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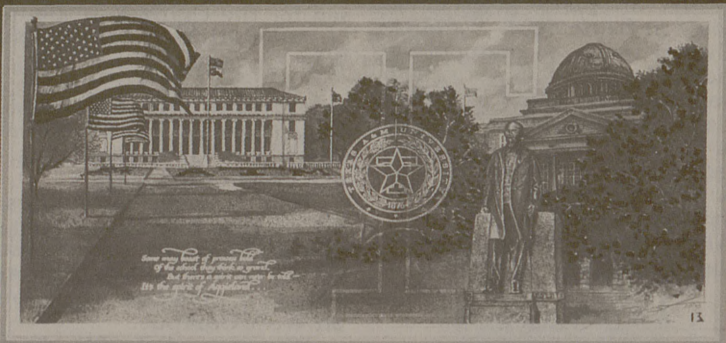
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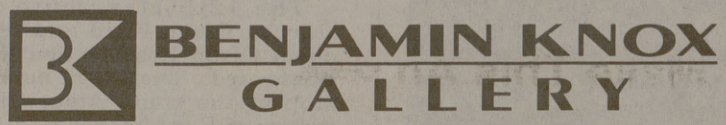
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**A&M archaeology dept.  
discovering more than  
just bones, arrowheads**

By Katherine Arnold  
THE BATTALION

While students dig through the library for research material, archaeologists at Texas A&M have to dig a bit deeper for their research.

Archaeology is within the department of anthropology. The department was started in 1971 by Dr. Vaughn Bryant, who is currently professor and head of anthropology.

The program is considered young compared to other well-established departments within the University, Bryant said. But the Texas A&M department of anthropology was recently named in the top 10 most improved anthropology departments in the United States.

"We study the interactions between humans and their past," Dr. Alston Thoms, acting director of the Center for Environmental Archaeology, said. "We

interact with American Indian tribes in the area.

Texas A&M archaeology students are currently working in the Medina Valley south of San Antonio. The actual site is buried 30 feet below the surface. Researchers have been able to find artifacts from 9,000 years ago.

Archaeologists usually do not choose their sites, Thoms said.

"Anytime there are plans to build on federal land, the land must be surveyed first to make sure an important area of study is not lost to the construction of roads or buildings," Thoms said.

Discoveries are not always revolutionary, Thoms said.

"If you're looking for the equivalent of the discovery of King Tut's tomb in Texas, it's just not going to happen," Thoms said. "But we gain important information from what we do find."

Bryant devotes much of his research to the study of prehis-

**"We study the interactions between humans and their past. We can look at things such as resources used and how primitive cultures coped with change."**

— Dr. Alston Thoms, acting director of the Center for Environmental Archaeology

can look at things such as resources used and how primitive cultures coped with change.

The department has several areas of specialty. Environmental archaeology is an important part of any archaeology department, Bryant said.

"Environmental archaeology is designed to teach students to do more than dig," Bryant said. "We look at the environment of the site, the sedimentation and how the site was formed."

Other areas which archaeologists specialize in include: zooarchaeology, which tells anthropologists what animals cultures hunted and domesticated; paleoethnobotany, which examines plant life, wood samples and dietary patterns of our primitive ancestors; or nautical archaeology, which examines artifacts found in bodies of water.

Texas A&M is the only university in the world that offers a Ph.D. program with a specialty in nautical archaeology.

The archaeology department was the co-sponsor of a field school last year. Students dug at sites in the northern Rocky Mountains, and were able to in-

teric diets.

"The remains and artifacts we find tell us a lot about the diets of prehistoric cultures," Bryant said. "For example, we know that no culture ever had more than 20 to 25 percent of calories come from fat. The average American consumes 40 to 45 percent fat calories."

Prehistoric cultures also consumed less salt and sugar than we do, Bryant said.

"Our prehistoric ancestors were very healthy," Bryant said. "Even the elderly had a great deal of stamina and strength."

Much of the information gathered through archaeological study is used to add details to history, Bryant said.

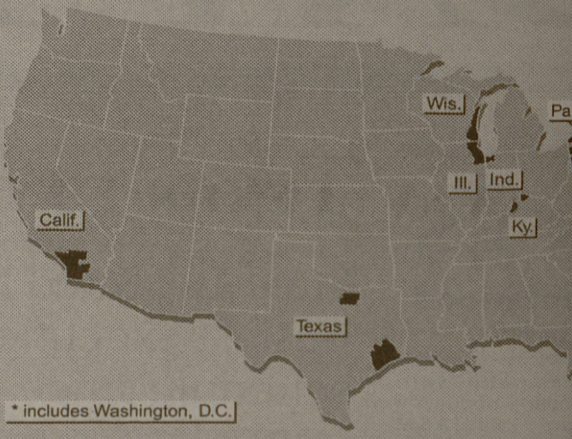
"We are able to reconstruct historical records with the information we find," Bryant said. "Sometimes we make a discovery that can be used to set the record straight."

Gathering this type of information and using it for research shows how much archaeology has grown, Bryant said.

"Archaeology isn't just looking for arrowheads anymore," he said.

**Reformulated gasoline**

A cleaner burning, more expensive gasoline will be introduced in the U.S. by the end of the year. It will be implemented in all of Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island, and in regions of 12 other states.



Source: American Petroleum Institute

**Tree disease spreading quickly through Texas, experts say**

DALLAS (AP) — Eugene Gehring of the Texas Forest Service has been forced to break the sad news again and again: Someone's tree has oak wilt, an infectious disease for which there is no cure.

And while oaks aren't considered affectionate beings, learning of your favorite tree's impending doom can be sad.

"I've actually had more than one lady that tears started welling in their eyes," Gehring said. "And I've seen grown men get very emotional as well."

Gehring, a staff forester who works in Austin, said the problem has become an epidemic.

Oak wilt, first identified in Texas 30 years ago, has accelerated in recent years and is now found in about 55 Texas counties.

"It's like a slow-moving fire," said Ron Billings, principal entomologist with the Forest Service. "That's what we're trying to contain."

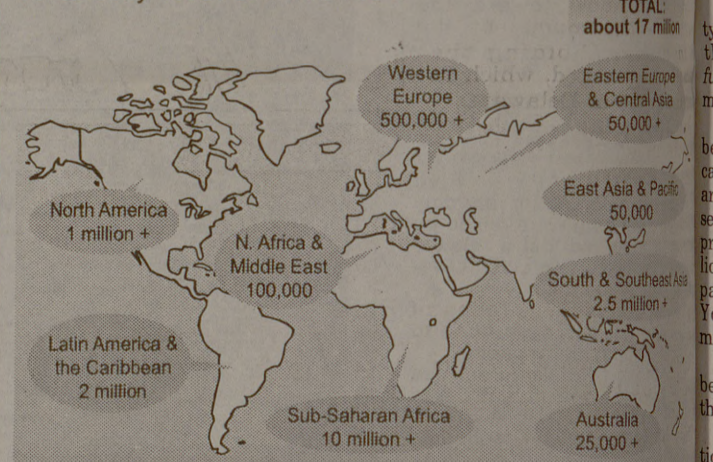
The first Texas case was reported in Dallas, but the now hardest hit is the Country near Austin. More than 10,000 trees have died in Austin and countless more have died in surrounding rural areas, according to the Forest Service.

"Tremendous acreage has been decimated," said Jerry Johnson, of the plant pathology and microbiology departments at Texas A&M University.

Red oaks are the most susceptible trees. An established tree can die in seven to 10 days after exhibiting symptoms, Johnson said.

**HIV worldwide**

A record 3 million people caught the AIDS virus during the past year. Estimated distribution of total adult HIV infections from late 1970s/early 1980s until mid-1994:



Source: World Health Organization

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illegalizing public education and services to illegal immigrants in the state of California

Texas A&M University  
MSC 226

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**THE BATTALION**

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