

## The Playboys' Legacy

Bunnies left on campus act as physical reminders of Puryear's existence long after being torn down

BY BETH FOCHT  
The Battalion

In Old Army days there was a dorm on the Texas A&M University campus named Puryear Hall. Built in 1928 along with Law Hall, these dorms were the first to be built following the construction of Bizzel Hall in 1918. Puryear was an all-male dorm named for Charles Puryear, a member of the Texas A&M faculty for 43 years and the first dean of the College.

Puryear and Law were demolished in 1996 because the cost to restore these dorms was too high. The last year students were allowed to live in Puryear Hall was Spring '95.

Even though Puryear has been gone for several years, there are little marks that have been left behind. Puryear Hall residents were known as the Puryear Hall Playboys and left this legacy behind.

Another mark left behind by Puryear was a history of school service when students lived there. Puryear was one of the most active dorms on campus.

Puryear residents were involved with Residence Hall Association, Bonfire and a variety of activities on campus including RHA Casino Night, which originally began in Puryear Hall.

Puryear Hall was All-University Champs for many years and was the Male Hall of the Year in 1995.

Greg "Cubby" Matzer, Class of '96, lived in Puryear Hall from 1993 until the last year it was open. Matzer said Puryear was his favorite dorm to live in when he was at A&M.

"My freshman year I lived in Lechner [Hall], and then I moved to Puryear my sophomore year," Matzer said. "I loved living in the hall because things were so crazy and because everyone who lived in the dorm was involved with all kinds of dorm-related activities."

"Our doors were open all of the time because we did not have any air conditioning, and that is why we got to know each other so well. All of the guys got along who lived in the dorm, and there was double the amount of activity in Puryear as compared to other dorms on campus."

The dorm had many unusual traditions that made Puryear Hall stand out, Matzer said.

"Every year on Charles Puryear's birthday we had something called 'frick serve,'" he said. "The fricks, or known to others as fish, would print menus of what was being served at Sbisla [Dining Hall] that day and would serve the upperclassmen dinner that night. We would all just generally have a good time."

Another annual Puryear tradition was taking a canoe trip on the Guadalupe River in the spring. For two days, members of the dorm would canoe, set off fireworks and cliff dive, he said.

Other traditions revolved around the rivalry between Law and Puryear Halls.

"Two or three times a month I would wake up around two in the morning hearing guys just screaming at each other," he said. "You could look out your window and see between 20 to 30 guys lined up from both Law and Puryear just screaming obscenities at each other for a

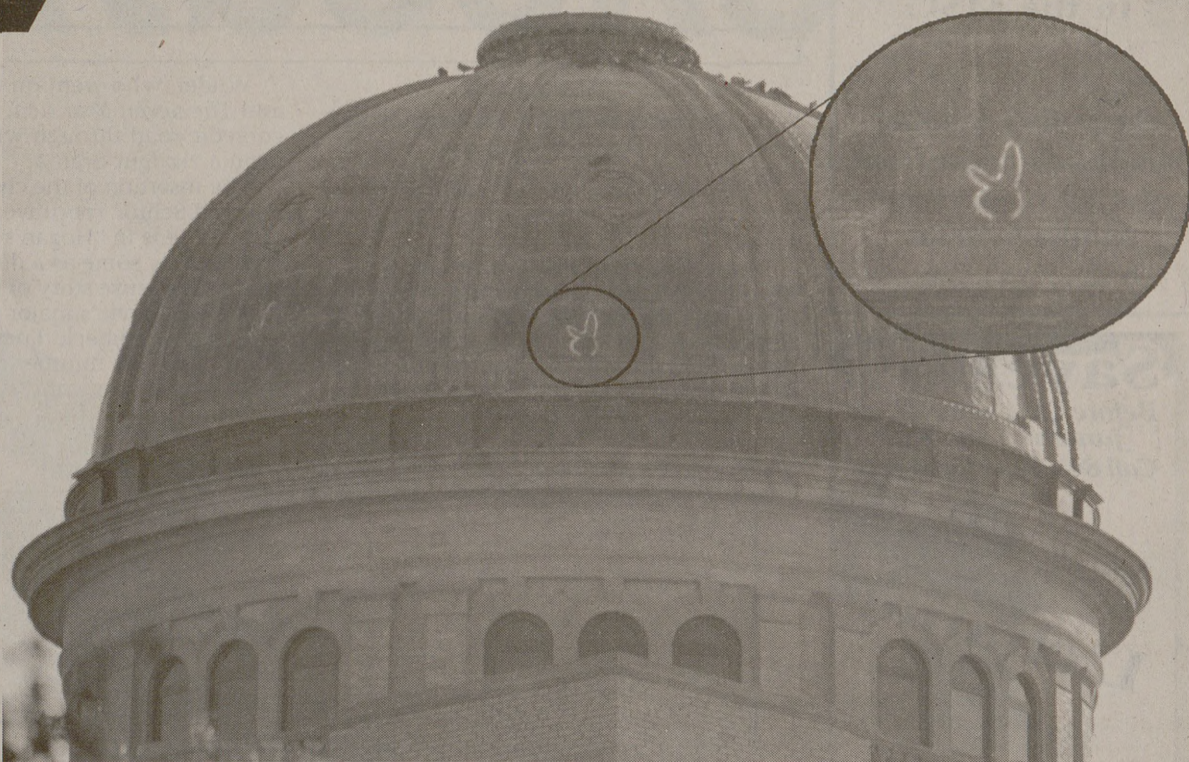


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY BRANDON BOLLOM AND BRAD GRAEBER/THE BATTALION

The east side of the Academic Building's dome adorns a Playboy bunny left by a Puryear Hall resident.

"Our doors were open all of the time because we did not have any air conditioning."



— Greg "Cubby" Matzer  
Puryear resident and Class of '96

On the Academic Building dome, on the back side facing Harrington Education Center-Classroom, there is an outline of a Playboy bunny.

The bunny appeared in 1993 and is still there today. Several other bunnies have been spotted on campus on the backs of street signs and even on a lamp post by the YMCA building.

good 10 to 15 minutes.

"This, of course, sometimes ended in a fist fight if anyone got mad enough at the other side. We genuinely hated each other, and that is what made it so much fun."

Matzer said other dorms have rivalries, but none will compare to the rivalry between Law and Puryear.

"After Puryear was closed, I guess the torch was passed on to Walton because so many old Puryear guys moved into Walton," he said. "I moved into Moore Hall, and it

was fun but it was not the same."

A physical reminder of the dorm are bricks from the Puryear building found in the Freebirds on Texas Avenue in the H.E.B. shopping center.

Puryear Hall has been gone for several years now, and all that is left is a grassy area across the street from O.R. Simpson Drill Field. The dorm was a thriving place for male students to live, and the legacy and the spirit of the dorm still lives today.

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