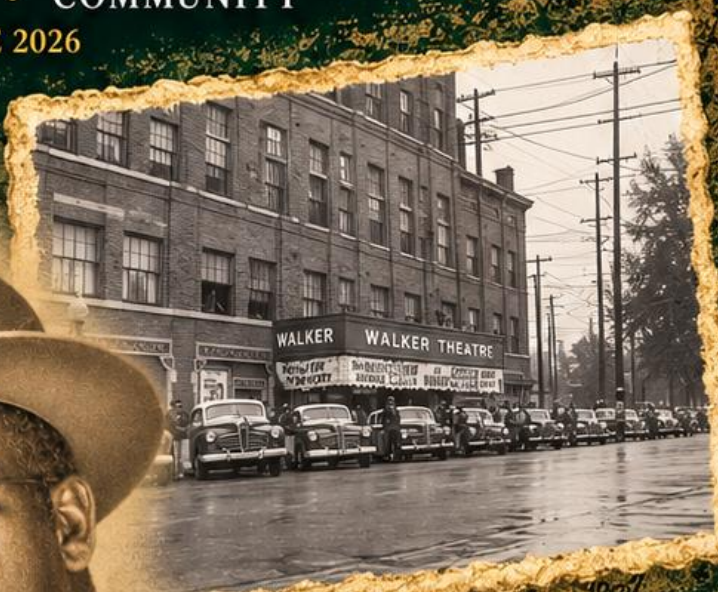
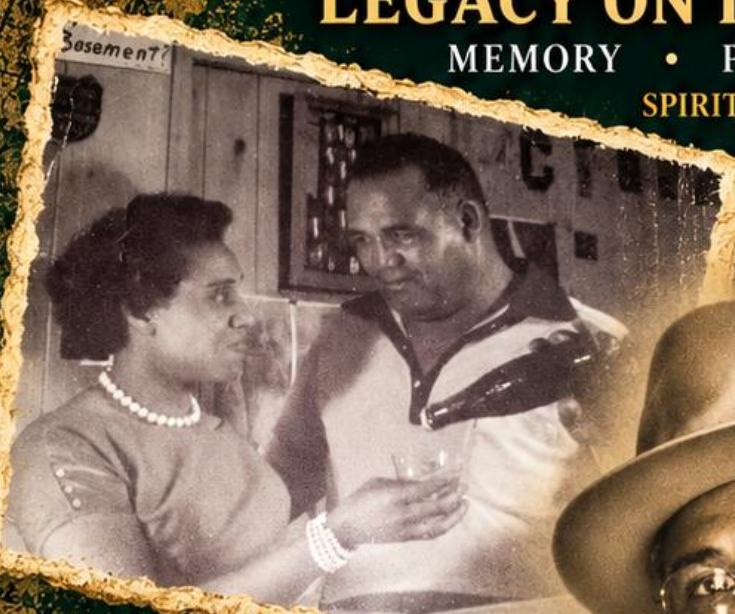


WE REMEMBER

HERBERT HAWKINS'S LEGACY ON INDIANA AVENUE

MEMORY • PLACE • COMMUNITY

SPIRIT & PLACE 2026



SERIAL NUMBER 204	1. NAME (Print) HERBERT GRIGSBY HAWKINS	ORDER NUMBER 3234
2. ADDRESS (Print) 924 W. North St 8th Indianapolis Marion Ind.		
TELEPHONE none	4. AGE IN YEARS 30	5. PLACE OF BIRTH Columbus Ohio
6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP U.S.A.		
7. NAME OF PERSON WITH WHOM HE HAS BEEN TOGETHER Mrs. Adeline Hawkins		
8. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON 924 W. North St 8th Indianapolis Marion Ind.		
10. EMPLOYER'S NAME Local 120		
11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS 442 N. Senate Avenue Indianapolis Marion Ind.		
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE EXCEPT DATA WHICH MAY BE IN THE REGISTRATION CARD D. S. S. Form 1 16-17105		

SHARE A MEMORY. HONOR A LIFE. KEEP THE STORY ALIVE.
EVERY MEMORY MATTERS.

CO-PRESENTERS

Dr. Michelle D. Dartis
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Encyclopedia of Indianapolis
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COMPANION GUIDE

Exploring the Life, Legacy, and Larger Lessons of Herbert Grigsby Hawkins

HERBERT GRIGSBY HAWKINS

A Story Recovered



Herbert Grigsby Hawkins

Herbert Grigsby Hawkins was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1910 and came to Indianapolis in 1937. He built a life here with his wife, Adeline Hardy Hawkins, and their family.

Herbert was an entrepreneur, Prince Hall Mason, Socialite Club member, and working man whose life was deeply connected to Black Indianapolis. At 614 Indiana Avenue, directly across from the Madam C. J. Walker Building, he operated a filling station and developed business connections that included the taxicab industry.

Contemporary newspaper coverage described Herbert as a well-known Indianapolis businessman. Yet after his death in 1957, his visibility gradually faded. His name remained in records. Photographs survived. Newspaper stories survived. Addresses, organizations, and other pieces of his life remained scattered across the historical record.

Erasure does not always mean the evidence is gone. Sometimes the traces survive while the connections among them disappear.

Decades later, a family search began reconnecting those fragments—one photograph, document, newspaper article, address, and memory at a time. What emerged was not only the story of one man, but a pathway into the larger history of Indiana Avenue and the Black community that surrounded him.

The traces survived. Recovering Herbert's story meant reconnecting them.

“What happens when we go looking for the people history has allowed us to forget?”

MEMORY LIVES IN PLACES

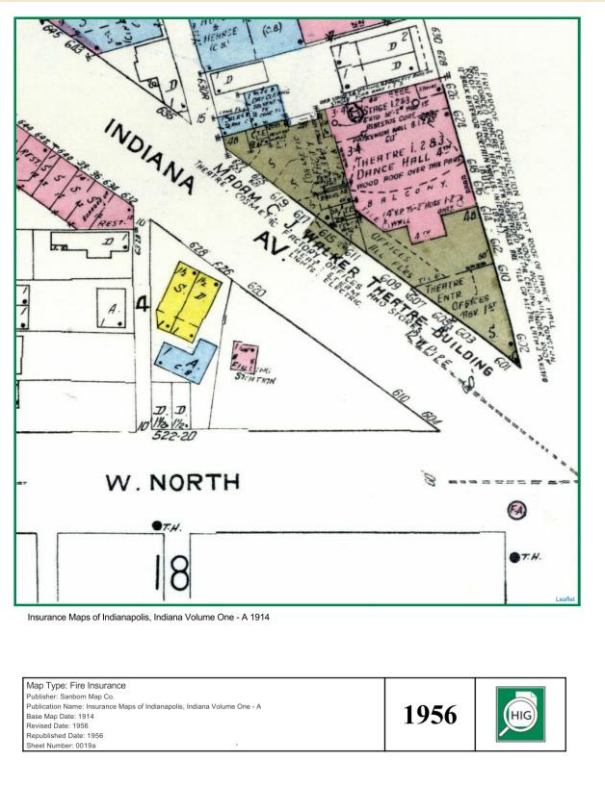
Indiana Avenue and the world Herbert knew

A place can hold a family’s memory long after the people, buildings, and businesses have changed.

Indiana Avenue was a center of Black business, culture, work, entertainment, faith, and community life in Indianapolis during the 19th and 20th centuries (1920s-1960s). Herbert’s story belongs to that larger landscape.

His filling station at 614 Indiana Avenue was not simply an address. Located directly across the street from the Madam C. J. Walker Building, it placed him within a network of Black entrepreneurs, workers, organizations, customers, neighbors, businesses, entertainers, and institutions.

Recovering one person’s life can open a door to the history of an entire community. A business record can reveal a neighborhood. A newspaper clipping can reveal a social network. A family photograph can lead to a public archive.



1956 Sanborn map of Indiana Avenue and the Walker Building area

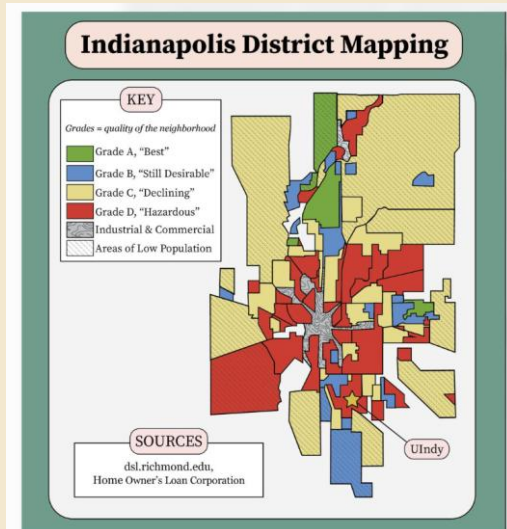
PLACE	PEOPLE	CHANGE
Where did the story happen? What stood there? Who gathered there?	Who lived, worked, worshiped, organized, celebrated, and struggled there?	What was preserved, renamed, demolished, displaced, or forgotten?

The larger story is not only who Herbert was. It is the world that made his life possible—and what happened to that world over time.

THE COLOR LINE

Connection under constraint

A strong Black community grew on Indianapolis's Near Westside within boundaries Black residents did not freely choose. Racist housing customs, lending discrimination, and other barriers sharply constrained where Black residents could live and invest.



Indianapolis District Mapping



Flanner House self-help housing construction, early 1950s

SEGREGATION & HOUSING BARRIERS

Indianapolis was not legally segregated in every sphere, but in practice a complex system of racist codes restricted Black residents' access to neighborhoods and opportunity. The Near Westside became home to a broad cross-section of Black Indianapolis.

REDLINING & DISINVESTMENT

The Price of Progress records residents recalling that banks would not lend Black property owners money for renovations and improvements. Disinvestment was imposed even as many residents continued caring for homes, businesses, and neighborhood institutions.

BUILDING DESPITE BARRIERS

Black residents built anyway. Flanner House's self-help housing program enabled families to build new homes through sweat equity and skills training; the program ultimately resulted in approximately 181 homes.

THE IMPORTANT TENSION

The closeness residents remembered should not make us romanticize segregation. Community strength developed in spite of racial restriction. Both truths belong in the story.

Black Indianapolis created connection, care, opportunity, and belonging within a system that also restricted where those connections could take root.

How can connection flourish even within boundaries created by exclusion?

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS

Several forces reshaped the Near Westside—not one single cause

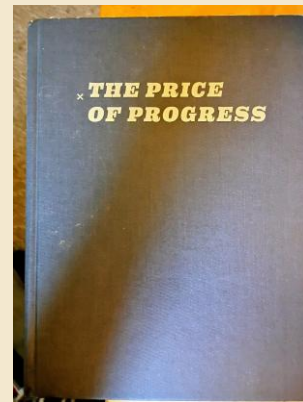
After World War II, integration, urban renewal, interstate construction, and university expansion overlapped in ways that profoundly changed Indiana Avenue and the Near Westside.



A surviving Near Westside home amid IUPUI parking lots



The transformed IUPUI landscape



*Dr. Dartis's personal copy of *The Price of Progress**

INTEGRATION & CHANGING PATTERNS

As racial barriers began to fall, Black residents gained access to neighborhoods and businesses previously closed to them. Some oral-history participants remembered that wider mobility also redirected customers and economic activity away from Indiana Avenue.

PROPERTY, OWNERSHIP & GENERATIONAL WEALTH

For Black homeowners and business owners, displacement carried an economic cost that could extend far beyond the generation that was forced to move. A home could represent accumulated equity and an asset to pass to children. Rental properties could provide continuing family income. A business could create employment, ownership, and wealth that might otherwise have remained within a family for generations.

When properties were acquired for redevelopment—and when compensation was insufficient to purchase comparable property elsewhere—families could lose more than a building. They could lose part of the foundation from which future generations might have built wealth. Contemporary research on the Near Westside therefore raises an important question alongside the loss of place and community: what wealth might these families have accumulated and passed forward had their property ownership not been interrupted?

HIGHWAYS, DISPLACEMENT & LOSS OF COMMUNITY

Interstate construction cut through established Black neighborhoods on Indianapolis's Near Westside, removing homes, dividing streets, and scattering residents whose families, churches, businesses, and social networks had been rooted there for generations. Displacement did not simply change the physical landscape—it disrupted relationships and community institutions that had developed over decades.

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS — CONTINUED

Displacement, acquisition, and the cost carried forward

Residents did not necessarily receive enough compensation to recreate what they had lost elsewhere. Some families moved more than once, while neighbors and community networks were dispersed across the city.

URBAN RENEWAL, LAND ACQUISITION & IUPUI EXPANSION

The creation and expansion of IUPUI required hundreds of acres on the Near Westside, much of it occupied by a predominantly Black community. Indiana University quietly acquired residential properties through the Hoosier Realty Development Corporation, sometimes renting properties until they were eventually demolished. Over time, thousands of residents were displaced.

Although formal eminent-domain proceedings were comparatively rare, the power—and threat—of eminent domain shaped negotiations with homeowners. Oral histories describe residents being told that if they refused to sell, their property could ultimately be taken. Other accounts describe compensation that was insufficient to purchase comparable replacement housing, forcing longtime homeowners to begin again elsewhere.

Black-owned businesses were displaced as well. Some lost customers as surrounding homes and streets disappeared; others faced property acquisition or closure as the university campus and interstate system expanded. The result was not merely the removal of buildings. A network of Black homes, businesses, churches, neighbors, and community institutions was fragmented.

ABOUT THE PRICE OF PROGRESS

Published by IUPUI in 2010, *The Price of Progress: IUPUI, the Color Line, & Urban Displacement* draws on 29 oral-history interviews with Black people who lived, worked, worshipped, shopped, or attended school on the Near Westside.

Their memories help preserve a community whose physical landscape was dramatically altered by displacement, highway construction, urban renewal, and university expansion. The book reminds us that erasure does not require every trace of a community to disappear. It can also happen when people are displaced, familiar places vanish, and the connections between people, place, and memory become harder to see.

Oral histories help reconnect those pieces—preserving not only what happened to a neighborhood, but how the people who lived there experienced that change.

Progress can produce real public benefits while still imposing unequal costs. The book itself asks Indianapolis to hold both truths together.

WHO BENEFITS FROM PROGRESS—AND WHO PAYS ITS PRICE?

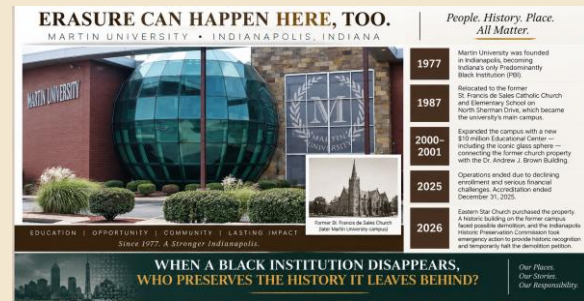
WHEN PLACE IS DISRUPTED

What happens to connection?

A home is more than property. A business is more than a building. A street is more than pavement. Places hold relationships, routines, livelihoods, memory, and belonging.



Safety Cab Company - Black-operated taxicab service in Indianapolis



MARTIN UNIVERSITY: A CONTEMPORARY CONNECTION

Martin University served Indianapolis's Black community for nearly five decades. After academic operations ended and the former campus changed ownership, a proposed demolition of the historic former St. Francis de Sales church prompted emergency preservation action in 2026. The moment raises a present-day question that echoes this guide: when an institution changes or disappears, who preserves the history, relationships, and community memory connected to the place it occupied?

HOMES & ROOTS

Relocation forced some families to leave homes and streets that had held generations of family life.

BUSINESSES & LIVELIHOODS

Black businesses lost physical space as well as neighborhood networks that had helped sustain them.

NEIGHBORS & NETWORKS

Displacement scattered neighbors who had lived, worshipped, worked, socialized, and cared for one another in close proximity.

MEMORY & BELONGING

When familiar places disappear, everyday pathways through which stories move from one generation to another can be disrupted too.

“The price was the displacement of a whole Black community—the dividends were not equal.” — Oral history in *The Price of Progress*

What happens to memory when the places that carried it disappear?

CONNECTIONS

One life. Many connections. One story connecting people, place, and time.



Herbert Grigsby Hawkins



Herbert & Adeline's shared headstone - Family memory carried forward across generations

Herbert Hawkins's story did not exist in isolation—and neither does the history of Indiana Avenue. His life connected family to community, work to place, business to opportunity, social networks to belonging, and one generation to another. Recovering his story created new connections between family memory and public history, archival records and living descendants, and Herbert's generation and ours.

That is the work of remembering—and reconnecting.

Recovery reconnects what time, change, displacement, and forgetting have pulled apart.

PERSON → FAMILY → COMMUNITY → PLACE → HISTORY → US

What connections become visible when we choose to remember—and what broken connections might we help restore?

FOLLOW THE TRACES

How to begin recovering a story

You do not need a complete family tree or a box full of documents. Begin with one name, one place, one photograph, one memory—or one unanswered question.

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ANOTHER STORY RECOVERED

Carrie Parker Taylor was the first African American woman to enroll at Indiana University, in 1898. Her story was largely forgotten until 2015, when IU Archives Director Dina Kellams found her name in an 1898 newspaper article. Her research led to Parker Taylor's descendants and restored the story to the university's public memory.

Different life. Different records. The same lesson: sometimes history is not gone—it is waiting for someone to reconnect the evidence.

THE RECORD SPEAKS

A single record can hold several clues at once: a name, address, employer, family relationship, date, and signature. Herbert's 1940 Selective Service registration card, for example, identifies "Local 120" as his employer and gives a workplace address.

The lesson: read the whole record—not only the line you originally came to find.

1 START WITH WHAT YOU KNOW

Names, nicknames, dates, addresses, workplaces, churches, schools, clubs, businesses, and family stories.

2 TALK TO PEOPLE

Ask relatives, neighbors, elders, former coworkers, church members, and community members what they remember.

3 STUDY PHOTOGRAPHS & OBJECTS

Signs, uniforms, buildings, cars, storefronts, handwritten notes, and ordinary objects can become clues.

4 SEARCH THE RECORD

Newspapers, directories, census records, obituaries, vital records, military registrations, property records, maps, and organizational records.

5 VISIT LIBRARIES & ARCHIVES

Librarians, archivists, and local-history collections can lead you to sources a basic internet search may never reveal.

6 PRESERVE WHAT YOU FIND

Save copies, record source information, label photographs, write down oral histories, and share what you learn.

WHAT CONNECTIONS DOES THIS STORY REVEAL?

People • Family • Place • Work • Community • Institutions • Generations

WE REMEMBER

Remembering is an act of connection

Herbert's story began as a family search, but it did not remain there. Following one life opened a path into the history of Indiana Avenue, the Near Westside, Black business, transportation, organizations, family, and place.

WHAT RECOVERY MAKES POSSIBLE

Recovery can return a person to family memory, reconnect a name to a place, and restore relationships among records that survived but had become separated from one another.

MEMORY DOES NOT PRESERVE ITSELF

Photographs can go unlabeled. Stories can disappear when the people who carry them are gone. Buildings can change or vanish. Records can remain in archives without anyone knowing how they fit together.

CONNECTION IS THE WORK

Remembering asks us to connect person to family, family to community, community to place, and the past to the present.

HERBERT'S STORY IS STILL TRAVELING

What was once a granddaughter's search now lives in family conversations, public history, archives, classrooms, community programs, and the people encountering Herbert's story today.

WE REMEMBER.

Because every memory matters.

The work of remembering begins when someone decides that a life, a place, or a story is worth carrying forward.

Every memory matters. The work of remembering begins when someone decides a story is worth carrying forward.

KEEP SEARCHING. KEEP ASKING. KEEP REMEMBERING.

Indianapolis resources for continuing the work

A recovered story rarely comes from one source. These institutions, collections, community voices, and creative works can help you keep following the trail.

Encyclopedia of Indianapolis

Explore people, places, events, organizations, and themes that have shaped Indianapolis.

Indianapolis Public Library

Use the Nina Mason Pulliam Indianapolis Special Collections Room, Center for Black Literature & Culture, Newspaper & Microfilm collection, Digital Indy, and library databases for local newspapers, genealogy, photographs, maps, books, and other primary sources.

The Indianapolis Recorder

Historic reporting can reveal Black businesses, organizations, social life, deaths, celebrations, advocacy, and community concerns that may not appear elsewhere.

The Indianapolis Star & Indianapolis News Archives

Search historic daily reporting, obituaries, advertisements, business notices, neighborhood coverage, and public events. Library databases and microfilm can provide access to years not freely available online.

Indiana Historical Society

Explore photographs, manuscripts, maps, family papers, organizational records, and other Indiana history collections.

IU Indianapolis University Library Special Collections and Archives

Explore university archives and collections documenting IUPUI/IU Indianapolis, the Near Westside, campus development, community history, photographs, publications, oral histories, and related records.

Indiana State Library

Use genealogy resources, city directories, newspaper microfilm, maps, government records, Hoosier State Chronicles, and Indiana Memory to search across Indiana history and digitized primary sources.

Indiana Archives and Records Administration / State Archives

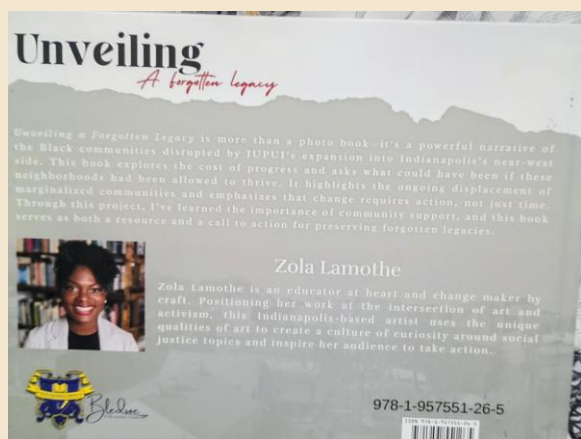
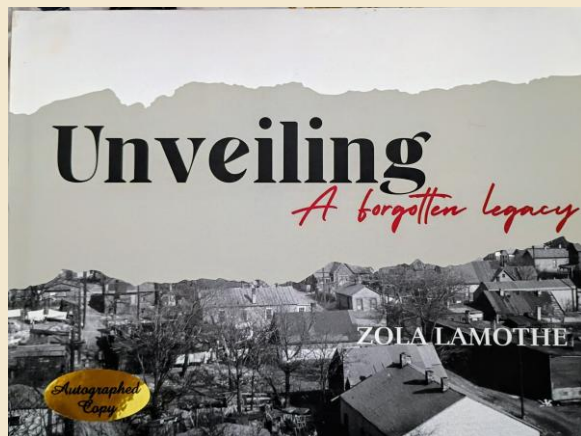
State government records, maps, photographs, and other public records can provide another route into Indiana history.

YOUR OWN FAMILY, COMMUNITY & CREATIVE HISTORY

Photograph albums, funeral programs, church records, letters, scrapbooks, oral histories, family Bibles, business papers, yearbooks, certificates, and everyday objects may hold evidence that exists nowhere else. Ask. Label. Record. Scan. Save. Share.

CONTINUE THE STORY

Reading, remembering, and carrying the work forward



Front and back covers of Unveiling a Forgotten Legacy

Zola Lamothe's *Unveiling a Forgotten Legacy* examines the Black communities disrupted by IUPUI's expansion on Indianapolis's Near Westside. Through photographs and community history, the book extends this guide's questions about displacement, ownership, generational wealth, memory, and what communities choose to preserve. It offers another path for understanding what can be lost when neighborhoods are transformed—and why documenting those stories matters.

SHARE A MEMORY. HONOR A LIFE. KEEP THE STORY ALIVE.

Dr. Michelle D. Dartis

Author • Historian • Storyteller • Founder, Leave A Mark Press LLC

Co-presented with *Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* and Indianapolis Public Library

Spirit & Place 2026 • Tuesday, November 10, 2026 • 5:30–8:00 PM • Central Library (CBLC) • Indianapolis

SOURCES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The records, collections, scholarship, and community memory behind the story

This companion guide draws on family-held records, historic newspapers, archival collections, oral histories, published scholarship, and contemporary public-history work. The sources below support the principal historical claims and images used throughout the guide.

HERBERT GRIGSBY HAWKINS & FAMILY HISTORY

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- Jones, Camike. “A ‘Kingpin,’ a Long-Lost Sister and a Family’s Untold Story.” Indianapolis Recorder, Dec. 31, 2025.
- Indianapolis Recorder archival reporting on Herbert Hawkins, including “Alleged Bootleg Cab Kingpin Calls City Officials ‘Unjust,’” Jan. 8, 1955, and 1957 coverage of his death and community standing.
- Herbert Grigsby Hawkins, Selective Service registration card, Oct. 16, 1940. Family-held copy; original federal registration record.
- Hawkins family archive: photographs of Herbert and Adeline Hawkins; Herbert portrait; family headstone photograph; family research notes and oral history.
- Indianapolis newspapers and vital records consulted for Hawkins family history, including the 1938 Hawkins-Hardy marriage-license notice and 1957 death notice.

INDIANA AVENUE, SEGREGATION & PLACE

- Encyclopedia of Indianapolis. “Indiana Avenue” and Indiana Avenue digital feature. Background on Black business, culture, segregation, urban renewal, and university expansion on the Near Westside.
- Encyclopedia of Indianapolis. “Madam Walker Legacy Center” and related Walker/Black-business entries. Context for the Walker Building and Indiana Avenue’s commercial life.
- Encyclopedia of Indianapolis. Residential Segregation in Indianapolis interactive feature, including the 1937 HOLC/redlining map.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Indianapolis, 1956, vol. 1A, sheet 19a. Used to locate the 614 Indiana Avenue/Walker Building area.
- Polk’s Indianapolis city directories and other city-directory records used to trace addresses, residents, businesses, and neighborhood change.

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- Mullins, Paul R., and Glenn S. White, eds. The Price of Progress: IUPUI, the Color Line, & Urban Displacement. IUPUI Office of External Affairs, 2010. Based on 29 oral-history interviews.
- IU Indianapolis / Paul R. Mullins research on the Near Westside, campus development, urban displacement, oral history, and the material legacy of IUPUI expansion.
- Lamothe, Zola. Unveiling a Forgotten Legacy. Artist publication/photographic public-history project on Black neighborhoods displaced by IUPUI expansion; see also Indiana Historical Society and Aurora PhotoCenter program materials.
- Flanner House Homes materials and historical documentation on the self-help housing program; approximately 181 homes were completed. Flanner House imagery credited to Flanner House of Indianapolis / Indiana Historical Society.

RECOVERY, ARCHIVES & CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS

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- Indiana University Indianapolis materials on Near Westside memory, place, campus history, and the continuing work of documenting displacement.

ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES & DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

- Indianapolis Public Library: Nina Mason Pulliam Indianapolis Special Collections Room; Center for Black Literature & Culture; Newspaper & Microfilm collections; Digital Indy; local-history databases.
- Indiana Historical Society: digital image collections and archival holdings, including Indianapolis Recorder, Bass Photo, Madam C. J. Walker, and Flanner House-related materials.
- IU Indianapolis University Library Special Collections and Archives: university records, Near Westside/IUPUI collections, photographs, publications, and oral-history materials.
- Indiana State Library: genealogy, city directories, maps, newspaper microfilm, Hoosier State Chronicles, and Indiana Memory.
- Indiana Archives and Records Administration / Indiana State Archives: state and local government records and digitized collections.
- Historic Indianapolis newspapers, especially the Indianapolis Recorder, Indianapolis News, and Indianapolis Star, accessed through archival databases, microfilm, and library collections.

IMAGE & DOCUMENT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Herbert Hawkins portrait; Herbert and Adeline Hawkins photograph; 614 Indiana Avenue filling-station photograph; registration card; and family headstone: Michelle D. Dartis/Hawkins family archive unless otherwise noted.
- Walker Theatre cover photograph: Indiana Historical Society.
 - Apex Taxi Drivers at Walker Theatre and Safety Cab Company imagery: Indiana Historical Society digital collections.
- Flanner House Homes construction photograph: Flanner House of Indianapolis, Indiana Historical Society.
- Carrie Parker Taylor portrait: Ashley Smith; used as a visual example of a story recovered through archival research.
- The Price of Progress book photograph and Unveiling a Forgotten Legacy front/back book photographs: photographs by Dr. Michelle D. Dartis of copies in her personal collection.

WITH GRATITUDE

- Encyclopedia of Indianapolis and Indianapolis Public Library, co-presenters of Herbert Hawkins’s Legacy on Indiana Avenue for Spirit & Place 2026.
- Archivists, librarians, historians, family members, community elders, oral-history participants, and preservationists whose work keeps Indianapolis history accessible.

Sources are presented in a public-history format for readability. Archival item-level citations and image-credit details may be expanded in future editions as additional records are identified.