

Opinion

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THE BATTALION

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Gig 'Em Aggies

On Oct. 4, 1876, the state of Texas founded its first public institution of higher education.

Over the past 125 years, it has matured into the Texas A&M University that every Aggie holds dear. A&M's global renown is not only because of our academic excellence, but also the character of the individuals who have come and gone here.

A&M has become known as a place where people are not only loyal to one another, but to ideals. Our history of commitment to our nation, traditions and one another is unsurpassed. Now we must make sure that we hold onto the legacy that was born in 1876 as we carve out one for ourselves.

Of course, some things in Aggieland have changed over time. The once unthinkable — non-regs, women, minority students and foreign nationals inhabiting campus — are now commonplace. This is a very positive thing for the University, as it allows our reputation to be spread to areas that it would have been able to reach otherwise.

The rapid growth of the school is enough to leave a graduate from 15 years ago looking for directions. One thing that has remained untouched over time is the belief that Aggies are part of something bigger than themselves. This can be seen on the Medal of Honor citations on the walls of the Memorial Student Center. It is when hundreds stand silent on the first Tuesday night of each month as Taps is played in front of the Academic Building. It is heard in the "howdy" or a solemn "here." We are willing to endure pressure from outsiders to discontinue one of

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our most cherished traditions — the Aggie Bonfire — because it means something to people from this school that cannot be defined by words.

Aggies are not just bound by tradition; they look to create new ones. These new traditions are established through leadership, a trait consistent with students of this school for 125 years. We find ourselves in a new and different world today, and that leadership will be required not only on this campus, but all around the world.

Many students have already proven that they are willing to accept the mantle of leadership. This is the campus where students originated an idea to help the people of New York City on a Website, and transformed their hope dream into a Kyle Field that looked like a patriot's dream. It is the place where people stand ready in case they are needed by their team on Saturday, and they are willing to do the same for their country on Monday.

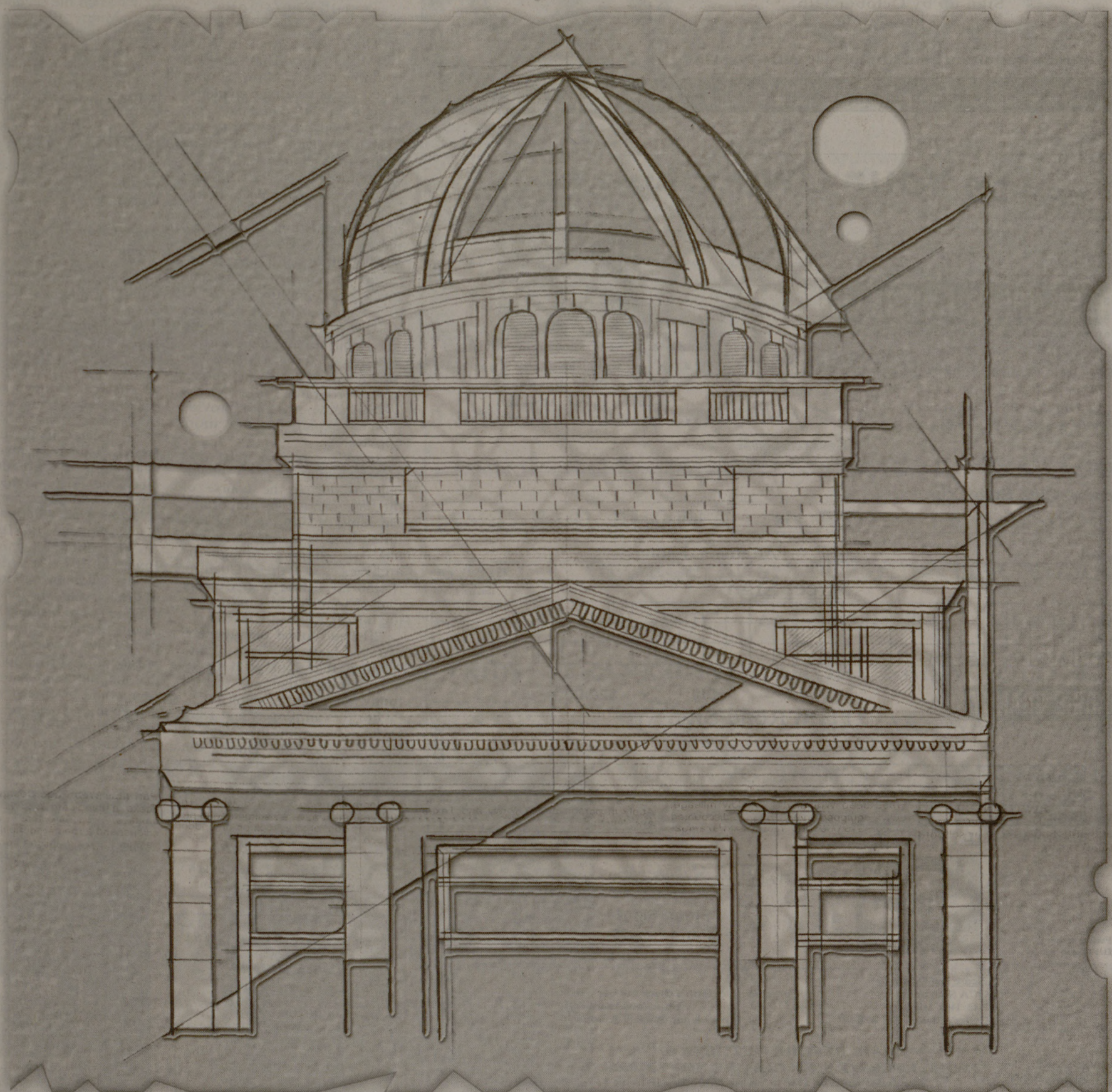
People here do not necessarily do what is easy, but they do what is right. On this 125th anniversary, A&M and its students are confronted with an insidious evil that would gladly tear away all this school and nation have accomplished over time. It will take the courage and strength of the past, and the vision of the present to help defeat them. This would be our first new tradition.

We must also be certain that we work for a better University. We must strengthen our liberal arts programs so that even more people will be interested in finding out what being an Aggie truly is. We must be able to take the leadership and commitment given to us by past generations to help us find the vision needed to blend tomorrow's challenges with yesterday's success.

At this great moment, we can take pride in the history of our school and have confidence that we can do what must be done to make it and our world better. We are Aggies, and we will succeed. We always have.

Happy Birthday, Texas A&M.

Mark Passwaters is a senior political science major.



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EDITORIAL

Texas A&M University — Celebrating 125 Years



THE BATTALION

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CONGRATULATIONS TO TEXAS A&M FOR 125 YEARS

Leaders, spirit and tradition remain steadfast as A&M grows

As Texas A&M embarks on another century, a look at past events rekindles the ever-so-grand traditions at Texas A&M. As we move forward to celebrate 125 years of A&M, we tip our hats and salute all those responsible for keeping the Aggie spirit alive.

On Oct. 4 1876, A&M opened its doors and welcomed six eager young men. Enrollment grew rapidly, and by the end of the year there were 103 men attending the A&M College of Texas. The first institution of higher learning was built on this soil. But as it has evolved and changed, it has managed to maintain the traditional Aggie culture.

To graduate from A&M means more than a diploma — it means being part of a family and a network that is larger than words can quantify. Leadership, spirit and Aggie morale have helped A&M remain strong and endure 125 years.

The leaders of A&M have shaped our unique culture. Lawrence Sullivan Ross, A&M president from 1891 to 1898, fought to keep the University open. James Earl Rudder, president from 1959 - 1970, was

a visionary who changed the nature of the University by transforming it from a military school to a world-class university. Our current president, Dr. Ray M. Bowen, has been one of the most progressive presi-

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dents and has developed a vision for the University to focus for the future.

There is something about A&M that keeps attracting new generations. Students, faculty and administrators come from all around to feel the spirit that from the outside looking in cannot be understood and from the inside looking out cannot be explained.

People are drawn to this University because they feel a sense of mission or purpose. Part of its uniqueness is its steadfast traditions such as the corps, loyal Aggie alumni, Silver Taps and the Aggie ring. Aggies have kept their traditions close to heart, while A&M has evolved into a top national university. As A&M continues to expand its visions and set new goals, the values that are held so dear to every Aggie will forever thrive in our hearts.

A&M is our home and Aggies are our family. From the first day of class in 1876 to now, Aggies have multiplied and legacies have flourished. Traditions have grown, and that faithful spirit has touched innumerable lives all across the world. If it were not for our loyal leaders and steady morale, this University would not have prospered as it has.

Aggie alumni, current students and future generations should celebrate A&M's birthday and help keep the Aggie vitality alive as we create new visions and strive for goals to improve and uphold the heritage of the University we are all so proud to be a part of.