

Monday, October 22, 1990

Grad student buys antique instrument

By ISSELLE MCALLISTER
Of The Battalion Staff

Before there were telegraphs and telephones and fax machines, there were heliographs, and one Texas A&M graduate student has one.

Peter Warnock purchased a heliograph — an instrument that sends light signals via a two-mirror reflecting device — for \$180 at an antique store in Bryan, a price he believes is a bargain for an instrument usually found only in museums.

He says the heliograph probably was made at the turn of the century.

It is between 80 and 120 years old, he says, because heliographs were used in the late 1860s and became obsolete before World War I with the advent of the telegraph.

Warnock says the heliograph was phased out because it was not practical.

"It is too dependent on sunlight and long horizons," he explains. "It is ineffective at night or on cloudy days."

With the sun's help, the military during the Civil War used a code much like the Morse Code to communicate with the heliograph, he says.

It was used originally by the British in South Africa, India and Afghanistan, he says. The United States then adopted this heliograph to track American Indians.

Apache Chief Geronimo was captured by the U.S. Cavalry, which used the heliograph to communicate his whereabouts.

The instrument's design is simple: Two mirrors attached to a tripod aim light signals at a target.

Warnock is not quite sure of all the uses of his new treasure because of limited resources. He will write, however, to the Library of Congress for more information.

Warnock, a history buff, says he was lucky enough to know what a heliograph was when he came across it.

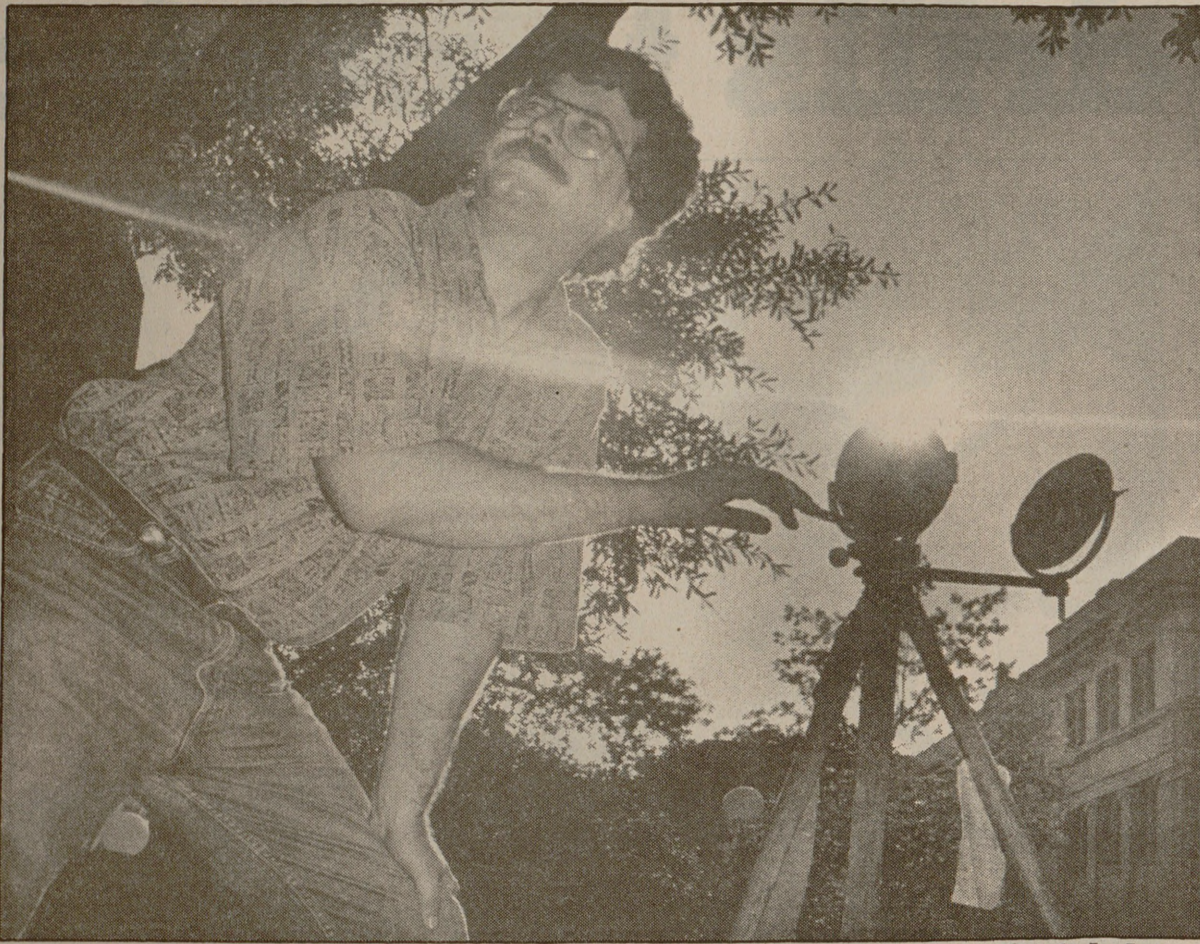


Photo by Jay Janner

Peter Warnock, a Texas A&M graduate student, uses a heliograph to send signals of light.

Two yell leaders to appear on television talk show

Two Texas A&M yell leaders will appear Tuesday on the national television talk show "Attitudes" racing armadillos with University of Texas cheerleaders.

Senior Kevin FitzGerald and junior Drew Davis square off against UT's cheerleaders at 2 p.m. on the Lifetime channel. The show, however, was taped earlier.

The race is to show the rivalry between A&M and UT.

FitzGerald, the yell leader who raced the armadillos, said he was impressed that so many people outside of Texas knew of the rivalry between A&M and UT.

The special "Attitudes" episode was shot in San Antonio on the Riverwalk. The show also will have country singer Holly Dunn, "Growing Pains" actress Chelsie Noble and Miss USA.

East Coast bankers seek Texans

HOUSTON (AP) — Texas bankers are finally in demand on the East Coast.

As Yankee banks begin to feel the pinch of Texas-sized losses, executive recruiters are looking to the Lone Star State for banking talent able to handle bad loans.

"It's really ironic," says Iyonne Dominguez, manager of the Houston office for the Chester Group, an executive search firm. "Now the tables have turned."

Only a year ago, Texas bankers were blamed for the financial troubles of the state and treated as pariahs of the business. Personnel recruiters said the bankers were "redlined," the basic equivalent of being "blackballed" in other professions.

But now, executives at Chester Group and the Houston search firms of Spencer Stuart & Associates, Stan Goss & Associates and Russell Reynolds Associates all report they have been contacted recently by Eastern institutions looking for interviews with local bankers.

"There are banks from Boston to Miami looking," Stan Goss told the Houston Chronicle. "There's been a lot of recruiting down here in Oklahoma and Texas."

The turnaround comes at a time when eastern institutions are beginning to feel the crunch of a slowing economy. Real estate prices are declining, developers are defaulting on loans and banks are faced with foreclosing on properties they can't easily resell.

BATTIPS

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The BATTIPS number is 845-3315.

Ideas can include news stories, feature ideas and personality profiles of interesting people.

Hong Kong financiers invest in Houston

HOUSTON (AP) — Hong Kong investors are putting their money in Houston real estate as they attempt to free funds from their homeland before the Chinese take over the city in 1997, market observers say.

Michael A. Pollack, a former Houston broker and developer, said he's considering moving back to Texas from California early next year as an agent for a Hong Kong investment group.

Pollack's clients are among three major investment groups from Hong Kong now looking to Houston projects.

A Hong Kong partnership represented by

Larry Wong wants to buy as many as 10 office buildings in the Westchase and Galleria areas and in southwest Houston.

Another Hong Kong group will visit Houston this week with an investment fund of \$100 million to spend on commercial property in Houston, the Houston Post reported.

Wong, who moved here from New York last fall to represent his clients' interests, organized the purchase of the Arena Towers office complex in late 1989. The group paid the Bank of America \$40 million for the 19-story Arena

Tower I and later bought the adjacent Arena Tower II for \$80 million from the Bracton Group and the Midland Bank of England.

Wong said he and his colleagues hope to sign contracts soon for additional purchases in downtown and suburban Houston.

But individual Hong Kong investors also have been active in Houston.

Gordon Chen of Hong Kong recently paid Alamo Federal Savings Association \$1.5 million for 84 apartments in the Village of Fondren Condominiums in southwest Houston.

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Pre-Registration is Necessary
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