

Water well drilled to run experiments

By SARAH OATES
Staff writer

Are they drilling for oil under Doherty Hall? No, that's not an oil well under construction in front of the building — it's a water well that will be used as a laboratory for students in Petroleum Engineering 415, Measurements Laboratory, beginning this semester.

"Everybody who goes by there asks what we're doing," said Dr. J. T. Rollins, an associate professor of petroleum engineering and one of the department faculty members involved in the development of the project and construction of the well.

Rollins said the well will be used to run petroleum engineering experiments that could not previously be run on campus because of a lack of facilities. About 270 students from nine laboratory classes will use the well this semester.

"It's a good teaching device," said Dr. William Von Gonten, head of the department. Von Gonten made the proposal that a well be constructed on campus. He explained that the well will be used to run experiments that previously required laboratory field trips to off-campus wells.

Von Gonten said that having a well directly outside the building eliminates problems involved in arranging field experiments such as receiving the permission for students to observe wells and arranging transportation to the well site.

"We have certain experiments run in the labs that involve pumping wells," he said. "It's a better situation to have a well by the building."

Von Gonten explained that the water well cannot be used to pump oil because of its small size. "It would be far too expensive to pump oil, and there would be safety problems," he said. "We wouldn't be able to drill right next to the building."

He said that while the water well costs between \$1,000 — \$2,000, the cost of constructing an oil well could be as high as \$500,000. The water well was funded by the department, and its construction was planned for nine months before it actually began.

Mark Beach, a junior petroleum engineering major working on construction of the well, explained two types of experiments that will be run using the well. They are a dynamometer test, used to judge whether a well is pumping efficiently, and a product index test, used to determine how much oil or water will be produced in the future.

Rollins said transient pressure testing is one of the new experiments that will be performed using the water well. Transient pressure testing is a means of determining how various well properties, such as pressure and ease of water flow are differentiated.

"This well is exactly like an oil well," said Russell Fontaine, a petroleum engineering teaching assistant. "It's just on a much smaller scale."

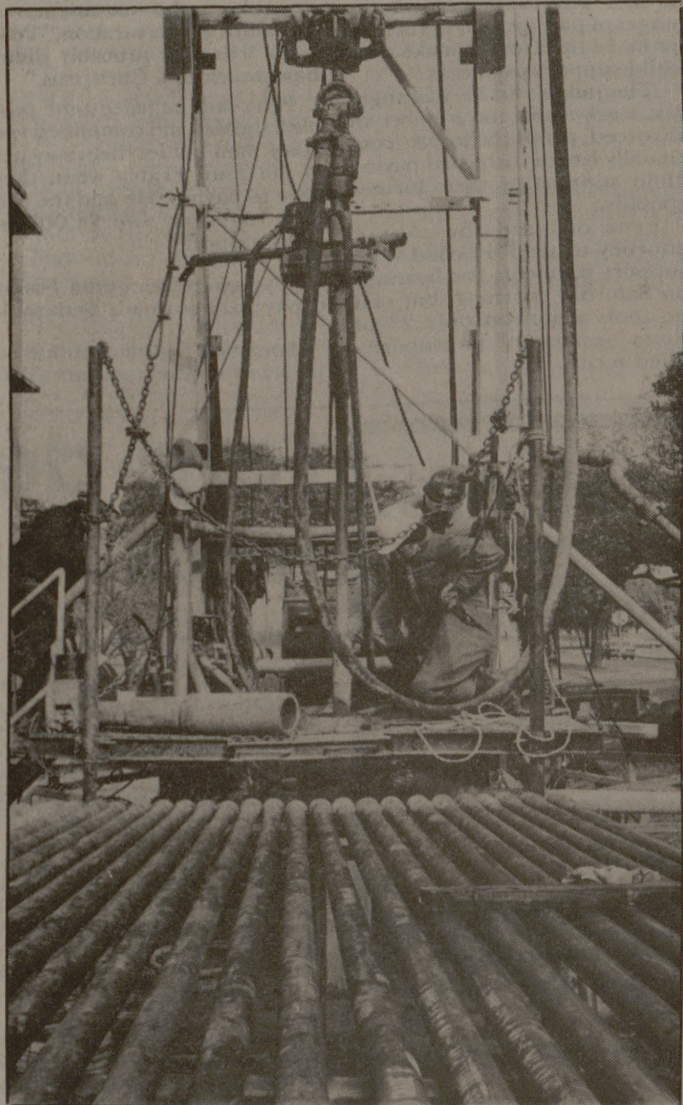


Photo by Dean Saito

Laborers work on part of the water drilling rig to be used by Petroleum Engineering students for a measurements laboratory.

Authorities test infant bones

United Press International

FORT WORTH — Extensive tests were conducted Monday on infant bones that a drug suspect said he got from satanists in Indiana, but authorities there said they knew of no missing babies.

The tiny bones and scalp were found last Thursday in a locked, black-draped box recovered by police who raided a

home in a rural area near Granbury, about 35 miles southwest of Fort Worth.

Hood County authorities arrested Timothy Newsome, 19, who said he got the dismembered body in May at a satanic worship ceremony in Lake Station, Ind.

"We haven't yet determined the sex or the age of the infant," said Tarrant County Medical Examiner Nizam Peerwani.

"There was a human scalp with the body and it appears they were that of a white child."

Peerwani said he was confident Monday's tests — which included several hours of X-rays and precise measurements of the bones — would show the infant's age, sex and cause of death.

Newsome was given a polygraph test about the infant's remains last Friday, but officials

said results were inconclusive. A spokeswoman for Hood County Sheriff Edwin Tomlinson said they were making arrangements to give him another test.

Sgt. Don Basista of the Lake Station, Ind., police said Monday there was no indication the body came from his area, which he said had no unsolved missing baby reports.

Court refuses appeal

United Press International

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court Monday refused to hear an appeal from Texas death row inmate Andrew Lee Mitchell who faces execution by injection for the Dec. 26, 1979, murder of a worker at a fireworks stand.

Court records indicate the victim, Keith Wills, was killed during a robbery of a fireworks stand just outside Troup in Smith County.

Mitchell, his son Anthony DeWayne Mitchell and a friend, Edward Earle Owens, all took part in the robbery. Owens and the younger Mitchell testified against the elder Mitchell during a two-day trial in February 1981.

Mitchell appealed to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, which upheld conviction and sentence April 27, 1983.

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