

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92001088

Date Listed: 9/10/92

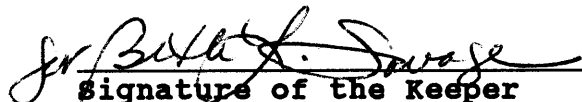
Queen City Pool and Pool House
Property Name

Tuscaloosa
County

ALABAMA
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

9/10/92
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 8

This nomination was amended to include Criteria Consideration G, since the pool house and fountain were built less than 50 years ago, but a convincing case is made for exceptional significance in the text.

The period of significance is amended to extend from 1932 to 1943, since the contributing foot bridge was constructed in 1932.

These changes were confirmed by phone with the Alabama SHPO (9/9/92).

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1088

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 7 1992

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

Ala. Historical Commission

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Queen City Pool and Pool House
other names/site number Same

2. Location

street & number Queen City Avenue and Riverside Drive N/A not for publication
city, town Tuscaloosa N/A vicinity
state Alabama code AL county Tuscaloosa code 125 zip code 35401

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>4</u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>6</u>	<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 7-21-92
Signature of certifying official Date
Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. [Signature] 9/10/92
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture/Sports Facility
 Other/Pool House

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement/Moderne
 Modern Movement/Deco
 Other/WPA

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
 walls Concrete
 roof Concrete
 other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Queen City Pool consists of a one story, Art Moderne pool house (contributing), a swimming pool (contributing), a small wading pool (contributing), an Art Deco fountain (contributing), a concrete grand stand to the west of the main pool (contributing), and a stone foot bridge (contributing), which is located at the southeast corner of the pool grounds. The pool complex is located adjacent to the south bank of the Black Warrior River at the intersection of Queen City Avenue and Riverside Drive. Presently, Queen City Pool is vacant and in disrepair. A number of the pool house windows are broken. The main pool is structurally unsound. Queen City Pool has undergone few, if any, alterations in its forty-nine year history.

The reinforced concrete pool house consists of a circular building surmounted by a smaller, circular clerestory and flat roof. Two smaller rectangular sections project from either side of the pool house. A semicircular porch projects from the east side of the pool house. Vertical, reinforced concrete pilasters punctuate the exteriors of the porch, main house, upper clerestory and roof at varying intervals. In addition to the upper clerestory, the pool house contains two clerestories, or window bands, on the north and south sides of the building. Several glass block window units pierce the wall on either side of the main entrance. An Art Deco plaque commemorating various city officials, architect, donation foundation, and opening date is secured to the exterior wall near the main entrance.

The interior of the pool house is lined with tile from the floor to the top of the walls. The dressing rooms were designed to accommodate 15 showers for men and 11 for women. The pool house was also designed to house two 5,000 gallon filter tanks, a 20 horse power electric pump, and a filter plant.

The main pool is 165 feet long and 60 feet wide. An Art Deco, concrete fountain with a small, shallow, concrete basin stands at the south end of the pools. Originally, the fountain contained colored lights and water from the fountain played over the lights, creating a beautiful spectacle of dancing light and water. The Art Deco design of the fountain with its stylized multi-layered vertical lines with gracefully curved ends further embellished the theme of delightful, flowing water by evoking the image of water spurting forth into the air.

The foot bridge is constructed of stones. It consists of a small, single arch span, which spans a shallow gully, and low, enclosed, stone guard rails on either side of the road bed. The foot bridge is the only remaining bridge of what used to be a nature walk consisting of stone foot bridges and paths that sprawled throughout Queen City Park. Work Projects Administration labor built the nature walk in the late 1930s.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

Period of Significance

1943

Significant Dates

1943

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: Schuyler, Don Buel

Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The association of Queen City Pool with the relief programs of the New Deal, Don Buel Schuyler's career in architecture, and the national trend of Art Deco and Art Moderne architecture qualifies it for nomination for National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C.

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

Queen City Pool is historically significant for its association with the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and Works Project Administration (WPA) relief programs of the 1930s and early 1940s, which had a direct impact on the city of Tuscaloosa. Queen City Pool, which is an integral part of Queen City Park, ultimately began as a combination civic organization and CWA project. A CWA project provided the funds and necessary labor for literally paving the way into the park grounds in 1932. WPA funds and labor later created a structured pathway made of stone walkways and bridges through the scenic park. And, finally, in 1943, the WPA helped finance the construction of Queen City Pool through the donation of \$100,000. In Tuscaloosa County, the WPA also improved the streets of Northport; landscaped highways; improved and/ or built a dormitory, sidewalks, and driveways on the University of Alabama campus; improved the Tuscaloosa Airport; and, made additions to the County Court House (Tuscaloosa County). Thus, the CWA and WPA provided critical relief assistance to Tuscaloosans while at the same time providing Tuscaloosa and surrounding areas with vital recreational facilities, some of which, as was the case with a public pool, did not exist prior to federal assistance.

Criterion C: Architecture

Designed by distinguished architect, Don Buel Schuyler, Queen City Pool and Pool House in Tuscaloosa is significant for its Art Moderne Pool House and Art Deco fountain. Schuyler who was born in 1888 and died in 1972 began as an apprentice to Frank Lloyd Wright working at his offices in Spring Green, Wisconsin, headquarters of the Taliesin Fellowship. While employed by Wright, Schuyler designed the Henry J. Allen residence in Wichita, Kansas. He also became familiar with Wright's architecture. Schuyler's familiarity with Wright's works became apparent in some of the buildings he designed in Tuscaloosa in the 1940s and 1950s.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Books:

Elliot, Jean, and Frohman, Louis H. A Pictorial Guide to American Gardens. New York: Crown Publishers, INC., 1960.
Hubbs, G. Ward. Tuscaloosa: Portrait of an Alabama County. Tuscaloosa: Windsor Publications, INC., 1952.
McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, INC., 1991.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 11 Acres

UTM References

A 16 447390 3675040
 Zone Easting Northing

C 16 447440 3674910

B 16 447500 3675170
 Zone Easting Northing

D 16 447640 3674990

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 3,6, & 7 of the Original City Survey of Tuscaloosa

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated area includes 11 acres of the original 18 acres of Queen City Park which contains the nominated building, object, and structures- the Queen City Pool House, pool, wading pool, grandstand, fountain, and stone bridge.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gene A. Ford; Melanie A. Betz/AHC Reviewer

organization Tuscaloosa Heritage Commission date 17 January 1992

street & number 1305 Greensboro Avenue telephone (205) 752-2575

city or town Tuscaloosa state AL zip code 35401

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Two churches, the Wesleyan Methodist Church and Wesleyan Foundation Activities Building, contain stained glass windows reminiscent of Wright's stained glass window creations and Schuyler's home resembled Wright's California-Style houses. In addition to his architectural contributions to Tuscaloosa, including Queen City Pool, Schuyler executed a major portion of the designs of Bellingrath Gardens and House. Schuyler was a member of not only the Alabama Association of Architects of A.I.A. but also the American Institute of Architects.

Schuyler based the design of Queen City Pool on pools that he inspected in the South and on Art Deco and Art Moderne architecture. The style of the fountain is Art Deco. The fountain features smooth surfaces, curved corners, stylized geometric motifs, and an emphasis on vertical lines, which are the essential characteristics of Art Deco. The style of the bath house is Art Moderne. The bath house has many of the same characteristics as the fountain with the exception that the emphasis is more on horizontal lines, the distinguishing characteristic between Art Deco and Art Moderne. The bath house also features a continuous clerestory, several wrap around window bands, and a section of glass block windows. The characteristics of the fountain and bath house were prevalent in Art Deco and Art Moderne public and commercial buildings throughout America in the 1920s and 1930s.

Historical Summary

The Queen City Pool was constructed as a result of the Works Project Administration (WPA) projects executed in Tuscaloosa. The architecture of the pool house and fountain reflected the national trend of Art Deco and Art Moderne architecture in America from the 1920s to the 1940s. The architect of Queen City Pool was no less than the distinguished Don Buel Schuyler, a student of Frank Lloyd Wright and designer of numerous buildings in the Tuscaloosa area.

The Great Depression seriously crippled the American economy. During the 1930s, many people lost their jobs, homes, and land. Unemployment rose as high as 14,000,000 in 1933 (U.S. Federal Works III). In an effort to provide relief assistance to the many suffering Americans and revitalize the economy at the local, state, and, ultimately, national levels, President Roosevelt and the federal government developed many New Deal relief programs. Two such programs were the CWA and WPA.

The federal government established the CWA, Civil Works Administration, in November 1933 and the WPA, Works Project Administration, in May 1935. It respectively disbanded them in March 1934 and June 1943 (U.S. Federal Works 3). The CWA and WPA provided employment throughout America through the construction and improvement of buildings, roads, parks, athletic fields, and airports. During its brief operation, the CWA employed as many as 2,500,000 Americans; and built or repaired 255,000 miles of roads, 60,000 buildings, including 30,000 schools, and completed many other projects. The WPA employed some 8,500,000 during its eight year existence. Through the WPA, 651,000 miles of roads and 125,110 buildings were repaired or built (U.S. Federal Works 135). The WPA also initiated the construction of water and sewage facilities, swimming pools, and airports. Considering the number of people helped and projects completed, the CWA and WPA were extremely successful.

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Unfortunately, Alabama was not immune to the Great Depression. Alabamians required relief assistance. The CWA and WPA operated numerous programs in Alabama with the WPA employing as many as 63,000 in one month. In all, WPA projects accounted for 20,990 miles of road, 304 new schools, 32 parks, 282 play grounds/athletic fields, 23 swimming pools, and 867 public buildings (U.S. Federal Works 135). In Tuscaloosa County, the WPA improved the streets of Northport; landscaped highways; improved and/ or built a dormitory, sidewalks, and driveways on the University of Alabama campus; improved the Tuscaloosa Airport; made additions to the County Court House; and improved Queen City Park (Tuscaloosa County).

Queen City Park, which eventually included Queen City Pool, began as a combination civic organization and CWA project. After Austin L. Bennett developed a plan for a park to be situated along the south bank of the Black Warrior River in Tuscaloosa, the Jaycees built a wading pool and CWA labor built a driveway into the park ("Father" 1-3). These initial park constructions occurred in 1933. In all, the CWA employed 1,700 workers to work on Queen City Park and other Tuscaloosa projects (Hubbs 68). After the discontinuation of the CWA, WPA labor continued to improve the park throughout the 1930s, adding nature walks consisting of stone pathways and bridges.

A swimming pool was seen by many as a necessary addition to Queen City Park. There were a number of attempts to create such a facility during the thirty years prior to completion of Queen City Pool, but none came to fruition. As early as 1931, Herbert David Warner realized the need for a public swimming pool when his son David died in a swimming accident while he was attending school in the East ("Park Improvement"). In tribute to his son Herbert David Warner established the David Warner Foundation for the purpose of donating money to humanitarian causes in the Tuscaloosa area. Through the David Warner Foundation Herbert David Warner established a \$25,000 fund for the creation of a public swimming pool in Tuscaloosa. Since the \$25,000 was only enough to begin a pool project, city officials and pool sponsors contacted local WPA officials to secure the funds necessary to see it through all stages of design and construction to final completion. In 1941, the WPA accepted a proposal calling for the federal government to provide the remaining necessary funds ("Ceremonies Set May"). By the time the pool opened in May 1943, the WPA had contributed \$100,000 for completion of the pool.

Pool sponsors and city officials chose Don Buel Schuyler, a Tuscaloosan resident, to design the pool. Schuyler, originally a Kansas native, earned a B.S. degree in architecture from the University of Illinois in 1916 ("Obituary"). After graduating, Schuyler gained employment with Frank Lloyd Wright at his Taliesin headquarters in Spring Green, Wisconsin (Schuyler). Schuyler migrated to the South in the 1920s to participate in a building boom. He eventually ended up working in the offices of George B. Rogers in Mobile, Alabama. While in Mobile, Schuyler greatly contributed in the design of Bellingrath Gardens and House (Hayslip). After working in Mobile, he migrated to Tuscaloosa in 1934. Wright's influence on Schuyler became apparent in a number of works that he designed in Tuscaloosa in the 1940s and 1950s. Schuyler's home, Possum Hollow, in Tuscaloosa (destroyed) resembled Wright's California-Style houses with its emphasis on horizontal lines, low compact block-like forms, projecting terraces and balconies, and hand made concrete block technology (Elliot 67). Schuyler shared his mentor's preference for stained glass windows with stylized, abstract, geometric designs; he designed two church buildings, Wesleyan Methodist Church and Wesleyan Activities Building, in Tuscaloosa that feature "Wrightesque" stained glass windows. In addition to his "Wrightesque" buildings and Queen City Pool, Schuyler designed some 29 schools, some of which were WPA projects, 14 churches, 26 residences, and 23 commercial buildings in Alabama from the late 1920s to his death in 1972 (Schuyler).

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Historical Summary (cont.)

When commissioned to design Queen City Pool, Schuyler traveled around the South inspecting public pools; he sought to determine the best design features of the inspected pools and incorporate them into the design of Queen City Pool ("Park Improvement"). In addition to its southern eclectic composition, Schuyler based the design of the pool, more specifically, the bath house and fountain, on nation-wide architectural trends. The Art Deco and Art Moderne styles of the fountain and bath house were quite popular in America from the 1920s to the early 1940s. Eliel Saarinen's design for the Chicago Tribune building in 1922 and the streamlined design of airplanes, ships, and automobiles in the 1930s popularized smooth surfaces, curved corners, and stylized geometric motifs: the basic characteristics of Art Deco and Art Moderne (McAlester 465).

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Bibliography (cont.)

Government Documents:

Hayslip, Betsy. "Notes on Don Buel Schuyler." 1990. Unpublished Document. Housed at Tuscaloosa Heritage Commission Office, Tuscaloosa.
Schuyler, Don Buel. "Architecture Portfolio." 1954. Unpublished Document. Housed at Tuscaloosa Heritage Commission Office, Tuscaloosa.
Tuscaloosa County. Resume of WPA Work Accomplished, Completed, and Discontinued Projects. 1 November 1937. Tuscaloosa County Court House Records Room.
U.S. Federal Works Agency. Final Report on the WPA Program: 1935-43. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943.

Periodicals:

"City Swimming Pool Ceremonies Set May 18." Tuscaloosa News. 2 May 1943.
"City Swimming Pool Dedication Arranged." Tuscaloosa News. 16 May 1943.
"Dedication of City Pool Set for Tomorrow Night." Tuscaloosa News. 17 May 1943.
"City Pool Ceremonies Set for 7:30 O'clock Tonight." Tuscaloosa News. 18 May 1943.
"Park Improvement Seen at Dedication of Pool." Tuscaloosa News. 19 May 1943.
"New Pool Proves Very Popular." Tuscaloosa News. 19 May 1943.
"967 Persons Use New Pool During First Day." Tuscaloosa News. 20 May 1943.
"Father of Queen City Park Dream Watches His Vision Become Reality." Tuscaloosa News. 11 June 1947.
"Obituary." Tuscaloosa News. 27 June 1972.
Davis, Paul. "Man stopped His Car and Became Friend." Tuscaloosa News. 2 July 1972.

Personal Interviews:

Hocutt, F. Grafton. Personal Interview. 13 February 1991.
Osborn, Donna Schuyler. Personal Interview. 12 November 1990.

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graphs Page 1 Queen City Pool and Pool House

Information in items 1-5 is the same for all photographs listed.

1. Queen City Pool, Exterior, Westward view, Entrance of Pool House.
2. Queen City Pool, Exterior, Northwestward view, Southeast side of Pool House.
3. Queen City Pool, Exterior, Southwestward view, Northeast side of Pool House.
4. Fountain and Wading Pool, Southwestward view, North side of Fountain and Wading Pool, Southeast of Main Pool, and Southwest side of Pool House.
5. Main Pool and Fountain, Southward view, North side of Main Pool and Northwest side of Pool House.
6. Queen City Pool, Interior, view from Womens' dressing rooms, looking at ceiling, clerestory, structural skeleton, and Womens' shower stalls (foreground).
7. Queen City Pool, Interior, view from Men's dressing rooms, looking at shower stalls.
8. Queen City Pool, Interior, view from Men's dressing rooms, looking at sinks, clerestory, and passageway to pool (middleground).
9. Queen City Pool, Interior, view from middle of Pool House, looking at tile floor and wall of passage way to pool.
10. Stone foot bridge, Southwestward view, Southeast corner of pool grounds.

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Queen City Pool
Sketch

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Queen City Pool and Pool House

