

# I Remember Old Tuscaloosa

PROBABLY the oldest indoor swimming pool in Tuscaloosa was the University Bath House. It was located just north of the present Music and Speech Building on the campus and was fed by a bold, cold spring—Marr's Spring—which was the prime reason for locating the University on its present site.

The bath house enclosed a circular pool about 16 feet in diameter and about 6 or 7 feet deep. A continuous flow of spring water was the only sanitary treatment of the water but the extreme coldness of the water kept the use of the pool to a minimum. Its closest known rival as to chill was the large spring at Coaling which was the source of the Big Sandy Creek.

The bath house was not kept locked—an open invitation to the small boys in the area. I recall bicycling to the pool with a small group of boys. I dived in expecting to swim across the pool but the shock from the cold water made me change my mind before I reached the surface and I changed my course 180 degrees while under water and scrambled out at the point of entry. We went to the Warrior River to complete our swim.

The only other indoor swimming pool I recall was in the basement of the YMCA building located on the northeast corner at the intersection of 21st

Ave. and University Blvd. It was constructed about 1908. The concrete pool was about 12 feet by 24 feet and was without tile lining and purification system.

The normal schedule was to drain the pool and scrub down the floor and walls and then refill with city hydrant water. The boys had the use of the pool from Monday through Friday and then the girls were magnanimously given the exclusive use all day Saturday after which the pool was drained.

To conclude the old swimming holes articles, it might be apropos to mention some of the present day pools of Tuscaloosa.

The privately owned pools are too numerous to try to chronicle. These pools are usually works of art, tile lined, recycling water purification systems and many of the desirable appurtenances such as springboards, slides and the like.

Included in a list of major pools—both indoor and outdoor are:

1. U. of A. Natatorium. This is a regulation pool 75 feet long with eight swimming lanes. Both the water and building are heated when needed. The depth varies from 4½ feet at the north end to 12 feet deep at the south end. Its other niceties are too numerous to mention. Spectator seats are provided along the west side.

2. The new YMCA in Tuscaloosa is well equipped with an excellent swimming pool—a gift from the David Warner Foundation.

3. The Benjamin Barnes YMCA has a similar pool, also a gift of the David Warner Foundation.

4. In Queen City Park there is an excellent outdoor pool with bath

- 1-A GRAPHIC Sept. 23, 1971 house and many pool appurtenances—a gift from the David Warner Foundation.

5. Both the Tuscaloosa and Indian Hills Country Clubs have excellent tile lined outdoor pools with all the necessary accessories and dressing rooms.