

Private Police Officer Derry Lee “Hightower” Hooks, Jr. (1946-2025)



Derry was born May 27, 1946 in Cincinnati to Alabamans Derry Lee and Mary L. (Johnson) Hooks, Sr. He attended Taft High School and graduated in June 1966. He earned a Bachelor of Education degree at Miami University and a master's degree at the University of Cincinnati.

Derry took a position with the Cincinnati Public Schools and taught science at Eastern Hills School. He retired after 27 years of service and became a contract mediator and union activist.

He was also an officer in the Cincinnati Private Police Association, known by his peers as “Hightower.” He served as such until it was disbanded by the City of Cincinnati and was one of six remaining members extant.

He later worked as a private investigator.

In 2003, he ran an unsuccessful campaign for the Cincinnati Board of Education. In 2004 he was a Greater Cincinnati delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Boston.

Officer Hooks died in Cincinnati on March 10, 2025 at the age of 78.

He is survived by his children, Charles Hooks, Martin Hooks, and Derry Lee Hooks III, and 11 grandchildren.

A visitation and funeral service was held on March 21, 2025. The Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society's Memorial Committee was not notified in advance.