

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name Martin Place Historic District

historic

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by north and south sides of Martin Place
and 500, 498, and 450 N. Main--See Continuation Sheet not for publication

city, town Franklin N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Johnson code 081

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See Continuation Page

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, Johnson County Courthouse

street & number Johnson County Courthouse

city, town Franklin state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Martin Place Historic District is a cohesive group of late nineteenth and early twentieth century homes which are an excellent collection of such architectural styles as Queen Anne, Italianate, Craftsman, American Four-Square and Carpenter-Builder. The district is composed of the north and south sides of Martin Place and three houses (500, 498, and 450) along the west side of the adjacent North Main Street. In a city with abundant nineteenth century architectural styles, the district is one of Franklin's best collections of representative examples.

As photo number one indicates, Martin Place is a tree-lined street with all of the houses maintaining a similar shallow setback. Sidewalks likewise line both sides of the street between the trees and houses. To the east of Martin Place is a railroad and a large vacant lot used as a coal yard from c.1919 to c.1950 (photo #2). The railroad forms a distinct boundary for the district and clearly separates it from the houses on Water Street (photo #3). The western end of Martin Place intersects with North Main Street which similarly, is lined with mature trees (photo #4). Along the street the sidewalks are separated from the curb by a narrow strip of grass. While the houses along North Main Street occupy a similar setback to those along Martin Place, the Main Street lots possess a steeper grade.

To the south of the district boundary on North Main Street, the streetscape is similar, however the majority of houses have been significantly altered and the street is dotted with intrusions. Immediately north of the northern district boundary the road forks to form North Main Street and Graham Avenue (photo #5). Houses in this area are smaller and are typically of a later twentieth century design. Of the 18 houses within the district five rated outstanding in the 1985 Johnson County Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. There are a total of 28 buildings in the historic district. Only one, (a modern garage behind 498 North Main Street) is non-contributing. There is 1 contributing structure (iron fence at 18 Martin Place) and 0 non-contributing structures. There is 1 contributing object (historical marker) and 0 non-contributing objects. There are 0 contributing and non-contributing sites in the district.

The Martin Place Historic District contains architectural styles which are scattered throughout Franklin. However, the district contains a concentration of some of the most prestigious homes in the area. Once hailed as a esteemed residential district the area is regaining recognition following several years of neglect and abuse.

The oldest house within the district is a former farmhouse located at 500 North Main Street (photo #6). Captain John P. Banta built this Greek Revival house in 1850. In characteristic Greek Revival styling, the main facade is symmetrically divided into three bays with a low-pitched gable roof with returns. The central bay, which contains a centered pedimented gable, is delineated by pilasters which serve to accentuate the classical details.

The centrally located entrance is flanked by three-quarter side lights and has a transom. Atop the porch roof, which is supported by wrought iron brackets, is a wrought iron balcony. An offset brick chimney located at each gable facade further contributes to the symmetry of the front of the house. A veranda highlights the southern facade and is decorated with ornamental brackets and jigsawn woodwork.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1850-c.1925 **Builder Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Martin Place Historic District of Franklin, Indiana, is an architecturally significant concentration of highly ornate and modest representations of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture. Regarded by many older residents of the city as the former premier residential area of Franklin, the Martin Place Historic District exhibits architecture ranging from the classic lines of Greek Revival, through the flamboyant Queen Anne to the simplicity of Carpenter-Builder and the Bungalow.

The history of the district precedes the platting of either Martin Place or the adjacent Christina Ellis addition of North Main Street by several years. As early as November 1838, sixteen years after the organization of Johnson County, the area currently known as Martin Place hosted the first fair in the county. A plaque currently marks the site of the first fair held in the woods then owned by Garrett C. Bergen (photo #17).¹

Approximately 275 acres which included the Martin Place Historic District existed as the farm land of Captain John P. Banta. In 1850 Banta constructed the Greek Revival farmhouse which now sits at 500 North Main Street. In addition to his large land holdings, Captain Banta served as president of the First National Bank of Franklin.

Architecturally the Banta house (photo #6) contains all of the elements which make it an outstanding example of the Greek Revival style, and the only such representative in the district. The house at 500 North Main Street possesses the symmetry and classical lines typical of this style. The central bay with pediment supported on pilasters echos elements of a Greek temple. The central entrance with side lights and transom is also indicative of the style so popular throughout Indiana during the mid-nineteenth century.

In 1887 Christina Ellis, daughter of Captain John Banta, platted a block of land along North Main Street. Christina and her husband, Captain William Ellis occupied the house at 500 North Main Street several years before ownership passed to their daughter, Mrs. Kittie Smith. In addition to service in the Civil War, Captain William Ellis served as councilman of the third ward of Franklin from 1875 to 1881.

Circa 1860 Dr. John O. and Charity Denton Martin constructed the first house on Martin Place--a brick Italianate (photo #7). In 1884 Dr. and Mrs. Martin platted the Martin Place addition on land purchased from Captain John Banta. Dr. Martin, a dentist by profession, is described as "... one of the leading men in the procuring of the charter of the City of Franklin."² During his political career, Dr. Martin served as clerk of Franklin from 1861 to 1868. Considered an influential and respected man in the Franklin community, Martin also assisted in the construction of the city school building. As was the fate with numerous other homes within the district, the Martin House at 18 Martin Place underwent a series of owners before eventually being divided into apartments during World War II. It is however, a single family residence once again.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Banta, D.D. History of Johnson County, Indiana. Chicago: Brant & Fuller, 1888; reprint ed., Evansville, IN.: Unigraphic, Inc., 1970.

See Continuation Page

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approx. 1 acre

Quadrangle name Franklin

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6
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5	8	1	4	3	0
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4	3	7	0	8	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

1	6
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5	8	1	4	2	5
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4	3	7	0	8	1	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

1	6
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5	8	1	2	1	0
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4	3	7	0	8	1	0
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D

1	6
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5	8	1	2	1	0
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4	4	7	0	8	9	0
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E

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F

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Page

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title F. Eric Utz, Director Indianapolis Regional Office
Suzanne T. Rollins, Preservation Historian

organization Historic Landmarks Foundation
of Indiana

date January 9, 1986

street & number 1028 North Delaware Street

telephone 317/638-5264

city or town Indianapolis,

state Indiana 46202

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Michael A. Hartz for J. M. Redman

title Indiana SHPO

date May 6, 1987

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation sheet Martin Place Hist. Dist. Item number 2 and 4 Page 1 of 1

Inclusive addresses:	1 Martin Place	450 North Main Street
	11 "	498 "
	14 "	500 "
	18 "	
	27 "	
	53 "	
	60 "	
	65 "	
	80 "	
	81 "	
	86 "	
	94 "	
	98-100 "	
	99 "	

Item Number 4

Current Owners:

1 Martin Place	- Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Wenning,	18 Martin Place
2 Martin Place	- Mr. and Mrs. Larry Striebeck	
11 Martin Place	- Mrs. Deloris J. Cummings	
14 Martin Place	- Mr. and Mrs. Michael G. Beidler	
18 Martin Place	- Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Wenning,	18 Martin Place
27 Martin Place	- Mr. Duane Roberts	
53 Martin Place	- Lou O. De Witt	
60 Martin Place	- Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Wenning,	18 Martin Place
65 Martin Place	- Mrs. Bernice Littleton	
80 Martin Place	- Mr. Elvin Alder	
81 Martin Place	- Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Wenning,	18 Martin Place
86 Martin Place	- Mr. John Cole	
94 Martin Place	- Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Wenning,	18 Martin Place
98-100 Martin Place	- Ms. Sandy Mullinaro	
99 Martin Place	- Ms. Estil L. Cox	

450 North Main Street	- Mr. Charles M. Hoffman
498 North Main Street	- Judge Richard M. Vandivier
500 North Main Street	- Mr. Ted Grossnickle

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Item number 7

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The house at 18 Martin Place is another early farmhouse within the district (photo #7). Constructed c.1860 for the platters of the street, Dr. John O. Martin and his wife, Charity Denton, the Italianate house sits on land purchased from Captain Banta. The brick house possesses numerous typical Italianate features, such as the low-pitched hipped roof, paired brackets, and limestone window improvements. A massive limestone bay window projects from the main facade. The bay has stone quoins and a wrought iron balustrade on top. The windows are full arch openings with keystones. The remaining two windows of the main facade have segmental arch limestone frames, likewise with keystones. The main entrance is recessed within a full arch limestone opening with a keystone; an arched transom is located above the door.

The Martin Place Historic District also contains several excellent Queen Anne houses. Among them are 498 North Main Street, and 2 and 14 Martin Place. The current revitalization efforts are reflected by these structures. Numbers 2 and 14 Martin Place represent high styled examples of Queen Anne architecture which demonstrate the lavish detailing associated with the style. Both recently rehabilitated structures highlight their ornamentation through multiple paint colors.

The Tarlton House at 2 Martin Place (photo #8) is distinguished by the sunburst and fishscale shingles on the main facade. The irregular massing of the c.1892 house is accentuated by several gables. Two offset brick chimneys further add to the asymmetrical appearance of the house. The porch, which has two gabled entrances, has turned posts and brackets. The one-over-one double-hung sash windows have plain, flat wood surrounds.

The house at 14 Martin Place (photo #9) is a later, transitional Queen Anne house. Constructed c.1902 for Henry Murray, the interior reflects Colonial Revival styling. The original porch, which was removed in the 1960s, reflected elements of Colonial Revival through the classical columns and pedimented entrance. The present owner elected to reconstruct a new porch which reflects the Queen Anne style of the house. The most striking design elements are the turrets located on the western side of the house. The turrets, in conjunction with the multi-gabled roof, contribute to the irregular massing which is characteristic of Queen Anne architecture. While decorative relief wood carvings and Queen Anne windows on the turrets reflect nineteenth century styling, the corner pilasters and entablature window molding represent a gradual transition toward the twentieth century.

The Freeman-Winslow House at 498 North Main Street (photo #10), constructed c.1898, represents an example of a less ornamental structure, which nonetheless contains several elements of Queen Anne detailing. Asymmetry, carved relief woodwork, and jigsaw porch posts, hallmarks of the Queen Anne style, decorate the main facade. The overhang of the front gable on the main facade is supported by wood brackets. Alterations on the exterior of the house are in the form of skylights, replacement windows on the north facade, and enlargement of the attic fanlight.

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Two more vernacular houses in the district are 86 and 94 Martin Place (photos #11 and #12 respectively). Both houses, which date to c.1905 reflect the continuation of Victorian design influences into the early twentieth century. The similar asymmetrical massing with complex roof lines, the wrap-around front porches, as well as the interest in such surface ornament as decorative shingle or spindle work are definite holdovers from the late nineteenth century.

Another house which dates to the early years of platted Martin Place is the brick one-and-a-half story Carpenter-Builder structure at 80 Martin Place (photo #13). The house, constructed c.1880, is simple in detailing and ornamentation. The overhang of the front gable roof is supported by carved wood brackets. The window openings have radiating voussoirs with sigmental arch windows. The side porch is supported by simple wood posts with molded caps to give the appearance of squared Doric columns. Above the main entrance, which is located on the porch, is a transom.

Several other relatively plain Carpenter-Builder houses are located along Martin Place. Among them are 1, 11, 27, and 98-100 (the only double in the district). Each one, although altered by the addition of aluminum siding, reflects the simple lines characteristic of this style.

The residence at 65 Martin Place appears to be the oldest house on the south side of the street (photo #14). Title research indicates an approximate construction date of 1890 for this two story, frame, Carpenter-Builder house. This very simple house underwent remodeling in the 1940s. A porch was removed from the front of the house and a new projecting gabled entryway added. Carved wood brackets, plain window surrounds, and a small diamond shaped attic vent enhance the main facade of this house.

Houses at 53 and 81 Martin Place provide examples of more recent architecture constructed within the district. The American-Four Square at 81 Martin Place (photo #15) is a good example of a very common twentieth century architectural style. This particular house, constructed c.1914 for Mr. Fremont Miller, has a low-pitched hipped roof and central dormer. It also has wide eaves which emphasize its horizontal proportions. Simplicity defines the house through the plain window and door enframingent as well as the modest porch across the entire front,

Number 53 Martin Place (photo #16), built c. 1925, likewise lacks the exuberant ornamentation reflected in the older homes of the district. Here too the jerkinhead gable and sloping lines of the roof emphasize the horizontal. The banded casement windows at the east corner and three-over-one double hung sash windows present bungalow style features.

The Martin Place Historic District presents an interesting cross section of architectural styles ranging from exuberant Queen Anne and Italianate houses to the simple Carpenter-Builder vernacular styles. Each house demonstrates the contribution made to American architecture by those styles and also documents in part the history of Franklin, Indiana.

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Paired brackets, a low-pitched hipped roof, rounded and segmental arches are the identifying Italianate features of this home. The massive limestone bay window east of the main door is a distinctive architectural element more frequently associated with Italian Villa design than the more formal-Italianate townhouse format. The Martin House is an outstanding example of the most predominant architectural style in Indiana in the late nineteenth century.

In addition to Greek Revival and Italianate architecture, the Queen Anne style is well represented among the houses in the district. The multiple design features of the homes at 498 North Main Street, and 2 and 14 Martin Place combine to form a compendium of Queen Anne architectural elements. Their spindled porches, and decorative shingles are all hallmarks of the style, as are their asymmetrical masses which emphasize the perpendicular. The Tarlton House at 2 Martin Place, (photo #8) and the houses at 14 Martin Place (photo #9) and 498 North Main Street (photo #10) provide outstanding examples of the Queen Anne style and display numerous identifying features.

Two of the older houses in the district are constructed in the characteristically simple Carpenter-Builder style. Italianate inspired details such as carved wood brackets and radiating voussoirs are the only form of ornamentation on the vernacular house at 80 Martin Place (photo #13). Constructed c.1880, this small brick house is one of the most modest buildings within the district. However, it provides a good example of the prevalent nineteenth century architectural style of the great majority of buildings.

The house at 65 Martin Place (photo #14), built in c.1890 is the oldest house on the south side of the street.³ Although altered in the 1940s by the addition of a new entryway, the identifying Carpenter-Builder elements remain as seen in the simple window trim, carved attic vent, and bracketed gables.

The Bungalow qualities of 53 Martin Place (photo #16) make this house an interesting transitional structure. It is noticeably more simple and less massive than the Queen Anne houses. While the height and massing of 53 Martin Place are atypical of the Bungalow style, such elements as the long slope of the roof and four-over-one windows contribute to the Bungalow appearance. Constructed c.1925, 53 Martin Place is the newest house in the district.

In addition to Captain Banta and Dr. Martin, numerous influential people resided in the Martin Place Historic District throughout the late nineteenth century and into the 1930s. Politicians, merchants, attorneys, and businessmen led to the establishment of the Martin Place area as an enviable address. Such men as John H. Tarlton (2 Martin Place), deputy auditor of Johnson County from 1878-86; Fremont Miller (81 Martin Place), former prosecuting attorney and later judge of the Johnson-Brown Circuit Court; Robert Todd (500 North Main Street), Vice President of the Citizen's National Bank; Roy C. Bryant (14 Martin Place), Mayor of Franklin from 1930-34 and the building contractor responsible for such structures as the Franklin Masonic Home, the Indiana Board of Agriculture Building at the State Fairgrounds, and buildings at Franklin College; and Neil Godwin (11 Martin Place), local merchant and former chairman of the Indiana State highway Commission, are responsible for the area's illustrious image.

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Although the Martin Place Historic District reigned prestigious during the late nineteenth century and maintained its reputation through the 1930s, attitudes were not always so favorable to the area. The mid-to-late 1940s witnessed a drastic change in building use within the district. With Franklin's close proximity to the military facility, Camp Atterbury, the city became a commuter town for the enlisted officers of the base. The first change in the district took the form of rented rooms during World War II.⁴ It was not until the early 1950s that some of the larger houses were actually split into individual apartments. The house at 81 Martin Place, divided into three apartments c.1953, became the first house on the street split as such. The house at 14 Martin Place quickly followed the trend to accommodate more residents. Other homes became rental properties; absentee landlords were common. By the 1960s the reputation of the district reversed itself; Martin Place became avoidable rather than enviable. The 1970s witnessed a slow but positive trend toward the rehabilitation of several district homes.

Today, much of the Martin Place Historic District is returning to its original splendor. Aluminum siding covers a few houses, but numerous recent rehabilitations continue to spark interest in the preservation of the area and improve its architectural and aesthetic appearance.

ENDNOTES

¹D.D. Banta, History of Johnson County, Indiana, Unigraphic, Inc. 1970; p.190

²Ibid., p. 632

³Interview with Mrs. Bernice Littleton, Franklin, Indiana, 30 September 1986

⁴Ibid

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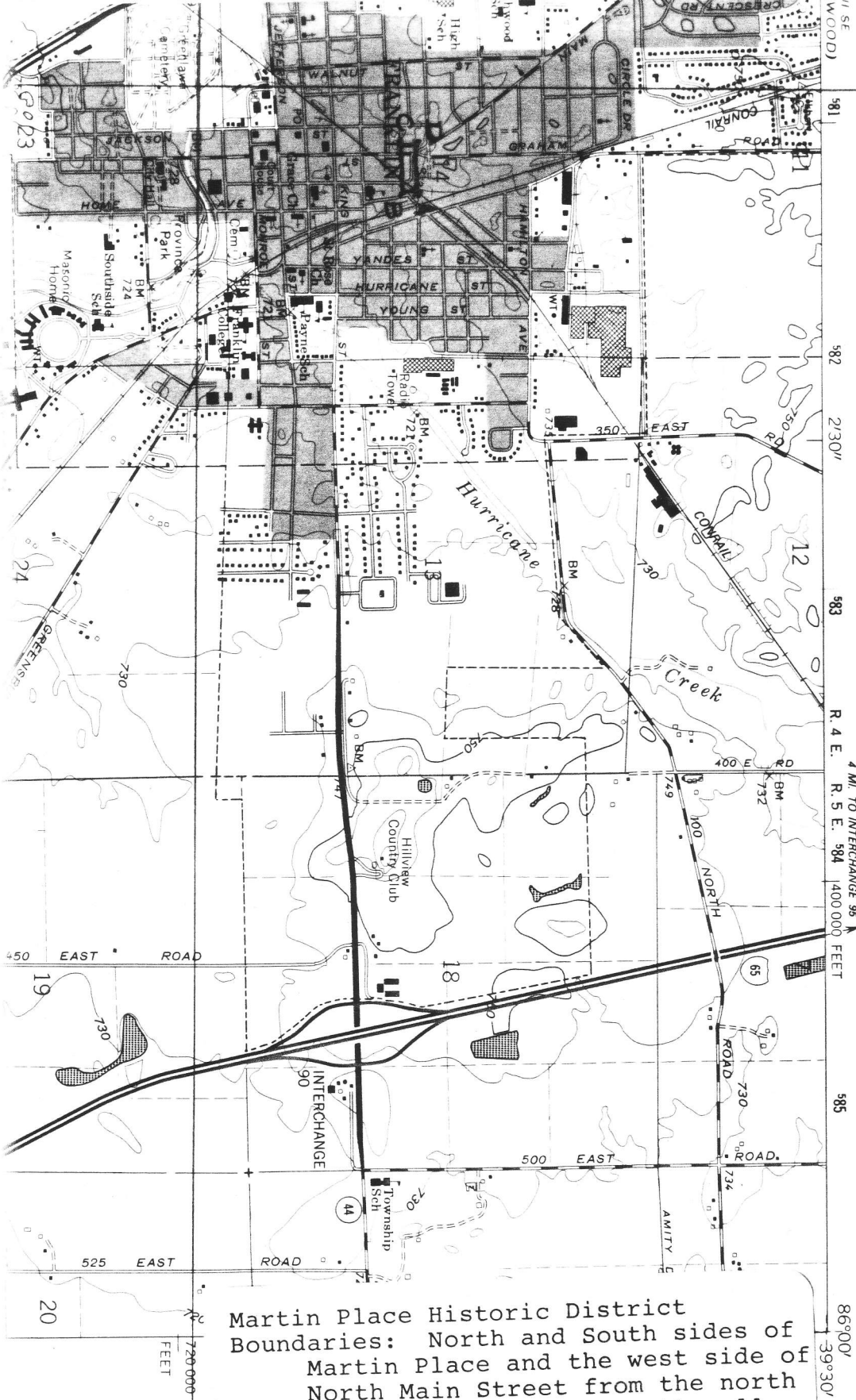
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Henry, Mrs. Rachel. Personal Interview. 18 September 1986.

Littleton, Mrs. Bernice. Frankin, Indiana. Interview, 30 September 1986.

Todd, Nancy H. "Mansions of Another Day." Women's Study Club of Franklin, Indiana.
4 January 1966.



FRANKLIN QUADRANGLE
 INDIANA-JOHNSON CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 3863 111 SW (BOGGSTOWN)

Martin Place Historic District
 Boundaries: North and South sides of
 Martin Place and the west side of
 North Main Street from the north
 side of 500 N. Main to the alley
 south of 490 N. Main

Johnson Co., Indiana
 UTM Reference:
 A. 16 581 430 4370 880
 B. 16 581 425 4370 810
 C. 16 581 210 4370 810
 D. 16 581 210 4470 890