

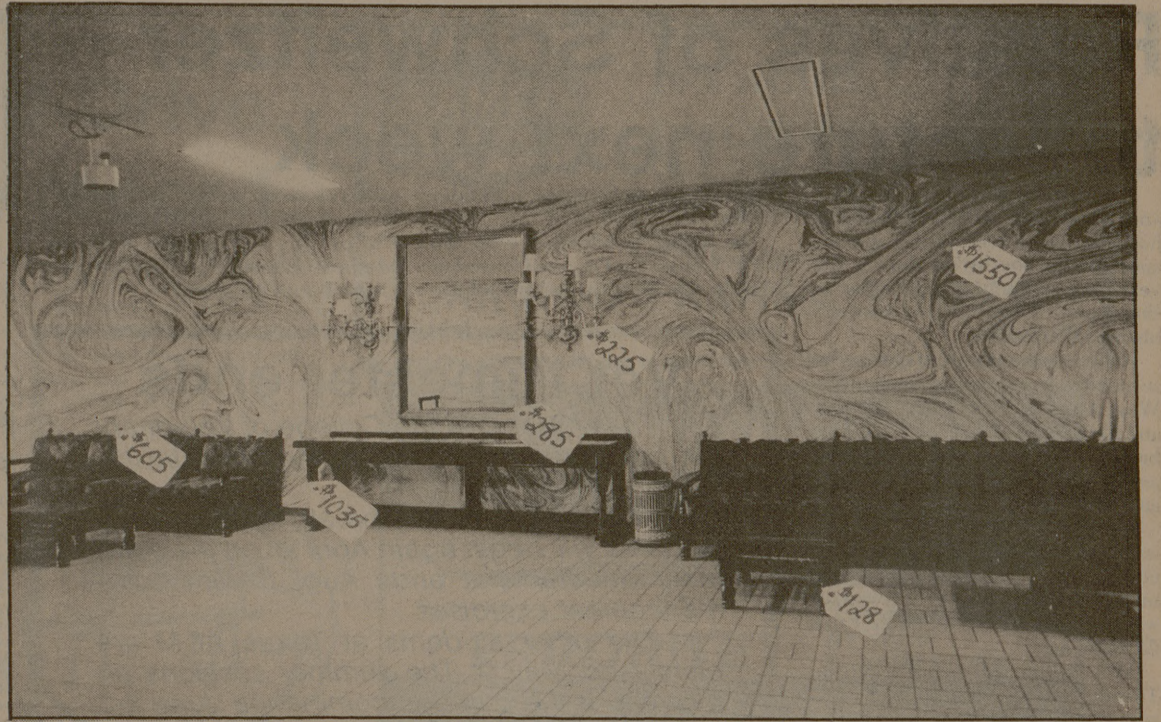
**UC costs**

The \$28 million University Center was funded by \$6.83 million in Student tuition and Building Use fees (24.3%), \$16.7 million of Permanent Available Funds (64.9%), \$2.5 million in Interest on University Local Funds (8.9%) and \$490,000 in Former Students' donations (1.7%).



INTERIOR DECORATION  
ROBERT D. HARRELL

This view of the main desk and promenade of the old MSC was taken from the 1952 Aggeland. In refurbishing the building, the interior designer specified that the "old hat" red tile be replaced by the light tan tiles used in the newer parts of the Center.



William Pahlmann said he "was trying to get away from that cursed yellow brick" when he selected the two "marbelia" murals for the second floor MSC concourse. The canvas mural cost \$72 a sq. yd.

(Photo by Jim Peters)

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**Commentary**

**Students not consulted in planning**

By JIM PETERS  
Staff Writer

"Interior decoration begins with a study of the people who are going to live with it. . . Their ideas, especially if they are young people, may seem impractical to you but you should hear them out."

Excerpt from *The Pahlmann Book of Interior Design, New York, 1968.*  
By William Pahlmann A.I.D.

It couldn't have been said better, and yet, it couldn't have been adhered to less. None of the established planning committees nor the

**COMMENTARY**

organizations that use the Memorial Student Center were consulted as to the furnishings in the Center.

Students were involved in all aspects of planning for the original MSC building, J. Wayne Stark, director of MSC, said. He has been director since the MSC's inception in 1947.

Both he and Bill Davis, the past student president of the MSC Council, lamented the lack of student input into the new complex, particularly its furnishings.

Whereas the operation and maintenance of the old MSC was controlled entirely by the MSC Council and Directorate, much of the new MSC's operations are handled by the University Center Board.

The recreational needs and office space for student programs in the new Center have already been taxed. Yet, there are plenty of conference and banquet rooms in the \$25 million complex. It's more a Memorial Conference Center in plan.

"The center should be union-oriented, as opposed to business-oriented," Davis suggested.

In the Theatre Arts Center, which has received due praise from its users, the decoration seems appropriate for the air of formality that exists there. The decorative plaques and statuary, although of an eclectic cultural mix, contributes to the re-

laxed atmosphere in the circulation areas surrounding the excellent theatre facilities.

Just across the mall area, the relaxed atmosphere evolves into a chaotic blend of hooved cowhide benches, martial arts, and out-of-place antiques.

The Board of Directors says it is pleased with the Center's design, which several members term a "work of art." The interior designer, William Pahlmann, says he gets dozens of letters from former students and visitors, thanking him for his work. President Jack K. Williams receives 20 or 25 complimentary letters for every negative one The Battalion prints concerning the University Center.

The question of taste is a personal one, the interior designer says, one that "grows with exposure to good influences."

"Taste is hard to define and difficult to talk about," Pahlmann wrote, "but when you come into a house and you feel comfortable and happy, you can be pretty sure that

good taste is operating there. Real taste can give you a lift like a glass of champagne."

As many view it, the biggest planning error is not taking advantage of the wealth of professional people on campus, whether they be in the field of architecture, agriculture, liberal arts, or whatever. Their recommendations could be infinitely valuable in an advisory capacity to the board or the administration.

Such an advisory role was anticipated by President Williams three years ago when he created the Long Range Campus Planning Committee.

Composed of three students, three faculty, and six staff members, the committee has been accused of being "top heavy in the administration." Even so, it has only met twice in the past two years, the most recent time being last spring.

The Campus Planning Committee (CPC) was formed by the Student Government in 1971 to provide student input into construction plans on campus. Committee members had difficulty obtaining information on several of the controversial items of campus planning, most notably the perimeter landscape development plan (the Wall) and the plans for furnishing the MSC.

At one point The Batt was told to delay taking photographs of the landscape plans for a couple of weeks. Williams said the University "was fighting for its life" in Austin over the apportionment of the Permanent University Fund (PUF).

The PUF is the earnings from state-owned land reserves. A&M receives one-third of the fund for improvements leading to "academic excellence." It is the board that determines what priority Cloisonne vases, the size of classrooms,

Hotard Hall and cowhide benches rate as items of excellence.

Even with active planning committees, however, the ultimate decisions rest with the board. A particular case is the new Architecture Building which underwent construction this month.

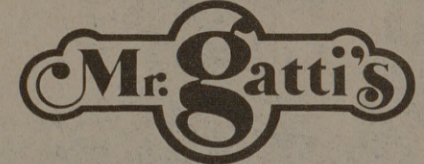
Original plans included eight skylights for the building's roof. Later, one of the board members thought the appearance of skylights would not "look good" and suggested that a wall (an accepted aesthetic solution so it seems) be build around them.

Despite protests from the architects, and the students and faculty involved from the College of Architecture and Environmental

Design about the folly of such an idea, the added "skylight shades" will be constructed.

Gen. Luedecke for one has been extremely helpful and receptive to those students wishing to examine landscape and construction plans. Yet few of the 22,000 students and faculty have this access and thereby rely on the committees for their information.

A Student Business Council was established this spring by Student government for the purpose of investigating student fee increases and fee expenditures (an area of widespread student concern). It will also provide input where possible and provide this information to the student body.



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