STALL SHOWERS

The following information on bathing facilities at the University in the early years is based on research done for a patron's request regarding the first installation of stall showers on Campus (see Exhibit A).

University Hall, the first building on Campus, did not have indoor bathrooms initially. Students, staff, and faculty only lived there the first year until other accommodations could make.

The North Dorm (H-108) was built in 1874. According to John Herrick's book on Campus Buildings, in 1876 hand pumps were used outdoors. He also mentions that there was a bathroom on the first floor and water came from a nearby tower by gravity. It is not clear exactly when this was. The April, 1944 issue of the OSU Monthly, p. 3, tells about the hand pumps out back of the North Dorm and how they were used for water and washing. There was a privy out back also. A May, 1940, OSU Monthly article, p. 11, talks about the bathtub in the Dorm that was used by athletes. This dorm was torn down in 1906.

In the Board of Trustees (BT) Minutes of January, 1876, p. 111, they mention that the students living in the Little (South) Dorm (H-109), also built in 1874, had to go to the North Dorm for baths as there was no plumbing in this building. In 1914, the Little Dorm became the Homeopathic Hospital.

Hayes Hall was built in 1892, Orton in 1893, and there was no mention of bathing facilities in either of these. However, in 1918, WWI aviation cadets were housed in Hayes Hall per BT Minutes of September 4, 1918, p. 25.

The next building on Campus to be built after these two was the Armory (H-202) and it was completed in 1898 and demolished in 1959. The original floor plans (Room 054) ultimately provided the answer as to when stall showers were first put in a building. They were located in the basement of the Armory (see Exhibit B). This photocopy is taken from a photo of the original plans and shows the sewer lines. My response which accompanied this photocopy is found in Exhibit C.

There were no main sewer lines on Campus at the time, each building apparently had its own cistern and septic tank. The first mention of a trunk sewer is in the April 28, 1904 BT Minutes, p. 41. By 1909, according to the Architect's files, OSU began to think of a sewage and drainage system for all of the buildings.

The OSU Monthly, December, 1945 issue, p. 3, says one of the pet gripes of students at that time was inadequate showers.

Exhibit D contains my rough research notes.
Dear Sir:

Ohio State University was founded in 1870.

I am making a historical survey of stall showers.

I would appreciate knowing in what year were stall showers first installed at Ohio State University student gymnasiums, athletic facilities, and dormitories.
The showers I am inquiring about were separate and not part of a combination high bathtub with a shower.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A. Stark
P.O. Box 40850
Tucson, AZ 85717
August 31, 1987

Mr. S. Stark
P.O. Box 40850
Tucson, AZ 85717

Dear Mr. Stark,

Your letter of August 14, 1987 to the President's Office was forwarded to our office. In checking the archival records of The Ohio State University, it appears that the first stall showers were installed in the Drill and Gymnasium Building known as the Armory. The enclosed photocopy of the basement floor plan was done by the architectural firm of Yost & Packard in 1896. The building was completed in 1898. I have circled in green the shower stalls in both the men's and women's bath areas. The red line is the 9" sewer line and is so labeled on the drawing.

I hope this will be helpful to you in your research.

Sincerely yours,

Bertha L. Innat
(Miss) Bertha L. Innat
Archives Assistant
for Manuscripts

BLI:bi

Enclosure

cc: President Edward H. Jennings
    Rodney J. Harrison
    William J. Crowe
Exhibit D

Shower Stalls - Individual - first ever installed on campus.

University Hall
North Armory

U-Hall - VF. - 720
Bed & Invites: 202, 204, 206, 272, 306, 312, 314, 321
322, 323, 325, 326, 331, 334, 357, 376
Total: 1880

Boarding Houses - Nancie Dow - VF. - 1576
Kerrick - shaft 1st floor water by gravity & it
Monthly - May 1940. P. 11 - Laundry -
1893 - hand pumps for water, cooking
on outside of dwelling. Pumps and gas

Little Nancie - (H108) - no plumbing in any illy.
Moore Hall - Nancie Dow for tenant
1876, P. 11

Noyes 039
Adwin 060 - 1893. Annex
Armory H202 - 1898 - Occupancy - Dec. 1929
Oglesby 102 - Sep 1906 - 1966

Armory
Bed & Invites: 319, 321 > 1890 to 1760 1915-17
308, 328 > 1900 - 1904 1917-20
1904 - 1909

Monthly - Dec 1945, 193 - inadequate showers, pit gallees
Armory Bath/Bathroom

Military

Showerheads
Plumbing
Also check:
Blueprints - 760
Army drawings in basement.
Architect preserved.
Key in file 2-60, "known staff - not aware of anything special about them."

Board Minutes:
April 1918 - p. 53, Army Hospital - ""
Sept 1918 - S. C. Y. Military Aeroplane discontinued
p. 35, Hayes redepc. for student training camp

Floor Plan - original in photo archives - possible useless plan.

Architect Files - L. W. Rocker 1915, 1918 (3014)
1909 (3011)