

## Tenino Quarry Memorial Pool

In 1888, George VanTine and Wes Fenton formed the VanTine Stone Company, which would become the Tenino Stone Company, to quarry sandstone just south of the Northern Pacific Railroad depot in Tenino, Washington. They shipped their first sandstone in 1889, the same year that Washington became a state. A local industrial boom caused Tenino to grow throughout the 1890s.



Tenino Stone Company Quarry circa 1910.

Photo Courtesy of the South Thurston County Historical Society

During the 1910s, concrete and steel supplanted stone as the main building material. The resulting loss of business caused the local quarries to close. The quarry itself slowly filled with groundwater.

By 1918, “The entrance gate was padlocked with a ‘No Trespassing’ sign posted in clear view. It wasn’t long before the quarry became the favorite swimming hole for high school boys skinny dipping.” “By the early 1930s (perhaps earlier), most of the young people of the town spent their summer hours swimming in the icy waters of the quarry.” – Evelyn Ruggieri Hoffman.



Over time, all the buildings, except for the Tenino Stone Company office building which is still extant as the Quarry House city community center, were dismantled. In 1946, the City of Tenino purchased the old quarry from Myrhl Fenton for \$1500 to create the “Tenino Memorial Pool” as a public swimming pool and memorial to those who served in World War II.



Work continued through the late 1940s, removing stone, building fences, paving the children’s pool area, and building a bath house. The pool was formally dedicated on June 18, 1950.

The Tenino Quarry Pool continues to serve the community as a public pool and historic location, with the Tenino Depot Museum located nearby.

By Richard A. Edwards, Tenino City Historian, June 2020