



t i m e l i n e

NEAR WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

1830-1998

Indianapolis
Indiana

PHIL CAULEY



Indiana Historical Society, #C6407

Haughville Industry, ca. 1920

- 1830** Construction of the National Road (now Washington St.) through Indianapolis stimulates settlement west of White River in a village known as Stringtown. Another farming community, Mt. Jackson, forms further west.
- 1848** Indiana Hospital for the Insane (later named Central State Hospital) is completed near what is now Washington St. and Tibbs Ave.
- 1860** Indianola School is founded at Bloomington and Market streets as a rural Wayne Township school.
- 1874** Indianapolis Belt Railway is constructed on three sides of the city to consolidate railroad traffic, with a track laid on the west side roughly parallel to Miley Ave. New industries along the Belt Railway attract English, German, and Irish immigrant workers.
- 1875** National Malleable Castings locates at the northwest corner of Michigan St. and Holmes Ave.
- 1880** Benjamin F. Haugh establishes an iron foundry at Belleview Pl. and Michigan St. The town growing around his business becomes known as Haughville.

Cover Photos

Haughville Parade, ca. 1920

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Near Westside Street Scene, 1997

The Polis Center

- 1882** Mule drawn trolleys extend west of White River with a turn-around at Mt. Jackson. Mule barns are built on Washington St.
- 1883** The town of Haughville incorporates with a reported population of 283.
- 1885** William Dana Ewart moves his chain link factory to the area. This company, later known as Link Belt, becomes a major employer in the neighborhood.

George Lambert, an agent of National Malleable Castings, recruits Eastern European (particularly Slovenian) immigrants for jobs in Haughville.
- 1889** Rev. T. H. Thomas and Rev. Harvey Kuhne organize Haughville Christian Church. Congregation first meets in a school house until a church is built at Bismarck Ave. and Walnut St.

1890 Haughville population is estimated at 2,100.

1891 Indianola school in Stringtown is rebuilt. Lauter Memorial Boys Club is later established across the street at Greeley and Market.

First Baptist Church of Haughville is established. Congregation meets in a school house at King Ave. and Walnut St. until 1899.

Msgr. Francis B. Dowd establishes St. Anthony's Catholic Church at the northeast corner of Vermont St. and Warman Ave. Congregation is predominantly Irish, many of whom are employed in railroad yards and slaughter and packing houses.

Haughville Town Hall and a community center are built at 519 N. Belleview Place.

1892 IPS School 53 is built at 440 N. Ketcham Ave.

1894 Indianapolis Street Railway switches to electric cars and extends service to West Indianapolis.

1897 City of Indianapolis annexes entire westside area, including Haughville, Mt. Jackson, and Stringtown.

Library branch opens in former Haughville Town Hall.

1898 Fire Station No. 9 is built at 537 N. Belleview Place.

1899 The First Baptist Church of Haughville relocates to a new structure on Germania Ave. and



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Haughville Street Scene, ca. 1920

changes its name to Germania Avenue Baptist Church.

Old Indianola School, now IPS School 16, is expanded.

- 1900** Slovenians form St. Aloysius Lodge, a social and benefit group known for its devout Catholic membership.

Wayne Township's population increases by 45 percent, mostly in Haughville and West Indianapolis. Census shows 16 different nationalities in Haughville. Almost half of the residents are Slovenian immigrants. Other groups include Polish, Irish, German, Macedonian, Hungarian, Greek, Croatian, Serbian, Italian, and Lithuanian immigrants.

- 1902** Free Kindergarten opens at Slovenian Hall, providing early education and Americanization programs.

- 1909** West Park Christian Church is built.

- 1910** The Disciples of Christ open West Side Mission at Ohio and Koehne streets.

- 1911** Holy Trinity's parochial school opens with 54 pupils. Students are taught by Sisters of Providence until 1915.

A second branch of the Carnegie Library is built at Mount and Ohio streets in the Hawthorne area.

David Parry converts a wagon and carriage factory on Washington St. into the Parry Motor Car Company.

- 1913** Westside Church of the Nazarene is organized with 60 charter members.

Five days of torrential rains bring severe flooding to the west side of Indianapolis, damaging 10,000 homes at an estimated loss of \$25 million. Stringtown is especially devastated.

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church is established by African-Americans settling in the neighborhood for wartime jobs.

- 1918** Slovenian socialists, freethinkers, and anti-clerics form the Slovenian National Home at 729 N. Holmes. Founders intend the social club to provide an alternative to Holy Trinity's religious programming. The Home offers concerts, plays, sports, cards, beverages, and dances.

- 1923** Michigan Street Methodist Church is founded at 2132 W. Michigan St.

Rev. Clarence G. Baker establishes Hawthorne House, later Hawthorne Community Center. Rev. Baker gains acclaim for his refusal to accept Ku Klux Klan donations or to allow them to meet at the House.

- 1924** Christamore House moves to Haughville. The building is completed in 1926.

- 1925** Civic League of Haughville forms at Christamore House and successfully pressures municipal authorities to make street improvements.

- 1926** Grace Lutheran Church operates at Holmes and New York streets.

- 1927** Holy Trinity adds a new social hall to existing school, later named Father Lavric Hall.

A business group, the West Michigan Street Improvement Association, hosts a festival and parade to celebrate improvements on Michigan St.

- 1928** Eighth Christian Church relocates to 14th St. and Belleview Pl.

George Washington High School is built at 2215 W. Washington St.

- 1929** Onset of the Great Depression brings hardships to the community. Several major employers eventually close, depriving residents of jobs.

- 1930** Total population is estimated at 21,574. The makeup of the neighborhood is 92.47 percent European-American and 7.49 percent African-American.



Indiana Historical Society, #C2539

Haughville parade, ca. 1920

- 1904** St. Anthony's Catholic Church erects a new building at 379 N. Warman Ave.

- 1905** Slovenians form Franc Preseren Lodge (socialist-oriented) and St. Joseph Lodge (Catholic).

- 1906** Holy Trinity Catholic Church is established as a Slovene national parish following conflicts with Irish and German Catholics at St. Anthony's.

- 1908** West Side Planing Mill, a small lumberyard in the Stringtown area, expands. Later this business becomes the Capitol Lumber Company.

- 1915** Rev. Clarence G. Baker, pastor of the West Park Christian Church, establishes a community newspaper, the *West Side Messenger*.

City builds White River Parkway and levee in aftermath of the 1913 flood.

- 1917** During World War I, Bismarck Ave. is renamed Pershing Ave. and Germania St. is renamed Belleview St. because of war-time, anti-German sentiment.



Indiana Historical Society, #C5404

The Americanization Program, 1932

General Motors acquires Parry Motor Company.

- 1936** West side Yugoslav football team becomes city champions.

Fire house No. 18 is built at Washington St. and Warman Ave.

West Side Church of the Nazarene, with membership over 400, builds an addition.

- 1937** Christamore House opens a summer camp and, in conjunction with the Haughville Neighborhood Council, establishes a neighborhood playground.

Two of the area's large employers, Duesenberg Company (makers of the Duesenberg automobile) and Brown and Ketcham Foundry, close operations.

- 1938** Holy Trinity begins perpetual Novena weekly observance, the only congregation in city to do so.

- 1939** Haughville area hosts a national Slovene athletic meet. The Hawthorne area hosts an annual fall festival.

- 1940** Total population grows by 5.30 percent to an estimated 22,717. European-Americans account for 91.92 percent and African-Americans for 8.07 percent.

West Side Mission opens a new chapel at a cost of \$8,000 with seating for 250 persons.

Slovenian National Home moves to its current location at 10th St. and Warman Ave.

In W.P.A. recreation tournament, "Phillips Boys" of Wendell Phillips School No. 63 win city championships in softball, basketball, volleyball, and track.

- 1941** United States enters World War II, and young men leave the area for wartime service. Industries gear up for wartime production, creating jobs for area residents. Woodrow Wilson School No. 75 raises \$11,931 in war stamps and bonds to purchase a jeep.

- 1944** Hawthorne House launches a summer youth camp.

- 1945** IPS School No. 63 at 1129 Traub Ave. organizes the first African-American Bluebirds Troop in the city.

Light and Life Free Methodist Church organizes in the area with 45 charter members.

- 1946** IPS School No. 63 is destroyed by fire.

Hi-Y Boys of Nathaniel Hawthorne School No. 50 wins the Southwest Indianapolis championships in basketball and track.

- 1947** SS. Constantine and Elena Romanian Orthodox Church move to 3237 W. 16th St. The congregation originally organized in 1910 and met at a location east of White River.

- 1948** Holy Trinity loses its national parish standing and becomes a territorial parish.

- 1949** Romanian Orthodox Church dedicates a new building at 3237 W. 16th St. The new building, valued at \$75,000, is of Eastern Oriental style architecture with a copper dome and the altar facing east.

Rev. Clarence G. Baker retires after 25 years as director of Hawthorne House.

St. Anthony's Catholic Church opens a new school.

- 1950** Total population increases slightly to 22,804 which shows growth at 0.38 percent. The neighborhood is 86.34 percent European-American and 13.64 percent African-American.

- 1951** Holy Trinity opens a new convent that allows the parish to increase the school's teaching staff to eleven. School attendance is 446.

Eighth Christian Church dedicates a new \$63,000 building, including a 350-seat sanctuary as well as a social and dining room.

Christamore House adopts open-door policy, racially integrating all programs. By 1955, the House serves 635 African-American members. By 1965, nearly 95 percent of members are black.



The Polis Center

Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 1995

Christamore House staff attempts to start a cooperative neighborhood council, but fails due to lack of interest by residents.

West Side Mission becomes West Side Christian Church.

1952 Rev. C. S. Davies establishes a new General Baptist congregation and purchases the old Memorial Baptist building.

1953 Indianapolis Transit Authority switches from electric cars to buses and maintains vehicles at local car barns.

1954 Hawthorne House is remodeled through efforts of volunteers and the West Washington Street Business and Professional Association.

St. Stephen's Bulgarian Orthodox Church moves to 3000 W. 16th St., where the new church includes worship facilities for 300 people, a recreation hall, and a kitchen.

1955 Bill Brown joins Christamore House staff and starts a boxing program which eventually trains several national champions.

Carnegie Library at Ohio and Mount streets closes after 45 years of service.

1956 Light and Life Free Methodist Church launches a campaign for construction of a new building at 14th St. and Tibbs Ave. Membership is 295.

As increase in juvenile delinquency in the area is noted, Christamore House expands its boxing program and starts a day nursery.

Holy Trinity membership peaks at 2,250.

1957 West Side Christian Church, 1520 W. Ohio St., is destroyed by fire.

1958 The West-side Teen-Age Association meets at Christamore House.

1959 Haughville natives are elected to top offices in local elections: Charles Boswell (Mayor), Phillip Bayt (Prosecutor), and Robert O'Neal (Sheriff).



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Link Belt, ca. 1950

Rev. Mozel Sanders accepts pastorage at Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist Church. Over the next thirty years, Sanders pioneers several noted development efforts on the west side and becomes a leader in the Indianapolis community.

1960 Total population is estimated to be 22,824 which reflects a small increase of 0.09 percent. The neighborhood population is 82.15 percent European-American and 17.80 percent African-American.

1961 West Michigan Street Businessmen's Association cooperates with Christamore House to collect money to clothe fifty children.

West Side Christian Church, 1520 W. Ohio St., opens its new \$50,000 building.

Teenage gangs disrupt programs at Christamore House, which institutes a Multi-Problem Family Program.

1962 National Malleable and Steel Castings Co. closes after almost a century of operation. Buildings are demolished later that year to make way for new commercial development. Former Link Belt buildings are also demolished—now all local foundries are closed.

A redevelopment project is announced to remake abandoned industrial section of Haughville into a modern retail business district, including a Kroger supermarket and Super-X drugstore.

1963 Haughville Community Council is established and holds monthly meetings at Christamore House.

Washington High School's overcrowded student population of 2,800 is relieved by the creation of Northwest High School.

Greater Whitestone Missionary Baptist Church is organized.

Fire station No. 9, the area's original facility, closes.

1964 Friendship Missionary Baptist Church constructs a building at 761 N. Sheffield Ave.

Western Star Missionary Baptist congregation is founded.

Three interracial shootings alert residents to growing racial conflicts in the area.

1966 St. Anthony's Catholic Church celebrates its 75th anniversary.

1967 Holy Trinity discontinues its annual festival because of increasing problems with crime.

Christamore House youth and social service programs expand to include job training, voter education, interpretive dance, senior shopping trips, religious education, and drug counseling.

Concord Village public housing project is built in two sections along Concord St. and north of Michigan St. Many residents see it as an unwelcome intrusion, and an arsonist burns part of the development during its construction.

1974 West Side Cooperative Organization (WESCO) is formed. City publishes the "Near-Westside Subarea Plan," which notes a slow, but steady deterioration in the quality of neighborhood housing.

Eighth Christian Church merges with Seventh Christian and relocates outside the neighborhood on West 30th St.

1969 George McGinnis leads Washington High School Continentals to second state boy's basketball championships.

1970 At an estimated 21,040, the total population has declined 7.82 percent. European-Americans account for 67.90 percent of the population while 31.91 percent are African-American.

1972 Belleview branch library closes.

1973 Holy Trinity starts a child daycare program.

IPS School No. 16 in Stringtown closes due to declining enrollments.

Christamore House and the Haughville Community Council submit a proposal to the city in January asking for \$150,000 to improve area housing and counsel residents on housing problems.

The Salvation Army, on 1309 W. Market St. in southeast Stringtown, plans \$100,000 expansion and renovation project on the site of the former Lauter Boys Club.

1975 Hawthorne Community Center, 201 N. Belleview Place, is destroyed by fire.

Area's first medical center, South West Health Center, is built and soon flooded with patients.

1976 Dropping enrollments force Holy Trinity School to consolidate with St. Anthony's and other local parish schools into All Saints school. Vacated Holy Trinity School buildings house Indianapolis Parks and Recreation programs, and the convent becomes the home of the Social Ministries Office of the Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis.



The Polis Center

Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist, 1995

1977 Greater Whitestone Missionary Baptist relocates to Concord and Michigan streets, the former location of Pilgrim Church.

1978 Seventh-Day Adventists relocate from Prospect Street to 1718 W. 15th St. and open the Better Living and Community Services Center. The center operates a number of health programs and a disaster relief van.

Hawthorne Community Center is rebuilt after the fire through local fund raising and a grant from the Indianapolis Foundation.

1979 The Haughville-Near Westside area is designated a "treatment area" for federal community development funds.

1980 With growth declining 24.15 percent, the total population is estimated at 15,959. The neighborhood is 56.22 percent European-American and 43.27 percent African-American.

Holy Trinity institutes a senior daycare program.

1981 Implementation of school desegregation plan sends westside students to schools outside their neighborhood.

Haughville's three remaining elementary schools close.

1982 The Western Star Missionary Baptist Church building is dedicated at corner of Ketcham Ave. and St. Clair St.



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Friendship Missionary Baptist, 1995

City planners update the "Near-Westside Subarea Plan" and report that 80 percent of homes require rehabilitation. About 47 percent of homes are rental units owned by absentee landlords. There are only two family physicians and two drugstores in the area. Existing parks lack adequate facilities, and development of small retail business is at a standstill.

- 1983** A new fire station, opened at 10th and Elder streets, replaces the services of Station No. 9.
- 1984** Seventy residents living in the area bounded by Bloomington St., Washington St., and White River lose their homes to the Indianapolis Zoo expansion. Rainbow Christian Association is formed in June by twenty pastors from Haughville, Stringtown, and Hawthorne to represent community interests in the face of the White River State Park development.
- 1985** Christamore House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places and a major renovation is completed.
- 1986** WESCO, the Haughville Community Council, and Christamore House establish the Westside Community Development Corporation (WCDC).
 - New Christamore House programs include: GED and job tutoring, Christamore House Achievement Program preparing area youth for college, emergency assistance, a preschool, after school and sports programs.
- 1987** After three years of negotiations by WESCO, Haughville Park is dedicated on the site of the former town hall.

Project Home paints 21 local houses with the help of 300 volunteers during its third annual Saturday event.
- 1988** First Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church begins operating at 2447 W. 14th St., in a former IPS school building that also houses Friendship Westside Charities.

Marion County Health Department sponsors "well baby" and dental clinics at Christamore House.

- 1989** Christian Faith Missionary Baptist Church is established at 702 N. Holmes Ave. in an old storefront.

Merchants Bank closes its branch bank at 2134 W. Washington St. Members of WESCO and Partners for Westside Housing Renewal begin the process of attracting another bank to the area.
- 1990** Total population increases to 16,853 showing growth of 5.60 percent. The neighborhood makeup is 58.22 percent European-American and 40.34 percent African-American.

Christamore House creates Social Development Department to focus programming on enhancing self esteem and positive values of area youth.

WESCO revitalizes block clubs in Haughville, Stringtown, and Hawthorne. WESCO also completes a beautification program of seventy new trees on Belmont St., and supports the relocation of Indianapolis Police Department IV headquarters to old IPS School No. 52.

Michigan Street Methodist congregation merges with Mount Olive United Methodist Church, moving out of the neighborhood to 1449 S. High School Rd.

- 1991** The Haughville area is spotlighted during Historic Preservation Week.

Neighbors for Historic Haughville organize and sponsor a Slovene Food Fest.

When a new 500 Mini-Marathon route passes through the Near Westside, the community provides a water station and sponsors a neighborhood fair at the race's conclusion.

St. Anthony's Catholic Church celebrates its centennial.
- 1992** City planners designate the Near Westside area as "area of special need" as part of Mayor Steven Goldsmith's Better Neighborhoods initiative. The \$190,000 grant, a combination of federal, local, and private funds, permits recruitment and training of community leaders and underwrites a multi-faceted program improving area social services and living standards. Concord Village receives a 3-year, \$6.6 million rehabilitation. IPD establishes a substation in the Village.



Hawthorne Youth Group, 1983

Hawthorne Community Center



Christamore House

Christamore Preschool, 1987

A section of Haughville is placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1993 Stringtown Neighborhood Association Council is organized.

Christamore House adopts a new mission statement that refocuses its programming to become more of a community center rather than a social service agency—clinics, outreach programs, child care, educational support, employment assistance, pre-school, and teen and senior programs continue.

City announces "Operation Weed and Seed," with a promised \$16.3 million over three years to eliminate criminal activity and renew human services and economic development initiatives.

1994 With input from neighborhood leaders, city planners adopt the Near Westside Housing Improvement and Neighborhood Plan.

WCDC celebrates its 10-year anniversary. During its history, the organization has completed 40 units (four completely new) and assisted over 200 homeowners.

The city targets the area straddling the old Big Four railroad tracks for renewal. After declaring it blighted, the city will buy the properties and either demolish or improve them.



The Polis Center

Anti-Drug March, 1995

As a result of neighborhood protests, the license of a 500 Liquor store on 10th St. is revoked.

Central State Hospital is closed.

Fire Station No. 18 is rebuilt on the original site in the Hawthorne area.

1995 Despite neighborhood opposition, George Washington High School closes, leaving the area with one public grammar school and one parochial school.

Indianapolis Prosecutor's office assigns a special community prosecutor to serve the Haughville and Stringtown area as part of a city pilot program.

WESCO announces a \$37 million plan for neighborhood revitalization in the Near Westside, including retail and industrial projects, replacement of two public housing complexes, and funding for social service programs.

1998 Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis and WESCO announce the Community Outreach Partnership Council (COPC). Funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development supports cooperative efforts for economic and business development, education, and organizational development for WESCO.

Prepared by



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