

# Mermaids, Sharks Scuba Dive Here

*Plumber, Ralph Simpson, Instructing  
Chowanians in Water Safety and Fun*

Mention the word plumber and people immediately think of clogged drains, overflowing bathrooms and costly bills. That is, unless they know Ralph Simpson, licensed Plumber and Maintenance man for Chowan.

Simpson is not only a first class plumber, but he has worked as a scuba diver in New York, New Jersey and the Bahamas.

His scuba diving talents don't go to waste at Chowan. He teaches a class in the underwater art in the college's pool daily during the lunch hour and two nights a week.

Eighteen students, including seven girls, started the course and "others are trying to join everyday," Simpson says.

Simpson has also done some hard hat diving. Hard hat requires a pressure suit and scuba diving is done

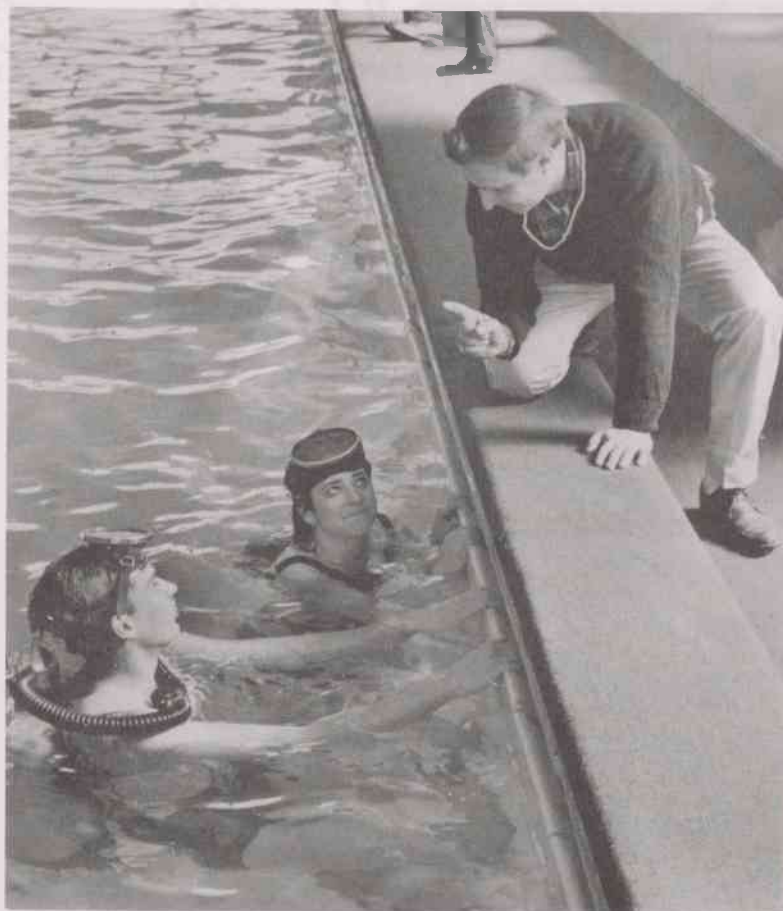
with just a mask and air tank. He attended the New York Salvage Diving School and worked for three New York companies before coming to Chowan.

He hopes to take his class to White Lake "as soon as the weather breaks," so he can give each student a chance to dive at depths of 25, 50, and 75 feet, "if possible."

Students will be instructed to work underwater, he explains. Each will be given four boards, a hammer and some nails and will be taught to make a box while underwater.

"It is hard since you are fighting both gravity and buoyancy," he says. Hammer and nails sink if dropped, but boards float to the top.

Members of the college class have formed a club, calling themselves the Chowan Sharks and Mermaids.



*Simpson instructs Greg Mensinger and Marie Christian in the college's pool.*



*Preparing equipment and testing water are mermaids and sharks Greg Mensinger, June Styron, instructor Simpson, Marie Christian, David Lawson, Jr., and, in the water, Bill McNeil, Vernon Lupton and Bob Baughn.*