

# Razorbacks on the lookout

Stone pigs on new building are link to past

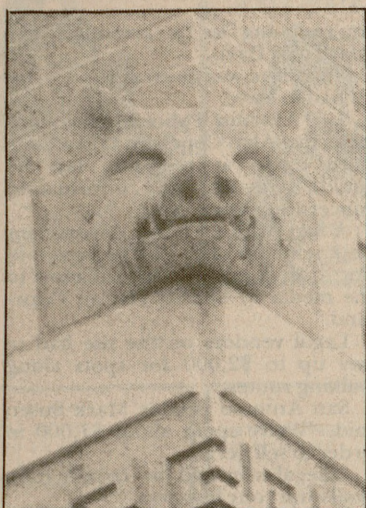
By Deciree Watson  
Reporter

If students walking by Texas A&M's new civil engineering building feel they're being watched by beastly eyes, it's because they are — sort of.

The stone razorback pigs that glare at passers-by from atop the Civil Engineering/Texas Transportation Institute Building — one from the main entrance and another from a fire escape stairwell — are older than the building itself. The building is new and the move-in hasn't been completed.

Although juxtaposing visages of farm animals on an engineering building seems like a visual oxymoron, the figures do have historical significance, Dr. Donald Maxwell, interim head of the civil engineering department, said.

"This architectural-based idea, approved by the building's coordinators, is an attempt to preserve his-



tory and to combine the old and the new," Maxwell said. The new facility was built on the site of a building where animal dis-

sections took place. The old building had several of these razorback heads along the roof line, and when it was torn down to make room for the new bituminous laboratories (asphalt labs) and office building, the two best headpieces were kept for use on the new building.

The facility is one of many efforts made by the civil engineering department to preserve its historical bond with the veterinary school, Maxwell said.

Most of the seven civil engineering buildings are renovated buildings that once were occupied by the School of Veterinary Medicine. Until a few years ago, there were still drains and wall rings in the old Civil Engineering Building, next to the Highway Research Center.

The old Civil Engineering Building also has a unique roof line. It's crowned with horse heads, longhorn skulls and pigs that are different from the razorbacks on the new building.

# A&M press offers new edition of Vandiver's Civil War book

By Sharon Foreman  
Reporter

Texas A&M University President Frank E. Vandiver's book "Their Tattered Flags: The Epic of the Confederacy" was re-released last week by the Texas A&M University Press, said Noel Parsons, University press editor.

The book was originally published in 1970 by Harper's Magazine Press. Parsons said the book was no longer in print, so the press gained permission from Vandiver and the Harper's Press to re-release the book.

Vandiver's book is one of many the press is publishing as part of a new military history series, Parsons said. Although some typos were corrected, the book's content wasn't changed. The book is in paperback form and is selling for \$12.95, Parsons said.

Vandiver said the book is an attempt to show the history of the Confederate states in a unique way.

"It's not straight history, it's not biography, it's not a battle narrative, it's not political history — it's all of these things," Vandiver said.

The book talks about the Confederate Army at great length, he said, but depicts the army as instruments in the hands of the Confederate government.

"The book is an attempt to show the whole life of the Confederacy from a Confederate standpoint," Vandiver said.

Vandiver said he was 11 years old when he started visiting battlefields and reading Confederate history.

Vandiver found some early papers that concerned a small battle in Virginia, and he managed to publish his first article when he was 16.

"That's what got me going, and from then on I had this insatiable urge to see my name in print," Vandiver said.

The title of the book, "Their Tattered Flags," was given by the editor of Harper's Press. Vandiver said the editor had been reading some work of Civil War historian Bruce Catton and came across a line that said, "They're all gone now with their tattered flags and faded uniforms."

"I thought it was a great line," Vandiver said.

The subtitle, "The Epic of the Confederacy," also was added to the title. Vandiver said the word "epic" usually involves a tragic theme and a hero.

"The Confederacy is a fairly tragic theme, and my hero is Jefferson Davis," he said. "Jeff Davis is an unlikely hero compared to those like Lee or Jackson, but I think Davis was a much misunderstood man."

Vandiver, a historian and authority on the Civil War and World War I, has written and edited 20 books. Most of these books are about the Confederate Army during the Civil War. Vandiver has received various awards and fellowships, including the annual Award of Merit from the Houston Civil War Round Table, which now is permanently named the Frank E. Vandiver Award.

Vandiver will autograph copies of his book from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Oct. 1 in the Clayton W. Williams Jr. Alumni Center, said University Press Advertising Manager Mary Ann Jacob.

# Texas coast to receive big cleanup

Environmentalists hope to pick up support for a pollution prevention agreement as well as beach trash during the second Texas Coastal Cleanup.

About 3,000 volunteers are expected to sift debris from more than a dozen Texas beaches during Saturday's three-hour event, said Linda Maraniss, regional director of the Council for Environmental Education in Austin.

They also will sign and circulate petitions seeking U.S. Senate ratification of an international agreement to end the ocean dumping of trash made from plastic.

"We've got beach users who are careless and leave their picnic debris. But we've also got a problem from offshore sources. Merchant ships throw a tremendous amount of debris into the Gulf of Mexico," Maraniss said.

Plastic products accounted for more than half of the 124 tons of debris collected last year from 122 miles of beachfront, figures from the council showed. Beaches were cleared from Boca Chica, at the Mexican border, to the Louisiana state line.

The agreement needs only U.S. approval to have the force of international law.

# New computer course aids farmers, ranchers

By Donna Buchala  
Reporter

Farmers and ranchers can reap benefits from a series of short computer courses sponsored by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

The program will be held at the Stiles Farm Computer Training Center in Thrall, northeast of Austin. The program, scheduled to begin in November, will run through September 1988.

The intensive three-day courses will be primarily aimed at reducing costs in today's competitive agricultural society, said Dr. James McGrann, an assistant professor of agricultural economics at Texas A&M and a farm and ranch management specialist.

The courses will be limited to 18 people per session because of the intensity of each course and to ensure the opportunity for hands-on computer use for the participants, McGrann said.

Each of the 11 courses will cover a different facet of the agricultural industry, from swine management to electronic spreadsheets and their use in agriculture.

"We are teaching them to be analysts — to pick the best alternative," McGrann said. "They need quick information to adjust to changing conditions and environment, and to

have this information in just a few minutes."

This program shows farmers and ranchers how the computer works as an educational tool instead of just accepting the results, he said.

"Rather than going in uninformed, with the computer they can make a decision — hopefully — to prevent a mistake," he said.

Most participants in the seven-year-old program have been better-educated producers who are business-oriented in activities, he said.

"There have been mainly younger farmers, but some have been older, too," McGrann said. "They are information users who are more associated with education. For commodity-oriented informing, with some of the big farms, it's a necessary tool. And with the progressive-type managers, it's the same way."

Computer use in agriculture extends from the very sophisticated to the very basic, McGrann said, depending on one's specific needs.

"From the feedlot, where we can tell you what an animal ate yesterday, to the commercial type, where there is a husband-and-wife team and the wife does all the accounting, the computer is just a tool to complement," McGrann said.

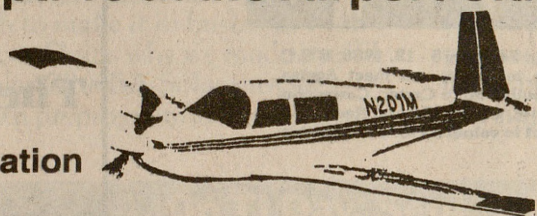
"In the last two to three years, we have had no problem with supplying software," McGrann said. "Like any new technology, we had our problems at first."

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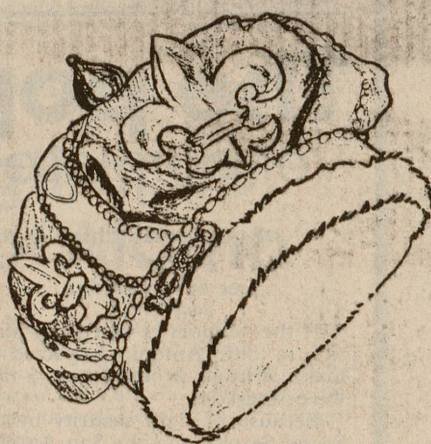
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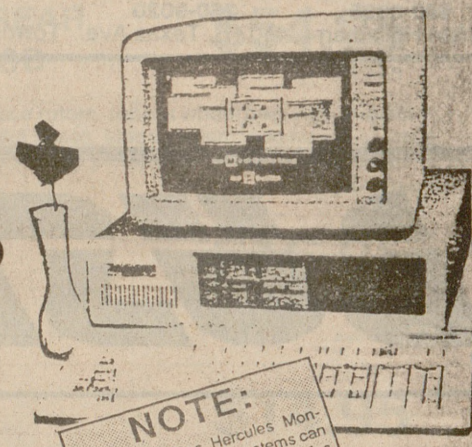
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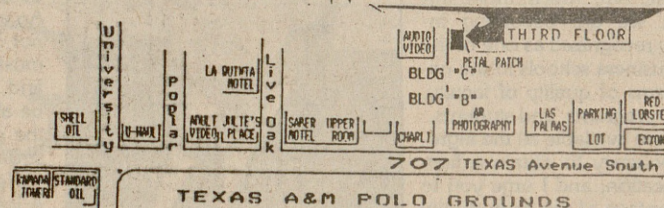
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