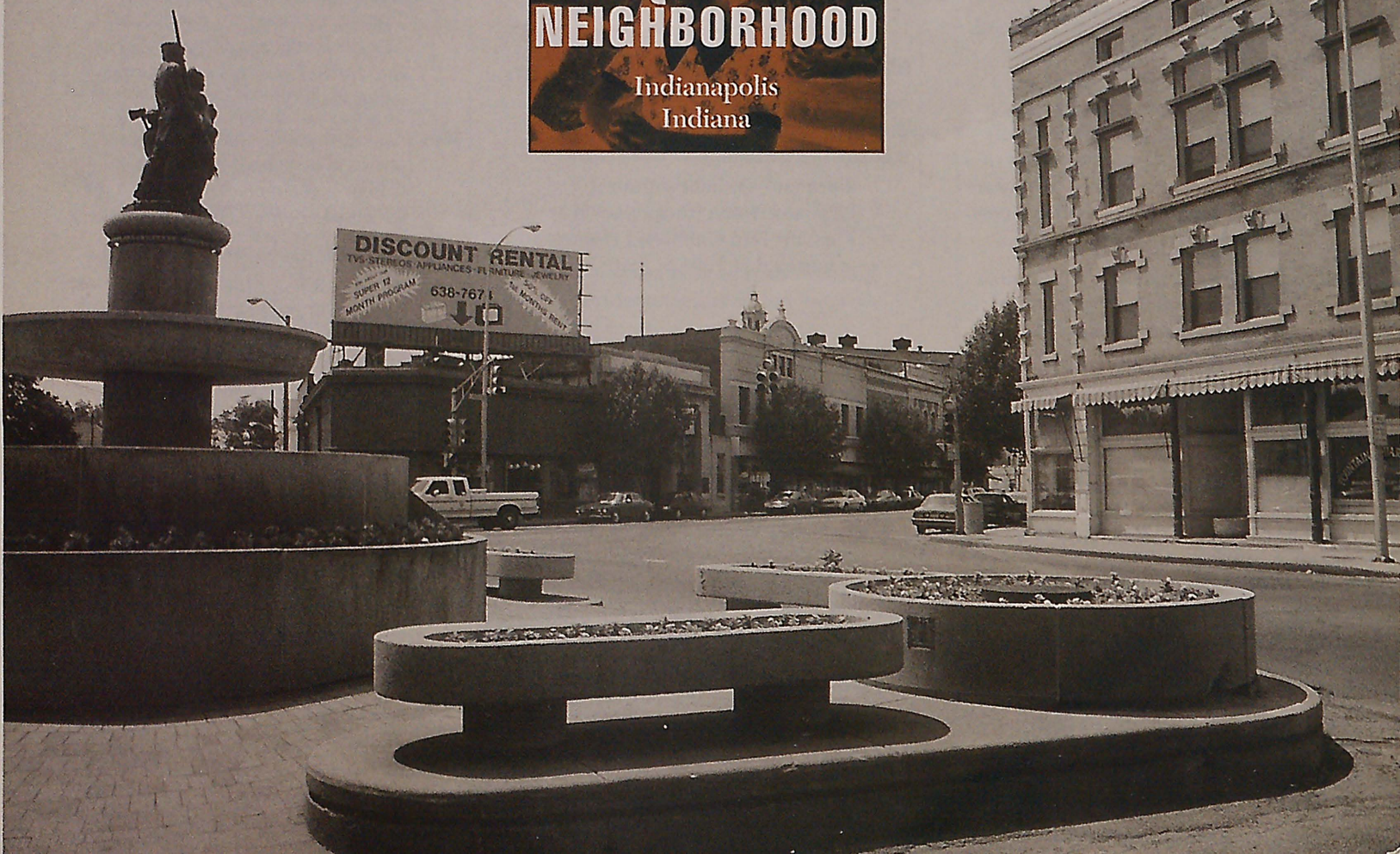




**FOUNTAIN
SQUARE
NEIGHBORHOOD**
Indianapolis
Indiana

t i m e l i n e

1820-1997





Indiana Historical Society, Bass Photo Co. Collection #91483

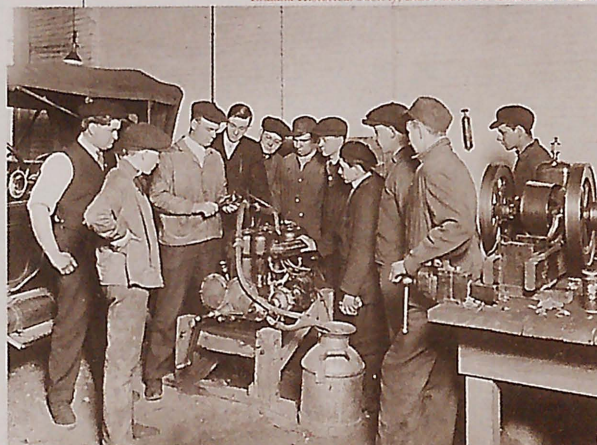
Virginia Ave. viaduct dedication ceremony, 1892

- 1820** Delaware Indians abandon camp on Pleasant Run to leave Indiana.
- 1835** Calvin Fletcher and Nicholas McCarty purchase a 264-acre farm to plat what will become the Fountain Square neighborhood. Except for a few houses along Virginia Ave., settlement is considered "sparse" until 1870.
- 1847** The arrival of railroads to Indianapolis brings Irish railroad and industrial workers who settle below the railroad tracks on South St. Eventually this area becomes known as "Irish Hill."
- 1859** St. Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church builds St. Paul's Lutheran School, on the corner of East and Georgia streets. Two years later the congregation builds a new sanctuary next to the school.
- 1860** School No. 8 opens at 520 Virginia Ave. with a staff of eight teachers. In 1905, the school is renamed for Calvin Fletcher.

- 1864** Citizens Street Railway Company extends a mule-drawn streetcar line down Virginia Ave. as far as Shelby and Prospect streets. Because of the streetcar turnaround, the neighborhood becomes known as "The End."
- 1865** St. Peter's Catholic Church is established at 950 Prospect St. to serve the Irish immigrants in the neighborhood. The congregation changes its name to St. Patrick's in 1871 when it dedicates its new building; the original structure becomes a school.
- 1867** Olivet Baptist Church is founded in Beech Grove. This African-American congregation eventually will locate at 1001 Hosbrook St.

German General Protestant Orphans Home (today known as Pleasant Run Children's Home) is founded at 1404 S. State St.

Indiana Historical Society, Bass Photo Co. Collection #46204



- 1870** German immigrants open shops and stores on Virginia Ave. Due to the rapid growth in population along Virginia Ave. and Prospect St., the neighborhood is platted eight times between 1870 and 1873.
- 1873** A Methodist Episcopal congregation first meets at a site at Woodlawn and Laurel streets. Later in 1879, they build a church at 1006 Laurel St. and name it for Edwin Ray, a pioneer circuit rider.

Prospect Street German Methodist Church is founded. The building is sold in 1950 to the Fountain Square Church of Christ.

- 1874** Southern Driving Park is opened on the south side of the city. In 1881, the park is renamed for the recently assassinated President James A. Garfield and is the only public park serving the south side of the city.
- 1882** School No. 28 (Henry W. Longfellow School) is built at 931 Fletcher Ave.
- 1883** St. Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded in 1842, moves to the Fountain Square area where it erects its third and final structure at 717 S. New Jersey St. This same year, St. Paul's and Trinity Lutheran Church form the Lutheran Orphan's Home Association.
- 1884** An eight-room addition is constructed at School No. 8 (later Calvin Fletcher School). The new structure becomes High School No. 2.
- 1885** Samuel P. Lorber's Saloon is established at 1638-40 E. Prospect St. and remains open until 1975. This and other businesses, such as Frankie Hardware, Stuckmeyer-Johnson Pharmacy, Haverkamp and Dirks Grocery, and Wiese-Wenzel Pharmacy, eventually cluster along a three-block stretch of Prospect St. and remain a center of the community through the present day.

Emmerich Manual High School automotive repair class, 1916

Cover Photos

Fountain Square, ca. 1910

Indianapolis Newspapers, Inc.

Fountain Square, 1995

The Polis Center



St. Patrick's Church

St. Patrick's Church

1889 A fountain—variously known as the “Subscription Fountain,” and the “Lady of the Fountain,” and “Lady-Spray”—is erected at the intersection of Virginia Ave. and Shelby and Prospect streets. The neighborhood soon derives its name from this fountain.

1890 School No. 31 (Lillian M. Reiffel School) is built at 307 E. Lincoln St.

1891 Second English Evangelical Lutheran Church (later named St. Mark's) is founded and begins meeting at 647 Virginia Ave.

1892 Completion of the Virginia Ave. viaduct opens the southeast side to commuting workers and results in a significant increase in commercial growth in Fountain Square.

1893 Second English Evangelical Lutheran Church relocates to 1001 Hosbrook St.

1895 High School No. 2 is relocated to the present site of Emmerich Manual Training High School. The building at 520 Virginia Ave., once again known as School No. 8, becomes a junior high school.

School No. 39 (William McKinley School) opens at 801 S. State St.

1896 Branch No. 3 of the Marion County Public Library opens at Woodlawn and Linden streets.

St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church (after 1957 known as St. John's United Church of Christ) is founded at Sanders and Leonard streets.

1899 Emmanuel Baptist Church is founded and located at 920 S. Laurel St.

1900s Fountain Square's May Day Celebration is a big event. In the years before World War I, people come from all over town to see the parade and to dance in Garfield Park.

Olivet Baptist Church leaves Beech Grove in the early 1900s and begins meeting at a location at Prospect and Leonard streets.

The Southside Turnverein, a German athletic and community center, opens on Prospect St.

1901 Abraham Lincoln School No. 18 opens at 1001 E. Palmer St.



Indiana Historical Society, Bass Photo Co. Collection #c366

The Southside Turnverein, 1908

1902 Villa Avenue Methodist Protestant Church is founded at Villa Ave. and Prospect St. Later in 1919, the church moves to a new building and changes its name to Victory Memorial Methodist Protestant Church to mark the recent victory in WWI.

1903 A pagoda, built to house musical performances, is added to Garfield Park.

1904 Emmaus German Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) is built at 1224 Laurel St. St. Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church organizes the church to serve the second wave of German immigrants settling in the Fountain Square neighborhood.

1905 The Morris Street United Methodist Church, an outgrowth of Ames Methodist Church, is built at 335 E. Morris St.

1908 The Fountain Square State Bank opens. It closes in 1922.

1909 The first theater in the neighborhood, the Fountain Square Theater, opens at 1058 Virginia Ave.

1910 Second English Evangelical Lutheran Church changes its name to St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Airdome Theater, later known as the Green Theater, opens at 1044-46 Virginia Ave. Other theaters, such as the Fountain Eagle Theater (1113 S. Shelby St.) and the Fountain Airdome Theater (1106 E. Prospect St.), soon follow, establishing the area's reputation as a theater district.

1911 Edwin Ray Methodist Episcopal Church is lifted, turned, and rebuilt at 1006 Laurel St.

Virginia Ave. looking northwest from Shelby St., ca. 1890

Indiana Historical Society, Bass Photo Co. Collection #331267





St. Patrick's Church, Bass Photo Co. #259445 Indiana Historical Society

Msgr. O'Connell's Golden Jubilee, 1943

1913 Josie Ragale organizes a settlement house under the auspices of Fletcher Place Methodist Episcopal Church; by 1928 it becomes known as the Fletcher Place Community Center.

A conservatory is added to Garfield Park.

The Sanders (Apex) Theater is built by Frederick W. Sanders—one of the city's first movie operators—on the site of the Fountain Airdome Theater. The Sanders has a seating capacity of 600 and serves the neighborhood until 1952.

The Iris Theater opens at 1637 E. Prospect St.; it closes two years later.

Laurel Street Tabernacle (Assemblies of God) is organized at Prospect and Laurel streets. The congregation constructs a church building in 1915.

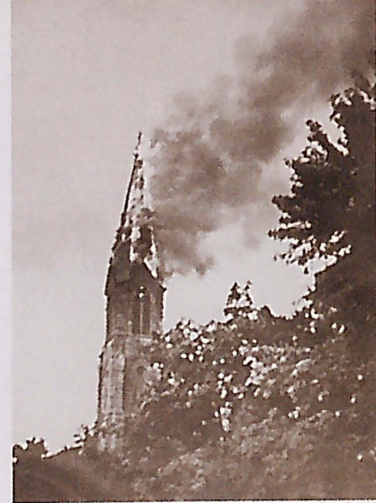
1914 The Green Theater closes, but the building is purchased by Roy Bair and renamed the Bair Theater; it closes in 1918.

Virginia Ave. elevation looking northwest, 1925



Indiana Historical Society, Bass Photo Co. Collection #93911F

- 1915** Four rooms are added to School No. 8, permitting shop and home economic classes to be introduced into the curriculum.
- 1916** Emmanuel Baptist Church erects its present building at 920 Laurel St.
- 1919** Victory Memorial Methodist Protestant Church opens at 1928 Woodlawn Ave.
The "Subscription Fountain" is accidentally toppled by local merchant's banner (which was tied to the statue) when a "wind blew up." No one knows what became of the statue.
- 1920** Calvary Evangelical United Brethren Church organizes and locates at 725 S. State St.
- 1922** St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church sells its Hosbrook structure to the Salvation Army and relocates to its present site at 1301 E. Prospect St.



St. Patrick's Church

Fire at St. Patrick's, 1927

The *Home News* combines with *Southside News* in 1922 to serve as the south side's local paper.

Mayor Samuel "Lew" Shank decides that Fountain Square should receive a bequest for a fountain in honor of former Congressman Ralph Hill, as specified in the will of his widow, Phoebe J. Hill. The Ralph Hill Memorial Fountain, designed by Myra Reynolds Richards and topped by her sculpture, "Pioneer Family," is unveiled on September 9, 1924.

1927 St. Patrick's four-year-old building is destroyed in a fire set by an arsonist on June 20, 1927. The crash of the burning steeple is considered one of the spectacles of the decade. The present church of St. Patrick's is built on the same site.

The Fountain Square Post Office opens and remains in operation until 1963.

Olivet Missionary Baptist Church moves into its present building, the former St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, at 1001 Hosbrook St.

Grace Baptist Church forms and builds its current structure at 1907 E. Woodlawn Ave.

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church builds an addition to its structure.

1928 The (second) Fountain Square Theater opens at 1105-15 S. Shelby St. The theater seats 1800 and boasts a divided pipe organ.

1929 The Granada Theater opens at 1045 Virginia Ave. The theater is part of the Universal Picture Chain and has a seating capacity of 1142.

The G.C. Murphy Company opens a store at 1053-55 Virginia Ave.

1930 Fountain Square area total population is estimated at 26,285.

Greater St. James Baptist Church organizes and locates at 835 St. Paul. St.

1932 The Granada Theater is the first theater in Indianapolis to show a foreign language movie, *Terra Madre*, on April 11, 1932.

1934 The *Lincoln Log*, a paper published by School No. 18, is awarded a superior rating in a nationwide contest sponsored by Kappa Pi Beta, a national professional education society.

Calvary Tabernacle United Pentecostal Church moves to the neighborhood at 902 E. Fletcher Ave.



St. Patrick's Church

Procession in Fountain Square, ca. 1950

1935 School No. 39's news magazine, the *Broadcaster*, receives an All-American Honor Rating from the National Scholastic Press Association and the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

1939 *The Spotlight*, a southside weekly paper, is founded.

1946 The PTA and the Federation of Churches institutes a Week-Day-Religion project in School No. 39.

1950 Fountain Square area total population peaks at an estimated 27,242; under 4 percent are African-Americans and other minorities.

**Wedding snapshot
ca. 1950**



St. Patrick's Church

Fountain Square Church of Christ is organized by Irvington Church of Christ. The new congregation takes up residence in a building at Spruce and Prospect streets.

The Laurel Street Tabernacle moves to 1601 Laurel St. across from its original site at Laurel and Prospect streets.

1951 The Granada Theater closes and the building is taken over by the G.C. Murphy Company.

1954 Citing traffic problems, Fountain Square's fountain is moved to Garfield Park. The following year the statue is moved into the conservatory.

Rev. James W. "Jim" Jones establishes the Community Unity Church, an integrated congregation, at Hoyt Ave. and Randolph St. (Two years later, Jones opens the first People's Temple Full Gospel church at 1502 N. New Jersey.)

1955 English Trolley Coach is discontinued and replaced by the motorbus. Shelby St. trolley barns are destroyed two years later to make space for automobile parking.

1957 City announces plan to use federal highway funds to construct a highway system connecting to a proposed interstate road network. Local plans call for an outer belt encircling the city, as well as freeways connecting with downtown Indianapolis.

Fountain Square stores meet competition when Twin Aire-Center, one of the city's first malls, opens on Southeastern Ave.

Greater Southside, Inc. is formed by church leaders, merchants, and residents dedicated to the creation of an economically, socially, spiritually, civically, educationally, and culturally greater south side. The area's borders are designated as Washington St., White River, State Road 421, and the Johnson County Line.

1960 The Fountain Square Theater closes.

St. John's United Church of Christ begins new building further south in Southport. By 1967, the congregation moves out of Fountain Square, and the original building is razed in 1970 for interstate highway construction.

Proposed plan for interstate highways includes roads through the Fountain Square neighborhood. State officials begin purchase of homes, businesses, and churches in the highway right-of-way.

1961 Opening of Southern Plaza Shopping Center draws shoppers away from Fountain Square stores.

**Students at St.
Patrick's School
1939**



St. Patrick's Church

Emmanuel Lutheran Church constructs a new education building and opens a kindergarten.

WGEE broadcasts the daily show of popular radio personality Jimmie Logsdon from the Fountain Square Theater Building.

1964 Residents of Fountain Square and other neighborhoods in the path of the proposed interstate protest prices offered for homes and businesses. Community Service Council of Indianapolis urges additional aid for displaced families.

1966 A fire the previous year forces the relocation of School No. 28 from 931 Fletcher Ave. into a new building located at 510 Laurel St.

1967 The German General Protestant Orphan's Home, which consolidated with other German orphanages in 1941, celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Father Joseph Wade of St. Patrick's creates the Fountain Square-Barrington Recreation Project, which is housed in the former St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church until the building's demolition in 1970.



Indiana Department of Transportation

Hundreds of Indianapolis buildings were razed in the 1960s to make way for I-70 and I-65

1968 United Southside Community Organization (USCO) is founded during a meeting held at St. Patrick's School. Founding organizations include Southside Community Council, Neighborhood Pride, Inc., Irish Hill Neighborhood Assoc., Fletcher Place Neighborhood Assoc., and twenty other local groups. The following year, USCO represents 42 neighborhood groups and agencies on the south side.

Members of Fletcher Place United Methodist Church and the Fletcher Place Community Center lead a drive to create the Southeast Neighborhood Health Center, a public health facility, at 630 Virginia Ave.

1969 The fountain is returned from Garfield Park Conservatory to Fountain Square as a result of pressure from USCO. In addition to this and other neighborhood beautification efforts, USCO begins Fountain Square Days, a neighborhood festival.

USCO and the Southeast Pastor's Alliance cosponsor a meeting on behalf of south side homeowners to address dislocation due to highway construction. Despite protests in this and other neighborhoods, construction begins on a portion of I-70 on the west side as well as I-65 on the northwest side.

The Prospect Branch Library moves to 1831 E. Prospect St.

1970 Fountain Square area population declines over 24 percent from the previous decade to an estimated 19,736. Minority population rises to 6 percent.

Community Service Council of Metropolitan Indianapolis releases a report, "The Appalachian in Indianapolis," which included in its study Fountain Square, Fletcher Place, Stringtown, and Haughville. The report indicates that Fountain Square's Appalachian population is a mixture of first generation with third and fourth generation migrants. It concludes, however, that none of the neighborhoods have a large concentration of Appalachian residents—and that the Appalachians who reside in the neighborhoods fail to demonstrate the "unique" characteristics attributed to this population group.

USCO, in cooperation with Atterbury Job Corps, provides a classroom at St. Patrick's and School No. 112 for a ten-week course for high school drop-outs to receive a diploma.

1971 Construction begins on portions of the I-65 and I-70 inner loop on the south side. The Community Service Council reports the area has not only lost population, but remaining residents have little access to social services.

1972 Pentecostal Church of Promises is founded at 1468 English Ave.

With federal grant money and in cooperation with local citizen groups, the City of Indianapolis creates the Southeast Multi-Service Center, one of several in the city. The new center is formed with a staff of three. The Southeast Neighborhood Health Center locates with the Multi-Service Center at 901 Shelby St. (location of the former Fountain Square Christain Church).

1973 The Salvation Army moves its Fountain Square Corps to 1337 S. Shelby St.

Central Wesleyan Church moves to the neighborhood, locating at 1225 S. Laurel St.



The Polis Center

Southeast Community Organization (SECO) Anti-Drug March, 1995

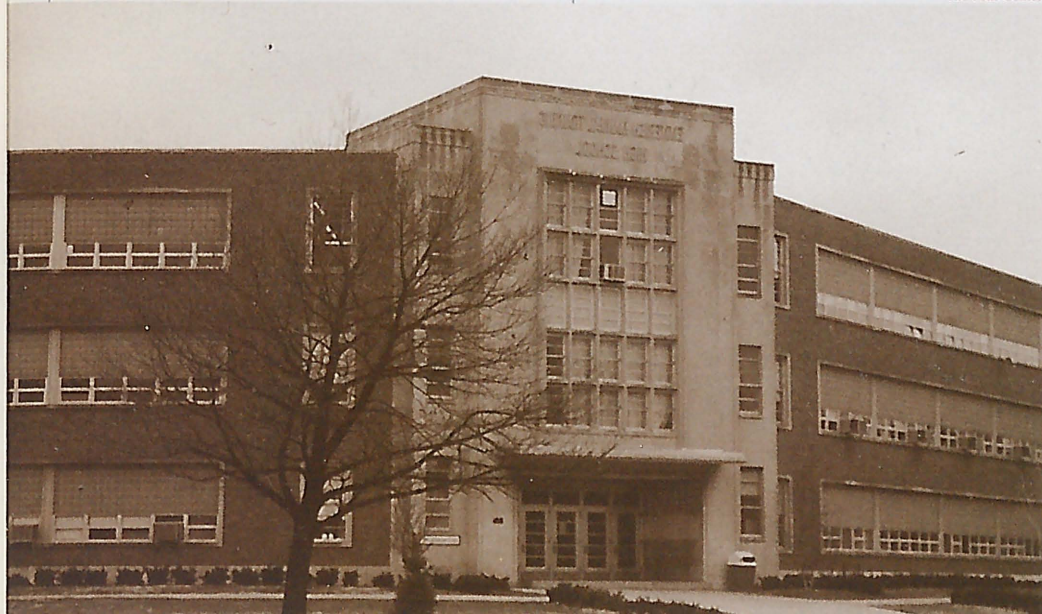
1976 The stretch of I-65 and I-70 that traverses the neighborhood opens. An estimated 17,000 of the city's residents are dislocated from homes, including many from the south side. Interstate construction demolishes many houses in the neighborhood.

1978 A number of south side community groups—including USCO, the Southeast Multi-Service Center, the Fountain Square Merchants Association, Fletcher Place Historic Preservation Association, and the Fletcher Place Community Center—pool resources to form the Fountain Square Consortium of Agencies.

Fountain Square becomes a “treatment area” for Community Development Block Grant funds.

Emmerich Manual High School, 1995

The Polis Center



1979 Fletcher Place Design Center, administered by the Southeast Multi-Service Center, is founded with Community Development Block Grant Program funds. Its purpose is to renovate homes for low-income families and the elderly.

\$115,901 of a federal grant designated for revitalizing the area is appropriated for the restoration and repair of Fountain Square's fountain. Some residents call it “an outrageous waste of tax money.”

1980 Fountain Square area population declines by almost 20 percent from 1970, to an estimated 15,941.

Calvin Fletcher School, located at 520 Virginia Ave., closes. The oldest IPS school, it is sold that year to Triad Associates Inc. for \$23,500.

1982 The Fletcher Place Design Center becomes the Fountain Square-Fletcher Place Investment Corporation (FSFPIC).

According to the Fountain Square Merchants Association, over \$3 million has been invested in Fountain Square between 1980 and 1982 in paint-up/fix-up and commercial facade restoration programs.

1984 Fountain Square is placed on the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission's list of adopted districts to focus on area rehabilitation. Using funds from the Community Development Block Grant Program, the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission also issues its Historic Area Preservation Plan for Fountain Square.

Several streets are blocked off for food and music at the first annual “Symphony in the Square,” sponsored by the Fountain Square Merchant's Association.

1986 Life Unlimited Christian Church is founded at 720 S. Randolph St. in a building originally constructed for a German Lutheran congregation.

1987 School No. 39 participates in IPS's Effective Schools Program. The school is also active in the Partner-in-Education Program, the Big Brother-Big Sister Program, and the Project Leadership Service Program sponsored by Butler University.

1988 The Fountain Square Block building undergoes renovations costing \$1.3 million.

The Indianapolis Downtown Antique Mall opens on Virginia Ave., beginning the trend of antique shops to move into the area's vacant storefronts where German-owned businesses were once located.

The Theater on the Square brings live drama into the former Eagle Lodge Building. Productions continue until 1993.

1983 The Fountain Square business district is placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Metropolitan Development Commission declares the near southeast side to be an Urban Renewal Area.

An Appalachian Heritage Program is offered by the Fountain Square Girls Club and funded by the Indiana Arts Commission and the NEA to “bring about awareness of Appalachian Arts and Crafts.”

Southeast Community Organization (SECO) Anti-Drug March, 1995

The Polis Center





The Polis Center

Fountain Square Youth Festival, 1995

Helen Fehr helps found the Fountain Square Church and Community Project. It is dedicated to “reviving community fellowship and reclaiming the neighborhood for resident home owners” by arranging interest-free loans from Railroadman’s Savings and Loan Association for “as many houses as it can work on at a time.”

1989 Public School No. 39 is rebuilt on the site of Finch Park at 1733 Spann Ave. The community is assured that a new park will be built on the former site of School No. 39 at State and Lexington streets. The park is completed in 1991.

Emmaus Lutheran Church’s food pantry expands operations to cover the entire 46203 zip code. The pantry works with the Southeast Multi-Service Center and reports serving up to 2,000 people by the end of the year; by 1992 it is serving 5,000.

1990 Fountain Square area population is estimated at 13,903—almost a 13 percent drop from the previous decade. The percentage of African-Americans has reached 5.27 percent, with 1.39 percent representing Hispanics and other minorities.

School No. 39 takes part in a pilot program for IPS involving the use of a school-wide computer system and two special exploratory centers.

1993 The first Fountain Square Neighborhood Association Home Tour is hosted in June. The Tour includes the Sanders-Childers home, 1016 Palmer St., believed to be the oldest existing house in Indianapolis. Money raised from the Home Tour is put into a vocational scholarship fund for high school

students; the first scholarships are awarded the following Spring.

Faced with dwindling membership and spiraling maintenance costs, Edwin Ray United Methodist Church closes.

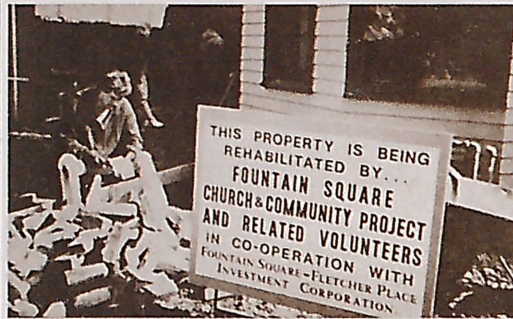
The Fountain Square-Fletcher Place Investment Corporation and the Fountain Square Church and Community Project combine to form the Southeast Neighborhood Development, Inc. (SEND).

The Southeast Community Organization (SECO) forms and implements neighborhood clean-up, anti-drug marches, and crime-watch programs. With the assistance of Citizens Gas Co., it also constructs Bennet Field, a small baseball park.



The Polis Center

The Fountain Square fountain topped by the sculpture “Pioneer Family,” 1995



Fountain Square-Fletcher Place Investment Corporation

Fountain Square Church and Community Project rehabilitating their first house

1994 St. Paul’s (Evangelical) Lutheran church closes its downtown location and the congregation begins meeting in Perry Township.

The Southeast Umbrella Organization (SUMO) is organized to facilitate communications between community and city.

The Prospect Branch Library relocates to 1066 Virginia Ave. and changes its name to the Fountain Square Branch Library.

1995 The Indianapolis Police Department’s new South District Headquarters open at 1150 S. Sanders St.

Ball State University conducts planning charette for the business district under the auspices of SUMO.

Fountain Square becomes a focus of the Faith and Community project by The Polis Center at IUPUI.

The first SECO Anti-Drug March is held on March 24. Marion County Prosecutor’s Office assigns a full-time deputy prosecutor to the South District in April.

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church building is demolished.

1996 The Fountain Area Community Team (FACT) is established.

SEND opens Briggs Flats and B&B Apartments as part of the SENCORD limited partnership.

1997 The Hoyt Avenue Park is created through the cooperative initiatives of FACT, SEND, and SUMO.

Prepared by



The Polis Center
We bring things into perspective.™

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