

# University School lives on in graduates' memories

**Q**uestion: What school in Bloomington gave its name to another building and its original building to another school? If you answered "University School," you have either a good memory or a real grasp of recent Monroe County history.

Back in the 1930s, universities across the country were establishing laboratory schools for the training of teachers and as a place to try out newfangled education theories. The idea of building such a school at Indiana University was first proposed by H.L. Smith, then dean of the School of Education. He had the approval of IU President William Lowe Bryan.

The University School, which contained both elementary and secondary schools opened in 1938. From the beginning, things were different there. Classes were smaller, and the curriculum was rich.

In fact, the kind of student who were later called "nerds" were plentiful. According to an *Indiana Daily Student* article that appeared on April 18, 1969, 85 percent of the University School graduates went on to college. (Their



## LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

basketball team didn't have such an impressive average — "losers for 17 of 28 years."

Vee (Turner) Kinzer recalls that the nickname for the team was changed after a "referendum" when she was in school there. The team name, "Guinea Pigs," inspired a lot of insults from rival schools. Kinzer said as a result of the vote the name was changed to the "Univees."

There was the time in the 40s when Tom Hoadley and friends sneaked a naked statue out of the back yard of Henry Hope's house at First and Jordan and stood it up on the University School lawn. When the principal arrived, the statue was sporting a "Miss Bloomington" banner across its chest.

After a Halloween prank which backfired at the nearby Kappa Sigma fraternity house, a combined crowd of Bloomington High and University School boys returned to the fraternity house to retaliate. Parents of the University School boys received letters which began, "We understand your son was involved in an unfortunate misunderstanding between U-School boys and the members of Kappa Sigma fraternity."

It was not unusual for fights to erupt between Bloomington High and University School supporters after a basketball game. (U-School rarely won the games, having a much smaller number of boys from which to choose a team.)

University School made a very important contribution to the war effort by allowing its gym to be converted into a dormitory for Army Student Training Program cadets in 1943-44. After the war the gym was used temporarily as a dorm for returning veterans.

By the 1970s laboratory schools were being phased out by the universities that fos-

tered them. The Monroe County School Board decided to build a new high school on the northeast of Bloomington, and University School's days were numbered. (It had moved to a new campus at 10th and the Bypass in 1964.)

A phased-out high school has a shelf life. The school lives in the minds of its graduates as long as there are any who remember noisy halls between classes, after-school dances, victories on the basketball court and football field, "going steady," senior skirts and other traditions.

This summer three University classes will be having reunions — the classes of 1946, 1951 and 1971. Planning committees for the reunions hope to have good turnouts where alumni can swap stories, compare gray hair and grandchildren photos.

Maybe someone will bring up stories about the senior boys' skipping school once a year and driving up to Indianapolis to attend the matinee at the Fox burlesque. For other stories, see your class reunion chairmen.

H-T

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