

British Students Began Movement for 'Centers'

One hundred and forty-five years ago an idea started in England that today has become the goal of every college in the United States—to have a student center.

Around 1815, two small groups of students, one at Cambridge and another at Oxford, became fired with the passion for free discussion. They conceived an organization through which there might be a combat of mind against mind, irrespective of college registration.

Students rented and furnished their own halls and, for a long time, were not recognized by the college authorities. But out of this "debating" stage in student organization developed some of the great leaders of the times, including Gladstone, Ruskin, King Edward VII, and others.

Prompted Structures

With this love for discussion and debate came a call for reading rooms, libraries, lounges, and festive halls. Thus came better buildings and refinement of furnishings.

The student center idea, meanwhile, was begun in America as early as 1832 in Harvard, then in the University of Pennsylvania. In 1896 Pennsylvania secured the first real student building in this country, and Harvard completed one in 1901. During the early years of the century, the spread of the idea was rapid and on a club basis.

The next definite trend, known as the "campus democracy stage," started in 1918 following World

War I.

Many colleges had exclusive fraternities, but the Student Union, rather than the fraternities, met the needs of a great social democracy. They became larger and more inviting and the real center of student life.

General Trend

Last and present development of the Union in this country is identified as the "community recreation stage," starting about 1930. Becoming more than a club or a campus activity, the Union represented a general trend of the times. Properly organized and developed during this period, it offered an opportunity for personal self-discovery and self-improvement through a broad field of college service.

Fundamental characteristic throughout these periods of development was ownership and operation of the buildings by students. Today, there are still charges to keep these Unions going.

Used by Students

A Student Union building is also paid for by the public, but students are by far the biggest users of the building. Over 95% of the buildings have a required Student Union fee.

With a chance to learn etiquette, ballroom and folk dancing, to work and to play, and, perhaps most important of all, to meet people, the students of today at the colleges which have Student Unions become more polished socially and culturally.

Mrs. Cummings Is Gifts Head

With two sons enrolled in A&M and having lived in Bryan for four years, the A&M campus is not new to Mrs. Johnnie Cummings, manager of the gift shop in the Memorial Student Center.

Already experienced in the merchandising field, Mrs. Cummings has been connected with a grocery, eating establishment, and appliance store. One son, Glenn is a senior, while the second, Don, is a junior.

Basically, the gift shop was suggested by Carl Birdwell, manager of the Exchange Store, who made this suggestion to a committee of students, faculty, and former students about four years ago.

This committee had been appointed by President Gibb Gilchrist to recommend various things concerning Student Centers, including what facilities and departments should be in the Student Center.

Birdwell Suggestion

At this meeting Birdwell said that the Exchange Store had faithfully served the student body and visitors many years for gifts and souvenirs. He suggested that the school put a gift shop in the Student Center to serve the same group of people and to let the profits go to operate the Student Center itself. Actually the gift shop is just an elaboration of the Exchange Store.

The gift shop will have a tobacco bar with a line of box candies, nuts, and many exclusive items—such as Turtles by DeMets in Chicago, Charlotte Charles Rum Cakes, Sherry Pralines, Russel Stover Famous Standard Candies, Kings and Whitman Box Candies and other lines, many of which are



Johnnie Cummings

Mrs. Cummings, manager of the MSC gift shop, has two sons in A&M.

found only in exclusive department stores in Dallas and Houston. Also it will offer everyday items for student conveniences such as aspirin, shoestrings, tooth paste, razor blades, soap, and other items.

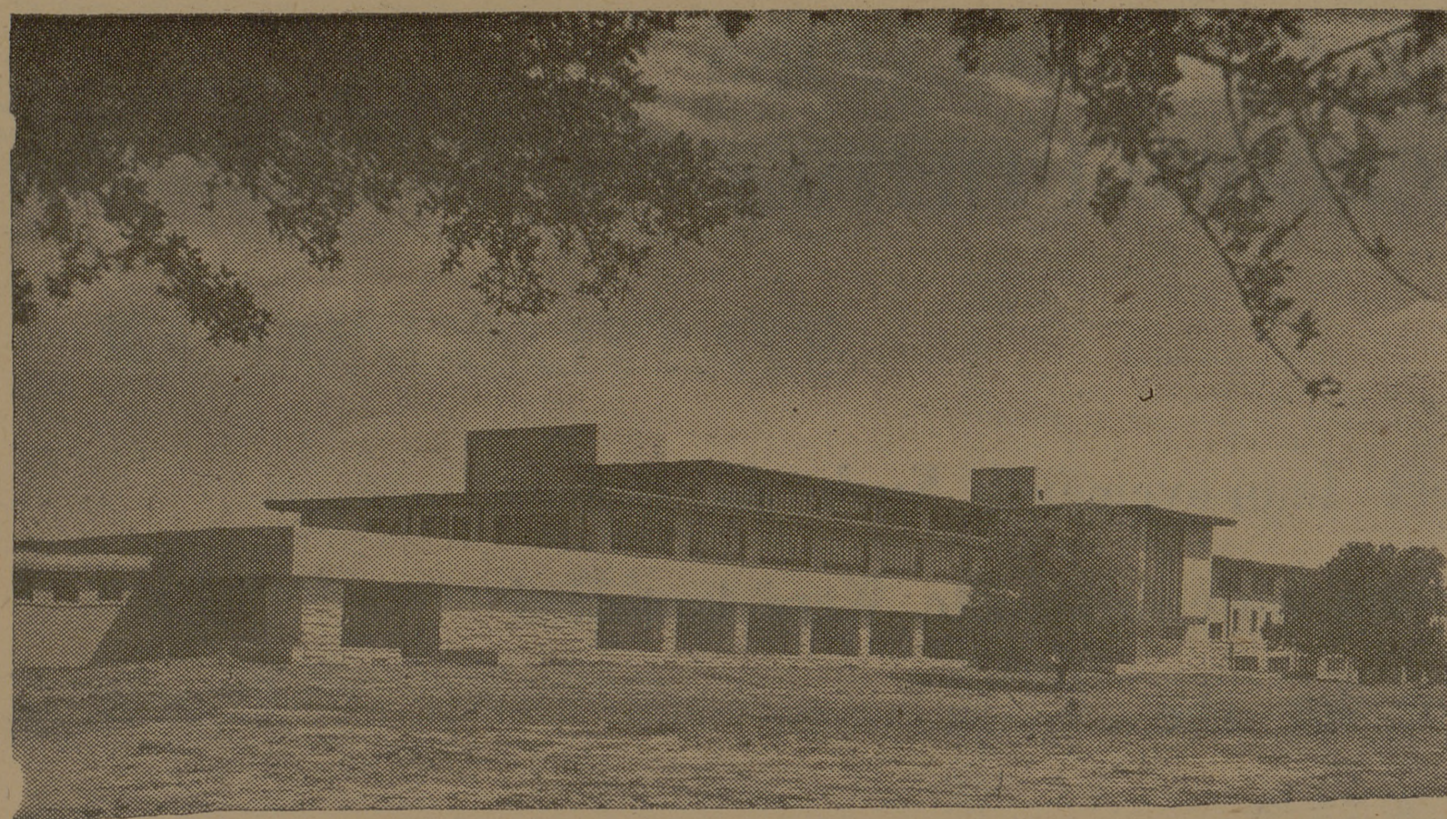
Film Supplies

There will be a complete stock of film for photographers and supplies for users in the craft shop, art room, dark rooms, and hobby shops of the Center.

Showcases and wallcases are

custom built and are made of beautiful birch and are well lighted. The colors of the room are dusty rose and blue and the indirect lighting effect will greatly add to the beauty of the room. The gift shop is conveniently located near the MSC post office.

Jeanne Hooper is one of the girls who will be working with Mrs. Cummings. Her husband, Darrow Hooper, was a freshman football star last fall. Two other girls will be chosen at a later date.



Congratulations to the Officials of A&M College who were responsible for the planning and construction of the new Memorial Student Center. The Southwestern States Telephone Co. appreciates the opportunity of being able to provide the latest type of telephone facilities for this modern building.

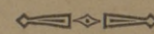
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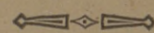
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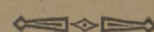
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