



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

**LPB 104/24**

### REPORT ON DESIGNATION

#### **Queen Anne Pool 1920 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue W**

##### Legal Description:

Lots 9-16, Block 10, Cove Addition to the City of Seattle, State of Washington, recorded in Volume 1, Page 73 of Plats, King County, Washington.

At the public meeting held on May 15, 2024 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Queen Anne Pool at 1920 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue W as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standard for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

- A. It is the location of, or is associated in a significant way with, an historic event with a significant effect upon the community, City, state, or nation.
- B. It is associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the history of the City, state, or nation.
- C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation.
- D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.
- E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.

The Features of the Landmark to be Preserved Include: the site; the exterior of the building; the open interior volume of the Natatorium space and its exposed roof structure; the pool form; and the pool depth indicator.

## DESCRIPTION

### Introduction

This nomination addresses the Queen Anne Pool. This property includes the site, and the building with the indoor swimming pool. Occupying a full half-block in the Queen Anne neighborhood, the property fronts McClure Middle School and the Queen Anne Community Center across 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West and is diagonally northeast from the West Queen Anne Playfield. Residential and mixed-use development occupies the blocks to the south across West Howe Street and north across West Crockett Street, and the half block east across the alley.

The reinforced concrete building has a T-shaped plan and running bond brick veneer as the exterior finish. The top of the T, along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West, is a single story and the public point of entry. There is a partial basement. A flat roof with low parapets extends over this portion of the building. The large, recessed front entrance connects users to the public and staff spaces, and access to the indoor swimming pool area. The rear one-and-a-half-story leg of the T contains the swimming pool. At the northwest corner a small portion of this volume extends north behind (west of) the front single-story portion. This portion of the building roof steps up to the south via a series of short roof slopes, mirroring the depth change within the swimming pool. A parapet wraps this roof portion.

The site consists of raised earth berms planted with lawn flanking the north and south sides of the building, tucking the building into the site. Mature trees screen the southeast and northeast corners of the building. Foundation plantings extend along the sides and front, with street and alley trees on all sides of the site. A dedicated parking lot occupies the north end of the site with access to West Crockett Street and a diagonal sidewalk at the southwest corner descending to the sidewalk along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West.

### Setting and Site

Centrally located within the Queen Anne neighborhood, the property is on the west side of a block bounded on the east by Queen Anne Avenue North and on the west by 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West. Queen Anne Avenue North is the neighborhood's main north to south commercial core and circulation arterial, as well as the east edge of the neighborhood's West Queen Anne subarea. The west half of blocks along Queen Anne Avenue North within the immediate vicinity are generally single-family residences with narrow spacing between residences. The Queen Anne Pool is notable in its visual blending in with this setting through the use of site grading and plantings.

The site is bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West on the west (front), West Crockett Street on the north, an alley along the east (rear), and West Howe Street on the south. Concrete sidewalks (6-feet wide) extend along the front and ends of the site. Wide planting strips (11-foot front, 8 to 9 foot and ends) with lawn and street trees exist between the sidewalks and street curb along the front and ends of the site. Street trees along the north end of the site consist of three *Acer rubrum* (Red maple) that range in trunk diameter from 20 to 23-inches.

Street trees along the west front (eleven trees) and south end (4 trees) consist of *Prunus serrulata* (Double Chinese cherry) that range in trunk diameter from 2 to 18-inches.

Circulation within the site utilizes short connections to the perimeter sidewalks. The public point of entry is a 50-foot-wide concrete walkway (repaved ca. 2022) linking 1st Avenue West to the front entrance, with added metal hand railings (ca. 2022) on either side, an added metal bike rack (ca. 2022), and two concrete bollards (ca. 2022) replacing the original four along the roadway curb. The entrance leads directly to the crosswalk connecting across 1st Avenue West to the McClure Middle School and the Queen Anne Community Center. The original site design for the Queen Anne Pool included this connection. Sloped original concrete walls (sloped from the top of the concrete foundation down to the sidewalk) retain the foundation planting areas flanking the entrance. Adjacent to each retaining wall are a pair of hexagonal (2-foot length sides) exposed aggregate concrete planters. Similar sloped concrete retaining walls provide an added inset seating area (ca. 2002) south of the entrance along the sidewalk with two added metal and wood benches.

The original 10-foot-wide concrete walkway the north end of the building provides staff access from the north end of the building to 1st Avenue West, and the route for moving the building's dumpster to the curb for pick up. A low, original U-shaped concrete screen wall with canted edges on the north side of this walkway encloses the dumpster location. An added, 5-foot-wide walkway (ca. 1990) flanked by low concrete curbs and metal railings descends from the original parking lot (112 by 63 feet, approximately 22 stalls) to the sidewalk along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue West, bringing the public to the sidewalk connecting to the front entrance. This walkway was part of the original site design, but not built. It's later construction replaced a former direct connection from the sidewalk along the south side of the parking lot to the sidewalk along 1st Avenue West.

The overall site slopes from a grade level of around 385 feet at the east side (alley) down to 380 feet at the west side (1st Avenue West). Topography within the site is an original design feature and uses raised berms to enclose spaces. Berms enclose the north and south sides of the building, and the north, west, and south sides of the parking lot. These berms slope down from a central, rounded ridge. Alterations in 1980 reduced the height of the south berm's ridge by one foot on average. A stone retaining wall at the southeast corner of the site extends along West Howe Street (22-feet, approximately 2 feet tall, squared rubble, beaded joints) and the alley (58-feet, 2-feet tall tapering north to grade, random rubble). The retaining wall, based on materials and the 1976 site survey, is attributed to the previous single-family residence at this location.

Vegetation throughout the site consists mainly of lawn, at the berms and planting strips. Trees planted within the site function as screens around the windowless building. Plant identification based on existing foliage, the 1976 Planting Plan and a 1980 Landscape Revisions plan.

- Foundation plantings at the building's northwest and southwest corners, and front west facade enclose the shorter front portion of the building.

- Plantings at the north end include an understory of *Hypericum calycinum* (St. John's Wort), *Viburnum davidi* (David Viburnum) or similar below multi leader *Acer circinatum*s (Vine maples) consistent with the original design and specified plantings. Added plantings include *Prunus laurocerasus* (Cherry laurel, ca. 1980), *Pinus mugo* Tura (Dwarf Mountain-pine, ca. 2002) or similar.
- Plantings along the west side (ca. 2002) replace the original lawn and include an understory of grasses, *Spiraea japonica* (Japanese Spiraea), *Salvia rosmarinus* (Rosemary), *iburnum davidi* (David Viburnum) or similar below several ornamental deciduous trees, *Celtis occidentalis* (Hackberry) or similar.
- Trees added (ca. 1990s) along south side consist of seven, multi leader, small leaf ornamental deciduous trees, *Phillyrea latifolia* (Green Olive tree) or similar within an added narrow planting bed, the length of the one-story front portion. A recently planted (ca. 2022) deciduous tree, *Nyssa sylvatica* Marshall (Black tupelo) or similar, is located on the berm directly south of the building's one-story portion. These plantings replace the original *Rhus Typhina* (Staghorn Sumac) and lawn in these areas.
- Trees at the northeast and southeast building corners and along the rear alley enclose the taller rear portion of the building.
  - Southeast trees, from adjacent the building south to the sidewalk are added (post 1980) except for the large *Catalpa sp.* (Catalpa or similar) near the intersection of the alley and West Howe Street that predates the building construction. The added trees consist of a mature multi-leader *Thuja plicata* (Western Red cedar) and *Betula sp.* (Common Birch or similar) birch (along south side of one-and-a-half-story portion).
  - Alley shrubs, are added (1980) *Viburnum tinus* (Laurestine) or similar ornamental multi leader shrubs within the planting strip. These replace the original *Viburnum davidi* (David Viburnum) and *Parthenocissus tricuspidata* (Boston Ivy). A concrete curb separates the planting strip from the alley.
  - Northeast trees include *Acer circinatum*s (Vine maples) consistent with the original planting plan and originally with an understory of *Hypericum calycinum* (St. John's Wort) that no longer remains. Added (ca. 1990s) plantings include Western Red cedar and Birch trees. Near the southeast corner of the parking lot are several added (ca. 1990s) evergreen trees *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* (Lawson's cypress) or similar and two *Chamaecyparis obtusa* (Hinoki false cypress) or similar nearby with an understory of *Berberis aquifolium* (Oregon-grape). These replaced *Styrax Japonica* (Japanese Snowbell) that extended in a line along the south edge of the parking lot.
  - The screen wall at the dumpster includes base plantings. The planting area was added in 1980 and the plantings of *Nandina domestica* (Heavenly bamboo) and *Hypericum calycinum* (St. John's Wort) added ca. 1990s to early 2000s.

- Trees added (ca. 1990s) along the north and west sides of parking lot provide screening for the parking area. These replace the original *Rhus typhina* (Staghorn Sumac) specified for these planting areas. These consist of several multi leader pine or similar along the north edge with a large deciduous tree, *Pistacia chinensis* Bunge (Chinese pistache) or similar at the southwest corner.

## **Building and Changes Through Time**

This narrative addresses the architectural character of the Queen Anne Pool building and changes through time. With the exception of the main entrance, the building does not have windows.

### Foundation and Structure

A reinforced concrete, grade beam perimeter foundation supports the exterior walls.

Running bond brick veneer is the exterior finish. Brick type at the front single-story portion is Meridian or similar, measuring 3-1/2 by 3-1/2 by 15-1/2 inches with 1/2-inch mortar joints. A slightly shorter, Utility type or similar brick is used only at the front facade of the upper half story. Bricks are reddish-brown in color with slight color variations across the brick. A soldier course band extends along the top edge of the building's parapets. Large metal louvers occupy a portion of the north facade's west end. Alterations include painting of the lower portion brickwork along the north and south facades. Through wall anchors with round rosettes have been added on the south facade at two locations.

### Roof

A flat roof spans the front single-story portion. Low-pitch Warren trusses support this roof over the lobby space. An asymmetrical faceted roof spans the indoor swimming pool volume and provide clearance above the three-meter diving tower at the north end of the pool. This roof is divided into a series of flat and sloped sections. The stepped-up portions of this roof mirror changes in depth within the swimming pool. Exposed glulam beams, stained dark to blend with the bricks, support the roof over the indoor swimming pool. A steel rod extends below the southernmost beam (replaced in-king in 1997). Exposed stained wood rafters carrying the flat and sloped roof sections. The north and south roof slopes are the same pitch and separated by flat roof sections with low parapets. Low parapets extend around the perimeter of the building's roofs. Sheet metal copings extend along the parapets. To access the half story roof portions, metal ladders attached to the west facade of the half story wall portion provide access from the lower roof. Corrugated metal, red to terra cotta in color, is the roofing material at the roof slopes, with composition roofing (1990) at the flat roof portions. Multiple light skylights (1990 replaced) are in the outer portions of the roof. Exterior metal downspouts provided drainage for the roofs. Metal scuppers extend through the parapets to support water movement between roof levels and

discharging from the lower roof. Large, painted sheet metal mechanical systems at the lower and upper roof portions support the ventilation needs for the indoor swimming pool. These extend out from the wall with a concrete sill.

## Entrances

The building's original main public entrance is on the west facade. Secondary original service entrances are on the north and south facades.

### *Main Entrance*

The front main entrance is offset slightly north of center on the front facade. Recessed within the facade, the entrance's south end is canted, and the north end stepped straight back. The entrance is split into six, 6-foot-wide bays. A pair of centrally placed single light metal doors with metal pulls provide interior access. Painted metal framing carried on a concrete bulkhead supports the doors, side lights, transoms, and solid panels (originally designed as tinted glass windows) within the entrance. Fixed single light side lights flank the doorway. Painted composite panels comprise the outer two north and south bays. Fixed light transom sashes above the transom bar within each bay provide day lighting to the lobby and via relites to the main pool volume. A single light fixture is mounted to the entry soffit.

An added metal frame, vinyl clad awning (ca. 2002) projects out at the front entrance with the facility name "Queen Anne Aquatic Center" across the front. Added wall mounted fluorescent light fixtures provide back lighting for the awning. Alterations include added security panels over the lower portion of the front doors, and the front awning.

### *Service Entrances*

Service entrances provide staff access to and from the building. They have brick headers. On the north facade a pair of doors with louvers and added security screens open to a mechanical space supporting chlorination of the swimming pool. Directly east, a flush panel metal door with a lower vent provides access to another mechanical space. The north concrete walkway extends to both doorways. Two doorways, one at each at the north and south ends of the building portion containing the indoor swimming pool provide an egress function. These doorways do not connect to perimeter sidewalks. They are flush panel metal doors, have interior panic bars, but do not have exterior hardware. The south doorway has a small exterior concrete landing.

## Interior

The interior consists of a single floor, with some slight variation in flooring levels within the floor.

### *Public and Staff Volumes*

The front single-story portion of the building is organized around the central lobby that connects through to the pool volume. The cashier space is on the south side of the lobby and flanked by doorways leading to the locker rooms, showers, and restrooms. Hallways at the south end of the showers direct pool users out to the pool volume. North of the lobby is a vending area, restrooms, staff changing areas, mechanical and storage spaces, and the office overlooking the pool volume. A drop T-bar ceiling extends through the front entrance. A series of relites between the east side of the entrance volume and the swimming pool volume provide visibility between the spaces. The fixed lights are set in painted metal frames above a low concrete bulkhead. Personnel doorways providing access between spaces have a tall light.

### *Natatorium*

The natatorium, the volume containing the indoor swimming pool, consists of exposed concrete foundation walls and brick at the upper wall portions. The volume is partially below grade on the east side along the alley, and at grade at the west side. Thin, vertical wood slats (acoustical screen) wrap around the lower portion of the walls (concrete along the east side, brick at the other walls), except at the north and south egress doorways. Replacement pendant light fixtures (post 2018) provide lighting. Round metal duct work extends along the upper portion of the west and north walls. Metal flush panel doors in the north end of the volume provide staff access to mechanical spaces.

On the west side, six bays of tall glass relites link the pool and lobby volumes. An enclosed booth projects out from the lobby at the northwest end of the pool for staff monitoring of the pool area. A sauna is available for public use.

The 25-yard concrete swimming pool (75 by 43 feet) extends to 12-feet in depth (north end) and tapers to 3-feet in depth at the south end. A concrete deck extends around the concrete pool. Original diving towers, 1- and 3-meter, are located at the north end of the pool, along with short starting platforms. A rope swing is suspended from a glulam beam over the northcentral portion (deep end) of the pool. Metal lifeguard seats are located along the east and west sides of the pool. Concrete stairs with metal railings in the southeast corner of the pool provide access. Treads have blue tile nosing and enter the pool at the 3-foot-deep section. Pool covers are suspended above the pool deck at the south end of the pool. An added accessible lift supports universal access to the pool.

### Alterations

The chronological listing of known alterations follows below. Changes for which the specific date are not known are identified by ranges based on available background information. Both interior and exterior changes are addressed in the following list.

1980, revisions to the site landscaping replacing some existing and adding new plantings and lawn along with a slight reduction in the south berm's height.

Ca. 1990, installation of the diagonal walkway from the parking lot to the sidewalk along 1st Avenue West.

1990 (contract no. 1403) replaced the building's roofing. This work reinstalled existing metal roofing, installed new skylights and composite roofing.

1995 (permit 679044) replaced the pool's heating and ventilation equipment with a new rooftop recovery unit.

1997 (permit 692936) emergency storm repairs to replace a damaged glulam beam and add roof joists at the south end of the natatorium. The work involved removing a section of the brick at the west exterior wall and adding rollers to slide the beam in from the west while providing temporary bracing within the building to support the roof structure.

2000 (permit 001227-011), installation of the front quarter barrel awning. Installation of the front inset seating area along 1st Avenue West occurred during this same time period.

2019 (permit 6616134) for alterations and repairs to the pool including new pool slab placement. Existing pendant fixtures replaced black round pendant light fixtures suspended from the ceiling above the perimeter pool deck. The base and reinforcing steel for the ADA lift in the southeast corner of the pool occurred at this same time (permit 6616134). Work also included repairs to a beam in the basement.

Ca. 2022, replacement of concrete at the front entrance sidewalk, bollard replacement, and bike rack and railing installation.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

### **Introduction**

The Queen Anne Pool was completed in 1977 as part of the Forward Thrust parks movement in Seattle during the late 1960s and early 1970s. The building was designed by Benjamin F. McAdoo, Jr., the first Black architect to practice in Washington State and the founder of the first African American-owned architecture firm in the state. The pool building continues to house a community pool, operated by the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department.

Prior to the site's construction as a pool in the mid-20th century, within a neighborhood in the city of Seattle developed by white Euro-American settler-colonists in the mid-19th century, the hill along with the surrounding area was home to Coast Salish people, including the ancestors of the present-day tribes of the Suquamish, Stillaguamish, and Muckleshoot, and the non-federally recognized Duwamish Tribe. The land of the greater Puget Sound region, including Queen Anne, has been their home since time immemorial.

The area now known as Uptown was once a prairie marked by salal patches (Little or Large Prairie—babáq<sup>w</sup>ab or báq<sup>w</sup>baq<sup>w</sup>ab), with trails connecting Lake Union to Elliott Bay, camping places, and shellfish processing sites. The abundant natural resources of the land and the surrounding fresh and salt waterways provided plentifully for the Coast Salish. They



hunted local game, fished the rivers and sea, harvested shellfish, gathered roots and berries, and used native trees and their bark to carve canoes, build their homes, and weave baskets.

White Euro-Americans arrived in the greater Puget Sound region to colonize and claim the land as their own beginning in the early 1800s. Their arrival profoundly impacted the lifeways of the Coast Salish people, with escalating consequences as the number of Euro-Americans steadily increased following the Denny Party's arrival in 1852. Once Washington Territory was established in 1853, Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens initiated a series of treaty conferences with Native Americans who were living within the boundaries of the newly formed territory. These conferences were to convince Native Americans to give up their lands to the U.S. Government and relocate to specified reservations. There were five treaties signed in western Washington: Medicine Creek, Neah Bay, Olympia, Point Elliott, and Point No Point. The Treaty of Point Elliott (1855) was signed by representatives of the Duwamish, Suquamish, and Snohomish people and created the Tulalip, Port Madison, Swinomish, and Lummi reservations. The Duwamish did not receive their own reservation.

### **Neighborhood Context: Queen Anne**

The neighborhood known today as Queen Anne is one of the oldest established residential neighborhoods in Seattle. A government survey of Township 25 North, Range 3 East occurred in the early 1850s, where Queen Anne is now located, and between 1853 and 1859, 15 Euro-American land claims were filed within the township. The names of these early individuals and families continue in the area, with Mercer Street after Thomas Mercer; Denny Way after David Denny and his wife, Louisa Boren Denny; and Smith Cove after Dr. Henry Smith and his mother, Abigail, and sister, Ellender. Queen Anne Hill remained relatively remote through the 1860s until David Denny, along with his father, John, subdivided part of their family's land claim (between Mercer Street and Denny Way, Warren Street and Elliott Bay) and platted it as Plan of North Seattle. The Denny family, as well as the Mercer family, continued to subdivide their land holdings on Queen Anne hill in the early 1870s. Subsequently, six plats were filed between 1869 and 1879. Additional plats occurred over the next decade, with construction following, and by the mid-1880s, the name "Queen Anne Town" appeared in advertisements for the area. Supposedly named by the Reverend Daniel Bagley, the name is attributed to the number of Queen Anne-style homes built on the hill. By the 1890s, construction was still limited to present-day Uptown, formerly known as Lower Queen Anne, and the south slope of the hill but nearly 75 percent of the hill had been platted.

The existing built environment character of Queen Anne began to solidify by the end of the 1910s as infrastructure (i.e., streets, streetcar lines, sewer and water systems, major parks) was constructed. Patterns of commercial and residential development were clearly established during this period and the neighborhood matured through Seattle's construction boom of the 1920s. By the time the Great Depression struck in 1929, much of Queen Anne was built out and had progressed from a suburb to "a 'close-in' urban district." During the Depression and World War II era, there were a number of public works projects

completed with significant impact within and around the Queen Anne neighborhood, including the Aurora Bridge (1931-32, Seattle Landmark), North Queen Anne Drive Bridge (1936, Seattle Landmark), the Amory in Uptown (1939, Seattle Landmark), and pedestrian stairs and pathways throughout the hill.

In the post-WWII era, real estate development and construction boomed in Seattle alongside the metropolitan area's largest employer, the Boeing Company. To address the population growth, Seattle and the surrounding suburbs joined together to form METRO, a regional transit and wastewater treatment agency in 1958. Seattle also hosted a second world's fair in 1962, the Century 21 Exposition, establishing a civic center site at the southern base of Queen Anne hill. The Forward Thrust program—implemented city- and county-wide—had tangible impacts for Queen Anne with new park construction and revitalization of existing parks. Additionally, during the 1960s and 1970s economic development spurred the development of taller and larger buildings.

### **Forward Thrust**

Forward Thrust was a series of bond authorization issues approved by voters in 1968. It began as a countywide effort in the mid-1960s to plan for the future of King County, recognizing that the rapid growth of the Seattle/King County area created demand for capital improvements. Population growth forecasts in 1965 predicted King County's population could double in 20 years and government officials and interested citizens were worried that the region was not prepared to address the challenges associated with such tremendous growth. Community advocate and attorney James Ellis (1921-2019) had raised the alarm about this issue in the 1950s to little avail. However, in November 1965, Ellis addressed members at a Rotary Club of Seattle meeting proposed organizing a group of citizens to push for planning and funding for significant capital improvement programs.

A group of 200 citizens participated in the planning for the county and city's growth over the course of two years. After the study was concluded, a package of capital improvement programs was presented to King County and Seattle voters. Seven of the 12 propositions were approved, authorizing \$333,900,000 in bond issues to begin a 12-year program of community projects. Within the Forward Thrust program, \$118 million was allocated for a countywide parks and recreation program, with \$65 million of that allocation set aside for the City of Seattle in five specific ways:

- Acquire major waterfront and other park space as well as improve existing parks.
- Improve Woodland Park Zoo.
- Add neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and playfields for organized athletics.
- Build swimming pools and recreation centers.
- Develop downtown parks, as well as a park on Seattle's central waterfront and an aquarium.

According to a report from the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department at the program's halfway point, "Forward Thrust projects make up a balanced program to expand and

improve Seattle's public recreation facilities and urban open space." By January 1975, when the progress report was submitted, Seattle Parks and Recreation had completed 125 of the nearly 200 projects slated for the program. As of 1975, Forward Thrust resulted in "the single largest expansion of public athletic facilities in Seattle's history.

Within the larger program, the construction of public swimming pools was just one small portion of Forward Thrust with seven pools slated for construction. Four indoor swimming pools were completed by 1975: Medgar Evers (500 23rd Avenue), Capt. Wm. R. Ballard (1471 NW 67th Street), Helene Madison (13401 Meridian Avenue N), and Rainier Beach (8825 Rainier Avenue, replaced in 2013). Two more were under construction at Sealth and Meadowbrook (10515 35th Avenue NE). And the final pool, the Queen Anne Pool, was set for development but not yet constructed.

At the time that Seattle was planning and constructing these seven pools, many cities around the country were closing their own public pools. Swimming had become an important part of the recreational life for many Americans by the 1920s. At that time, pools were largely segregated by gender, not race, but men and women began swimming together in increasing numbers in the 1930s. Racist beliefs around fear of White women swimming with Black men and stereotypes about uncleanness led to the establishment of racially segregated pools (both de facto and de jure segregation). According to Professor of History Victoria Wolcott, "Swimming pools and beaches were among the most segregated and fought over public spaces in the North and the South."

De facto segregation of swimming pools occurred here in the Northwest, as well. According to the Densho Project,

"The exclusion of non-white bodies from public swimming places spanned geographic and racial boundaries. Japanese Americans growing up in pre-World War II Seattle remember facing discrimination at the city's swimming pools".

Passage of Title III of the 1964 Civil Rights Act outlawed racial segregation of public facilities, but it still took activism efforts by organizations like the NAACP to integrate pools. However, many communities chose to shutter their community pools entirely in the 1960s and 1970s rather than integrate.

There have been significant and alarming consequences to swimming pool segregation. Swimming is one of the least diverse sports in the United States. A 2021 report from USA Swimming said just 1.4 percent of its 200,000-plus year-round swimmers identified as African American or Black. And furthermore, the CDC reports that Black children ages 10-14 years old drown in swimming pools at rates over seven times higher than white children. In Washington state, Asian-American children and adolescents have the highest rate of drowning — 18 percent of the deaths even though they are 7 percent of the state population.

Mickey Fearn, a former manager of Community Connections for Seattle Parks and Recreation, stated in a 2008 *Seattle Times* article that "Historically, black Americans haven't had easy access to pools, so a disproportionate number don't know how to swim, may not

have insisted their children learn how and, in fact, may have encouraged the kids to stay away from the water.

### **Construction and Use of the Building**

Following voter approval of the Forward Thrust bond issues, planning began by the Seattle Park Department, under supervision of then Park Superintendent Hans Thompson. For new construction projects, the planning process also required court action to acquire property by condemnation. By July 1972, the Queen Anne Pool was delayed, with the Seattle Park Department citing lack of open space and the high cost of property as factors. The Forward Thrust bond resolution required the new pools to be built “at or near” high schools. And although Queen Anne was a proposed location for a new pool, there was no available land near Queen Anne High School. Superintendent Thompson proposed a location near McClure Junior High School adjacent the existing Queen Anne Recreation Center, but that site required additional funds to purchase nearly one-and-a-half acres of houses to raze for the pool building. However, the bond issues only cover construction, not acquisition costs for pools. Debate then began over the site of a proposed Queen Anne Pool with residents of Queen Anne and Magnolia debating over the location of the pool. Queen Anne residents wanted a site near McClure Junior High School while Magnolia residents argued for an Interbay location. A report was prepared to outline costs to purchase the land and negotiations began with the City Council and School District to help fund the acquisition costs. An environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared in 1973 for the site near McClure Junior High School, which included 10 residences. Acquisition costs for the houses and relocation of the families were estimated at \$325,000 to be paid by the Parks and Recreation Fund.

Benjamin F. McAdoo was selected to design the swimming pool on Queen Anne Hill in November 1974. Donald Harris with the Seattle Park Department was the project manager. The contractor for the project was Frodesen & Associates was selected in May 1976 with a low bid of \$764,900. Frodesen & Associates completed the pool for \$843,000.

Construction on the Queen Anne Pool began in July 1976. The design was completed by Benjamin F. McAdoo & Co. and was the same size as the new Ballard, Meadowbrook, and Sealth pools at 75 by 43 feet. The building included lockers, bleachers, showers, and offices. While the Queen Anne Pool was intended to be one of the first pools constructed as part of the Forward Thrust program of capital improvements in Seattle, it was the seventh and final pool built. The pool opened to the public on November 10, 1977. However, its opening was not without delay, just like its construction, as the opening was originally planned for November 9th but a snafu with the pool’s thermostat accidentally heated the pool to a sweltering 100 degrees. The pool’s formal dedication, led by Mayor West Uhlman, occurred on November 21, 1977. Only 10 months after the pool opened, it was briefly closed to dampproof the building. The interior red brick began turning white from efflorescence, which happens when evaporating water leaves behind salt deposits on the brick. The humidity inside the pool building and the dampproofing on the exterior of the brick lead to the white powder forming on the interior brick.

The 75-foot Queen Anne Pool has continued to operate as a community pool since it first opened in 1977. The Queen Anne Pool building features its lap pool, sauna, 1- and 3-meter diving boards, rope swing, stair entry, and accessible lift. The pool hosts a wide range of programs and special events.

## **Architectural Context**

The architect of the Queen Anne Pool, Benjamin F. McAdoo, Jr., was known for his blending of regionalism and modernism. During his career, he completed over 500 professional works, from small residences to large institutional projects. The contractor for the project was Frodesen & Associates.

## Style

The Queen Anne Pool is a Modern style building with a simple exterior. Its Modern stylistic elements are most visible on the interior, with its exposed concrete stem wall, thin wood slat paneling, exposed brick walls, and exposed glulam beams. Each of the pools constructed during the Forward Thrust have their own unique design and embody a range of mid-20th century architectural styles, with the Brutalist Medgar Evers Pool, New Formalist Southwest Pool, and Contemporary Meadowbrook Pool. McAdoo's design for the Queen Anne Pool blends a Modern design with the surrounding neighborhood, following the scale and material palette of the adjacent McClure Junior High School (now McClure Middle School) and Queen Anne Community Center. The Queen Anne Pool also gives a nod to earlier periods of architecture with its stepped parapet. McAdoo's pool design, in comparison to other Forward Thrust pools, is an example of compatible infill. It clearly stands as a building of the era in which it was designed and constructed, but the building's materials and design blend rather than stand out from neighboring buildings.

## Architect – Benjamin F. McAdoo, Jr.

Benjamin Franklin McAdoo, Jr., was born to parents Benjamin McAdoo and Alferetta Derousell McAdoo on October 29, 1920, in Pasadena, California. The McAdoo family lived in a racially segregated neighborhood alongside Chinese American and Mexican American residents. McAdoo spent his childhood and early adulthood in California. He began his architectural studies at Pasadena City College and then continued at University of Southern California. He married Alice Thelma Dent (1916-2013) on July 23, 1942. The couple would go on to have three children: Marcia, Benjamin (III), and Enid. He transferred to the University of Washington in 1944, graduating from the School of Architecture in 1946. After completing his degree, he began practicing in the Seattle area, primarily working on small-scale designs for churches, residences, and building renovations. His work quickly gained recognition and was frequently published in *The Seattle Times*' "AIA Home of the Month" feature. Designs featured included the William Moorhouse residence (1947, Seattle); Donald Hochberg residence (1954, Seattle); Kenneth Ota residence (1956, Seattle); George H. Hage residence (1956, Seattle); and Herbert Rivkin residence (1955, Mercer Island). His

own residence in Bothell (17803 28th Avenue S, 1958), is a leading example of his residential work which integrated modernism and regionalism.

In 1950, McAdoo established the “House of Merit,” a single-family home of only 620 square feet with a projecting carport. The two-bed, one-bath design had a combined living and dining room, kitchen, and utility areas. The design was adopted by builders and approximately 80 Merit houses were built north of the Central Area between 1951 and 1959. McAdoo also designed a number of churches during his career.

Both professionally and as a private citizen, McAdoo led a life of public service, fighting for racial equality. For McAdoo—according to his daughter, Enid—architecture was a way to impact the world and further human rights. “Not only did he believe in fair housing, he felt that he should participate in fair housing.” His advocacy for low-cost housing solutions, which, coupled with his involvement in the Democratic Party, lead to his appointment as the Chief Housing Advisor for the United States Agency for International Development (AID) in Jamaica in 1961. While with the U.S. AID, McAdoo designed modular housing. He then returned to the United States, continuing to work with AID as they created their Latin American Division. He continued his government service, moving to the General Services Administration’s (GSA) Public Building Service. McAdoo’s work while with the GSA included the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the National Fisheries Center and Aquarium. He returned to the Seattle area in 1964, working in the Auburn Office of the GSA to supervise federal building design in the Northwest. Once back in the Seattle area, McAdoo persisted with his public service and advocacy work. He served as the Seattle-area president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for four years beginning in 1964 and hosted a weekly radio broadcast on social issues in the mid-1960s. He co-founded the Central Contractors Association, an organization of Black architects, craftsmen, and builders, which, according to writer Kelsey Rose Williams, sought to “combat the disproportionate lack of Black workers in the Seattle building industry.” McAdoo also wrote several columns in *The Seattle Times* addressing police brutality, school segregation, and housing discrimination and redlining.

By the late 1960s, McAdoo had returned to private practice. This phase of his career was marked by larger commissions and a shift away from his early residential work. Key projects completed by McAdoo during the 1970s include the King Country Central Blood Bank (1970, Tukwila), Seattle First National Branch Bank (1970, 8405 35th Avenue NE) in the Wedgwood Neighborhood, Ethnic Cultural Center, Seattle (1970-72, University of Washington, demolished), and Fire Station No. 29 (1972, 2139 Ferry Avenue SW). His clients during this portion of his career included the Boeing Company, Port of Seattle, Pacific Northwest Bell, Seattle City Light, King County, Rainier Bank, First Interstate Bank, Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound, and University of Washington.

McAdoo continued to work until his death in 1981. During his nearly four-decade long career, he held licenses to practice architecture in Washington, Oregon, Montana, Alaska, and Washington, D.C. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects, the National Organization for Minority Architects, National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, and the Architectural Resources Collaborative (a minority architecture internship

program at the University of Washington), and the Society of Military Engineers. In addition to those memberships, he served on the American Institute of Architects' Historic Preservation Committee, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce Board, the Seattle Environmental Review Committee, the King Country Central Blood Bank Executive Board, the Walla Walla College Board of Trustees, the Historic Seattle Public Development Agency council, and as chairman of the Central Contractors Association.

#### Frodesen & Associates

It is unclear who owned and operated Frodesen & Associates. However, brothers Fred and John Frodesen ran F. Frodesen Masonry Company in Seattle alongside their father, Frode, until Frode's death in 1966. Fred then became president of the company, renamed Frodesen-Henson Masonry, Inc., which he ran until his death in 1972.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bock, Paula. "The Power of the Pool: Issues of class, culture and political priorities swirl." *The Seattle Times*. June 15, 2008.
- Collins, Gail. "Around the Sound: Pool Dedication." *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. November 20, 1977: C-7.
- Dunham, Sandy Deneau. "Benjamin F. McAdoo's lasting legacy as an architect and activist." *The Seattle Times*. September 9, 2022. <https://www.seattletimes.com/pacific-nw-magazine/the-lasting-legacy-of-benjamin-f-mcadoo-jr-the-first-black-architect-registered-in-washington/>.
- Historical Research Associates, Inc., Carl Williams, Heather Lee Miller. "Queen Anne Historic Context Statement Update: 1962-2012. Prepared for the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation Program, and the Queen Anne Historical Society. December 2015.  
<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/HistoricResourcesSurvey/ContextQueen%20Anne%20Historic%201963%20to%20present.pdf>. Accessed August 29, 2023.
- Houser, Michael C. "Benjamin F. McAdoo, Jr." *DocomomoWEWA*. <https://www.docomomo-wewa.org/architect/mcadoo-benjamin-f-jr/>. Accessed August 10, 2023.
- "The Latest Information On Water Safety And Drowning Prevention." National Drowning Prevention Alliance. <https://ndpa.org/the-latest-information-on-water-safety-and-drowning-prevention/>.
- Lentz, Florence K., and Mimi Sheridan. "Queen Anne Historic Context Statement." prepared for the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation Program, and the Queen Anne Historical Society. October 2005.  
<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/HistoricResourcesSurvey/context-queen-anne.pdf>. Accessed August 29, 2023.
- Mahmoud, Jasmine. "Benjamin F. McAdoo Jr." *Black Arts Legacies*. June 1, 2022.  
<https://blackartslegacies.crosscut.com/articles/benjamin-mcadoo>. August 31, 2023.
- Miles, Sierra. "The Benjamin McAdoo Research Collective." *DocomomoWEWA*. August 19, 2021. <https://www.docomomo-wewa.org/news/the-benjamin-mcadoo-research-collective/>. Accessed August 29, 2023.
- Mullins, William H. "The Persistence of Progressivism: James Ellis and the Forward Thrust Campaign." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Spring 2014.  
<https://www.washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspn/Website/Articles/Mullins/ForwardThrust.html>. Accessed August 21, 2023.



Modie, Neil. "Bleached Bricks Pull Plug on Pool." *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. August 30, 1978, A9.

Mumford, Esther Hall. "Benjamin F. McAdoo, Jr." Ed. Jeffrey Karl Ochsner. *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historic Guide to The Architects*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2014. 328-333.

*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*.

---. "McClure Site Favored for Queen Anne Pool." October 3, 1978: A8.

---. "City to Take Plunge on Queen Anne Pool." May 31, 1973: C15.

---. "Too Hot to Swim." November 9, 1977: A-4.

*The Seattle Times*.

---. "Architect for Swimming Pool Selected." November 12, 1974: B2.

---. "Firm Makes Low Bid on Last Pool." May 16, 1976: G6.

---. "Work on New Pool to Begin Next Spring." November 16, 1975: B2.

"Segregated Swimming: Oral Histories of Japanese Americans and Public Pools." Densho Project. <https://densho.org/catalyst/segregated-swimming-oral-histories-of-japanese-americans-and-public-pools/>.

Thrush, Coll, Nile Thompson, Amir Sheikh. "An Atlas of Indigenous Seattle." In *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2007. e-book.

Willamette Cultural Resources, Penelope Cottrell-Crawford and Tom Heuser. "McAdoo House." Bothell Register of Historic Landmarks Nomination. August 2023. <https://www.bothellwa.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/09262023-997>. Accessed November 1, 2023.

Williams, Kelsey Rose. "Benjamin McAdoo: A Modernist Architect of Merit." *Arcade NW*. January 15, 2021. <https://arcadenw.org/journal/benjamin-mcadoo>. Accessed August 29, 2023.

Wolcott, Victoria W. "The forgotten history of segregated swimming pools and amusement parks." *Conversation*. July 11, 2019. <https://arts-sciences.buffalo.edu/news-and-events/recent-news/2019/july/wolcott-segregated-pools.html#:~:text=Swimming%20pools%20and%20beaches%20were,the%20foundatio n%20for%20this%20segregation.>

Your Seattle Parks and Recreation. "Forward Thrust at the Halfway Mark." Progress report to Seattle City Council. 1975. Available via Seattle Municipal Archives.

Varney, Val. "Forward Thrust Parks are on Schedule." *The Seattle Times*. December 20, 1970: 7.

---. "High Costs, Lack of Space Delaying Pool." *The Seattle Times*. July 30, 1972: B2.

---. "Queen Anne Pool Study Distributed." *The Seattle Times*. April 11, 1973: B7.

Issued: May 20, 2024



Sarah Sodt  
City Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Kevin Bergsrud and Annie Hindenlang, Seattle Parks & Recreation  
Michael Herschensohn, Queen Anne Historical Society  
Katie Pratt and Spencer Howard, NW Vernacular  
Ian Macleod, Chair, LPB  
Nathan Torgelson, SDCI  
Katrina Nygaard, SDCI  
Christina Thomas, ITD