

Marcus Garvey Pool
Individual Landmark
Marcus Garvey Park



The Marcus Garvey Pool. Photo: Melanie Nanez

The Marcus Garvey Pool is in Marcus Garvey Park, a 20-acre expanse that intercepts Fifth Avenue between 120th and 124th Streets. Marcus Garvey Park, originally named Mount Morris Park in 1835, was one of Manhattan's earliest public squares. In 1856, the park became home to a cast iron Fire Watchtower; it is the only one that remains today of 11 that were built throughout the city in the 1800s. It is both a New York City landmark and is designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

From 1867 and 1870, gardener Ignatz Pilat developed new landscaping for the square, but this naturalistic plan was overlaid in the 1930s when NYC urban planner Robert Moses revitalized the park with masonry ways, paved walkways, stairs, and terraces, all in a Neoclassical style. The recreation center, amphitheater, and pool, designed by African American architecture firm Percy Iffill and Conrad Johnson, were added to the park between 1969 and 1971. In 1973, the park was renamed in honor of African American community leader Marcus Garvey.