INDIANAPOLIS 500 AND WEIR COOK AIRPORT PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM, 1922-1947

Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 PAA album
COLLECTION DATES:	1922-1947
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HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Indianapolis 500, 'The Greatest Spectacle in Racing' is a 500-mile automobile race that has been run at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway every year since 1911, except for during the war years 1917-1918 and 1942-1945. The race is traditionally held on Memorial Day weekend, and in more recent years, specifically on the Sunday. In 1947, the year in which the photos in this album were taken, the winning driver was Mauri Rose, who drove a Deidt Offy to victory.

The Indianapolis International Airport was first known as the Indianapolis Municipal Airport and was owned and operated by the City of Indianapolis and the Board of Airport Commissioners. The city formed an Airport Committee in 1928 to vet a variety of locations for a large airport that would be able to grow with the city and with increasing popularity of air travel. The 400-acre portion of farmland chosen for the airport site was six and nine tenths miles southwest of Monument Circle. Construction began in 1929 and the airport officially opened in September 1931. In 1944, the airport was renamed the Weir Cook Airport in honor of Col. H. Weir Cook, Indiana's first ace in World War I. Shortly after the name change, the structure of the airport also needed a change to accommodate an increased number of airlines serving Indianapolis and the increase in passengers, which had grown to 190,000 in 1946. In June 1954, construction began on a hangar, office building and a new, larger terminal building, which opened in 1956. The 1956 terminal was expanded and renovated in 1968. The 1960s and 1970s were also a time of great expansion at the airport, as the airport almost doubled in size and saw one million passengers through its gates in 1970. Other improvements were made as the airport continued to expand, such as a new runway system to accommodate larger aircraft, an air traffic control tower designed by I.M. Pei, an International Arrivals building, and a new Administration building. Controversy between the Airport Authority and some citizens and airport users erupted in 1976 when the decision was made to change the official name of the airport from Weir Cook to Indianapolis International. In the 1980s and 1990s, the number of passenger carriers went from 6 to 22, and cargo operations also increased significantly because the airport received designation as a Foreign Trade Zone. In addition, the Airport Authority was able to win a lot of new business from locally based American Trans Air, which built a hangar, maintenance center, and relocated corporate headquarters to the airport. U.S. Air and United Airlines also purchased space for maintenance centers, and the U.S. Postal Service established an Express Mail Hub facility. Most recently, needs for greater passenger and cargo service have only continued to increase, and the airport has continued to expand to keep up with the need. In 2005, the ground was broken for an entirely new terminal, parking, and support facilities. The new Indianapolis International Airport and the H. Weir Cook Terminal officially opened in November 2008.

Sources:

Indianapolis 500 Historical Stats. Race Results- Indianapolis 500- 1947.
https://www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com/events/indy500/history/historical-stats/race-stats/race-results/1947

"Indianapolis 500-Mile Race." Barrows, Robert G. and David J. Bodenhamer, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Collection Guide for M1080 Indianapolis Airport Authority Materials

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This album contains portraits and snapshots of people who are identified by only a first name or not at all. One photograph in the album was taken at a restaurant in Chicago, Illinois called the Down Beat Room, and a series of snapshots were taken at the Indiana Dunes, as the Pavilion can be seen in the background in one of the photographs. Another series of snapshots contained in the album are from a 1946 trip to Kansas City, Missouri. Finally, there are photos taken on Memorial Day weekend 1947 in Indianapolis. The first of that series of photographs feature the Indianapolis 500 with views from the covered stands across the track from the Pagoda and the leader board. The second series is shot around the Indianapolis airport, and feature a Chicago and Southern Airlines plane exterior, the exterior of the Roscoe Turner Aeronautical Corp. hangar, as well as a B29 in take off and few other views from the tarmac. The end of the album contains photographs from 1922 of an unidentified group gathering and participating in outdoor activities.

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