

Collection #
M1349
OM0658
BV5328-5332

**INDIANAPOLIS TRANSIT COMPANIES
COLLECTION, CA. 1864-1995**

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Processed by

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
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Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 9 manuscript boxes, 5 bound volumes, 4 oversize manuscript folders, 2 boxes of photographs, 2 cold storage color photograph boxes, 2 OVA photographs folders, 2 photograph albums, 16 8x10 acetate negative envelopes, 2 4x5 acetate negative envelopes, 4 envelopes 35mm acetate negatives

COLLECTION DATES: 1864-1995

PROVENANCE:

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Indianapolis Transit System Records, M0427; Indianapolis Street Railways Collection, OMB0020, BV 3038-3049; Indiana Railways Ledger and Minute Book, BV5106-5107; P0523 Indianapolis Street Transportation Album, P0523

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2009.0075

NOTES: Materials in cold storage need at least 4 hours to acclimate, so patrons should call ahead if they wish to view materials that are in cold storage.

Slides and negatives must be requested in advance and may be viewed by appointment only and with the assistance of library staff.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

From 1864-1877, the Citizen's Street Railway Company established the first streetcar system in Indianapolis. They operated mule-drawn cars on Illinois Street and steadily expanded their system to reach the neighborhoods of Irvington and Haughville. The system was then managed by Tom L. Johnson, another streetcar entrepreneur. The Chicago-based company, the Citizens' Street Railroad Company, purchased this system in 1888 where they changed the system to electric power.

The Indianapolis Street Railway Company, founded by Hugh J. McGowan, purchased the existing electric powered streetcar system from the Citizens' Street Railroad Company in 1899. McGowan also allowed interurban to use Indianapolis Street Railway Company's tracks, and bought the traction line to Broad Ripple in 1902. By 1903, the Indianapolis Traction and Terminal Company, another company managed by McGowan, leased this streetcar system, built route extensions and constructed the Indianapolis Traction Terminal Building (1904). The Traction Terminal Building served as a train shed that covered nine sets of tracks and all but 13 interurban lines crossed at terminal located on Market Street near the Indiana State Capitol Building. After McGowan's death in 1911, the company suffered financial problems. The two companies merged as the Indianapolis Street Railway Company in 1919.

Beginning in 1923, the People's Motor Coach Company operated and scheduled bus routes between Monument Circle and Riverside Park. The People's Motor Coach Company were allowed to expand their routes if they did not use streetcars. However, the Indianapolis Street Railway Company also began to operate buses in 1925 to extend their bus routes on Capitol Avenue and Central Streets to points north of 54th Street. Indianapolis Street Railways Company purchased all of People's Motor Coach shares in 1927 to form an integrated system. The bus routes mainly went to outlying suburbs, while the streetcars stayed in the urbanized and densely populated areas of Indianapolis.

Indianapolis Railways Inc. purchased the system in 1932. This company (renamed Indianapolis Transit System in 1953) became the first system and operators to use trackless trolleys in downtown traffic. Slowly the new trackless trolleys replaced the traditional streetcars. The last streetcar lines were converted to trackless trolleys routes in 1953. Bus routes completely replaced the trackless trolley lines in 1957.

The Indianapolis Transit System remained in operation until the city of Indianapolis took over transportation in 1975. Established as the Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation where it originally operated under the name Metro Bus Company, and subsequently renamed as IndyGo in 1996. Today, the IndyGo bus system is still operated and maintained by the city of Indianapolis.

Sources:

Bodenhamer, David J. and Robert G. Barrows. *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Materials in the collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This Indianapolis Transit Companies papers consist of seven series.

Series 1: Transit Routes and Schedules, 1864-1984

This series contains maps of Indianapolis streetcar and bus routes from 1864 to 1984. These maps depict the changes in the streetcar and bus routes over time. Series 1 also contains materials related to daily transit schedules from 1940-1972, night owl buses from 1937-1950, and Indianapolis school and industrial bus schedules in 1960. Materials in this series also include transit transfer tickets from 1952-1957.

Series 2: Record Keeping, 1864-1982

Series 2 contains materials related to reports, statistics, and other miscellaneous records from the following private transit companies in Indianapolis: Citizen's Street Railway Company, Indianapolis Street Railways Company, People's Motor Coach Company, Indianapolis Railways Inc., and the Indianapolis Transit System. This records include Citizen's Street Railway Company account ledgers, trolley service and replacement reports, vehicle registry and statistics, Passenger Car and Mileage Reports (1906-1953), transit route name and number report, People's Motor Court Company Income Reports (1931-1932), payroll ledger (1940-41), Indianapolis Railways Inc. employee list, and other efficiency reports.

Series 3: Property Titles and Mortgages, 1894-1976

Series 3 contains materials related to property titles, mortgages, and deeds from the following private transit companies of Indianapolis: Citizen's Street Railway Company, Indianapolis Street Railways Company, Indianapolis Traction and Terminal Company, People's Motor Coach Company, Indianapolis Railways Inc., and the Indianapolis Transit System. The materials include abstract titles and deeds for various properties, mortgages and loan files, and other legal contracts from the previously mentioned companies (1894-1976).

Series 4: Institutional History and Annual Reports, 1922-1961

Series 4 consists of institutional histories of the Indianapolis transit system from 1864-1960. These materials include notes, rough drafts, and final copies of the report *History of Indianapolis Street Railway Company*, written by John O. Kain. This series also includes Annual Reports for Indianapolis Street Railways Company, Indianapolis Railways, and Indianapolis Railways Inc. from 1917 to 1972.

Series 5: Newspaper Clippings and Newsletters, 1915-1995

Series 5 contains newspaper clippings collected by the following transit companies of Indianapolis: Indianapolis Street Railways Company, Indianapolis Traction and Terminal Company, People's Motor Coach Company, Indianapolis Railways Inc., and the Indianapolis Transit System. The newspaper clippings and magazine articles are from 1915-1995. This series also has materials related to internal newsletters and publications from Indianapolis Railways Inc. and Peoples Motor Coach Company (1940-1950s).

Series 6: Visuals, 1880-1972

Series 6 contains visual material (black and white photographs, color photographs, and negatives) from the following transit companies of Indianapolis: Indianapolis Street

Railways Company, Indianapolis Traction and Terminal Company, People's Motor Coach Company, Indianapolis Railways Inc., and the Indianapolis Transit System. The black and white photographs include streetcars, streetcar routes (1880s-1950s), buses, bus drivers, Indianapolis Traction Terminal Building, West Washington Street and Indianapolis executives, Indianapolis Railways banquets, and Indianapolis Railways workers. The color photographs include streetcars and streetcar routes from the late 1940s to 1950s.

Series 7: Buses Systems Outside of Indianapolis

Series 7 contains materials related to any bus or transit system outside of Indiana. The materials include photographs from the Schenectady, New York and Wilkes-Barre, records PA Railroads, Cincinnati, Ohio and Cleveland, Ohio transit systems, and color photographs from the Dayton Regional Transit Authority.

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Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 39

Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 40

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 1

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 2

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 3

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 4

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 5

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 6

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 7

Cold Storage:
Color Photographs,
Box 2, Folder 8