**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

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### 1. NAME

**COMMON:**
South Charleston Mound

**AND/OR HISTORIC:**
Criel or Creel Mound

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### 2. LOCATION

**STREET NAME AND NUMBER:**
U. S. Route 60, in triangle formed by Oakes, MacCorkle, and 7th Ave.

**CITY OR TOWN:**
South Charleston

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### 3. CLASSIFICATION

**CATEGORY (Check One):**
- District
- Site
- Building
- Object
- Structure

**OWNERSHIP:**
- Public
- Private
- Both

**ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC:**
- Yes
- Restricted
- Unrestricted

**PRESENT USE:**
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainmen
- Industrial
- Military
- Religious
- Park
- Transportation
- Other (Specify)

**ACCESSIBILITY:**
- Public Acquisition: In Process
- Being Considered
- Preservation work in progress

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### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

**OWNER'S NAME:**
City of South Charleston

**STREET AND NUMBER:**
319 Fourth Avenue

**CITY OR TOWN:**
South Charleston

**STATE:**
West Virginia

**CODE:**
47

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### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

**COURTHOUSE:**
Kanawha County Courthouse

**STREET AND NUMBER:**
400 Quarrier Street

**CITY OR TOWN:**
Charleston

**STATE:**
West Virginia

**CODE:**
47

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### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE OF SURVEY:**
Mound Explorations of the Bureau of Ethnology

**DATE OF SURVEY:**
1883-1885

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**
Smithsonian Institution

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**
Washington

**STATE:**
District of Columbia

**CODE:**

The original Crioul Mound, located in a municipal park in downtown South Charleston, was 40 feet high and 525 feet in circumference, the base being almost a perfect circle.

Some time prior to 1883, when The Smithsonian Institution began excavation, the top of the mound was leveled to accommodate a small bandstand on a 40-foot diameter flat top. At the time Colonel Morris began excavations, the mound had thus been reduced to 33 feet in height. A. R. Sines, one of the excavators, in 1961 recalled that the mound was probably eight to ten feet higher than the present approximately 25 feet. He said that the original shape of the mound is thought to have been conical, while the present mound retains the flattening created by the original band stand, no longer extant. Another band stand lined with stone, accompanied by a small basketball court outside the circumference of the mound, was cut into the west side of the mound, as indicated in Figure 3, but without doing any known damage to the mound's contents.

The environment of the mound is suitable -- a well-kept triangular park of about two acres immediately south of U. S. Route 60 in the downtown business section of South Charleston.

The mound many years ago was covered with trees, which were denuded by a tremendous explosion at a nearby chemical plant. At one time a ditch was dug across a small portion of the mound's base to accommodate a utility, at which time some sherds of limestone-tempered pottery were found. Archeologists believe that the mound may eventually yield more treasures of a past civilization.
The South Charleston Mound, originally known as the Criel Mound, is the second largest in the State.

Most modern archeologists who have studied the material taken from this mound believe it represents some mingling of Adena and Hopewell traits and therefore stands as a monument to both of these cultures so important in the Ohio River drainage.

The mound was the tallest in an elaborate system of earthworks originally occupying a large portion of the bottom lands on both sides of the Kanawha River in what is now the area of Charleston and South Charleston. The Smithsonian Institution thought the complex important enough to justify investigations extending over the period of 1853 to 1885, with special attention to the Criel Mound, into which a large central shaft was opened clear to the bottom of the mound under the supervision of P. W. Morris, of the Smithsonian Institution, and former superintendent of Yellowstone National Park.

The findings were described by Cyrus Thomas in the 5th and 12th annual reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology, published in 1887 and 1894. The results of the excavation are thus summarized by McMichaels and Mairs in their 1969 publication on Kanawha River Archeology:

"... Norris (Morris) sunk a shaft into this mound and found, at 3 feet down, the remains of a skeleton. At 4 feet, two skeletons were encountered, with 2 celts, 2 stone hoes, 1 lance head, and 2 disks nearby. These are probably Late Prehistoric intrusive burials.

"Nothing more was encountered until near the base, where apparently a large log tomb was found containing 11 skeletons. One central burial was covered by bark and had some folded sheet copper near its head, 6 shell beads and 1 lance head. Ten bodies surrounded this central one. Each of the four to the east had one 'fine lancehead', while the one to the northeast had one 'fishdart', three arrowheads, and decayed mussel shells'. The 5 skeletons to the west had nothing with them. A possible clay vault was found, which Thomas compares to some in North Carolina. What sounds like a number of paired postmolds were also found.

"In the U. S. National Museum at present there are a few fragmentary skeletal remains, a folded copper object with adhering leather or cloth, one
small copper fragment with adhering bone, 10 Olivella shell beads, and 19 heavy circular disk shell beads made from the central whorl of the conch. Also, according to the Museum catalogue a number of 'lanceheads and arrowheads' are recorded for the mound, but since these were lumped with those from many other sites and the senior author had little time to separate them, they were not checked in detail."

A. R. Sines of Charleston, who assisted in the excavations in 1961, stated that one of the skeletons measured 6'8-3/4" from head to heel, but the extreme height indicated might have been an exaggeration created by earth pressing down on the burial.

Some thirty or forty years ago, a pipeline was laid across the corner of the mound. At that time Deitz Ernst of Wheeling, an amateur archeologist, recovered a number of sherds of limestone-tempered pottery. The mound is still standing and probably contains more archeological material of value to the scientist.

The mound was for many years owned by Union Carbide Corporation, which deeded it to the City of South Charleston on condition that it be used for a park--otherwise to revert to the corporation.

Harry L. Flournoy, his article reprinted in Gazette-Mail State Mag. 6/18/61.

Hale, John P. Some Local Archeology. Charleston, W. Va., 1898.


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

Corner NW NE SE SW

Latitude Degrees Minutes Seconds
38° 22' 07.78" 38° 22' 07.78"

Longitude Degrees Minutes Seconds
81° 41' 48.76" 81° 41' 48.76"

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

Corner NW NE SE SW

Latitude Degrees Minutes Seconds

Longitude Degrees Minutes Seconds

9. APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

State: Code County: Code

State: Code County: Code

State: Code County: Code

State: Code County: Code

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Clifford M. Lewis, S.J.

ORGANIZATION: W. Va. Antiquities Commission

DATE: July 9, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER: 39 Old Mountainlair, West Virginia University, Morgantown, W. Va.

CITY OR TOWN: Morgantown

STATE: West Virginia

CODE: 47

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National [ ] State [X] Local [ ]

Name: Clifford M. Lewis, S.J.

Title: Acting for State Liaison Officer

Date: July 9, 1970

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date