



CUT CLASS AND VIRGIN STRIPES
Students who wanted to work on Bonfire attended a "cut class" that taught them how to swing an axe and how to judge where a tree would fall. Participants would get a stamp on their student ID cards at the end of the session; however, not all Bonfire participants had stamps when they went to cut. In some cases, a participant would grab a handful of stamps for their buddies who had not attended the class. Cut class was typically done before the stack would be built, demonstrating proper axe usage on a ported plant. At the cut site, those who had never worked on Bonfire, mostly freshmen, wore a virgin stripe — athletic tape wrapped around their leg so they were easily identified and properly instructed.



WAKE-UPS
The quiet of Saturday mornings in the fall were often interrupted by crew chiefs yelling and banging on room doors as they implored hall residents to get out of bed at 6 a.m. to go to cut. In the midst of this frenzy, it was not unheard of for deacs to be broken or for residents to be physically dragged from their beds.

	REDPOTS	These are seniors who directed and supervised the construction process. Each has an equal amount of authority, but individual responsibilities.
	JUNIOR REDPOTS	As the name implies, they are juniors who answered to the seniors. Junior redpots were responsible for the physical management of the student workers.
	BROWNPOTS	Brownpots were senior coordinators who help junior redpots and acted as liaisons between juniors and seniors.
	CENTERPOLE PITS	There are two junior and two senior centerpole pits who were responsible for splicing the two poles that made up each Bonfire's centerpole.
	YELLOWPOTS	All non-Corps male dorms and off-campus Aggies had a yellowpot. They were in charge of organizing and leading the students for all Bonfire activities.
	CREW CHIEFS	Each yellowpot had two to five crew chiefs who assisted him with his duties.

STACK
When the first Aggie Bonfire burned in 1909, it was a haphazardly built pile of wood and trash. Ninety years later, it had evolved into a 55-foot tall layered structure of cut logs requiring tens of thousands of man-hours to build. Two weeks before being burned, work on stack became a 24-hour task, known as "push." Stumps of 4' need a log" would be answered by crews picking up logs and carrying them to stack. Once a proper place for the log was determined, students would "slam" the log into stack, where workers on swings were waiting to wire the logs together. While some equipment and grades were used during "stack," most of the work was done with manpower. Built like a layered cake, each log was fitted with pulleys and tied vertically in place with wire. Most of the work on the higher stacks was done by the more experienced Bonfire builders, and the sixth and final stack was built only by the redpots.



LIGHTING THE FLAME
The flame that lit the Aggie Bonfire originated in Austin when Aggies "steal" the eternal flame. Three days before bonfire burned, Aggies ran a lighted torch from Austin to College Station. When the torch-runner reached College Station, the burning torch was stored in a yellowpot's residence hall room until needed. Two hours before Bonfire burned, the redpots twice used fire hoses to douse Bonfire with hundreds of gallons of jet fuel. The yellowpot let freshmen take turns carrying the torch to the stack. When the freshmen reached the stack, the yellowpot took the torch and lit the redpots' torches. The redpots encircled Bonfire and threw their torches up onto the stack and bonfire ignited. As bonfire burned, the head yell leader would recite "The Last Corps Trip" while the Aggie band plays. Then, the Aggies had a yell practice.

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Photos: Courtesy of Student Media

POT DECORATION

Bonfire participants from each hall get together to paint and decorate their pots; freshmen and non-leaders could decorate it any way they want, following their hall's specific colors and designations. Crew chiefs and leaders had stricter and more specific things on their pots, including color. Hart Hall's pots were half hats with the hall's insignia on the sides; Spence-Briggs pots were blue with a stripe or zig-zag down the middle; McIntire Hall painted their pots yellow; Corps outfits traditionally used their outfit logo; class year and nicknames. The main idea in pot decoration was identification — while walking through the woods at cut, hall members could spot each other and their leaders.



CENTERPOLE
The symbolism of the multi-tiered wire structure, centerpole was made of two logs bolted and spliced together all into the ground. The day centerpole was a tradition in itself. Corps outfits would fight for a spot around the centerpole, as redpots marked the ground walked around with their axe handles, fish and fishhead wrap, where senior sophomores made the final wraps at the centerpole. On the redpots' end Bonfire participants would spin to be tight for a layered spot to help in



GRODE YELLS AND SOUNDS AT CUT

To show the spirit of the hall, vulgar yells were performed by each hall, usually, building up site hall by leading down another. Offensive and harassing, the University worked hard to eliminate these yells from the Bonfire culture, claiming they were not representative of the Aggie spirit. In general, cut site was not a quiet place. The sound of countless axes chopping trees and the sound of tractors, dragging logs was constantly present. The shouts of crew chiefs leading heavy yells were often interrupted by the occasional shout of "headache!" when a tree was chopped down.



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