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The Battalion

Campus

Thursday, August 6, 1992

Page 1

Wind tunnels aid in research

Aerodynamic testing facilities available to students, faculty

By Tanya Williams
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Aerospace Engineering Department wind tunnels, located next to Easterwood Airport, are major research sources for the University as well as the aerospace industry.

The low-speed wind tunnel has tested wind effects on trucks, aircraft, cyclists, and was heavily involved with shuttle testing in the 1970s.

The low-speed wind tunnel, which has been operating at the University since the 1960s and privately since the 1980s, is a closed-circuit wind tunnel.

A B-29 airplane propeller is capable of generating airflow as high as 200 mph and has a legend that has developed over the years.

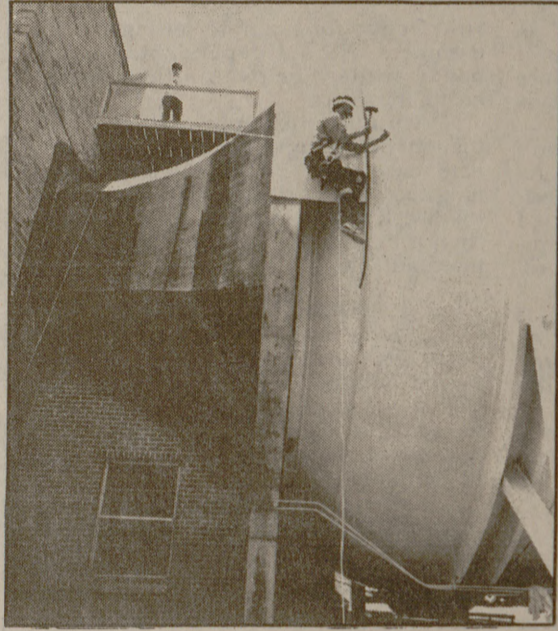
"It's been rumored that the propeller used in the low-speed wind tunnel was the propeller for the Enola Gay bomber," said Mike Heffner, an undergraduate aerospace engineering major. The Enola Gay was the bomber that was used in World War II to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

The tunnel can be used to test applied air flow research and development. In addition to testing aircraft, land and space vehicles, the tunnel also has tested buildings and the wind's effect on structures.

"Currently, we are in the low parts of the year," said Jorge Martinez, an engineering research associate and operations manager of the low-speed wind tunnel. "Companies have cut back on basic research because of the economy."

A&M has six new wind tunnels located in the basement of the Harvey R. Bright Building. Though the tunnels are not open for use by private industry, those affiliated with the University wanting to perform research can do so.

"If someone affiliated with the University wants to have the department perform an experiment," said Emundo Valera, a graduate student in aerospace engineering, "all they have to do is contact the proper officials in the department."



DARRIN HILL/The Battalion

Rodney Nabizadeh rappels off a wind tunnel to knock off bolts that hold a wooden scaffold together on the inside.

Included in the six tunnels is a tunnel that tests water currents and fluid dynamics. Currently, the department is testing sail board keels in that tunnel.

The advantage of the University having its own wind and water tunnels is beneficial to both students and faculty, Martinez said.

"Having the tunnels allows faculty to have basic research and teaching tools to help students and themselves," Martinez said. "The tunnels allow research that you cannot simulate on computers."

Statistics professor earns fellowship

By Ursula Simms
The Battalion

Dr. Cliff Spiegelman, a Texas A&M University statistics professor, was selected as a fellow for the American Statistical Association (ASA).

The American Statistical Association, with 16,500 members, has "been around for over 150 years and is the second oldest professional association," said Dr. Jim Matis, Texas A&M University professor and ASA fellow.

The ASA publishes several statistical journals and lobbies in Washington for the statistical profession, said Matis.

"They represent the statistical

profession to the business community."

Fellows nominated for the ASA fellowship have made an exceptional contribution to the field of statistics, said Matis.

Spiegelman has published more than 50 articles in statistics journals and has done research with Chemometrics, which is the application of statistics to chemistry. He was also editor of the Journal of Chemometrics.

Spiegelman said that his nomination by Dr. Ray Carroll, professor and former statistics department head, for the ASA fellowship was a result of a career of contributions to the profession.

The new ASA fellow has been at Texas A&M for five years. He

also said, "I'm happy to be at A&M and proud to be an Aggie."

Spiegelman previously worked for the National Bureau of Standards as a member of the statistical division.

"I'm very thankful that Dean Fackler, former dean of College of Science took a chance on hiring someone from the government."

Matis said that we have quite a distinguished department here with six to eight current fellows.

Other distinguished fellows at Texas A&M include the following professors: Dr. Emanuel Parzen, Dr. Ron Hocking, Dr. Charles Gates, Dr. Rudy Freund, and Dr. Pendleton, adjunct professor, and Dr. Raymond Carroll, distinguished professor.

Syndrome

Continued from Page 2

"I have not heard of anyone who contracted post-polio from another post-polio patient," Fife said. "It's not considered a viral infection. Now, the person's on their own."

A vaccine for polio has been in effect for 30 years, saving thousands of lives, but a cure for polio or post-polio does not exist. With proper treatment, the effects of polio can be minimized.

Before polio was recognized, polio sufferers were expected to either get over the disease themselves or die. There was not an adequate understanding of the disease at its onset.

But today, researchers know that some improvement will eventually occur in polio sufferers using the body's own healing mechanisms.

"Sometimes they improve to the point where you don't know they ever had polio," Fife said. "They will have some improvement as these nerves come down and take over other muscle fibers. So you can get some repair, but it's repair based on other nerves taking over the function of those nerves that die."

The experiment being conducted by Fife with the facilities at A.P. Beutel Health Center, hypothesizing the use of hyperbaric oxygen to relieve the symptoms of post-polio syndrome, is the only one of its kind. The experiment is being funded by the Meadows Foundation of Dallas.

Fife is currently working with five post-polio syndrome sufferers and has treated a total of 12 polio patients in the past three years.

Through research, Fife said he hopes to find a drug that will be successful in treating post-polio syndrome, which was officially recognized five years ago.

"Eventually, my goal is to be able to stop the symptoms of post-polio without them having to go into a chamber every day," Fife said. "Right now they're going into a chamber five days a week, and the reason for that is to relieve the pain."

Vol. 91 No.

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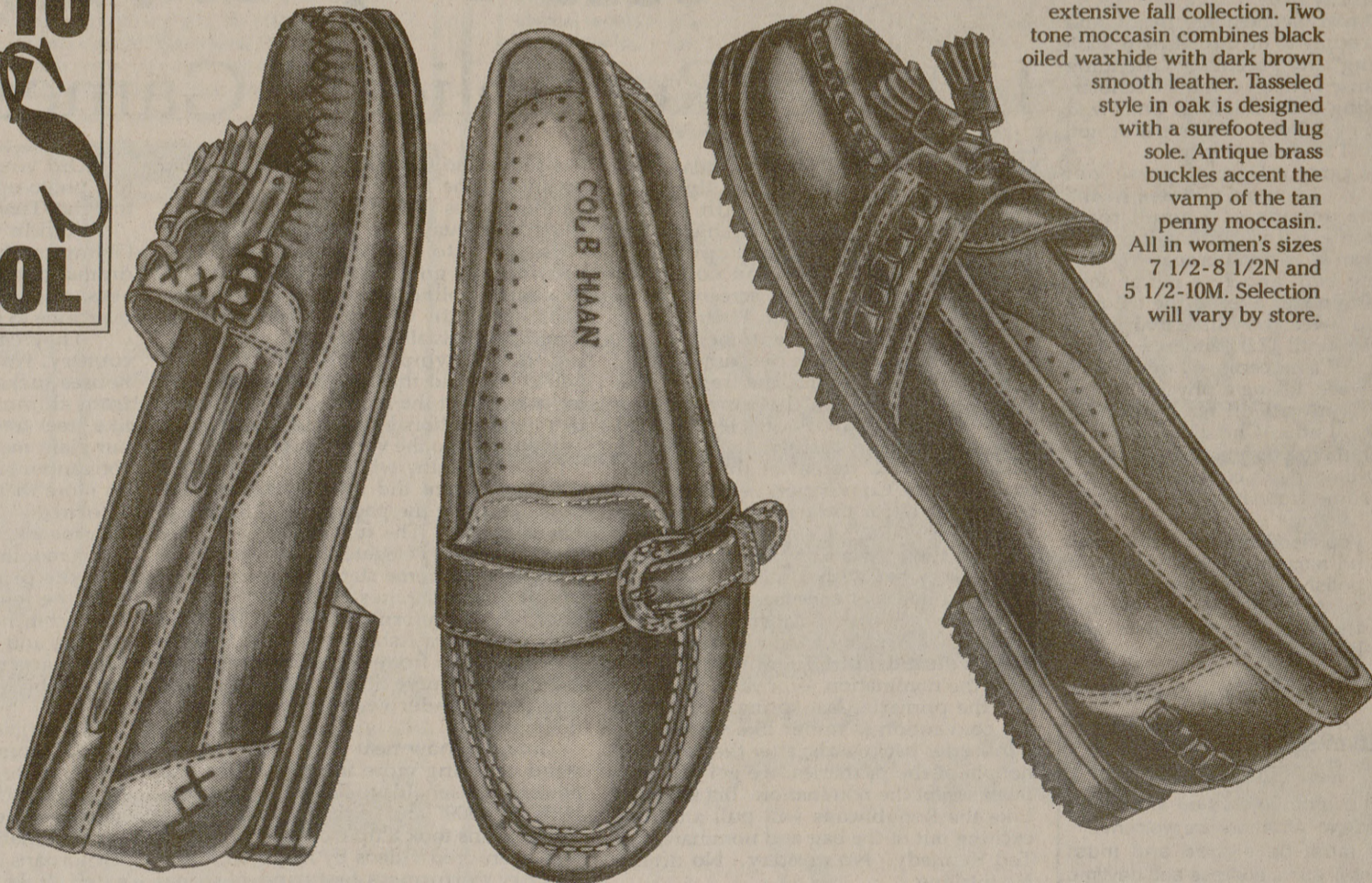
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The Battalion

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