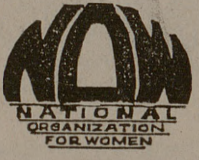


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Photo by Tom Ownbey

Exchange student Susan Wilson has a beer with a friend (also named Susan Wilson) at Dudley's Thursday night. At right, graduate assistant Joanie Kleypas helps exchange student Peter Merkel work out a problem in geology lab.

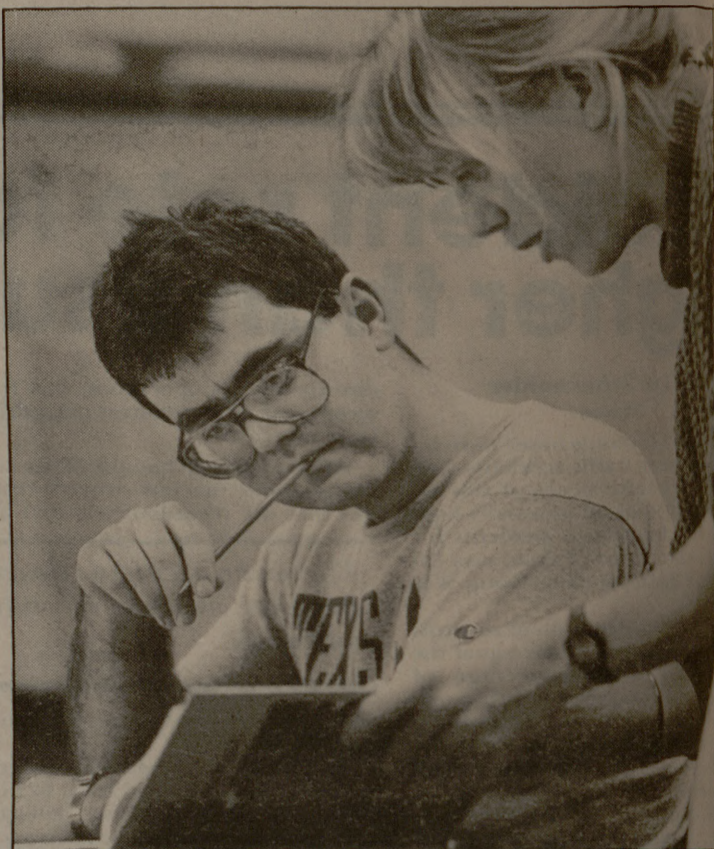


Photo by Bill Hight

# Foreign exchange students find A&M 'different,' adapting well to changes

By Tammy Hedgpeth  
 Reporter

Once an Aggie, always an Aggie? Certainly for most, but foreign exchange students Susan Wilson and Peter Merkel are still wondering what an Aggie is.  
 "One semester is not enough," Wilson says. "I love it here. It (Aggie spirit) is alive."  
 Wilson, an environmental science major from Ashby Parva, England, is a junior exchange student from the University of Stirling in Scotland. After one semester at A&M, she says she has adapted well to environmental and cultural changes.  
 But one major change is the social scene.  
 "It is totally different," Wilson says, with a proper British accent.  
 The music and atmosphere cannot compare to that in Scotland, she says.  
 "I kind of like Dudley's myself — I like the people there. I'm not too keen on the Dixie Chicken; I find it a bit of a pick-up joint," she says.  
 Because the legal drinking age in

Scotland is 18, there are bars around campus, Wilson says. The cover charge at a bar is about 60 cents, she says, and a glass of lager is 40 or 50 cents.  
 Adjusting to a different lifestyle hasn't affected Wilson's academic performance. She made straight A's her first semester at A&M.  
 She says she has more time than she did at her other school, which she attributes to her making better grades.  
 "The whole college system is different in Scotland," Wilson says.  
 "You take only classes in the col-

lege that you're in," she says. "When you're in the upper level, you cannot take lower-level classes."  
 Merkel, a geology major from Friedrichshafen, Germany, has a different view of A&M.  
 "I don't identify with school spirit," he says, "I don't think I'm a real Aggie."  
 But Wilson also says the whole setting here is different from that at Eberhard-Karls-Universitat Tubingen, where Merkel attends college.  
 "There are things that are really different, but I really like A&M,"

Merkel says, with a slight accent. "The school's excellent."  
 His 4.0 grade-point ratio played his academic adjustment during the Fall 1986 semester.  
 The quizzes at A&M keep the students working, Merkel says, and he likes the professors better than in Germany because the student-teacher relationship is good. At Tubingen, the students have little to do with the professors, he says.  
 "The system is different," he says. "Here you have quizzes. At our school you have one or two tests a semester, mostly one at the end of the semester."  
 "During the semester, you get pretty free . . . if you keep up with the stuff. You have to know it at the end of the semester."  
 Speaking of the exchange program, Merkel says, "You cannot apply for a specific place."  
 But once he was chosen as an exchange student, he could choose either Louisiana State University or A&M — he decided to go to the latter school, he says.

"I kind of like Dudley's myself — I like the people there."  
 — Susan Wilson

"There are things that are really different, but I really like A&M. The school's excellent."  
 — Peter Merkel

# Legal assistant enforces city's smoking law

DALLAS (AP) — To Jim Carrao, a restaurant is as good as its no-smoking creed.  
 And never mind if the lettuce is crisp at the neighborhood grocer's. What matters is how prominent no-smoking signs are displayed.  
 Carrao is a free-lance legal assistant who moonlights as a part-appointed enforcer of the city's smoking ordinance. The law took effect Feb. 6, 1986, and forbids smoking in administrative areas, restaurants, hospitals, retail stores, public service areas and elevators. Violators face fines ranging from \$25 to \$500.  
 Carrao has filed four of the five complaints against people who he said violated the ordinance. He has also filed 85 of the more than 300

complaints against businesses that have not complied with the law.  
 "What I would like to see done is to make management required to enforce it," Carrao said. "Police should be required to enforce it, too."  
 He said he is sensitive to smoke. It gives him a headache, causes respiratory problems and makes him nauseous.  
 "As for as smokers having rights, I can't think of any rights they would have," Carrao said. "It's the only substance that, if properly used, kills and maims people. No one has the right to hurt someone else."  
 He recently saw a man breaking the law in a grocery store aisle. Walking briskly, Carrao caught up with the man as he shopped.

"Would you put out that cigarette please," Carrao said. "This is a no-smoking area."  
 "Listen, you can't tell me what to do," the man said, walking off with a cigarette between his fingers.  
 "That's a typical smoker response," Carrao said. "Most smokers are instantly offended. A few smokers have said they were going to go outside and beat the . . . out of me."  
 He doesn't play favorites.  
 After visiting the Dallas Morning News for an interview, he filed complaints against the publication for failing to post no-smoking signs on some elevators and at the entrance to the lobby.

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