# United States Patent [19]

**Finch et al.**

[11] **3,864,762**

[45] **Feb. 11, 1975**


[54] **ELEVATED SAFETY BATHTUB**


[76] Inventors: **Eve B. Finch,** 5190 S.W. Chestnut St. Beaverton, Oreg. 97005



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[21] Appl. No.: **230,639**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **4/173**

[51] **Int. Cl.** ..... **A47k 3/00,** A47k 3/024

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 4/173, 183, 145, 146, 173



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*Primary Examiner*—Harvey C. Hornsby

*Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Chernoff & Vilhauer



[57] **ABSTRACT**

An elevated safety bathtub for use both by invalids and by persons without physical handicaps. The tub has a floor supported approximately at normal chair height and a side opening serving as an entryway through one of the walls of the tub, the bottom of the entryway being substantially at the same elevation as the floor of the tub. The entryway is provided with a water-tight barrier which may be moved out of the way to permit a person to enter the tub, and replaced once the person is inside the tub. The fact that the bottom of the entryway and floor of the tub are supported at approximately chair height enables the person to enter the tub by simply seating himself on the floor of the tub through the entryway as if he were seating himself in a chair. The person need not stand on the slippery tub floor. Several embodiments of the invention comprise adapter assemblies for converting existing conventional bathtubs to elevated bathtubs having the features of the present invention. These latter embodiments provide a tub shell for mounting on top of the existing tub so that the floor of the tub shell is approximately at chair height. Means are provided for securing the tub shell to the existing tub to prevent any horizontal slippage between the two, and provision is also made for adapting the existing plumbing for use with the elevated tub shell.


**9 Claims, 10 Drawing Figures**

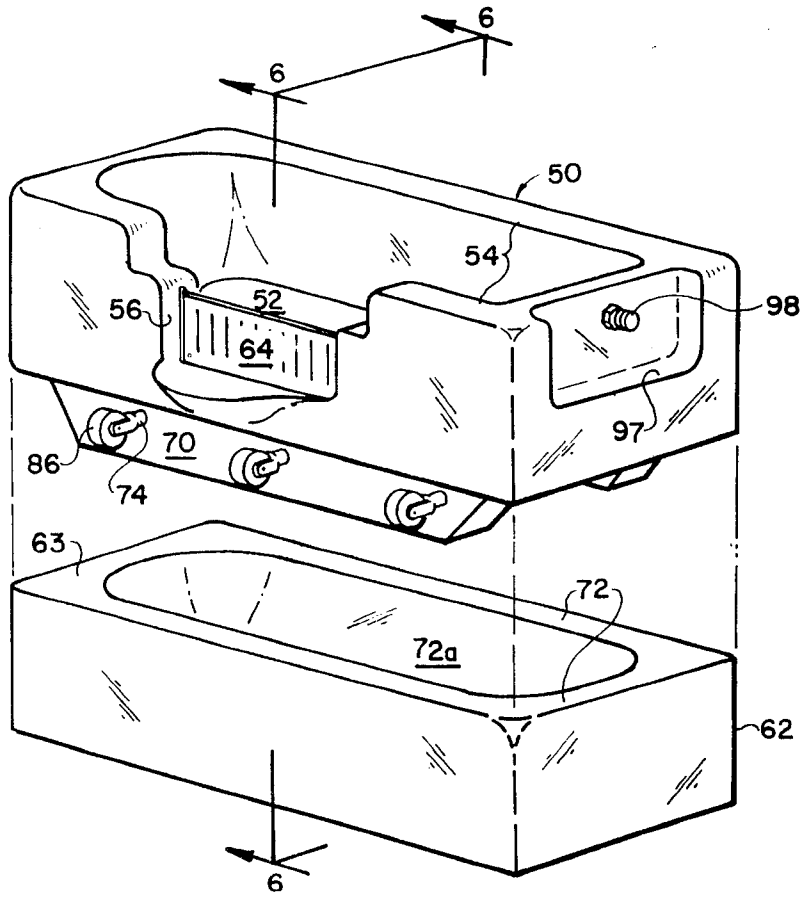
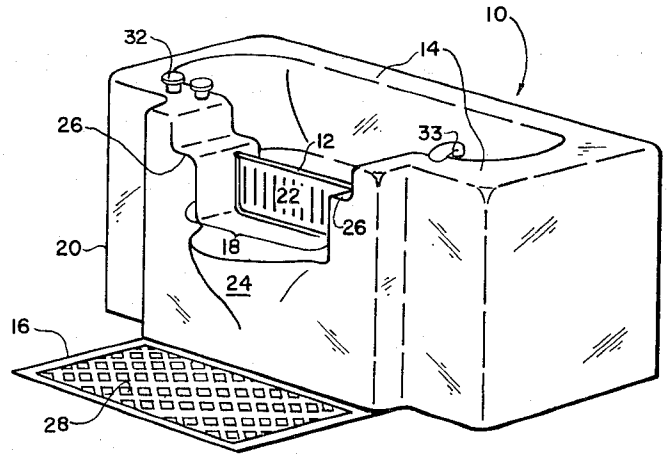


FIG. 1



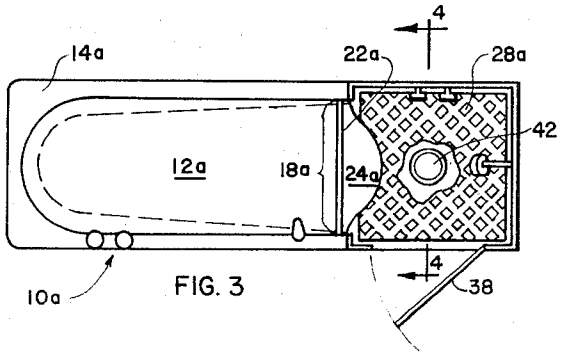




FIG. 3

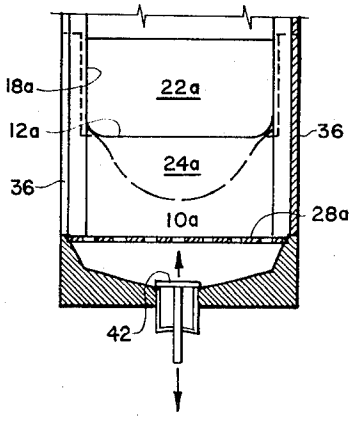



FIG. 4

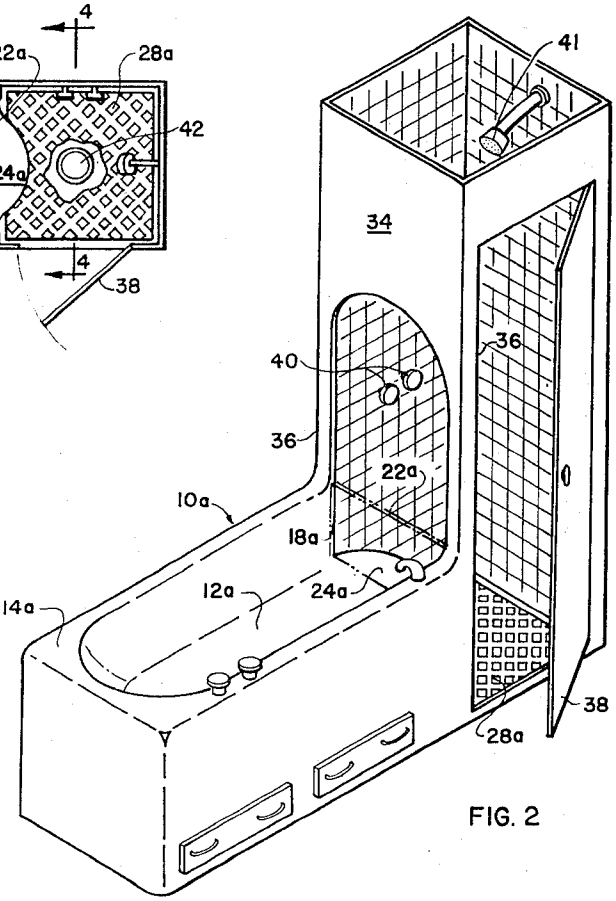
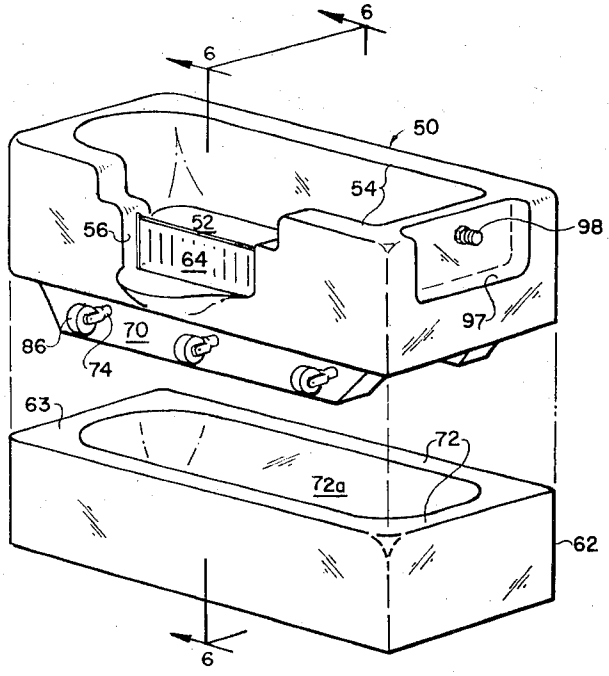



FIG. 2

FIG. 5



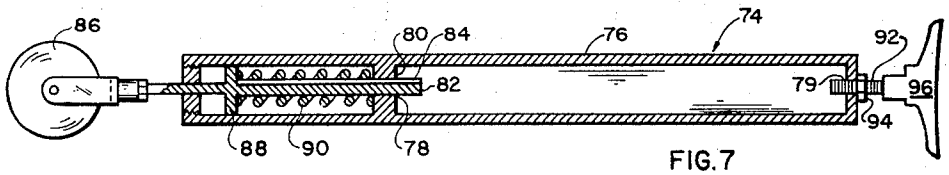




FIG. 7




FIG. 8

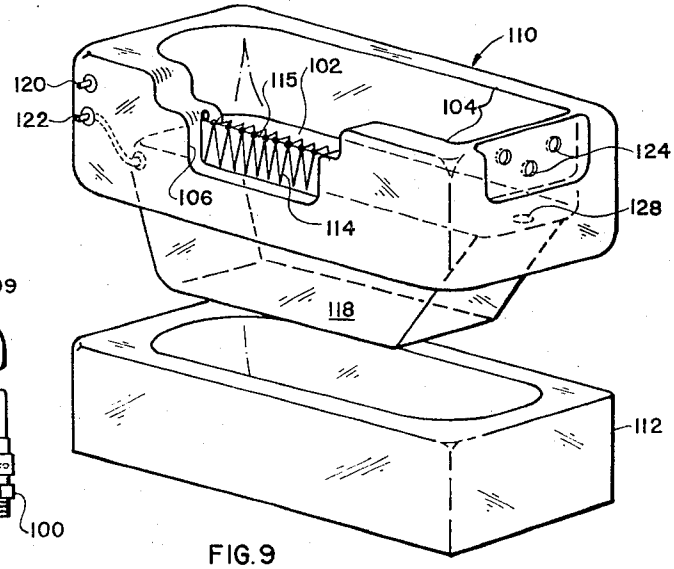



FIG. 9

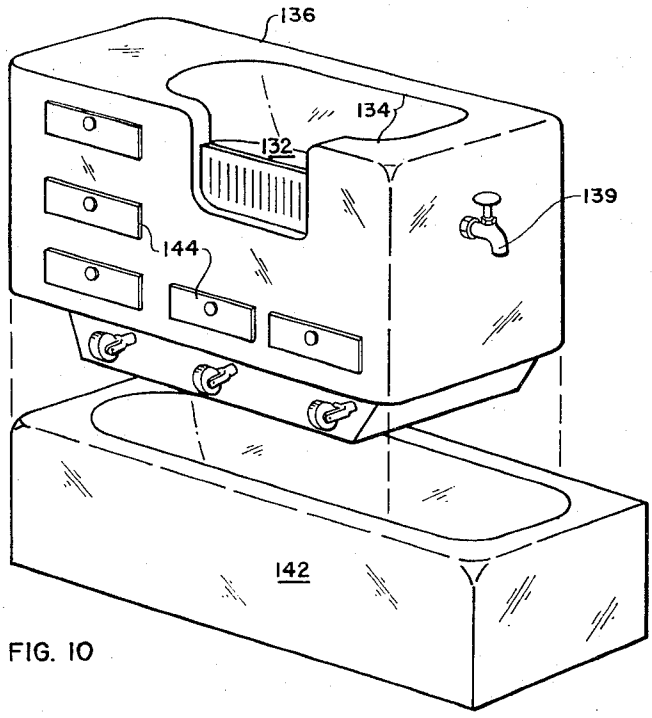

136
134
132
139
144
142

FIG. 10

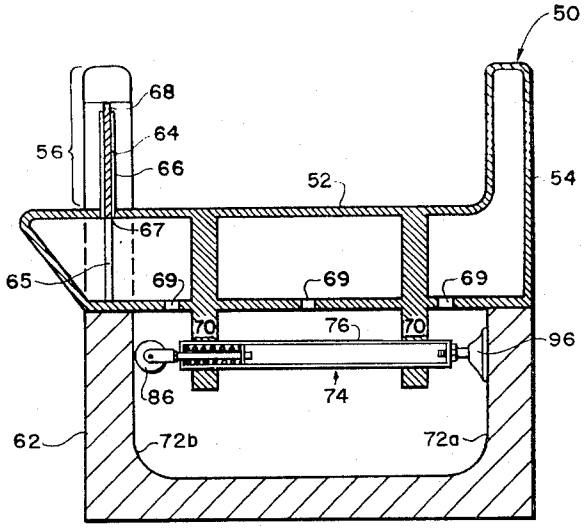

50
68
64
66
56
52
54
67
65
69
69
69
70
76
70
96
86
74
62
72b
72a

FIG. 6

# ELEVATED SAFETY BATHTUB

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a bathtub having features which insure the safe and convenient ingress and egress of a person into and out of the tub, whether the person be an invalid or one having no physical handicaps whatsoever.

In invalid or safety bathtubs known to the prior art, as shown for example in Fowler U.S. Pat. No. 2,570,053, a bathtub is provided with a water-tight side door for purposes of easier ingress and egress from the tub. The problem with the Fowler tub, and with other tubs employing a side door, is that a person must stand on the slippery floor of the tub while entering or leaving. In addition, once having entered the tub, he must crouch down and then slide his legs forward in order to assume a normal bathing position, i.e., seated with legs extended on the tub floor. Since numerous deaths and injuries are caused by slipping while entering and exiting a bathtub in a standing position, the Fowler tub and those similar to it fail to eliminate the major personal danger involved in bathing. The dangers are further magnified if the bather is an invalid. Furthermore, the fact that an invalid using the Fowler tub would have to crouch down to assume a normal bathing position, and rise to a standing position in order to leave the tub, hardly offers sufficient convenience for an invalid having limited bending capability in his back or legs.

A second generation of bathtub inventions is illustrated by Hanson U.S. Pat. No. 3,380,078, which provides a seat within the bathtub and an entrance door at the end of the tub opposite the seat. As in the case of the Fowler tub, however, the type of tub depicted by this patent requires the bather to stand on the slippery tub floor while entering and leaving the tub. Moreover, even though a seat is provided in the tub which allows a person to assume a seated position without having to crouch down, this position is not the normal bathing position seated with legs extended on the floor of the tub, and the ability of the person to comfortably soak and wash in the tub in the conventional manner is therefore greatly limited.

In order to solve the above deficiencies of prior art bathtubs, elaborate mechanical means have been employed in order to provide both safety and convenience in the use of bathtubs. For example, in Moran U.S. Pat. No. 3,604,018, a rotatable drum is provided in the tub wall with an open segment to provide an entrance into the bathtub. The bather sits on the seat within the drum and the drum is rotated by a motor until the open segment faces the interior of the bathtub. The seat is then lowered by another motor to the bottom of the tub so that the person can bathe. To get out of the tub, the procedure is reversed. In order to construct and maintain a bathtub of this type, a considerable expenditure of money is necessary because of its complex system of motors and moving parts. For most individuals or families such a tub is probably beyond their economic means.

## SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a safety bathtub of the general type described wherein a bathtub is supported at an elevation so that the tub floor is substantially at chair height. One basic embodiment of the invention comprises an original installation tub with integral structure supporting the elevated tub floor, while another embodiment comprises an adapter assembly which can be used to convert a standard, existing floor-supported bathtub into an elevated safety bathtub. The latter embodiment comprises a bathtub shell with means for mounting the shell on the existing bathtub so that the shell floor is supported above the top of the existing bathtub at approximately chair height. All of the embodiments of the invention include a sealable opening or entryway in the tub or shell wall, with its bottom substantially at the same level as the floor of the tub or shell, through which a person may enter or exit conveniently and safely.

The novel constructional features of the safely bathtub of the present invention provide it with several important advantages. First, when the sealable entryway is open, a person entering the bathtub may seat himself on the elevated tub floor through the opening, with his feet resting on the bathroom floor outside and below the tub. He then adjusts his position, all the time sitting on the floor of the tub, until his body is wholly within the tub in normal bathing position, i.e., seated with legs extended on the tub floor. The sealable entryway is then closed and the tub filled with water. After bathing, the process is reversed and the person exits from the tub by adjusting his position, while seated on the tub floor, until his feet are positioned on the bathroom floor or other surface located outside and below the tub. At no time during the ingress or egress procedure is the person forced to stand or walk on the slippery tub floor, nor is he forced to bend his back or legs to an extent greater than that necessary to sit down in a chair.

In addition, the safety bathtub of this invention provides a person, and even more importantly an invalid, with the above safety and convenience advantages without requiring any expensive, mechanically complex structure, such as that set forth in the Moran patent. Rather the present invention, due primarily to the elevation of the complete tub floor, provides a relatively inexpensive, virtually repair-free structure for bathing, with a minimum of movable parts and no requirement for motors or other power devices. As a result, both original installation and maintenance costs will be minimal. The orginal installation cost can be further reduced by employing the adapter assembly of the invention in conjunction with a presently existing bathtub.

It is therefore a principal object of the present invention to provide a new and improved safety bathtub which allows persons to enter and leave the tub without having to stand or walk on the slippery and dangerous floor of the tub.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a bathtub which enables a bather to assume a normal bathing position, i.e. seated on the floor of the tub with legs extended, without requiring him to bend his back or legs to an extent greater than that necessary to sit down in a chair.

It is a still further object of the present invention to provide a safety bathtub as described above which can be procured for a reasonable investment and which has a minimum number of movable or powered parts so that maintenance costs are minimized.

The foregoing and other objectives, features and advantages of the present invention will be more readily understood upon consideration of the following de-

tailed description of the invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the safety bathtub of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the invention, showing a shower stall coupled with the safety bathtub.

FIG. 3 is a plan view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a partial cross sectional view taken along line 4—4 of FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is an exploded perspective view of a third embodiment of the invention featuring an adapter assembly for existing bathtubs.

FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view taken along lines 6—6 of FIG. 5.

FIG. 7 is an enlarged side sectional view of the coupling device of FIG. 6.

FIG. 8 is an extended detail view of a hose connector assembly employed in the embodiment of FIG. 5.

FIG. 9 is an exploded perspective view of a fourth embodiment of the invention showing an inflatable adapter assembly for existing bathtubs.

FIG. 10 is an exploded perspective view of a fifth embodiment of the invention showing an infant adapter assembly for existing bathtubs.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The safety bathtub, designated generally as **10** in FIG. 1, comprises a bathtub floor **12** with a surrounding wall **14** for holding a quantity of water. Although the preferable configuration for the perimeter of the tub is essentially rectangular, any shape may be employed in the practice of this invention such as a round or oval configuration. The bathtub **10** is adjacent to a surface **16**, which may merely comprise a portion of the bathroom floor, and the tub floor **12** is supported by the structure of the bathtub at a distance above the surface **16** approximately equal to normal chair height.

In the wall **14** directly above the surface **16** is an opening **18** extending downwardly from the top of the wall **14** approximately to the level of the bathtub floor **12**. The opening **18** is fitted with a movable water-tight barrier **22**, to be described hereafter in greater detail, capable of sealingly closing the opening **18** after the person has positioned himself within the tub **10** for bathing. Although any of a large variety of water-tight barriers may be employed, a simple manually operated door or movable screen is preferred for purposes of economy. The wall **14** may optionally include an outwardly projecting seat **24** and arm rests **26** adjacent the opening **18** for the comfort of the bather and to aid him in entering and leaving the tub. Moreover, in order to provide additional safety for the bather, the surface **16** is preferably provided with a skid-resistant covering, comprising for example a rough finished, non-skid synthetic polymer, upon which the person can stand. The surface may consist of a grating **28** with a drain underneath for collecting any water which may leak or overflow from the opening **18**.

A person wishing to use the bathtub **10** stands on the surface **16** and opens the water-tight barrier **22**. He then turns and, with his back to the opening **18**, seats himself upon the tub floor **12** through the opening **18**, with his feet resting on the surface **16**. He positions himself lengthwise within the tub by lifting his legs, pivoting his body, and swinging his legs over the tub wall so that he is sitting on the tub floor **12** with his legs extended. Thereafter he closes the water-tight barrier **22** and fills the tub with water by means of the hot and cold water controls **32** which are conveniently located at a position near the end of the tub opposite the spigot **33** so that the bather can readily reach them without having to lean forward from his normal bathing position. After bathing, he reverses his movements in order to exit from the tub.

A second embodiment of the invention is shown in FIGS. **2**, **3** and **4**, which illustrate a safety bathtub **10*a*** communicating with a shower stall **34** through an opening **18*a*** located in the end, rather than the side, of the tub. A grating **28*a***covered with a suitable non-skid material, comprises the shower stall floor. The shower wall **36** is connected to the tub wall **14*a*** so that, when the shower stall door **38** is closed, a complete unit is formed comprising both the tub and the shower which allows a person either to bathe or shower within the confines of the single unit. As in FIG. **1**, the floor **12*a*** of the bathtub portion **10*a*** is supported at substantially normal chair height above the grating **28*a***, and the opening **18*a*** in the wall **14a** allows ingress and egress into and out of the tub **10*a*** from the shower stall **34**. A movable water-tight barrier **22*a*** is provided in the opening, and a seat **24*a*** may be included extending outwardly from the tub floor **12*a*** into the shower stall **34**. The hot and cold water controls **40** for the shower stall **34** are placed conveniently near the opening **18*a*** and seat **24*a*** so that a person taking a shower while seated on the seat or in the opening can regulate the temperature and rate of flow of the water. In addition, the controls **40** are located on a wall other than that containing the shower head **41** so that a person standing in the shower can easily make adjustments while avoiding the spray from the shower head.

Beneath the grating **28a** is a conventional, mechanically closable drain **42**, best illustrated in FIG. **4**. Since the shower door **38** is water-tight, the drain **42** can be closed and water confined within the periphery of the shower walls **36** so that the floor of the shower stall **34** can be used as a foot soaking basin by the bather.

The bathtub **10*a*** is sufficiently large to permit a person to assume a normal bathing position within the tub by simply standing in the shower stall with his back to the opening **18*a***, sitting down on the elevated tub floor **12*a***, sliding himself back from the opening until his legs are inside the tub, and closing the water-tight barrier **22*a*** behind him. It should be noted that the opening **18*a*** and shower stall **34** need not necessarily be located at the end of the tub **10*a***, but could instead be located on the side of the tub, as in FIG. **1**, if space considerations so dictated.

The two embodiments of the invention discussed so far are primarily intended for original installation in new homes, or for inclusion in re-designed bathrooms. A third embodiment provides for an adapter assembly to be mounted on top of an existing floor-supported bathtub, the resultant product being a simple, low-cost safety bathtub having the basic advantageous features of the previously described embodiments. Referring to FIG. **5**, the adapter assembly comprises a bathtub shell, generally designated as **50**, having a shell floor **52** and a surrounding wall **54** for holding a quantity of water. Although the configuration of the shell **50** will gener-

ally be rectangular, any shape shell may be employed to correspond to the shape of the existing bathtub. In its mounted position, the shell **50** is supported by the existing bathtub **62** at an elevation such that the shell floor **52** is substantially no lower than the top **63** of the existing bathub. Although the height at which the shell floor **52** is supported may vary depending on the height of the existing bathtub **62**, it is preferred that this height be approximately equal to chair height.

As in the embodiment of FIG. **1**, an opening **56** in the shell wall **54** extends downwardly from the top of the wall substantially to the level of the shell floor **52**, the opening being wide enough to permit a person to seat himself on the shell floor **52** through the opening **56** when the shell **50** is mounted on top of the existing bathtub **62**. The opening **56** is fitted with a movable water-tight barrier **64**, which preferably comprises a simple, manually operated water-tight door or movable screen. One such type of barrier, which could be employed with any of the embodiments of the invention discussed so far, is illustrated in FIG. **6**. The barrier **64** comprises a substantially rigid plastic screen with its sides slidably mounted within a pair of vertical grooves **65** in the shell structure. The portions of the grooves **65** above the shell floor **52** are lined on either side with a gasket material **66** to prevent leakage, as is the slot **67** in the shell floor **52** through which the screen passes. The height of the screen **64** is short enough that it may be manually pushed down into the area below the shell floor **52** until its top is flush with the shell floor. This allows a person to enter the shell **50** in the same manner that he enters the tub **10** of FIG. **1**, after which he simply raises the screen **64** into its closed position. A small recessed or retractable handle **68** is preferably provided at the top of the screen **64** to aid the bather in lifting the screen. During bathing the frictional engagment of the screen with the gasket material **66** will probably be sufficient to retain the screen in its elevated position, but if not any conventional type of latching mechanism (not shown) can be used. Any leakage which may pass the gasket material on the inner side of the screen will simply flow into the cavity beneath the shell floor **52** and be drained into the existing bathtub **62** through drain holes **69**.

A horizontally reciprocating screen or a hinged door might alternatively be employed in place of the vertically sliding screen **64** of FIG. **6**. In the embodiments of FIGS. **1–4**, mechanically actuated screens or doors could also be used, but at added expense.

Referring to FIGS. **5** and **6**, the bathtub shell **50** is supported on top of the existing tub **62** by the engagement of its downwardly facing bottom surfaces with the top of the walls of the existing tub **62**. In addition, a coupling device is attached to the bottom of the bathtub shell **50** for purposes of securing the shell to the existing bathtub. The coupling device comprises two members **70** protruding downwardly from the bathtub shell **50** and positioned so as to fit wholly within the existing bathtub **62**. A plurality of adjustable couplers **74** are transversely mounted in the members **70** for engaging the interior of the wall **72** of the existing bathtub **62** so that relative horizontal movement between the shell **50** and the existing bathtub **62** is prevented. As shown more specifically in FIG. **7**, the adjustable coupler **74** comprises a tubular housing **76**, preferably constructed of aluminum or rigid plastic, having an inner fixed retaining wall **80** with a keyed aperture **78**. A movable rod assembly, comprising a rod **82** with a keyed spline **84** to prevent axial rotation of the rod, fits slidably within the keyed aperture **78** of the retaining wall **80**. The exterior end of the rod **82** passes slidably through one end of the housing **76** and includes a rubber roller **86** journaled for rotation about a horizontal axis. A disc-shaped shoulder member **88**, which fits slidably within the tubular housing **76**, is affixed to the rod **82**, and separated from the retaining wall **80** by a coil spring **90**. The coil spring **90**, acting through the shoulder member **88**, yieldably urges the roller **86** outwardly from the tube **76** for purposes to be explained hereafter. The opposite end of the tube **76** is provided with a threaded aperture **79**, which receives a bolt **92** held tightly in place by a lock nut **94**. Affixed to the outer end of the bolt **92** is a suction cup **96**.

To install the bathtub shell **50** on top of the existing tub **62**, the suction cup **96** of each coupler **74** is adjusted in or out so that it can readily engage the inner surface **72a** of the existing tub wall **72** (FIG. **6**) on the side of the tub which is adjacent the bathroom wall. The shell **50** is positioned on top of the tub **62** and the suction cups **96** are pressed tightly against the inner surface **72a**, while the side of the shell having the rollers **86** is tipped upwardly. Once the suction cups are engaged, the side of the shell having the rollers **86** is pushed down and, as the rollers engage the inner surface **72b** of the tub wall **72**, the springs **90** allow the respective rollers to yield inwardly, thereby permitting the shell **50** to assume its level mounted position on top of the existing tub **62**. The frictional engagement of the suction cups and rollers with the inner surfaces of the existing tub wall **72** prevents the shell **50** from sliding horizontally in any direction, while the vertically positioned rollers **86** permit the shell to be pulled upwardly and removed if desired.

Any number of systems can be employed to provide plumbing for the tub shell **50**. In FIG. **5** a recess **97** is provided in one end of the shell wall **54** positioned to correspond with the locations of the hot and cold water controls of the existing tub **62**, thus permitting manual access to the water controls when the shell is in mounted position atop the tub **62**. A fitting **98**, best illustrated in FIG. **8**, communicates through the shell wall and is coupled with a flexible hose **99**. The hose **99** includes a quick-disconnect coupling **100** at its opposite end for attaching to the existing tub's spigot. Alternatively, coupling **100** could simply comprise a flexible sleeve for fitting over the spigot, of the type commonly employed in bathtub spray hoses. For drainage, a simple orifice and stopper may be provided in the shell floor **52** to allow bath water to drain into the existing tub **62**.

A fourth embodiment of the invention is an inflatable adapter assembly which can be manufactured at low cost and is useful particularly for traveling. Referring more specifically to FIG. **9**, the inflatable adapter assembly comprises a foldable rubber or plastic bathtub shell, designated generally as **110**, having a shell floor **102**, a surrounding wall **104** with an opening **106**, and a water-tight barrier **114**. Since all of the components of the shell **110** should be foldable for convenience, the barrier **114** preferably comprises a foldable water-tight curtain sealingly attached at its sides and bottom to the perimeter of the opening **106**. The curtain has an excess of material at its top which allows it to be laid flat to allow entry to the tub. The curtain may be secured

in a raised position by tightly fastening a cord **115**, which passes through the upper folds of the curtain, across the opening **106**.

In the embodiment of FIG. **9**, an inflatable chamber **118**, which fits inside and rests on the bottom of the existing tub **112**, provides the principal support for the shell **110**, and particularly for the shell floor **102**. A pair of air passageways **120** and **122** are provided to inflate the shell wall **104** and the supporting chamber **118** separately. Each of the passageways is provided with a one-way valve fitting so that the passageway into each chamber is closed except when air pressure is applied through the fitting.

A group of flexible, resilient tubular sleeves **124** extend inwardly from apertures located at positions in the wall **104** corresponding to the locations of the existing tub's water controls and spigot respectively. The sleeves are designed to fit tightly around the controls and spigot so that they may sealingly communicate with the interior of the shell **110** through the wall **104**. Alternatively, a hose may be passed from the existing tub spigot over the top of the wall **104**, and the water controls manipulated exterior of the shell as in the previous embodiment. The shell floor **102** is provided with an orifice and stopper assembly **128** which allows the inflatable shell **110** to be drained. To avoid interference with the chamber **118**, the orifice is located at a point between the interior of the shell wall **104** and the perimeter of the area formed by the attachment of the chamber **118** to the shell floor **102**.

A fifth embodiment of the invention is an adapter assembly for bathing infants, as shown in FIG. **10**. The adapter assembly is similar in many respects to that of FIG. **5**, the principal differences being that the shell floor **132** and inner surrounding walls **134** of the shell **136** are substantially smaller than those provided previously since an infant requires a much smaller bathing area. In addition, the shell **136** is higher and has a shorter longitudinal dimension than the adapter shells previously described, and the height of the shell floor **132** is at counter height (approximately three feet) for convenience in bathing the infant, rather than chair height (approximately 18 inches). An exterior drain spigot **139** communicates with an orifice in the shell floor **132** and drains directly into the excess length of the existing tub **142**. The shell **136** is also provided with a plurality of drawers **144** which provide storage for the equipment and supplies needed for bathing the infant.

The terms and expressions which have been employed in the foregoing abstract and specification are used therein as terms of description and not of limitation, and there is no intention, in the use of such terms and expressions, of excluding equivalents of the features shown and described or portions thereof, it being recognized that the scope of the invention is defined and limited only by the claims which follow.

What is claimed is:

**1.** An improved safety bathtub comprising a tub having a floor supported at chair height and a surrounding wall for holding a quantity of water, said tub wall having an opening therein extending from the top of said wall downwardly toward said tub floor for permitting a person to seat himself on said tub floor through said opening preparatory to positioning himself wholly within said tub for bathing and a water-tight barrier associated with said opening for sealingly closing said opening after said person has positioned himself wholly within said tub, wherein the improvement comprises arm rest means formed in said tub wall adjacent to the sides of said opening at a height lower than the top of said wall for supporting the arms of said person seated on said tub floor and for use in entering and leaving said tub.

**2.** An adapter assembly for an existing, floor-supported bathtub comprising:

a. a bathtub shell having a floor and a surrounding wall for holding water;

b. support means attached to said shell for mounting said shell on top of said existing bathtub with the floor of said shell supported at a height substantially no lower than the top of said existing bathtub;

c. said shell wall having an opening therein extending from the top of said shell wall downwardly toward said shell floor for permitting a person to seat himself on said shell floor through said opening preparatory to positioning himself wholly within said bathtub shell for bathing;

d. water-tight barrier means associated with said opening for sealingly closing said opening after said person has positioned himself wholly within said bathtub shell; and

e. arm rest means formed in said shell wall adjacent the sides of said opening at a height lower than the top of said shell wall for supporting the arms of said person seated on said shell floor.

**3.** An adapter assembly for an existing, floor-supported bathtub comprising:

a. a bathtub shell having a floor and a surrounding wall for holding water;

b. support means attached to said shell for mounting said shell on top of said existing bathtub with the floor of said shell supported at a height substantially no lower than the top of said existing bathtub;

c. said shell wall having an opening therein extending from the top of said shell wall downwardly toward said shell floor for permitting a person to seat himself on said shell floor through said opening preparatory to positioning himself wholly within said bathtub shell for bathing;

d. water-tight barrier means associated with said opening for sealingly closing said opening after said person has positioned himself wholly within said bathtub shell;

e. means defining an outwardly facing recess in said shell wall positioned so as to correspond with the locations of the hot and cold water controls of said existing bathtub when said shell is mounted atop said existing bathtub, said recess permitting manual access to said hot and cold water controls when said shell is in mounted position; and

f. means for conducting said water from the spigot of said existing tub into said bathtub shell.

**4.** An adapter assembly for an existing, floor-supported bathtub comprising:

a. a bathtub shell having a floor and a surrounding wall for holding water;

b. support means attached to said shell for mounting said shell on top of said existing bathtub with the floor of said shell supported at a height substantially no lower than the top of said existing bathtub;

c. said shell wall having an opening therein extending from the top of said shell wall downwardly toward said shell floor for permitting a person to seat himself on said shell floor through said opening prepar-

atory to positioning himself wholly within said bathtub shell for bathing;

d. water-tight barrier means associated with said opening for sealingly closing said opening after said person has positioned himself wholly within said bathtub shell;

e. means defining a passageway in said shell wall positioned so as to be adjacent the water spigot of said existing tub when said shell is mounted atop said existing tub; and

f. means for coupling said spigot to said passageway in order to conduct water from said spigot into said bathtub shell.

**5.** The adapter assembly of claim **4** wherein said means for coupling said spigot of said existing tub to said passageway comprises a flexible hose having means for coupling one end of said hose to said spigot and the other end of said hose to said passageway.

**6.** The adapter assembly of claim **4** wherein said bathtub shell is constructed of a substantially rigid material and includes downwardly facing surfaces for engaging upwardly facing surfaces of said existing bathtub to support said bathtub shell atop said existing bathtub.

**7.** The adapter assembly of claim **4** wherein said bathtub shell includes means for coupling said shell to said existing bathtub to prevent relative horizontal movement between said bathtub shell and said existing bathtub.

**8.** The adapter assembly of claim **7** wherein said coupling means includes suction cups for engaging the inner surface of said existing bathtub.

**9.** The adapter assembly of claim **4** wherein the floor of said shell is substantially at normal chair height when said shell is mounted atop said existing bathtub.

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