

## Whitely History #1

In the United States, there are almost one thousand streets, avenues, or squares named after Martin Luther King Jr. Muncie is among these places. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard is a busy avenue from north to south between McGalliard Road and the Cardinal Greenway (close to Hackley Street). However, its name is rather recent. In April 2003, Randall Sims, the then-president of the Whitely Community Council, made a request to the City of Muncie to rename Broadway Avenue in honor of the civil rights advocate, assassinated in 1968. What seemed to be a simple process turned into a bone of contention. Some business owners on Broadway objected to the change and others even said "it's only asphalt. So why the fuzz?" After federal mediation and endless committee meetings, mayor Dan Canan issued an executive order in 2004 to rename only parts of the boulevard.

In 1892, a man named William Needham Whitely (also Whiteley), or the "Reaper King," founded the neighborhood of Whitely. Choosing Muncie, Whitely set up significant enterprises, such as the Whitely Harvesting Machine Company. During this time, he had recently patented his "Champion Reaper," a harvester/mowing machine that completely revolutionized the agricultural industry. Whitely, along with his brother Amos, would go on to found several factory sites within the area besides the Whitely Harvesting Machine Company. These would include the Whitely Malleable Castings Company and the Whitely Land Company. Despite setbacks, including a devastating 1894 factory fire, the Whitely area, annexed by Muncie in 1919, evolved into a diverse and resilient neighborhood.

Source: Ball State Digital Media Repository

## Community in Whitely #2

### Centennial Center

The Buley Center is a community center for Whitely that was at risk of closing in 2009. The Center was revamped with help from Ball State and community support. It has community spaces and is currently being utilized by the Boys and Girls Club of Muncie. Much like Motivate Our Minds (MOMs) and Longfellow Elementary School, there are many after-school programs available for students in Whitely. The Buley Center offers options for middle and high school students.

The Whitely Neighborhood Association purchased land located on 1208 East Centennial Avenue in the neighborhood. The Centennial Center is planned to be the economic and community hub of Whitely and Northeast Muncie! The Center is planning on housing many community revitalization organizations, including financial help, business aid, business development, widespread educational resources, and even a neighborhood clinic. The project, slated to begin building in 2024, will also house the current food pantry.

Source: Whitely Community Council

## MA.S.T.S. of Whitely #3

This project proposes an innovative nine-sheet informational series focused on distinct locales within the Whitely community. A dual-sided newsletter will be distributed, covering comprehensive aspects of a particular site. The front side will adopt a journalistic approach, detailing the historical and cultural importance of a specific location, along with any other important information within Whitely. The reverse side of the newsletter will showcase a sectional geographic representation. The nine parts can be assembled to a poster-size information sheet telling about important places in the neighborhood and a complete cartographic picture of Whitely. The double-sided newsletter will serve both educational and navigational purposes.

We are the students of the GEOG434 class at Ball State University, and through the Fall 2023 semester we have been working on a project for the Whitely Community that consists of a map of the community that can be put together when the sheets are flipped over. The original project had these "newsletters" coming out in a weekly format, but that was switched due to time constraints. We hope this is an informational project that can be used until it needs to be updated, whenever that may be. Thank you for letting us into your community and learning more about the rich history this area has. This work is part of M.A.S.T.S. of Whitely, a Mapping and Story-Telling System for the community.

Sincerely,  
Dani Sipp, Eric Ross, Hasinee Atigala,  
Jacob Wrangler, Kevin Misbach,  
Megan Thompson, Oliver Moster, Sam Davis,  
Tyler Miller, Yessica Vazquez,  
& Dr. Jörn Seemann  
Muncie, December 2023

-Kevin Misbach  
9/5/2023

## Northern Whitely #4

### Creston Addition

Founded during the 1890s gas boom, Whitely emerged as a thriving industrial hub in Muncie. Despite setbacks, including a devastating 1894 factory fire, Whitely transformed into a robust and diverse community, showcasing the enduring spirit of residents. Annexed in 1919, it became Muncie's most integrated community in the 1920s and 1930s. The Whitely legacy, marked by business-minded spirit and community bonds, persists 130 years later. Today, Whitely stands as a core of Muncie's "re-greening," connecting communities through the Cardinal Greenway and the White River Greenway in its south, McCulloch Park, and nature preserves, embodying the enduring spirit of Muncie's neighborhoods.

The Creston Addition forms a rectangle between Macedonia Ave and Elgin St from West to East and Centennial Ave and Streeter Ave from North to South. The area of 40 acres with approximately 200 lots was approved by the City of Muncie administration in 1944. The covenant of this new neighborhood determined the rules for building (for example, number and size of houses in the lots, building material, and distance from street). The rules did not allow any tents, trailers, or discarded automobiles on the properties. Outside toilets could only be used "if built with concrete vaults... inaccessible to insects or animals." Item 14 of the covenant identifies the addition as an exclusively white area: "No person of any race other than the Caucasian shall own, use or occupy any lot."

## Churches of Whitely #5

### Against Injustice:

**First Baptist Church: The Union Missionary Baptist Church**

The Union Missionary Baptist Church was founded in 1905. By 1909, the foundation structure of the church was completed. Prior to Union Missionary Baptist Church, Muncie had had few to no black churches that community members could attend. The introduction of this new church made it a huge accomplishment to the Whitely community. In the present day, over 25 missionaries have been introduced to the Baptist Church in addition to a band, choir, a Bible study group, and the remodeling of the church in 2008.

**Against Injustice:** In front of Shaffer Chapel, there's a unique marker, and this place has a fascinating history. Once Muncie's oldest public school, it's now on Indiana Landmarks' registry for its special architecture. But what truly sets it apart is a tragic event from 1930, when after a lynching in Marion, the bodies of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith, two young Black teenagers, were brought to Shaffer Chapel, where the community members secured the teens' rights for a proper burial, resisting threats from the Ku Klux Klan. Shaffer Chapel stands as a reminder that people must unite against injustice.

**Greater Mt. Calvary Church of God in Christ**, originally referred to as Mt. Calvary Church became one of the first spiritual landmarks in Muncie in the early 1930s. Mother Tina Boone, from Fort Wayne, IN, made her way down to Muncie to conduct a 60-day tent revival. Bad weather conditions followed shortly after, so she and her husband decided to have a house rented out from Fort Wayne and brought down to where the current parking lot of Greater Mt. Calvary is located now. This lasted up until 2001, when the church was renamed as "Greater Mt. Calvary Church of God in Christ" with a new building in its current location.

## Social Programs in Whitely #6

### The Debonair Club

Motivate Our Minds (MOMs) is an afterschool education program for children started by Mary Dollison and the late Raushanah Shabazz in 1987. Mrs. Dollison started the MOMs program after teaching at Longfellow Elementary School and realizing that the children of Whitely needed more help and guidance than just school was providing them with.

The program started as a 6-week summer program taught in Mrs. Dollison's home. MOMs has since evolved into a full-time afterschool program in its own campus building and has continued to provide enriching education and experiences for children for over 30 years.

Founded in 1952, the Debonair Club of Muncie was a formal men's club at 1324 N Gavin Street created for and by African American men to find community and support. At this time, minorities were excluded from most white establishments and thus lacked any way to formally gather outside of their own homes. The club would go on to have many members including the first president, Richard Mitchell, the man with the original idea, Otis Edward, and Hurley Goodall, famous activist and political representative. The Debonair Club continues to meet for planned occasions and has been prone to participate in philanthropy for the betterment of the Black community.

Source: Debonair Club of Muncie Facebook Page

## McCulloch Park #7

McCulloch Park now stands on the same grounds where the Whitely Harvesting Machine Co. once stood. The company officially opened its one-story floor with a fireproof roof on June 3, 1893. When the plant went into full operation, Mr. William N. Whitely, the owner, employed nearly 200 people. On May 6, 1894, the Whitely community noticed flames covering the entire building.

The reason behind this fire is still unknown, but it was believed that the extremely hot stoves in the paint room had fallen over. At the time, there were no fire extinguishers in the building, and damages ran up to \$250,000. This became the short-lived period of the Whitely Harvesting Machine Co.

The turn of the century brought many innovations into factories that help relieve the work week. With more time being spent outside of work, workers turned to the number one sport in America at the time: BASEBALL! McCulloch Park housed Muncie's first ever Professional Baseball Team—the Muncie Fruit Jars. The team finished their inaugural season 4-10 in 1906 before being disbanded for a year. They resumed in 1908 with a 10-14 record placing 4<sup>th</sup> in the Interstate Major League.

Between the years 1943 and 1945 the Pittsburgh Pirates used McCulloch Park as a spring training facility and even played a few preseason games. After 1945 the Pirates left, which opened the opportunity for the Cincinnati Reds to start a Minor League team, the Muncie Reds. This ran for several years before ending in 1950. Unfortunately, in 1951 the wooden diamond caught fire and burned down completely. The diamond was replaced by the stands, and the history of the field remains nothing but distant memory to few.

Source: Ball State Digital Media Repository

## Southern Whitely #8

### Riverview Park

In most areas around the White River, there are levees or floodwalls that reduce the amount of water that could get into residential areas, but there are still parts of the Whitely neighborhood that are in an area that could be affected by a historic flood.

Parts of McCulloch Park and areas south of Lowell St. are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to be at risk of water damage if a historic flood happened. These areas have different construction guidelines that must be followed, and Riverview park happens to lie in this area.

Riverview Park has recently been under the process of renovation after being a green space for many years. New additions to the park include pickleball courts, playground equipment, a walking trail, and other things. A splash pad has already been added to the park space, but engineers have run into a snag. The entire area of the park is in a flood plain like most areas around the White River are. Though there have been setbacks and problems, the park is expected to be open and fully operational by summer 2024.

Source: FEMA Flood Map Service

## Community in Whitely #9

Founded in 1999 by Jaynie McCulloch, Precious Hearts Development Center is a non-profit company created for the sole purpose of providing child-care to low-income families and underprivileged children. It currently sits on 801 North Gavin Street within the neighborhood of Whitely in Muncie, Indiana and is open from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM for children from the ages of three to twelve. Precious Hearts provides free tutoring, meals, and has become a neighborhood hub for child socialization within the community. This is not to mention the organization's external commitment to the Whitely community.

Hurley C. Goodall was born on May 23rd, 1927, in Muncie Indiana, and passed away on May 12th, 2021, in his Whitely home. Goodall was a lifetime resident of Muncie and an active member of the Whitely community. Goodall accomplished much in his long life and achieved major milestones in history. Goodall was the first black firefighter in Muncie in 1958. He then went on to be the first black man on the Muncie school board in 1970 and was the only black member until he left the board in 1993. In 1978 Goodall made state history and became the first black representative in the Indiana House of Representatives. He served as a democratic representative in the House from 1978 to 1992. He also served as the Indiana Democratic Party secretary from 1989 to 2004.

Source: Ball State Digital Media Repository