The Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool, Portsmouth, Ohio is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in this example. The nomination process for the McKinley Pool is streamlined by using the extensive historic information and analysis provided by the Twentieth Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio multiple property listing document (MPD). While the MPD covers the movement statewide and explains the broad civil rights history within the context of the state, the nomination form for the McKinley Pool focuses more on the local history and the development of the pool.
4. National Park Service Certification
I hereby certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain): ______________________

Signature of the Keeper   Date of Action
____________________________________________________________________________

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)
Private:  
Public – Local  X
Public – State  
Public – Federal  

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)
Building(s)  
District  
Site  
Structure  X
Object  

Sections 1-6 page 2
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool Scioto, Ohio

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<table>
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<th>Sites</th>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register __0__

6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Sports facility – pool

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Sports facility-pool
The architectural classification of the McKinley Pool is Modern. The materials used in the pool are primarily concrete and concrete block. The pool complex has changed little during its history and retains most of its original features. McKinley Pool has a high overall level of integrity of materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association, since relatively few changes have been made to the facility since its original completion.
Narrative Description

The McKinley Pool sits on a small tract of land in a mixed-use area north of Portsmouth’s downtown. The pool sits in a block of the city’s street grid bounded by Sixteenth Street on the north, Findlay Street on the east, Fifteenth Street on the south, and U.S. Highway 23 on the west. North of this block is a large institutional building complex facing Robinson Avenue. East of the pool is a mixed residential and commercial area, with Greenlawn Cemetery sitting several blocks further to the east. To the south a small commercial and residential mixed-use area sits immediately north of the downtown central business district. On the west side of the pool, beyond U.S. Highway 23, there is a small wedge-shaped commercial area; beyond this is the Scioto River and its associated floodplain.

The pool sits in the middle of its block, with other land uses to the north and south. A very small tract on the north end of the block contains two light industrial buildings facing Sixteenth Street; these buildings sit immediately north of the pool property. A much larger tract south of the pool contains, on its southwest corner, a city park with trees, a grass lawn, and concrete walkways. The remainder of the tract, to the southeast, is occupied by a large mid-twentieth century apartment building and its associated parking lot. The pool complex occupies roughly half the land in the block. The pool tract has a somewhat irregular shape, with straight sides on the north, south, and east, and a slanted border on the west due to the diagonal course of U.S Highway 23. (See Figure 1)

The pool tract itself is mostly surrounded by a high chain-link fence that appears to have once had barbed wire at the top. The fence is currently painted black and appears to be on the pool’s original perimeter boundary. The fence extends along the entire north, west, and south sides of the property. On the east (Findlay Street) side of the property, the concrete block wall of the restroom/changing room building faces the street, with the perimeter fence stopping at the building’s southeast corner and resuming at the building’s northeast corner. The fence has an admission gate just south of the restroom/changing room building, plus a larger gate facing Findlay Street for equipment and maintenance vehicles. The portion of the fence on the west side of the pool complex has a gate that is wide enough to admit a large truck.

Within the perimeter of the pool property, the site is divided roughly in half. The western half is occupied by a large grass lawn, while the east half contains a concrete-paved apron area that accommodates the pool and pool buildings. The lawn has only two structural features, other than the perimeter fence and gate. The first is a round concrete riser with an iron manhole cover on the top, located south of the large vehicular gate on the lawn’s west perimeter. The second is a small bench located on the lawn’s southeast corner near the pool apron.

The main pool is an L-shaped poured floor with pre-cast walls concrete structure that sits on the southwestern corner of the concrete apron (Photograph 1). Other features of the pool include access ladders, handrails, three lifeguard towers, and a diving board structure, all constructed of painted steel pipe. The concrete of the pool walls is painted blue, and at the time of writing
To the north of the main pool, on the east side of the restroom/changing room building, the complex features a second, shallow, square-shaped wading pool. These wading pools were commonly included in municipal pool complexes of the era as a safe place for small children who could not swim, as well as for parents with babies. The wading pool is composed of poured concrete walls that, like the main pool, have been painted blue (Photograph 6).

The restroom/changing room building sits on the northwest corner of the concrete apron and is part of the original pool complex. This building has a poured concrete foundation, painted brick and concrete block walls, a flat overhanging roof, and flat metal doors. The roof overhang has a flat metal cornice, which has a recent aluminum gutter and downspout attached to it on the building’s north side. Under the cornice, the overhang’s soffits are composed of painted plywood with small rectangular metal vents in some areas (Photograph 7).

The restroom/changing building’s east wall faces Findlay Street and is recessed a few feet from the sidewalk, creating a shallow lawn space. This wall is veneered in brick and decorated with a recently painted mural spelling out the name of the pool in decorative script. Most of the brick is laid in a common bond pattern but there are several areas of soldier course bricks near the top of the wall. A door opening in this wall has been boarded up but a steel door casing is still visible on the edge of the opening. The building’s south wall is composed of painted concrete block and has a flat metal door and a large partially boarded-up window opening. The north wall is composed of painted concrete block and has two flat metal doors. The building’s exterior appears to have changed little from its original condition aside from the repainting of the exterior walls and the boarding up of some of the door and window openings.

The bathhouse interior consists of three separate rooms. The northern room is the men’s changing room. It is an open room with four showerheads on the east wall. The south wall features two toilets and a urinal separated by four-inch block walls six courses high, or approximately forty-eight inches high (Photographs 8 and 9). The women’s changing room in the middle of the bathhouse is the same design as the men’s changing room. It features two toilets and a sink on the north wall, sharing plumbing with the men’s changing room (Photograph 10 and 11). The toilets and sink are separated by four-inch block walls, six courses high. The room has four showerheads on the east wall. The shower area has a rudimentary shower curtain system made of Speed-Rail. The southernmost room is an office. It contains recent (twenty-first century) office furniture and no fixtures (Photograph 12).

The second building in the pool complex is a pump building that is partially underground, with only the upper parts of the north, west, and east walls visible aboveground. This building is located near the southeast corner of the pool apron. The building has a poured concrete foundation and floor, painted concrete block walls, and a concrete slab roof. The south wall is the only fully exposed wall of the building. This wall features a door opening fitted with chain link gates. This below-grade door opening is connected to a concrete driveway that slopes up to
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool Scioto, Ohio
Name of Property County and State

grade level, connecting with the steel chain-link vehicle access gate facing Findlay Street. Concrete block retaining walls sit to the east and west of this concrete driveway, which would have been used to load supplies and equipment into the pump building. Some small areas of grass lawn sit to the south and east of the pump building, while the building’s west wall abuts the pool’s concrete apron. A small bump-out on the west edge of the building’s south wall has a small horizontal basement window opening filled with wire mesh, and a small doorway for pedestrian access. The other three walls of the building also feature similar basement window openings, and the north wall has a concrete staircase (Photograph 4). A metal railing lines the rooftop of the pump building; this may have been used as a viewing platform. The pool’s diving board sits immediately to the west of the pump building.

The final structure in the complex is a small, long, rectangular carport-type prefabricated shelter positioned west of the wading pool. This 1993 structure consists of twelve thin metal columns supporting a low-pitched metal roof painted white. This structure may have been used to shelter pool supplies (Photograph 6).

The McKinley Pool has excellent historic integrity. The Twentieth-Century Civil Rights Movement in Ohio describes swimming pool integrity noting that the fencing and pavement should mirror the original. It does so at the McKinley Pool. The MPD registration guidelines also notes that associated buildings and structures at the time of the significant event should remain in a condition where their original form, proportions, and exterior solid void relationships are relatively intact. The pool, bathhouse, and pump building have not been appreciably altered since the pool opened. The lifeguard chairs, board, and railings appear to be original. The setting remains the same as it did in 1967 with the concrete pool area and adjacent grass lounging area intact. The chain-link fence surrounding the pool appears to be original. With the exception of the removable metal shelter the McKinley Pool looks just as it did when it opened in 1967. The registration guidelines note that later building additions must be evaluated for their impact to the overall historic character, setting, feeling and association of the historic property. The location of the 1993 metal shelter, to the side of the complex, and its reversibility, do not lend it any qualities that affect the integrity.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark “x” in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [ ] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool
Scioto, Ohio

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
- Ethnic heritage-black
- Other: Civil Rights

Period of Significance
1961-1967

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
CJ&L Construction
The Eugene McKinley Pool is significant under Criterion A in the area of ethnic history. The McKinley Pool is significant as an example of a pool planned as an integrated swimming pool in a town that formerly only had segregated pools. Construction on the pool was started after its namesake, a fourteen-year-old Portsmouth youth, drowned in a Scioto River gravel pit because African Americans were not allowed to swim at the privately owned Terrace Club pool. A coalition of African American residents and white community organizations banded together to raise funds for the pool’s construction in 1961. Fundraising languished until 1966 when the City of Portsmouth took over the project and completed the pool’s construction. The period of significance is from 1961 when the pool was officially planned to 1967 when the pool opened to the public.

The McKinley Pool occupies a complicated position in Ohio's civil rights and black history. During its construction period Portsmouth experienced the integration of elementary schools and jobs that split both white and black communities. While ostensibly integrated, the pool is located in a historically segregated African American neighborhood. The pool was not completed until the private Terrace Club in Portsmouth was integrated by the NAACP in 1964. The pool is testament to both community conflict and an effort to uplift a community within narrow parameters. It is also a physical representation of a city maintaining the racial status quo and preserving a town’s social dynamic during the Civil Rights era. While many cities saw private swim clubs constructed when municipal pools were integrated, constructing a municipal pool to protect a private club is much rarer. The McKinley Pool occupies this position. It is an integrated pool that served to protect informal segregation. Conversely, it is also, as advertised, “A Place in the Sun for Everyone.” For both the African American and white communities the McKinley Pool and Terrace Club pool offered a choice — not only in how to remember integration but also whether to participate.

The Twentieth Century African American Civil Rights in Ohio examines integrating swimming pools and parallel institutions. In the 1920s it was common for organizations to construct a separate but equal facility to avoid integration. In the 1960s, the separate pool construction remained not uncommon.

The Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool is nominated under the Multiple Property Document *Twentieth Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* and has been evaluated within the historic context, “History of Civil Rights and Public Accommodations in Ohio, 1884-1970.” The Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool meets the registration requirements for the *Twentieth Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* property type for “Amusement Parks and Pools.”
Portsmouth, Ohio, was founded in 1815. It grew along with transportation infrastructure. The 1832 completion of the Ohio–Erie Canal from Cleveland to Portsmouth enabled goods from inland Ohio to be shipped up and down the Ohio River. The railroad came to Portsmouth in 1849.

Major industries in Portsmouth included the Norfolk and Western railroad shops, which attracted African American employees to Portsmouth. In the latter half of the nineteenth century shoe production became a major Portsmouth industry.

Portsmouth's racial history in the post-Civil War century is typical of the segregationist regime that prevailed in North as well as South from Reconstruction to the Civil Rights era. A separate African American school was maintained at 11th Street and John Street in the mid-1870s. The school had serious attendance issues, leading to difficulties with students finishing a grade in a year. Recalcitrant students were physically punished rather than dismissed since being sent home was what they wanted.¹ In 1885, the segregated school system was outlawed and black students were integrated into the white schools in their neighborhoods. As frequently happened, the segregated school’s black teacher lost his job as a result.²

Schools aside, segregation was strictly enforced in Portsmouth. Norfolk and Western workers living on East Front Street in Slabtown in 1910 were driven from their tenement by a crowd and escorted out by the police.³ As in much of the country, black residents often did not have the protection of the legal system. In 1929 three African Americans accused of killing a C & O railroad foreman were found, shot dead, in the Ohio River. Greenup County, Kentucky, officials were certain it was the same three accused of the killing and closed the case when they recovered the bodies.⁴

African American life in Portsmouth was largely concentrated in the segregated North End. Restaurants, stores, churches, and parks were all present in the area bounded by 16th Street to the north, 9th Street to the south, and Chillicothe Street to the west. The eastern boundary was Offinere Street. The area contained the 14th Street Community Center, constructed in 1943.

In 1927, a segregated elementary school opened in the North End, contravening the 1885 Arnett Law mandating school integration (similarly illegal schools opened in Hillsboro and Gallipolis in southern Ohio). This event set off a battle that would endure until 1962.

¹ Annual Report of the Portsmouth Public Schools (Portsmouth, OH: James W. Newman, 1877), 36.
The segregated Dreamland Pool (original name) opened in 1929. When builder J.D. Booth, who owned a similar resort-style pool in Kenova, West Virginia, died in 1936, his heirs offered the pool to the city at a deep discount. However, the Great Depression had cut the pool's yearly revenue in half, from $20,000 in 1929 to $9,000 in 1936. The city refused, although there was broad agreement in local civic organizations that a city pool was needed, as swimming in the Ohio and Scioto was unsafe.

Throughout the century of segregation Portsmouth had always had an undercurrent of African American protest and civic involvement. In 1938, Portsmouth’s black youth community and African American Civilian Conservation Corps workers protested a segregated movie showing of “The Spirit of Youth,” starring African American boxer Joe Louis. The theater advertised by distributing handbills in the black neighborhood. Members of the youth council gathered the handbills and persuaded the local black CCC members to boycott the show; Friday’s screening attracted an audience of four, while Saturday saw seven customers.

Charles T. Smith and Carl Ferguson started a Future Outlook League (FOL) chapter in Portsmouth in 1948. Founded in Cleveland by John O. Holly, the FOL was a direct-action civil rights organization focused on equal employment opportunities for blacks. Successful in integrating Cleveland’s stores and factories during the 1930s, the organization spread throughout the state.

Another civil rights organization, the Metropolitan Civic Forum, became prominent in the early 1950s when an atomic energy plant was being planned. The MCF filled the role of the NAACP and the Urban League, neither being present in Portsmouth at the time. Founder and president Ross McConnell vigorously fought the segregated Washington Elementary School. McConnell’s petitions to the school board were not well received. The school board accused McConnell of prejudice and being a “rabble rouser” when he pointed out that the white McKinley School “was a highbrow school for bluebloods.”

Similar to other civil rights organizations in Ohio, the MCF brought in speakers to rally the membership, including, in December 1952, Cleveland Call and Post editor William O. Walker. Speaking at Beulah Baptist Church before 200 people, Walker addressed three community concerns: jobs, the lack of proper housing, and segregated schools. Walker worried that Portsmouth’s African Americans would not get jobs at the atomic energy plant being constructed. He also addressed the longstanding issue of the segregated Washington Elementary school. He commended the MCF, who had hired civil rights attorney and Columbus Vanguard League founder Frank Shearer to battle the district. Walker also contested an argument made by members of the black community who were not in favor of school desegregation: since black teachers were only employed in black schools, integration meant unemployment for these elite community members. Walker, however, claimed that if black teachers weren’t qualified to teach

7 “Portsmouth Scores Jimcrow School,” Ohio State News, September 13, 1952, 1
8 “Portsmouth Audience Hears Editor Urge Fight for Freedom,” Cleveland Call and Post, December 13, 1952, 3C.
white children, they weren't qualified to teach black children either. In addition, some Portsmouth African Americans felt school integration would only, “consist of the lower element of white children.” For some school segregation meant preserved jobs and a better class of student.

Walker also mentioned conditions in Portsmouth’s segregated neighborhood, bounded by 10th, 18th, Findlay, and West Offinere. The neighborhood was the only part of Portsmouth where the alleys were unpaved.

However, as often happened, progressive supporters of civil rights and more cautious community members may have become more openly divided because of the MCF's activism. For example, C. L. Ross, a strong MCF supporter, complained to the Call and Post about “Uncle Toms” and African American barbers who cut whites' hair downtown: “they were not helping the Negro cause.”

Attorney Frank Shearer lost the elementary school case in 1953 when a judge in Chillicothe ruled that parents had not produced sufficient evidence that segregation was being practiced at the school. Protests over school integration continued in Portsmouth, however. In 1954, African American students at the integrated Portsmouth High School were not allowed to participate in the school prom. The football team, angry that they could entertain the high school and the town but not participate in all the school’s activities, spoke out. The prom was integrated that year.

Skilled jobs for African Americans proved a difficult prospect in Portsmouth. In 1952, the MCF obtained the first job for an African American at the Williams Shoe Manufacturing Company. Forum officials also asked five and dime stores and supermarkets for more jobs. While advancing beyond menial jobs was difficult for many blacks in the early 1950s, a few did break barriers. Dr. James F. Scott became Scioto County coroner in 1954. Scott, who resided in the segregated North End neighborhood, was appointed by the county commissioners and then elected on a write-in vote in November 1954. Theodore Wilburn became the chief of police in 1962, one of two African Americans to hold that position statewide.

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10 Combs, John B. “Portsmouth: Strictly a Northern Community with Southern Exposure” The Ohio Sentinel, September 18, 1952, B1
11 Taylor, "200 Hear Call for Action."
12 Taylor, "200 Hear Call for Action."
13 Ray Paul, “A-City Workers Find Housing Biggest Problem,” Cleveland Call and Post, November 29, 1952, 1C.
16 Taylor, “200 Hear Call for Action.”
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool

History of the McKinley Pool

The McKinley Memorial Pool represents an important chapter in the civil rights history of Portsmouth, Ohio. The McKinley Pool’s origins and history are inextricably linked to the Terrace Club and the subsequently named Dreamland Pool.

The McKinley Pool is named after Eugene McKinley, a fourteen-year-old African American who drowned after he and a group of friends went swimming in an active gravel pit off the Scioto River on the last day of school in June 1961. McKinley was in the gravel pit because African Americans were not allowed to swim in the nearby Terrace Club pool. Built in 1928, the Terrace Club pool required a private club membership. The Terrace Club belonged to an uncommon class of resort pools. It was the social center of Portsmouth’s white community in summertime. For blacks, meanwhile, opportunities to swim were essentially confined to the Scioto River, creeks, and other natural bodies of water, none of which was particularly safe.

Shortly after McKinley’s death, community members formed the interracial Community Recreation Society, Inc., to build an integrated pool, under the motto “A place in the sun for everyone.” The organization was led by Orville Ferguson and Rev. Melvin Bateman of Findlay Street Methodist Church. Fundraising kicked off with a dinner at Trinity Methodist Church. Dayton’s Midwest Pool gave a presentation about the design and cost estimates to attendees.17

The group approached the city manager about potential sites. The city first offered Bannon Park, located within the segregated North End neighborhood. Bateman, however, felt the pool would take up too much room for a seasonal activity.18 The pool’s location became topic of debate within the African American community. Rev. Bateman thought the site should be within the community. Another site, owned by the city, on Union St. between 11th and 12th Streets, was not pursued.19 Others felt it should be located outside the community, “to give people someplace to go.” Bateman replied, “There are pools and lakes outside the community now. We want a pool located in the community.”20 In the end, all the potential pool sites seriously considered were within the segregated North End neighborhood.

In April 1962, CRS closed on two lots on the west side of Findlay Street between 15th and 16th Avenues, with an option to purchase two more. A “brief but enthusiastic” rally included a parade by the Russell Williams American Legion Post Drum and Bugle Corps and local children unveiling a sign.21

The Portsmouth Times published an editorial supporting the pool in May 1962, urging Portsmouth’s citizens to get behind the project. While the Portsmouth Times steadfastly supported the project, integrating the Terrace Club rather than building another pool was never mentioned.

21 “Swimming Pool Site is Unveiled,” Portsmouth Times, April 30, 1952, 20
On June 5, 1962, city officials, labor, industry, and civic leaders met with CRS to plan how to engender community support. CRS reported that they had made the final payment on the site at 16th and Findlay. CRS also obtained bids for the pool's construction, with a low bid of $70,000. Three houses on the site were to be razed within two weeks, or even sooner if new places to live could be located for the residents. The news article also noted that the pool would be operated on an integrated basis. On June 13th, CRS started a door-to-door fundraising campaign. Interested donors were to leave their porch light on.

Construction began on schedule in July 1962, with a planned opening date of August 1, 1962. Site preparation for the pool started on July 3, when the Portsmouth Fire Department burned down one of the three houses before a large crowd. The other two houses were razed. On the same day, Bateman and other advisory board members flew to Lorain to tour pools made by the contractor, Stardust Swimming Pool Company. By July 18th foundation footers for the bathhouse were completed on the $66,000 project. CRS had raised $13,000 in bond sales and subscriptions.

The CRS and the Portsmouth Jaycees ran a full-page advertisement in the August 4, 1962, Portsmouth Times encouraging community members to fund the “recreational improvement,” noting that the project “was of extreme importance to the entire community.” The Portsmouth Junior Chamber of Commerce also held a fundraiser for the pool. A campaign in the first week of August 1962, featured a parade and a best-decorated-bicycle contest. The various campaigns raised approximately $30,000. But in September 1962, the joint Jaycees and CRS fund-raising drive ended without reaching its goal. Funds from the subscriptions also did not materialize. At the same time, Washington Elementary School in the North End was finally being desegregated. The school’s boundaries were redrawn and the school expected between 25 and 50 white students to attend. “Seven or eight” white students went the first day. School officials surmised that parents may not have gotten news that the school was open. Six whites did get the news that Lincoln Elementary was integrating and protested the first day of class.

By the summer of 1963 a letter to the editor in the Portsmouth Times indicated that the pool project was in trouble. A resident appealed to Portsmouth residents, “regardless of race or religion,” to finish the pool for the benefit of citizens in the North End. According to the letter writer, construction was stymied for two reasons: inadequate fundraising and community opposition. However, newspaper accounts don’t record any opposition to the project. The continued support of Portsmouth’s newspaper, community organizations such as the Jaycees, and city government indicate that any opposition probably came from within the North End.

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neighborhood itself and centered on the perception that the pool's building represented an accommodation to a segregationist regime. Fifteen years prior to the pool project Portsmouth had supported a chapter of the direct-action group the Future Outlook League, and the MCF and its visitors were also anti-accommodationist. The MCF's attorney in the school desegregation suit, Frank Shearer, led a civil rights group in Columbus that fought vigorously against housing projects located in African American neighborhoods, preferring no new housing over segregated housing. The offer of a pool, albeit integrated in name, in the segregated North End, rather than elsewhere, may have aroused strong feelings. Roughly contemporaneous campaigns by Portsmouth's NAACP chapter indicate that a direct action approach was alive and well in the early 1960s in Portsmouth whether a pool was in the offing or not.

The Portsmouth NAACP, under President Charles S. Smith, was busy during the spring and summer of 1964. In March, the NAACP picketed Schaefer's Market because the store refused to hire an African American cashier. NAACP officials planned to extend the integration drive to jobs in all businesses. Shortly thereafter, in June 1964, with pool construction still stalled due to lack of funds, Rev. Bateman transferred to a church in Oberlin, removing one of the leaders of the McKinley Pool movement. The Portsmouth NAACP's next action moved to integrate the Terrace Club swimming pool. The chapter mounted a textbook example of direct action honed over decades of civil rights protests. Some in Portsmouth were nervous about protesting and its effect on their jobs. The protesters had lived in other states and some had military service. Curtis Gentry, one of the organizers, was a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Maryland and familiar with direct action from integrating Maryland restaurants. He was in Portsmouth for his summer vacation.

In early July, Robert Jackson and Brad Bayless applied for memberships at the Terrace Club but were not allowed to enter the pool. On July 15th Curtis Gentry, Curtis Richardson, and Bruce Thomas applied for pool memberships and were also denied entrance. On July 16th a white collaborator, Betty McGinnis, applied for a membership, witnessed by Alberta Pertusit, who was also white. McGinnis purchased a pool ticket but was not questioned about her membership status. With an ironclad discrimination court case now ready, the NAACP executed a July 19th "wade-in." As was typical, the Portsmouth NAACP alerted both the local police and the media to their plan ahead of time. The protesters also contacted local African American business leaders and the county coroner, James Scott, who waited at the police station to post bond.

Charles Smith, Roy Burns, Jesse Bagette, Curtis Gentry, Gerald Underwood, and Thomas Gentry (the latter two of whom were juveniles) approached the ticket counter with their admission fee in hand. Eugene Collins monitored the direct action near the counter. The cashier refused their money and another attendant locked the turnstile. The protesters placed their ticket money on the counter, jumped the turnstile, and headed to the pool. Pandemonium briefly ensued. Curtis

32 Eugene Collins, interview.
33 Eugene Collins, interview.
34 “Negro Children Sit-In At Pool in Portsmouth” Columbus Dispatch, July 22, 1964, 52
35 Eugene Collins, interview.
Gentry, who could not swim, looked for the shallow end before jumping into the water. Gentry, who could not swim, looked for the shallow end before jumping into the water. 36 Lifeguard Charles Lorentz, a teacher and football coach at Portsmouth High School, ordered all white swimmers out of the water. An order to vacate the pool under threat of arrest came over the loudspeaker. Some white parents yelled for their children to get out. One white parent told her child to get back in the water, which she did. 38

The protesters refused to get out. Meanwhile the attendants posted a “No Trespassing” sign at the entrance. Word spread around town and a traffic jam formed on the streets around the pool. When the police arrived the protesters politely refused to leave. This put the uniformed officers in a quandary. The police chief ordered two officers into swimming trunks. Meanwhile traffic and bystanders continued to mount and children began to jump back into the pool. Two white youth jumped in and shook hands with the protesters (Figure 9). The swimsuit-clad officers now went into the pool and the protesters were arrested without incident for trespassing (Figure 10). All the protesters were taken to the police station and booked (Figure 11). The adult protesters requested a jury trial (Figure 12). The juvenile protesters were released without charges, although under some duress. Informed by an attorney that a county coroner could technically arrest a county sheriff, James Scott told the sheriff he would arrest him if he charged the young boys. They were released to their parents. Bagette and Curtis Gentry were released with a $25 bond. Smith filed affidavits with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) under the state public accommodations law. Ellis Ross, executive director of the OCRC, informed the Cleveland Call and Post that the matter was under investigation.

The Terrace Club board pressed trespassing charges against the four adult protesters through board member and local attorney Ormond Adams. The board consisted of local business and civic leaders, some of whom had been protested in the past by Portsmouth civil rights groups. One board member was from the Williams family, owner of the shoe factory that had only hired their first black employee in 1952 after being pressured by the MCF. Since the late 1940s, with the inception of the local FOL chapter, the white establishment had been under pressure to act in an equitable manner. At first, pressure was put on businesses and the school board, both of which fought back consistently. Now, social institutions were also under pressure to integrate. Local children held a sit-in at the Terrace Club on July 21, 1964, a week after the wade-in (Figure 13). Forty youngsters silently sat at the swimming pool’s entrance until police chief Ted Wilburn took them downtown to the police station and called their parents to pick them up. The local NAACP denied any responsibility, saying it was the children’s idea.

The club did not immediately integrate. The Terrace Club board did not drop the charges until the following summer, when Adams asked for the charges to be dismissed. But in May 1965 the Terrace Club reverted to its former name, Dreamland, and announced it would admit blacks at the beginning of the summer season. While there was some confusion as to whether the public accommodations law applied to private clubs, the writing was on the wall. Whether the OCRC

36 Eugene Collins, interview.
37 Eugene Collins, interview.
On May 15th, 1965, the Dreamland Pool opened to all. Eugene Collins reports that some African Americans began to attend the Dreamland Pool, but overall attendance dropped. Whites began to worry what other demands blacks would have in the community. How far would integration go? Passive resistance to integrating pools was common during this period. It was usually not an organized affair; white people simply stopped going to swim. This seems to have been the case in Portsmouth. And black swimmers did not make up the numbers. In 1993 community members’ memory was that “when they opened up Dreamland to blacks they did not come and swim.” While this is an exaggeration, attendance dipped significantly overall.

The drop was noticeable enough that by May 29th the first letter to the editor appeared. Signed by three Portsmouth couples, it urged all citizens of Portsmouth to support their Dreamland Pool before it was too late. On June 5, a New Boston fifteen-year-old pleaded in another letter to the editor for people to support the pool.

Another solution besides community-wide support for the Dreamland pool, however, was available. A letter to the editor in September 1964, had chastised Portsmouth for their unchristian-like attitude and proposed acting like Christians all the time. Noting that Jesus said, “‘Let all the little children come unto me: forbid them not.’ And he didn’t say white children only. Why not finish up the pool now started in the North End for the colored children?”

It was common at the time to build a private whites-only swim club to replace a newly integrated municipal pool. In Portsmouth, what happened was essentially the opposite. A newly constructed integrated municipal pool, combined with social pressure, allowed the Dreamland Pool to serve a largely, if not almost exclusively white clientele until it closed in 1993.

On June 24, 1966, the Portsmouth City Council voted unanimously to fund the McKinley Pool’s completion. Bids were solicited and CJ&L Construction submitted the only bid ($28,500) in August. While the city hoped to finish the pool that summer, CJ&L stated that it would take 60 days to complete the work. Plans to open the pool in 1966 received a further setback in October when the Ohio Department of Health required revisions to the original plan. The project was then slated to open in spring, 1967. By April 1967, the project was underway again, with prefabricated walls being installed on top of the previously poured concrete floor (Figure 14).
The pool was dedicated on June 19, 1967. Mayor Merle Odle announced that the pool was open for free swimming and was promptly pushed into the water by either the city manager or a city council member (Figure 15). It is unclear whether the dunking was planned or not, but the Portsmouth Times reported that pushing the mayor into the pool was a local tradition.47

The pool was expanded in 1968 with the completion of the lounging area to the west of the pool. This made the McKinley Pool into more of a "resort" facility.

The historical significance of the McKinley Pool is that it does not fit neatly into the ongoing civil rights battle over swimming pools. For many towns, private swim clubs were constructed when municipal pools integrated. In Portsmouth, a municipal pool was constructed and maintained the racial status quo when the town’s private club was essentially forced to integrate. Historian Rebecca Jenkins notes that the pools were segregated by “social pressure” until the Dreamland Pool closed in 1993. She argues that the presence of both pools enabled de facto segregation to continue in Portsmouth.48 Others report that “de facto segregation” was at work in the 1970s with white kids going to Dreamland and black children going to McKinley.49 The Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool is significant because its story illustrates a town’s journey as it grappled with social forces, both from within and from outside, that changed the town’s social and racial dynamics.

As a tangible artifact of "Civil Rights Memory," the McKinley Pool occupies a number of positions. For some, both white and black, the McKinley Pool was constructed as an integrated swimming pool, the first of its kind in Portsmouth. It was, as originally advertised, "A Place in the Sun for Everyone.” Anyone could attend the McKinley Pool. It provided a safe place to swim that had never been provided for African Americans by the city or through private means. For others integrating Dreamland was the means to the same end. Some protestors may not have cared enormously about how the ability to swim safely was achieved. Thomas Gentry, one of the wade-in arrestees, later recalled that “As a young kid, I was part of both demonstrations. We won our right to swim at Dreamland. Shortly after that, they built us our own pool and we haven't looked back.”50

Others, both white and black, believed that the McKinley Pool was constructed to enable continued segregation at Dreamland, making it a parallel institution, separate and somewhat equal, aimed less at equal access for African Americans than at preserving the racial status quo in Portsmouth. In this view, the McKinley Pool is one of the last pools of its kind, constructed shortly after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 during a period of backlash against civil rights advances. This viewpoint is evident during the 1993 Dreamland Pool closing when some

48 Rebecca Jenkins, “Forgotten: Scioto County’s Lost Black History” (Master’s Thesis, Bowling Green State University, May 2015), 33.
49 "Down Memory Lane!!! Dreamland Pool, Portsmouth, Ohio."
community members felt betrayed by the city when it wouldn’t purchase the shuttered pool but had subsidized the McKinley Pool, seemingly just for African Americans, over the years.

The McKinley Pool is significant precisely because all of these viewpoints are valid for many in Portsmouth. All are perspectives on how a typical Ohio community responded to integration and segregation. It is also a reminder that the pace of integration was often uneven and that it has not always been remembered in the same way. A changing narrative, evolving memory, and two swimming pools were Portsmouth’s way to deal with a rapidly changing racial climate in the mid-1960s. The McKinley Pool is a significant example of this reconciliation of race, memory, and social relations in the civil rights era in Ohio.

This last sub-section at the end of Section 8, the narrative ties all of the previous sub-sections together and provides analysis from the MPD. Weaving these different aspects of history (the pool, the community, Ohio as a state), the nomination presents a comprehensive understanding of the significance of the McKinley Memorial Pool.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books and Article


Theses and Dissertations

Jenkins Rebecca, “Forgotten: Scioto County’s Lost Black History” (Master’s Thesis, Bowling Green State University, May 2015)

Government Documents

Curtis Gentry Intake Card, On file Portsmouth Police Department, Portsmouth, Ohio

Newspapers and Magazines

Cleveland Call and Post
Columbus Dispatch
Lancaster Eagle-Gazette
Logan Daily News
Marion Star
Portsmouth Daily Times
Portsmouth Times

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #
recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool
Name of Property
County and State

___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other

Name of repository: _____________________________________

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): SCI0065213

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.68 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 38.743338 Longitude: -82.992858
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

1. Zone: 17N Easting: 326776 Northing: 4289963
2. Zone: Easting:
Northing:
3. Zone: Easting:
Northing:
4. Zone: Easting:
Northing:
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool Scioto, Ohio
Name of Property County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is located in Portsmouth, Scioto County, Ohio, and the boundaries match the legal parcels, as recorded by the Scioto County Engineer’s Office as Parcel #31-1584.000, Parcel #31-2322.000, Parcel #31-1581.000, Parcel #31-1582.000, and Parcel #31-1583.000.

The property boundaries match the legal parcel.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary contains the entire historic site.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title:  Rory Krupp and Roy Hampton
organization:  Owen & Eastlake Ltd
street & number:  1356 Hamlet Street
city or town:  Columbus state:  Ohio zip code: 43201
e-mail:  rkrupp@oweneastlake.com
telephone:  614-439-9068
date:  October 15, 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps:  A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
Photographs
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log
Name of Property: Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool
City or Vicinity: Portsmouth
County: Scioto
State: Ohio
Photographer: Rory Krupp
Date Photographed: August 8, 2018
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 12. (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0001)
McKinley Pool, view looking southeast

2 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0002)
McKinley Pool, view looking east

3 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0003)
McKinley Pool, view looking northeast with bath house in background.

4 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0004)
McKinley Pool, Pump house, view looking southeast

5 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0005)
Bath house, view looking northeast

6 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0006)
Wading pool and temporary shelter, view looking northwest

7 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0007)
Bath house, view looking southeast

The National Park Service who administers the National Register of Historic Places program at the federal level requires specific size and resolution for the images submitted with the nomination.
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool  
Scioto, Ohio

8 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0008)  
Men’s room interior, view looking southeast

9 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0009)  
Men’s room interior, view looking southwest

10 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0010)  
Women’s room interior, view looking southeast

11 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool_0011)  
Womens room interior, view looking northwest

12 of 12 (OH_Scioto_McKinley Pool)  
Bath house office, view looking west

Figure 1: Exterior Photo Key

Figure 2: Bath House Interior Photo Key.

Figure 3: Large Bing Map showing McKinley Pool location.

Figure 4: Bing map detail showing McKinley Pool location.

Figure 5: USGS 7.5 Minute, 2013 Portsmouth, Ohio, Quadrangle Map.

Figure 6: 1954 Portsmouth High School football awards banquet. Left: coach and Terrace Club lifeguard Chuck Lorentz with Dick Hopkins. Right: Curtis Gentry receives outstanding player award from Ott Sand. Lorentz and Gentry would later be on opposite sides at the Terrace Club integration wade-in (Portsmouth Times).

Figure 7: North End children await the demolition of two homes for the McKinley Pool (Portsmouth Times).

Figure 8: July 31, 1962 parade for the McKinley Pool fundraising campaign showing Janet Dehner, winner of the “best decorated bicycle” contest (Portsmouth Times).

Figure 9: NAACP wade-in at the Terrace Club pool. The original caption read: There were no incidents and one swimmer shook hands with one of the Negro group when they entered the water. The six were charged with trespassing (Portsmouth Times).

Figure 10: NAACP protesters are taken to the police station after their arrest at the Terrace Club wade-in on July 19, 1964. Original caption: Swim Pool Wade-In, Detective William Combs escorts three Negroes from the Terrace Club swimming pool. Combs and Captain
Ray Thompson (behind Combs) donned swimming trunks to lead the Negroes from the water (Portsmouth Times).

Figure 11: Portsmouth Police Department intake card charging Curtis Gentry with trespassing at the July 19, 1964 Terrace Club wade-in (Courtesy of Portsmouth, Ohio, Police Department.)

Figure 12: Reverse of Curtis Gentry intake card showing jury trial request and eventual dismissal on July 27, 1965 (Courtesy of Portsmouth, OH, Police Department.)

Figure 13: Children at the July 21, 1964, Terrace Club sit-in being removed by police Chief Ted Wilburn (Portsmouth Times).

Figure 14: McKinley Pool under construction in April, 1967 (Portsmouth Times).

Figure 15: Mayor Merle Odle being helped from pool during the McKinley Pool dedication (Portsmouth Times).
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool
Name of Property

Scioto, Ohio
County and State

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Figure 2: Bath House Interior Photo Key.
Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool
Scioto, Ohio

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Eugene McKinley Memorial Pool

Scioto, Ohio

County and State

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Historic images often add to a better understanding of the property. They can be included at the end of the nomination as Figures. However, be selective when including figures-make sure that they directly support the significance statement.
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Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.