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'Hump it Ags'

Yell practices flaunt spirit



An enthusiastic crowd participates in the yells during midnight yell practice.

By STACEY COWART
Special to the Battalion

Texas A&M students have been "humping it" and hollering during yell practices since 1912 in show of school spirit.

In the early 1900s, the first yell leaders were freshmen. Since the freshmen often were dateless, the upperclassmen would get them to perform acrobatic stunts and lead songs and chants to entertain their dates during football games.

The freshmen began drawing the full attention of the upperclassmen's dates, so the juniors and seniors decided they would lead yells.

Leading the yells today are five yell leaders: three seniors and two juniors.

Many of the yells used in the 1900s were long chants and songs

used to make noise.

Some of those yells are used today, along with more organized yells that have developed during the years.

Yells are done from a position known as "humping it."

Aggies stand in this position by bending at the waist and placing their hands just above their knees. This position allows more air flow so yells can be deeper and louder.

Each yell has its own signal which the yell leaders use to get the attention of the crowd.

Signals are passed upward through the stands so Aggies at the top will know which yell to do.

The yell leaders then use specific body motions to signal the start of a yell. After a yell, students "wildcat"

and whoop rather than clap.

Yell practices prepare students for these maneuvers during a game. The most popular yell practice is at midnight in Kyle Field the Friday before a game.

The first midnight yell practice was in November 1932, the night before the game against the University of Texas.

A handful of Aggies gathered in a junior yell leader "Peanut" Owen's dorm room in Puryear Hall and decided to motivate freshmen by having them form a human chain and roam the campus.

They ended at midnight at the torch-lit YMCA Building. The senior yell leaders and the band led the chain there, and the first midnight yell practice was held.

Corps shares long history with A&M

By JAMES M. LOVE
Of The Battalion Staff

Since its founding, Texas A&M has sustained a rich history with the Corps of Cadets, and the two have proved inseparable.

The Corps founded the traditions that make A&M unique. It is the keeper of the Spirit of Aggieland.

With its distinct uniform, the Corps of Cadets has grown to the largest cadet corps of any state or private college or university in the nation. It produces more officers for the armed forces, excluding the service academies, than any other ROTC source.

A&M, however, was not always as robust as it is today.

On Monday, Oct. 2, 1876, just 11 years after the Civil War ended, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas officially was opened for registration. It was the first state-supported institution of higher learning.

The school is a result of the Morrill Act of 1862, which provided the donation of public land to the states. This land was to be sold at a public auction, and the proceeds set aside in a permanent fund.

The interest generated from this fund would be used to establish and operate a land-grant college.

Two days after registration began, 40 students and six faculty members began instruction under President Thomas Gathwright. A month later, Maj. Morris, the first commandant of the Corps, organized the small student body into two cadet companies.

In the first years after its founding, A&M fought for survival. Because of its location, College Station seemed unlikely for the beginning of an institution of higher learning.

Students experienced several hardships, including no bathing facilities and school grounds that served as an assembly point for cattle drives that took Texas beef to Dodge City, Kan.

By the end of the first year, 106 students were enrolled.

A&M's first turning point came when Lawrence Sullivan Ross, then governor of Texas, accepted the appointment as president in 1890.

Ross, loved and respected by Texans for his actions as a soldier, statesman and gentleman, led A&M from near failure to a secure and growing learning establishment. By 1900 there were 327 cadets in the Corps.

Traditions were in the making, but few existed during the turn of the century.

There was no bonfire, yell practice or senior boots in the early years. Even the term "Aggie" was not

By MARY M. CRYER
Special to the Battalion

The well-known sight of Aggie fans standing for hours at a time and waving their Twelfth Man towels vigorously during football games is a Texas A&M tradition that dates back 70 years.

In 1922, when A&M played Centre College in the Dixie Classic in Dallas, the forerunner to today's Cotton Bowl, many starting players were injured during the course of the game.

As the bench's supply of players was depleted, Coach Dana X. Bible called on E. King Gill, a basketball player and former football player who was watching the game from the grandstand.

Gill suited up in an injured player's uniform and stood ready on the sidelines in case the team needed

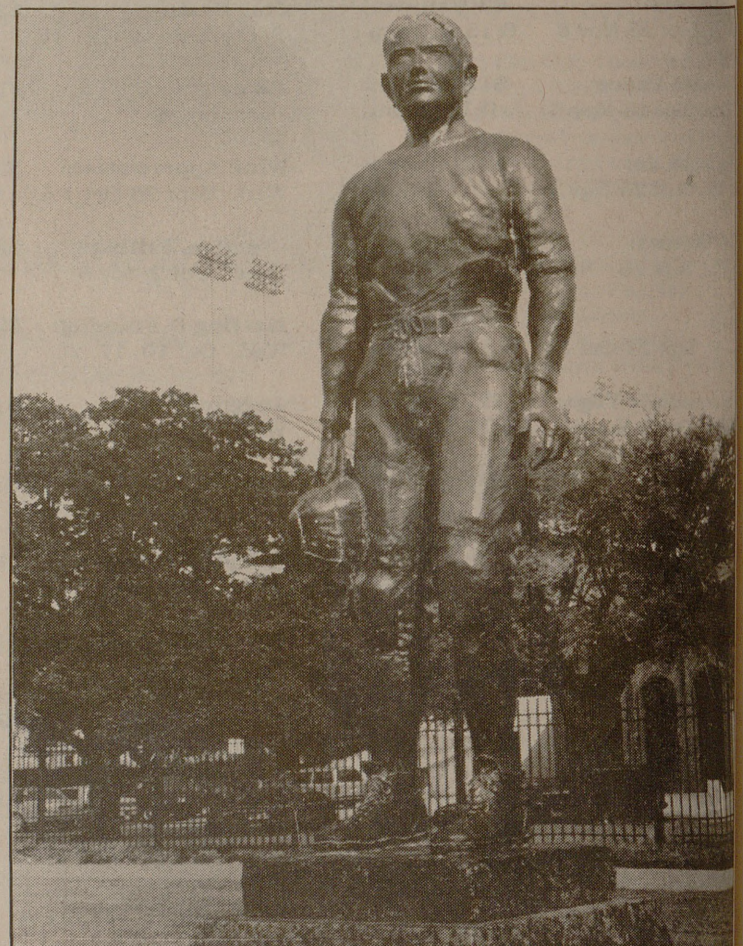
him. A&M won, 22-14. Though he was never called on to play in the game, Gill's readiness to play led to the Aggie tradition of standing during football games.

The entire student body, like Gill, symbolizes a willingness to help the team when they participate in the tradition.

In 1983, former A&M football coach Jackie Sherrill started the Twelfth Man Kick Off Team, composed of non-scholarship football players to cover kickoffs during A&M home games.

Sherrill got the idea during Fall 1982 when he visited the site where the Aggie Bonfire was being constructed.

The Twelfth Man tradition continues today under Head Coach R.C. Slocum.



The Twelfth Man statue stands outside of Kyle Field.