

# Bonfire

(Continued from page 1E)

stations, which provide ax handle replacements, and sometimes have first aid equipment and refreshments.

Yellowpots act as dorm leaders. They motivate dorm residents to cut, and at the cut site yellowpots walk the woods and are in charge of the axes.

Yellowpots teach people what to do at cut and have specific duties at stack, but not on the stack. Crew chiefs assist yellowpots by

coordinating activities on each floor of a dorm.

Two female groups help with annual bonfire construction. The Women's Bonfire Committee is part of the official bonfire chain of command. It consists of women who work concession stands on Duncan Field and provide lunches and drinks to those at cut site.

The "Reload Crew," sponsored by A&M Mother's Clubs, has members who provide cookies for those working on bonfire.

The newest positions are the "bonfire butts." These are junior Corps members that act as yellowpots for the Corps units. Fall 1990 is the first for bonfire butts.

Bonfire today is still as regimented as it used to be, but things are a little different now. Each step of its construction has become a tradition of its own.

The following are some of the traditions and standards that make up a '90s bonfire.

- The outhouse sitting on top each bonfire is no longer stolen but instead is built by sophomore band members.

- The Austin city limits sign is donated from a Hearne resident, with the year listed as the number of miles to Austin.

- Centerpole arrival also has become a big day on campus. Tradition states if centerpole stays up past

midnight on bonfire night, the Aggies will beat the Longhorns in the next day's game.

Senior redpots pick out centerpole, which is brought to campus the last weekend in October.

Perimeter guards begin watching the stack area when centerpole arrives. At least two junior redpots guard the pole 24 hours a day.

Attempts have been made to burn the stack early by mischievous Longhorns and others, but all have been stopped by bonfire guards. Ten outfits guard stack and the surrounding grounds on the night of bonfire.

"Push," the round-the-clock building process, begins 14 days before bonfire burns. Corps members

and dorm residents have a push schedule set up in six-hour shifts.

No student or group of students is required to work push, but it is mandatory that someone work on stack continuously. The main hours for push are 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., and 18 hours on the weekends.

H.B. Zachary, a construction company from San Antonio, donates a crane and the services of two operators and a maintenance person for push week. The slogans "Go Aggies" and "Beat Texas" are painted on the arm of crane.

Cut site for recent years has been near Carlos, about 35 miles from here. The land is used for strip mining and then replanted with vegeta-

tion.

Today, 8,000 to 10,000 logs are cut each year, about 220,000 man hours are spent cutting and stacking and 5,000 people help cut and stack the massive structure.

Last year, student leaders and campus and community law enforcers made efforts to make bonfire a safer experience for everyone involved.

A strong no-alcohol campaign was launched by student leaders, urging spectators to reduce alcohol consumption before bonfire and at the site.

More streets also were closed before and during bonfire to prevent residents' yards and property from damage.

Controversy over bonfire's safety and purpose has been around for some time, but the Faculty Senate took action in May by recommending a report for A&M President William Mobley.

Student leaders, faculty members, and University and local officials were consulted for the report.

The report suggests reducing bonfire's volume by 50 percent by 1993, and imposing grade point requirements for all who work on bonfire.

Environmental concerns about cutting down thousands of trees each year, and neighborhood concerns of trash and damage to property also were addressed in the report.

Bonfire '90's Head Stack Joey Dollins, a member of the committee recommending these changes, said the recommendations are just that, and are not set in stone.

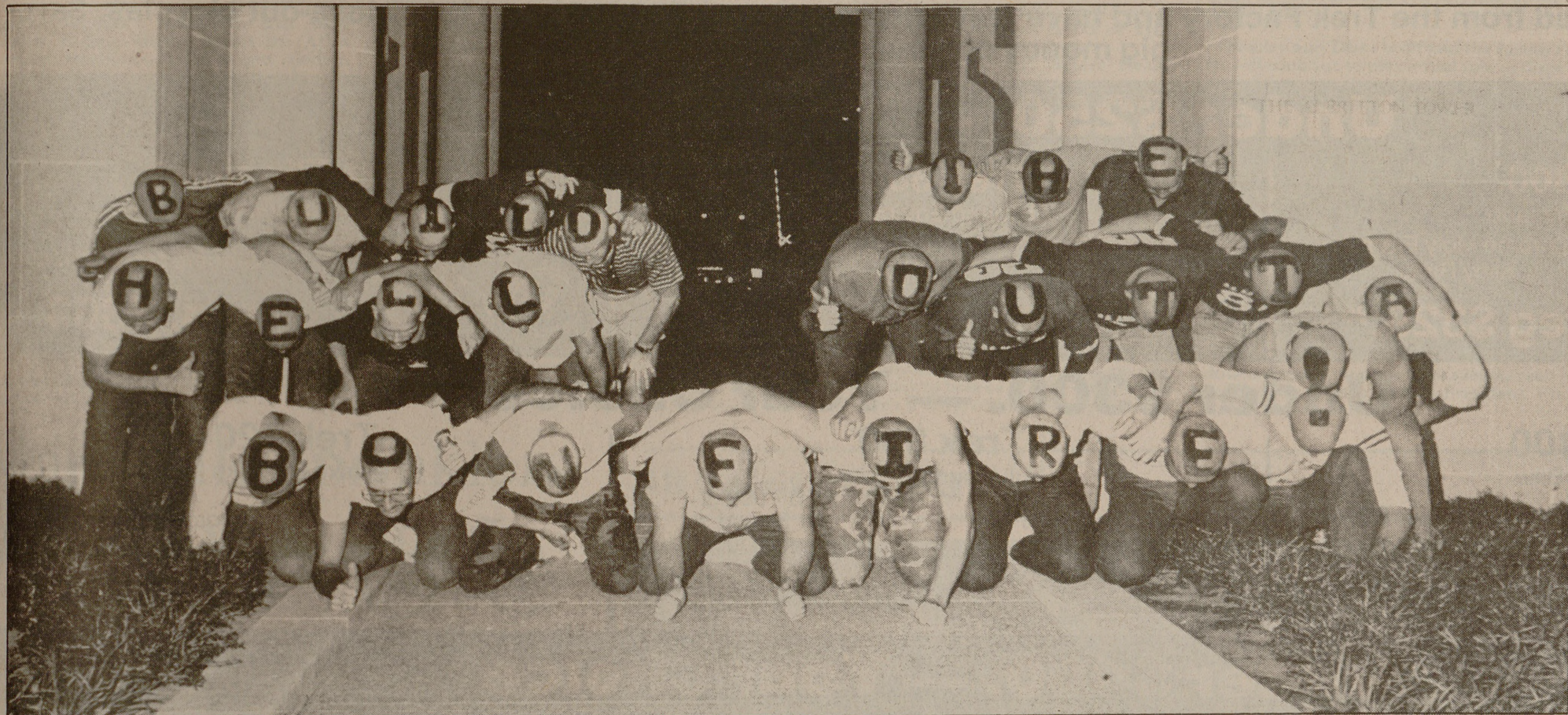
The Aggie bonfire tradition lives on in the heart of Aggies everywhere, young and old. It is a testimonial to friendship and hard work.

"Bonfire is a feeling, a motivation," Dollins said. "You are thinking about every Aggie that ever worked on it but you're not thinking about the fire."

It is hard to put into words the feeling bonfire evokes, but many Aggies will gather again Nov. 29, 1990 when the 81st bonfire goes up in flames.

Mike Finger, a senior redpot, expressed his feelings about bonfire.

"It brings everything about A&M, every Aggie quality, together."



Battalion file photo

Dorm residents show their enthusiasm for bonfire by shaving letters in their heads and displaying the message at Albritton Tower.



Redpots set up centerpole in Duncan Field for bonfire.



Battalion file photo

Dedicated bonfire crew members work together to load logs at the cutting site to be delivered to Duncan Field.

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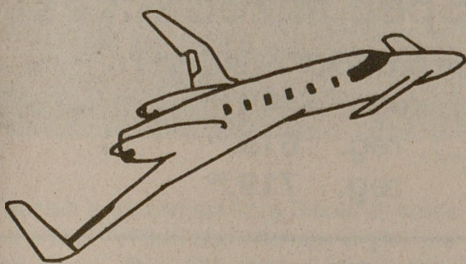
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