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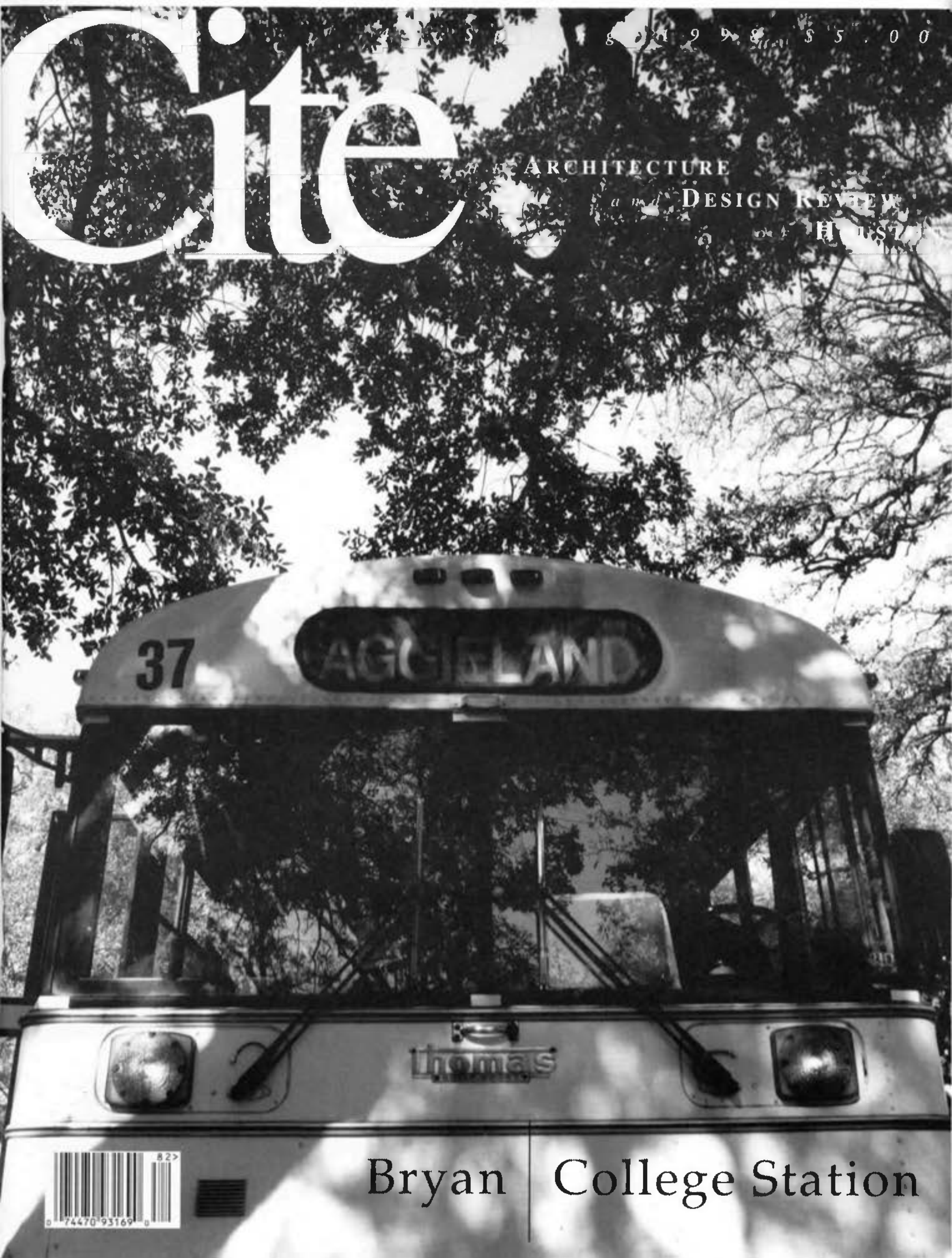
ARCHITECTURE and DESIGN REVIEW of HOUSTON



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Bryan | College Station

Notes on Contributors

Robin Abrams is assistant professor of architecture at Texas A&M University.

Jay Baker is the principal of Jay Baker Architects.

Joel Warren Barna, a frequent *Cite* contributor, is development manager of the McDonald Observatory. He lives in Austin.

Vincent B. Canizaro is assistant lecturer in architecture at Texas A&M University, where he is working on his Ph.D. dissertation.

Timothy J. Cassidy, a Ph.D. candidate at Texas A&M University, is a landscape architect and urban planner.

Stephen Fox is a fellow of the Anchorage Foundation of Texas.

Wesley H. Henderson is a visiting professor of architecture at Texas A&M University.

Shon Link, a recent architecture graduate of Texas A&M University, is working in Houston.

Ernesto Maldonado is a partner in the Houston architectural firm of Glassman Shoemake Maldonado.

Barry Moore, adjunct professor and director of the Center for Historic Architecture at the Gerald Hines College of Architecture, University of Houston, is president and managing partner of SJKB/Houston.

Steven A. Moore is assistant professor of architecture at the University of Texas at Austin.

Barrie Scardino is managing editor of *Cite*.

Jonathan M. Smith is associate professor of geography at Texas A&M University.

Nancy Volkman is associate professor of landscape architecture and urban planning at Texas A&M University.

David G. Woodcock is professor of architecture and coordinator of the historic preservation graduate program at Texas A&M University.

Cite

The Architecture and Design Review of Houston

A Publication of the Rice Design Alliance

41: Spring 1998

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In *Cite* 40 (pp. 38–39) the photographer's name should be spelled Ernest Braun; (p. 40) the full name of the Prolet Chapel is the Elaine and Herman Prolet Family Chapel; photographs of the Prolet Chapel were provided courtesy of W.S. Bellows Construction Corp.

Cite is printed on recycled paper.

Cite

Cover: Texas A&M University bus.

LETTERS

TAMAYO MURAL LIVES

I was most pleased to read Vincent Hauser's article, "Design Industry and Architecture: Houston at Mid-Century," in the winter issue of *Cite* [40]. As a native Houstonian who is especially interested in mid-century architecture and design, I am pleased by *Cite's* efforts to make its readers more aware of the rapid loss of buildings and interiors of that vintage from our urban landscape.

I write simply to comment on Rufino Tamayo's great masterpiece, *America*, which Hauser notes as once having graced the upper lobby of the Bank of the Southwest. Two years ago the Dallas Museum of Art discovered the work in storage in Fort Worth and subsequently arranged for it once again to hang in a grand entry space. If you motor up I-45 and visit us you can view the canvas much as you did in its original setting, high on a wall in the atrium of the museum's Hamon Building [above], designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes in 1993. While preserving *America* within its original setting would have been a better solution, the Dallas Museum of Art is pleased to place this important 1950s Mexican painting once again before the public.

Charles L. Venable, Ph.D.
Deputy Director and Chief Curator
Dallas Museum of Art

KEEP THE FLAME ALIVE

While I have consistently enjoyed and appreciated *Cite*, the winter issue [*Cite* 40] is quite exceptional. The unbridled optimism represented by modern Houston is tangibly expressed in the articles you collected, and the concerns couldn't be more timely. I very much appreciated Bill Stern's introduction, and I am deeply saddened that images like the very beautiful Stoller photograph [above] that flanks it might be the only lasting legacy of the extraordinary First City National Bank Building. The built environment is the most complex form of cultural history, and I believe the flame lit by the values nested in the modern movement must be kept alive.

Kevin Alter
Associate Director, Center for American Architecture and Design
School of Architecture, University of Texas at Austin

Another One Bites The Dust

On Friday, April 10, after a month-long asbestos removal, demolition began on the banking hall of the First City National Bank at 1001 Main Street. [see *Cite* 40]

This is the second grand building designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill to be demolished in the past year. The Great Southern Life Insurance Company Building (1965) on Buffalo Speedway was demolished for an apartment complex in 1997.

The First City tower will remain standing, and the banking hall site will be used for a new parking garage. First City's banking hall was the location of the Rice Design Alliance gala, "Sheetrock Around the Clock," on November 11, 1994.

photographs by
Louis H., Skidmore, Jr.

CALENDAR

ANTONIO GAUDÍ

Saturday, April 4, 7:30 p.m. and **Sunday, April 5**, 7:00 p.m.
Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. 713.527.4876.

Antonio Gaudí's Sagrada Familia church in Barcelona, Spain, is studied in a unique, beautifully photographed film delicately scored with Catalonian folk music. Cosponsored by the Rice Design Alliance and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Tickets $4 (RDA or MFAH members), $5 (general public).

GORDON MATTA-CLARK FILM AND VIDEO SERIES

Wednesday, April 15, 7:00 p.m.
Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. 713.527.4876.

Thursday, April 16, 3:00 p.m.
Lecture Theater, Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture, University of Houston. 713.743.2400.

Friday, April 17, 7:00 p.m.
Herring Hall, Room 124, Rice University 713.527.4876.

Panel discussions will follow each film and video presentation.

MODERN HOMECRAFT: THE HOUSES OF KATHARINE B. MOTT AND HARRY L. MOTT

Wednesday, April 22, 8:00 p.m.
Lecture by Stephen Fox
Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. 713.527.4876.

Saturday, April 25, and Sunday, April 26
Annual RDA members-only architecture tour. 713.527.4876.

Katharine and Harry Mott, working with Indianapolis architects Lee Burns and Edward James, built houses that are considered neighborhood landmarks. The houses were designed in French or English versions of the picturesque manorial style, one of the most popular suburban styles of the 1920s. The tour will feature the following six houses:

- 1635 South Boulevard (1928)
- 1659 South Boulevard (1928)
- 1660 South Boulevard (1929)
- 2421 Brentwood Drive (1929)
- 1419 Kirby Drive (1930)
- 3263 Del Monte Drive (1930)

RE-RAIL: FIRESIDE CHAT

Thursday, May 14, 7:30 p.m.
James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University. 713.527.4876.

This program will focus on the history of proposals for mass transit systems for Houston and discuss the issues surrounding mass transit in the Houston region. Panelists include Mayor Lee Brown and Steven Klineberg, professor of sociology, Rice University.

RDA ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, June 2, 6:00 p.m.
Moores School of Music, University of Houston. 713.527.4876.

DOCUMENTING HOUSTON: THE WORK OF PAUL HESTER

October 16 through January 3, 1999.
Menil Collection. 713.527.4876.

An exhibition of approximately 60 black-and-white images of Houston by photographer Paul Hester. The exhibition will showcase photographs from *Cite* and chronicle the city's development since 1972.

CHANGING FOCUS: PHOTOGRAPHERS VIEW PLACE FALL 1998 LECTURE SERIES

Wednesdays, September 16 through October 21
Brown Auditorium, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. 713.527.4876.

This series will focus on the relationship between photography and the built environment. Speakers include Eugenia Parry, John Szarkowski, Julius Schulman Tim Hursley, and Alex McLean.

RDA 1998 GALA

Saturday, November 7
713.527.4876.

HOUSTON TALKS: DEANS' LECTURE SERIES

RDA and the schools of architecture at Rice University and the University of Houston cosponsor this series, which features international architects.

Wednesday, November 18
Jan Kaplickey, Future Systems, London.

CITE WINS HOUSTON PRESS CLUB AWARDS

For the second year in a row *Cite* has taken first-place honors from the annual Houston Press Club Excellence in Journalism Awards. The event, held at the Rice Memorial Center on Thursday, April 2, was attended by local journalists and TV personalities. Mayor Lee Brown was given the Newsmaker of the Year Award.

Minor Design received first place for magazine design and layout for *Cite* 39 *Texas Places*. Minor Design's award this year follows last year's first- and second-place awards for *Cite* design.

Drexel Turner took second place for magazine news with his piece in *Cite* 38, "Houston, We Have a Problem." **Barrie Scardino** won first place for magazine news for her story, "WaterWold," on Houston's Cotswold project, published in *Cite* 37.

Mitchell J. Shields.

NEW *CITE* MANAGING EDITOR

Beginning with the next issue, Houston journalist **Mitchell J. Shields** will take over as managing editor of *Cite*. Shields, who for the last four years was the managing editor of the *Houston Press*, has worked for publications in Little Rock, New York, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. A native of Florida, he is a graduate of the University of Georgia and was an Oakley Fellow in American Studies at the University of Southern California, an NEH Fellow in Technological Studies at the Georgia Institute of Technology, and a Rockefeller Fellow in Religious Studies for Journalists at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His articles have appeared in publications ranging from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* in the United States to *Geo* and *Transatlantic* in Germany, *Adventure* in Holland, and *Scope* in South Africa.

Craig Minor accepts the Houston Press Club's first-place award for magazine design from Linda Sylvan.

ALAN Y. TANIGUCHI, 1922–1998

Alan Y. Taniguchi, dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin from 1967 to 1972, director of the School of Architecture at Rice University from 1972 to 1974, and William Ward Watkin Professor of Architecture at Rice from 1972 to 1979, died in Austin on January 14, 1998. He was 75 years old.

A quiet, self-effacing man, Taniguchi is remembered with deep affection by faculty and alumni of the University of Texas for his courageous opposition to the efforts of Frank C. Erwin, Jr., chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas from 1966 to 1971, to infringe on academic liberties. At Rice, Taniguchi worked with the dean of architecture, David A. Crane, to expand graduate enrollment and to establish the Rice Design Alliance in 1973.

Taniguchi was born in Stockton, California, the son of Japanese immigrants. While a teenager studying architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, he was interned by the U.S. government for one year in a concentration camp for Japanese-Americans. In 1945, he was able to return to Berkeley and complete his architectural education. Taniguchi worked with Anshen & Allen, Jack Hillmer, and Warren Callister in San Francisco.

He and his wife, Leslie, moved to Harlingen, Texas, in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in 1952, near the farming community where his parents had settled after their release from a concentration camp in Crystal City, Texas. From 1952 until 1961, Taniguchi was one of the most important contributors to the Lower Rio Grande Valley's vibrant modern architecture scene.

In 1961 Taniguchi moved to Austin to accept a faculty appointment at the University of Texas. In 1969 he formalized an association that began in 1964 as Taniguchi Shefelman Vacker Minter, Austin's most important architectural firm until its dissolution in 1976. Among TSVM's works was the reconstruction of the Wiess College Commons at Rice University in 1974.

Returning to Austin in 1979, Taniguchi practiced independently until he was joined by his son Evan. The last major project the firm completed before his retirement was the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana. During the 1980s Taniguchi was involved in a number of civic improvement projects in Austin, notably as chair of the city's Downtown Revitalization Task Force. He was also active in efforts to secure reparations for the injustices suffered by Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Alan Taniguchi was a man of conscience. But rather than a stern moralist, he was friendly and personable. For students and colleagues he had a seemingly inexhaustible supply of patience. As Joel W. Barna aptly noted in 1989, Alan Taniguchi's practice "unites a lifelong connection between modernism and social consciousness."
Stephen Fox

WITH THIS ISSUE I END MY TENURE AS MANAGING EDITOR OF *CITE* TO MOVE TO NEW YORK WITH MY FAMILY. HOWEVER, I DO NOT PLAN TO END MY 16-YEAR ASSOCIATION WITH *CITE* AND HOPE TO CONTINUE AS A CONTRIBUTING EDITOR AND NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL THOSE WITH WHOM I HAVE WORKED, PARTICULARLY LINDA SYLVAN, WHO ACTS AS PUBLISHER, AND CRAIG MINOR AND CHERYL BECKETT, *CITE*'S DESIGNERS.

I WILL MISS YOU ALL.

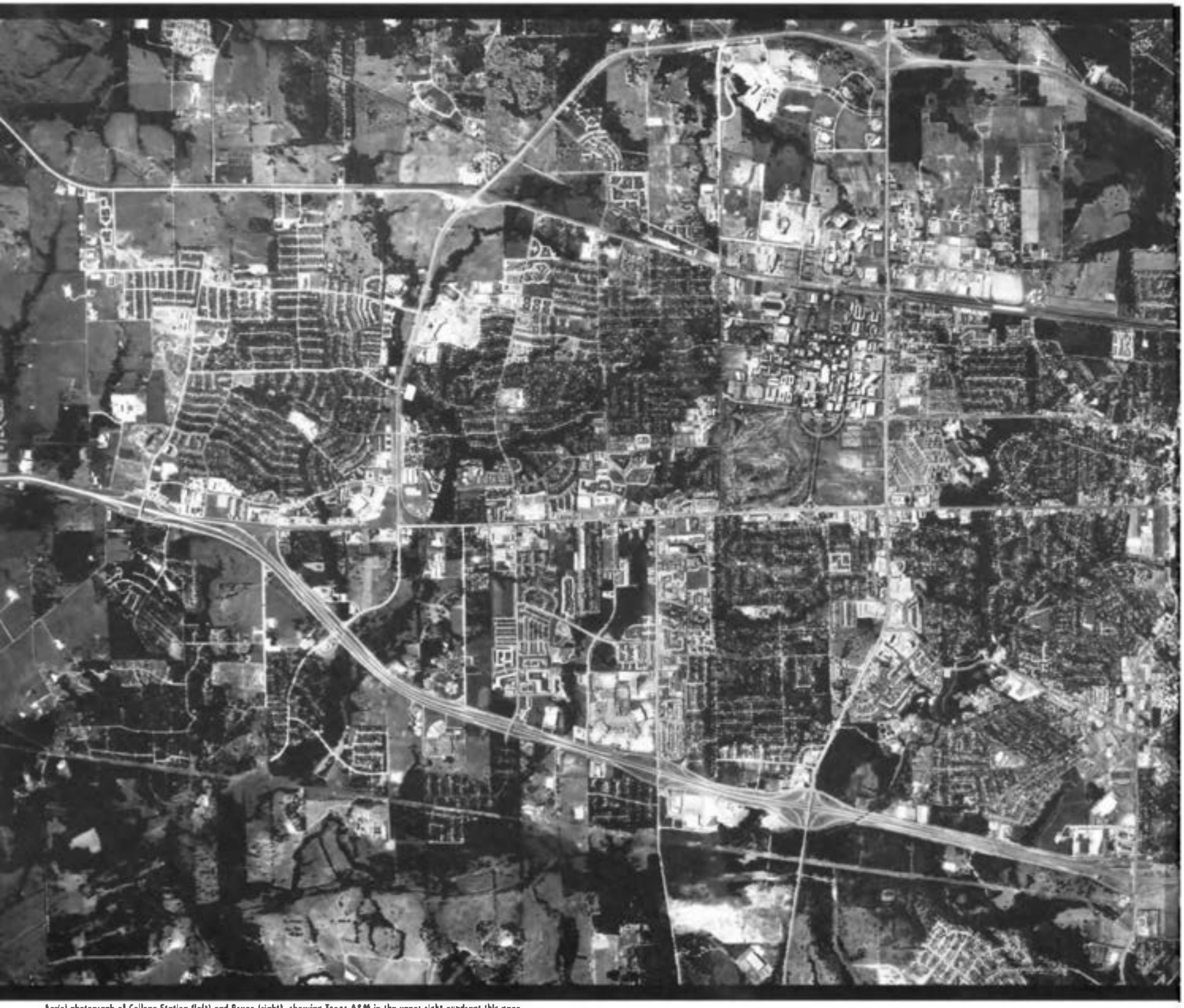
Barrie Scardino

Who gets to describe a place? In this issue of *Cite*, who gets to describe Aggieland, the mythical conflation of Bryan, College Station, and the campus of Texas A&M University? Whose reality should be most valued? We doubt the assumption that places are out there simply waiting to be described by authorities. If one's authority to describe a place is determined by those with similar experiences and interests, then authoritative descriptions tend to be more concerned with propping up the set of experiences and interests shared with one's peers than in understanding a place inhabited by people unlike oneself. To question descriptive acts is to question authority. Even well intended efforts to describe a place are efforts to predict and control.

AGGIELAND?

This issue of *Cite* acknowledges this dilemma by offering multiple, conflicting descriptions of Aggieland. Historians will offer contextual descriptions from the outside. Architects and geographers will offer spatial descriptions. Local residents will offer their experiential descriptions. These competing descriptions will elicit competing responses from readers. Traditionalists will argue that the descriptions offered by experts are truer. Relativists will argue that competing descriptions can all be true. Progressive readers will argue that the descriptions offered by average citizens are truer because their views of Aggieland are not impaired by the satisfied experiences of those at the top. As a reader, your view of Aggieland may not fit into any of these categories. Different myths (and different jokes) have conditioned our expectations of Aggieland. It is not our intention to champion the reductive realities constructed by mythmakers on the inside or jokesters on the outside. Rather, we hope that the assembled voices will construct some of the complexity of Bryan, College Station, and the mythical Aggieland all too often lost in stereotypes.

Steven A. Moore and Stephen Fox, Guest Editors



Aerial photograph of College Station (left) and Bryan (right), showing Texas A&M in the upper right quadrant this page.

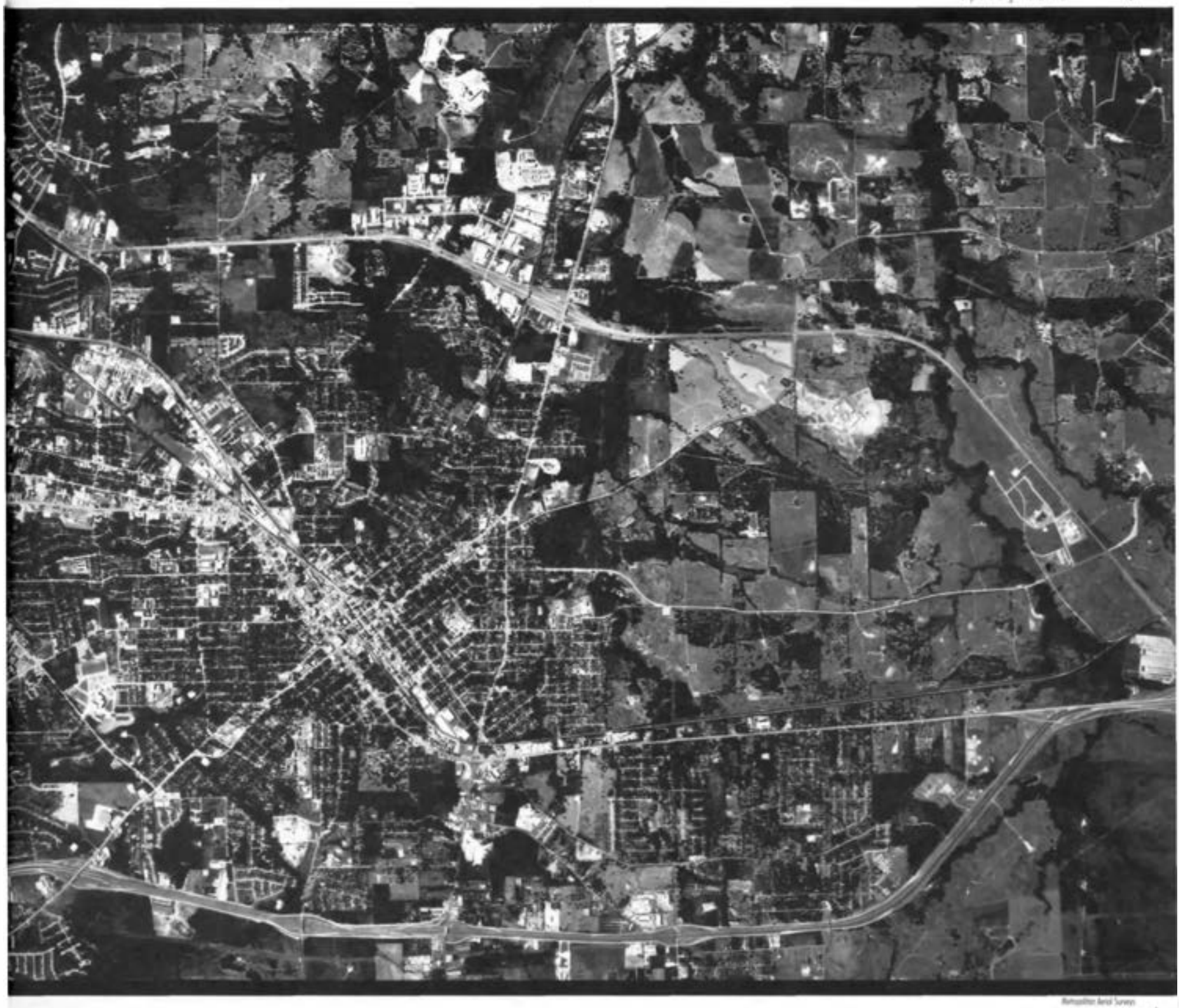
DESCRIPTIONS AND

STEVEN A. MOORE

Who gets to describe a place? In lieu of offering a single poetic or even scientific description of Bryan-College Station, readers may be best served by descriptions from both outsiders and insiders. Like poking road kill with a stick, multiple proddings will best determine if the critter is dead or alive. But an argument for multiple tests of reality is not to suggest that knowledge about a place is cumulative and progressive or even correct. This is not a game of statistical science. Rather, situated knowledge that is rooted in the often mundane and troubled experience of a place is preferable to the seemingly objective, god's-eye view constructed by the modern scientific method.[1]

What better way to situate knowledge than to let those on the inside speak for themselves? But which insiders? These edited interviews were gathered with no particular criteria in mind other than a concern for diversity. If descriptions are powerful tools that allow us to understand a place, redescriptions are doubly embedded in one's world view.[2] Describing a place documents what is. Redescribing a place requires speculation about what it might be and confronts those conditions that, from the viewer's perspective, need fixing.

With this distinction in mind, I asked each person interviewed to do three things: (1) Describe yourself; (2) Describe Bryan-College Station; (3) Redescribe Bryan-College Station. The responses provide a remarkably coherent view of how life is seen in these twin cities. Like the name itself, it is a hyphenated construction.



Metropolitan Aerial Surveys

REDESCRIPTIONS FROM THE INSIDE

A View From the Top

Fred Brown

Cite: To begin our conversation, it would be helpful if you would describe who you are and what you do in Bryan-College Station.

FB: I've been the Mazda-BMW dealer here for 15 years and have been heavily involved in the community. In 1991 I ran for city council in College Station and served on the council for several years before I became involved with Texas A&M. I am now a conservative Republican candidate for the Texas Legislature. My community involvement has flourished, and I love every bit of it. I think that if you're going to do business in the community, you need to give back your time, resources, and efforts to help make a difference.

Cite: That personal history puts you in the perfect position to consider my next question. How would you describe Bryan-College Station? What kind of a place is it?

FB: It's very, very traditional in every aspect. It's right in the middle of the Bible Belt. It's very conservative. And there's always been a problem between Bryan and College Station. Bryan is an old-time city that's been 140 years in the making, and then all of a sudden College Station sprang up in 1938. So there has been resentment from some of the old Bryanites because of the people who broke away and started their own town. But now, College Station is as big a city as Bryan. Over the years Travis Bryan, Jr., a banker whose great-grandfather founded the city of Bryan, has been quoted in *The Eagle* [the local newspaper] as saying that Bryan and College Station should become one city, and when College Station was small, most College Station citizens agreed. We figured that we didn't need two different police departments, two different fire departments — all that redundancy. Back then, most Bryanites, however, didn't see it that way. Then just a few years ago we had some hearings in College Station about unification, because it was obvious that the savings would be phenomenal. But those who showed up at the hearings in College Station were the old-time families that had started College Station. Their collective opinion was, "Hey, we're the overdog now. We're doing well; we don't need Bryan with all of its problems, with no zoning, with the tremendous decay in the downtown area. We have an up-and-coming city that is well planned and well organized, good government. Things are happening." As a result, College Station now takes care of its own development interests, and Bryan takes care of itself.

Cite: From your perspective as a community leader, how would you like to redescribe Bryan and College Station? In other words, what would you like to change?
FB: I would like for the two places to become one place. With the savings, we could do projects that need to be done in Bryan and bring both communities up to an equal par.

Cite: Did I detect in your golfing metaphor that the two communities can be characterized now as the haves and the have-nots?
FB: That's correct, but both extremes exist in Bryan. The old money is in Bryan, but College Station has a leg up because it's only 60 years old. When you have a plain sheet of paper to start with, it gives you a hundred-year head start on your competitor next door. You don't have decay that you're ashamed of in older parts of the community .

Cite: Is College Station both affluent and homogenous?
FB: Yes, because of the university.

Cite: So you would bring the two communities together politically in order to offer Bryan the opportunity and the resources to solve some of its social and infrastructure problems?
FB: Yes.

Cite: What would unification do for College Station?
FB: For people coming into the community from the outside, like I did, Bryan and College Station are one place. Most immigrants simply view Bryan as the decaying, old part of College Station. Even some A&M people understand this. A vice chancellor at A&M once told me that if God was going to give Bryan-College Station an enema, it could be right up Highway 21. That's the old, decaying part of north Bryan. But rather than paying to give Bryan an enema, the university had the Aggie expressway built so that people coming from Austin could bypass Highway 21 through Bryan. It seems that the university and the City of College Station are conspiring to make Bryan invisible rather than trying to solve mutual problems.

Cite: Would it be fair to say that just as business opportunity from Bryan has migrated south to College Station, the concealed social problems of College Station have migrated north to Bryan?
FB: Yes, absolutely. But no matter how the cities are politically divided, when people come to see the George Bush Library, they will experience Bryan-College Station as one city. The economic problems of Bryan will never go away unless there's a cooperative effort on the part of College Station, Bryan, and Texas A&M University to take care of the problems as one community. But it's still a great place to raise a family. Good, good people.
Editor's Note: Mr. Brown was elected to the Texas Legislature in March.

A Professional View

Julius M. Gribou

Cite: Julius, would you please describe who you are and the role you play in the community?
JG: I am the head of the department of architecture at Texas A&M University. My involvement in the planning and design activities of College Station started in the early 1990s, when I was asked to join the city's design review board. I then had the opportunity to serve on the planning and zoning commission. My role on the commission has been to make the values of architecture visible in a dialogue that had previously been dominated by engineers, developers, and attorneys. Now that my six years on the planning and zoning commission are up, I have decided to run for city council.

Cite: That history gives you a special perspective from which to understand the dynamics of Bryan-College Station. How would you describe this place?
JG: I guess the first time I saw College Station was in 1978. It seemed then like a nice, quiet, dormant community — a bedroom community for faculty. But in 20 years it has grown incredibly, curiously at times. There is a visible difference between College Station and Bryan, and if I didn't know they were two cities, two political entities, I would wonder why things are the way they are. The diversity in Bryan is interesting and exciting, but dangerous if you don't know what you're doing. The lack of diversity in College Station is surprising. College Station has only two little ethnic pockets, whereas Bryan has a range of ethnic neighborhoods, making Bryan a much more diverse community. Unfortunately, the relationship between the two cities is probably more antagonistic than complementary. For example, HOK [Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, which bought out CRSS] has recently completed a comprehensive plan for College Station, but it didn't consider Bryan other than peripherally. HOK's plan was based upon three demographic scenarios: moderate growth, high growth, and very high growth. In this last projection, College Station is seen as having the potential of being almost twice its current size by the year 2020 — 110,000 people in College Station.

Cite: What has caused the division between the two cities?
JG: College Station developed as a support community for Texas A&M. Historically, if you look at who lives where and why, I think you will recognize that economic and real estate interests have contributed most to the tension between the towns.

Cite: If it is only pragmatic to recognize that this bifurcated community is not going to resolve its political and economic differences, how would you want to redescribe the place — what would you make different?
JG: I would like to see this community develop an aesthetic that is not planned by developers, but planned by someone who can envision a civic presence in a single location. Such a concept might balance the future of College Station with the sense of history being redeveloped in Bryan. I think the two communities could build on each of their strengths without competing. The worrisome part is that I don't know how College Station can develop greater diversity. When I look at new real estate developments, Pebble Creek for example, they are more homogenous than ever before. I mean they're so white.

Cite: Do you think that people in Bryan will be satisfied with the prospect of their city becoming the precinct of history and College Station becoming the precinct of economic development?
JG: No, that's not going to fly. Economic development needs to occur in both areas. Each town needs to be built around different strengths. I don't think that one could say that Bryan should become a museum, and College Station should become the city of the future. College Station has some historical opportunities, and downtown Bryan is an amazing environment, full of development potential that I would hate to see vanish.

A View From Campus

Douglas Carnutte

Cite: Because I know you are pressed for time, as all graduate students are, I will ask only three short questions. First, could you describe yourself?
DC: I'm a retired high school band director and a career-change student in architecture at Texas A&M.

Cite: How would you describe Bryan-College Station? You've had experience in other states, and a lot of experience in

Texas. What is this place about?
DC: I really like it here. It's so friendly. First, there's the campus and Aggieland. Then, there's College Station at-large, and finally you have Bryan, which is different. It's a lot different. It has an older feel. I know that politically Bryan and College Station don't get along. But that division is, for me, almost meaningless.

Cite: So, how would you redescribe Bryan-College Station? What would you change?
DC: If I were tsar, I would make the area around the campus more urban, more like Ann Arbor, Michigan. Here the student body is spread all over creation because of the scattered housing situation. If it were just a little more urban, a little denser, maybe we could all live closer to campus and walk, bike, or take shuttles to campus.

Cite: Wouldn't making the campus denser, more cloistered, have the effect of making the university less integrated into the community?
DC: Maybe not. I think it would increase pedestrian traffic, and people might get to know fellow students and neighbors because they would see each other every day. For example, I don't have any relationship with anything around campus. I'm on campus, and then I go home. But if I had to walk home, then I would have a relationship with the other places and people around campus. Increased density could actually increase integration between students and what's around the campus. For graduate students, the campus isn't rewarding because we're isolated in our cars. We can't live on campus because there's not enough housing. Only the Corps and a few undergraduates live in campus dorms. You know we have a tremendous school spirit here. But can you imagine what it would be like if we all lived a little closer?

An Emergent View

Vera Miller

Cite: Could you tell our readers something about yourself?
VM: I was born in Bryan, and I've lived here all my life. I went away for a little bit, but I came back. You always come back home. Now I live in College Station. When you're from here, you're raised to say Bryan-College Station. But I guess I'm from College Station now. I have a company that cleans offices and apartments.

Cite: Since you've been here all your life, you know a lot about the place. How would you describe Bryan-College Station?
VM: It's a wonderful place, let me tell you! People are very nice here. The only thing is that we don't use Spanish very much in College Station. You don't need it here. There is not even a Spanish-speaking Catholic church here.

Cite: What about the Hispanic community in Bryan?
VM: In Bryan's Hispanic community, on the west side, there are a lot of people from Mexico. You find that in Bryan more than in College Station. But I don't have to go anywhere near Bryan. I have my grocery stores here. I have my department stores here. I have everything right here at my fingertips. Hispanic people from Bryan come and work at the university. A lot of the girls I know work at the university. In Bryan there's more factory work. I think even the pay scale is different, lower than in College Station. There is more opportunity in College Station, like at the Scott & White Clinic and in all the apartment complexes.

Cite: Your description of Bryan-College Station is very vivid. How would you want to redescribe it? What would you make different?
VM: I wouldn't want to make anything different. I love Bryan-College Station. I love College Station. Except, well, I think we need more entertainment stuff here. Like a place for concerts. Let's build more entertainment. Let's do more parks like Astroworld or Six Flags. They were going to have a Smashing Pumpkins concert right here at the Speedway that would have been great, but the city stopped it.

Cite: One of the things most people say about Bryan-College Station is that it's a great place to raise kids. Perhaps people think entertainment is a threat to raising kids properly?
VM: Well, those kids grow up, and I'm one of them. I would just like to be able to take my nieces to a water park or to Astroworld without having to pack my bags and drive to San Antonio or Houston. But, bottom line, it's a wonderful place to live.

A View From Bryan

Emilio López

Cite: Tell me a bit about yourself, and how you came to run the West 25th Street Cleaners.
EL: This business belongs to my dad, and I'm just managing it for him. I was raised here in Bryan until I was about seven. Then we lived in California until I was 13, but we moved on back to Bryan to get away from that. My dad started this business, and we've been here for 25 years. My dad is originally from here. My mom's from Mexico, but this is the hometown. This is the base. This is a family business.

Cite: That gives you some insight into Bryan-College Station. How would you describe it? What kind of a town is it?
EL: If you live here in Bryan, you'll come back to Bryan. I don't know why, but everybody does. Everybody moves away, but they always wind up back here. It's right in the middle of everything. College Station is here, and we've got the university. As far as the kids growing up, there's a chance of them going to college nearby. Saves a lot of money. I've got my daughter going to Texas A&M. Why move to Austin? As far as Bryan goes, it's nice. The downtown is being remodeled. We're getting all these buildings renovated, so in about another ten years there will be another look in the town.

Cite: So you think things are looking up for Bryan?
EL: Oh, yes! There's going to be a big fire station on the west side of town, so apparently they're going to fix up all this — put money into it. There is crime, but not any big crimes. I think the crime comes from the younger generation, the kids that are 15 or 14. I don't think they care. To them, it's just living day by day. There's no respect from these kids anymore. They get away with everything. If they do something, they go to juvie, stay three months, and then they're back out on the street. There's really no punishment.

Cite: It's a perplexing situation. On one hand, things are looking up for the community because of possible reinvestment in the downtown, but on the other hand. . .
EL: . . . the parents work, and the kids buy drugs.

Cite: Is College Station a different community from Bryan?
EL: Well, Bryan is a community. Over there, it's the school deal. It's two different towns. College Station's always been good. They've got their ups and downs too. But this is my little town. You've got mostly families here. Over there, you got apartments, duplexes, the mall, and the chains. If you do business in Bryan, you're not a chain; you're an independent businessman. You put your money into it, and if you don't make it, you fold. As far as the chains go, they don't lose; they just write it off. I can't compete with those franchises. They charge 89 cents to clean a shirt. I have to stick to $1.10 to make ends meet.

Cite: If that's how you describe Bryan-College Station, how would you like to redescribe it? What would you like to change?
EL: I don't know. I can't say that I want Bryan to change at all. You don't want it to change too, too much, because if you start growing, everything starts going up and small businesses start dropping. I'd like it to stay its same old self. Decorate it maybe, but keep it the same.

Cite: That's a nice way to put it.
EL: You put on a suit, but you're still the same person. It doesn't change you. It just brings you out a little bit more.

A View From the Country

Jack Sullins

Cite: Jack, could you describe yourself and Big Sky Farm?
JS: My wife and I moved here about 14 years ago, bought a piece of land off of the Johnson Ranch, and started a horse operation. We're about 20 miles outside of College Station. She trains dressage and jumping horses, and I ride young horses that haven't been ridden before. Things are going pretty good right now.

Cite: You've lived all over Texas, and you've been around the world a bit. How would you describe Bryan-College Station?
JS: It strikes me as a busy place. There seems to be a lot going on. We buy our feed there, and we do all our shopping there. I wish we could do more shopping in downtown Bryan, because they've got so many old buildings that aren't being used, and it's sad to see all that go to waste. It looks to me like they could use those old buildings instead of building more stuff on the outskirts of town. I don't know why they would let that part of downtown die like that. Bryan's got one good hardware store, which I like to go in, and I really like the Bryan Library. But when I speak of Bryan, I say old Bryan. College Station is new. I think of College Station as being a 19- or 20-year-old man, and I think of old Bryan as a 70- or 80-year-old man. Of course, now that I'm getting old myself, I lean toward the old. In old Bryan you've got the older generation, what I call solid. Sometimes I wonder about the young situation over here, whether they're going to be solid. There's a degree of competition between the two towns, between the young and the old. But I don't think competition ought to get to the point where one business is trying to put another out. I think everybody should have a decent living and shouldn't cut the price of things to force others out. I don't like that kind of competition. Downtown Bryan is also getting hurt by the mall out there. It undermines the downtown area.

Cite: If that's of concern, how would you like to redescribe Bryan-College Station? How would you like it to change?
JS: It would be interesting to see it come together as one unit. I think in order for that to work, there'd have to be one or two individuals come in and lead the others. I would also like to see things slow down a little bit. Over there on Texas Avenue, everybody is whipping up and down the road going real fast. Where are they going? Pick out one of those fast cars and follow it. See where it goes. It doesn't go anywhere. Whoever it was sped down there, stopped and bought a Coke. There was no reason to be charging off down that road. The house wasn't on fire. He was just going down there to buy a soda pop. We could just slow down, get the soda pop, and enjoy it that much more. That's just the way I think.

A Summary View

It is striking that all six of these interviews describe Bryan-College Station as a single community that has been internally divided by its troubled political economy. Without prompting, everyone observed that the political division between Bryan and College Station is at least wasteful, at most destructive. Three of those interviewed explicitly chose to redescribe the cities as a single political entity.

The artificial spatial division of this community is an example of the late-modern phenomenon known as "uneven development."[1] By creating an exclusive spatial zone — one that, like College Station, is more attractive to flexible capital — entrenched real estate interests serve themselves at the expense of community. Not only does exclusionary space stimulate investment in the new zone, it causes disinvestment in the old zone. For example, virtually all of Bryan's car dealerships that were established in Bryan have now relocated to College Station. The new commercial space created along the Route 6 bypass has attracted capital by focusing traffic flow along the frontage property controlled by a few investors, while the old dealership locations in Bryan now lie vacant, bringing no tax revenue to the city. The pattern of investment and disinvestment may maximize cash flow, but it also damages those who prefer the continuity and propinquity of a sustained community. One result of such spatial politics is that members of the community who are closer to the bottom of the economic hierarchy (principally minority groups who depend upon each other for economic survival) have become spatially, as well as economically, marginalized.

This harsh interpretation ignores another element common to four of the six descriptions of Bryan-College Station. These four people — three of whom have reason to complain about local spatial politics — stated that Bryan-College Station is a "wonderful place." The two Hispanic people interviewed, who might have been expected to redescribe the community in the most radical way, chose instead the status quo. They were reluctant to have their hometown(s) change at all. Some might dismiss this conservatism on the part of minority citizens as an example of cultural hegemony — a form of domination so pervasive that repressive cultural conditions appear natural, even to those who are most discriminated against. But when Vera Miller said, "It's a wonderful place, let me tell you!" I believed her.

Bryan and College Station are not, of course, the only twin cities in the United States. Those who wish to redescribe Bryan-College Station as a single political entity might look at Champaign-Urbana (the home of the University of Illinois) for strategies that may help to inform the current situation. The perspectives of the six citizens interviewed here suggest that the unique economic and cultural conditions of Bryan and College Station have fostered a division of wealth, labor, and geography that is something less than democratic. The Greek ideal of the polis depends upon the existence of a single space, or forum, where public discourse can take place. If the citizens of a single community lack access to any portion of the discourse that affects their interests, democracy fails. In this view, democracy is a spatial concept, and the artificial subdivision of political space within a community can only subvert the democratic process.

The people who live in the twin cities think Bryan-College Station is a "wonderful place to live," democratic or not. As Fred Brown commented, these are "good, good people" — but notice he had to say "good" twice. ■

1. Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," in *Technology and the Politics of Knowledge*, Andrew Feenberg and Alastair Hannay, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 175–94.

2. Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 89.

3. David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 293–97.

CONTRADICTIONS

AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN VIEW OF AGGIELAND

C. L. Wilson Hall, Prairie View A&M University, S. I. Morris Associates and W. Norris Mosley Associates, architects, 1976.

If A&M is to be a world-class university,

then some aspects of regionalism must be dispensed with.

Anderson Hall, Prairie View A&M University, Louis Edwin Fry, architect.

WESLEY H. HENDERSON

From a distance, the sight of Texas A&M University is awe inspiring. Tall skyscrapers rise above the trees, a massive football stadium rides like an ocean liner on the prairie, stout and sturdy square buildings cluster together. At a closer view, there are immense lawns, tree-lined vistas along roads, and manicured flower beds. This is what the majority of people see, and, indeed, that image is cultivated and intentional. Yet, as a minority person, I see things differently. My views cannot speak for every African-American, but my life experiences as a middle-class African-American with a doctoral education in the history of architecture give me a different perspective. It is not that I perceive the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of space differently, but in my analysis of architecture the sociological aspects of space and power are questioned, and conventions are not taken for granted.

Texas A&M is a set of seemingly contradictory concepts that students, faculty, and administrators try to resolve into a synthetic whole. For example, A&M is a land-grant college established in a rural setting, yet it feels somewhat urban. Students, faculty, staff, and other pedestrians mill about on plazas and walks, especially in the precincts in which vehicles are restricted. A&M is Texas's oldest state-supported university, and one feels this at the core of the campus, yet its edges have new buildings. Images rich in tradition, history, and old power vie with images of new power, sophisticated technology, and new research facilities. I hesitate to call this progress, because in this mix the personalized and customized compete with the large, bland, and impersonal in setting an overall ambiance, and there is no clear dominance. Also there are many agencies, the state agriculture extension and school of veterinary medicine for example, that are not focused on teaching undergraduates but draw many outside visitors to campus. These agencies have a strong visual presence, not just because of their

Texas A&M University, Corps battalion in front of the John K. Williams Administration Building.

bers of the community recognize these contradictions, and in the case of Bonfire have proposed tree planting as an amelioration. Here is an important new trend. While many students do not necessarily belong to the ecology movement, there is a growing awareness of the importance of the natural environment. More contentious battles will come over animal experimentation and human fetal experimentation. Ideally, old traditions don't have to end, but new ones are needed that can reach out to minorities, women, and foreign students. I have seldom seen members of minority groups participate in events at which the intent is to build campus unity.

Most of the African-American people I see on campus are support staff members such as maintenance, janitorial, custodial, and food service workers, who wear uniforms that symbolically obscure their individual identity. Occasionally, however, an athletic-looking African-American student passes by. Both sets of people are invisible until they are needed. One person in a uniform changes light bulbs. Another person, also in a uniform, becomes a gladiator to do battle with another school's gladiators on the court or field. What is missing at Texas A&M is average African-American students. The subtle message on campus is that if you are not an athletic superstar or a support person, there's no obvious role for you and no place to just be yourself.

The concept of visibility has a historical dimension. While statues and memorials to European-American male alumni are visible throughout the campus, no similar recognition exists for African-Americans at A&M. Perhaps this is a task for an African-American organization, but some commemoration of the African-American presence on campus should be obvious to casual and first-time visitors. Who was the first African-American student at A&M? Who was a notable A&M African-American athlete? Other universities, even in the South, have taken steps to recognize accomplished African-American alumni: James Meredith at Ole Miss, Charlayne Hunter-Gault at the University of Georgia, and O. J. Simpson at the University of Southern California, for example. I also wonder who the first female student was? Will she receive some sort of spatial commemoration?

I cannot recall any buildings on or near the campus that were designed by African-American architects, but in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin there are such buildings well known to the local community. I cannot recall any A&M African-American architecture graduates who could realistically compete for campus commissions against the large majority firms. However, some notable African-American graduates of other universities in Texas have obtained commissions on campuses of their alma maters. It is further unlikely that a non-Aggie, African-American architect will get a commission, but there are plenty of graduate architects from A&M's sister system school at Prairie View who could certainly compete for commissions on the main campus. A logical solution at this point would be to encourage majority and minority architects to design joint venture campus projects.

This leads to a question many ask: Is Prairie View A&M University part of Aggieland? No, but the two are definitely tied together by history and administration. When the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas was founded in College Station with federal land-grant funds in 1876, the education of newly freed slaves was a concern. In accord with the separate-but-equal policy of the day, Prairie View (initially called Alta Vista Agricultural College) was established for African-Americans the same year. Even though it was not until 1947 that the school officially became part of the Texas A&M system, it has, in practice, been part of the system all along. The separate-but-equal strategy might have worked if equal facilities had actually been provided, but the concept was hypocritically and even cynically implemented. Facilities were never equal and never meant to be. Now, the idea of a system is an administrative fiction. Prairie View receives few, if any, benefits from being part of the A&M System. For example, in the academic architectural realm, there is no formalized exchange of faculty, resources, students, or guest lecturers. Students and

The ultimate contradiction is that Aggieland is changing anyway.

buildings, but because of the logos on their ubiquitous vehicles.

Many European-American students easily and uncritically accept these campus contradictions as the mandate and legacy of history and tradition. Of course, some minority students and faculty members, including myself, also come to accept the old-line A&M traditions, but they do so at a psychological price. Why is this acceptance an issue? Traditions are important at A&M, and many of them began long before African-Americans students were legally allowed to enroll. To some, perpetuation of traditions is equated with retaining other values of those times in regard to race. Hence, a presupposition about A&M is that racial prejudice is rampant and ingrained. But that is simplistic and not completely accurate. It is a friendly campus. Lots of people speak to me as I walk around campus, especially members of the Corps of Cadets.

Although some of my Caucasian liberal friends are negative about the Corps, I note that the military is one organization where African-Americans have done well. Perhaps this friendliness is due to edict and discipline, but it sets an amiable tone. Despite the conservative dress and lifestyles of most students, there are relatively few rebel flags in sight in comparison to other Southern campuses I have visited. My theory is that many students here are from rural and small-town areas and wear their usual attire — jeans and work shirts — and thus have less need to manufacture a symbolic tie to the romanticized Old South. Most of the Confederate flags I see are on the T-shirts of fraternity members who look affluent and from suburban areas. And yes, there are Confederate flags on pickup trucks around town too. If A&M is to be a world-class university, then some aspects of regionalism must be dispensed with.

This conundrum comes up with such Aggie traditions as Bonfire. Astute mem-

faculty at the main campus are only dimly aware of Prairie View and probably have never been there. Faculty and students at Prairie View are afraid of being absorbed by A&M and then not treated well. The credibility of A&M system officials with Prairie View people is minimal due to years of neglect. This is sad, because both architecture programs are good ones, but they have different areas of strength. Both would be stronger with a cooperative, complementary strategy.

But in terms of architecture, the two campuses share much, especially at their older cores. Both campuses have Beaux-Arts and Art Déco buildings that have been neglected. Both went through building booms in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, and new construction at the outer edges of each campus during the 1980s and 1990s has not been well integrated with the rest of the campus. Both campuses have parking and traffic problems, even though each has large amounts of land, and new highrise buildings are exacerbating parking shortages.

Although A&M has regarded its stewardship as benevolent, it has also been paternalistic. Even though some of the pre-1950 buildings were designed and built by African-Americans, the system chose majority architects during the building boom that lasted from the 1950s to the 1970s. That was a sore point with Prairie View graduates and contributed to the erosion of trust in the A&M system. Contemporary buildings by African-American architects at Prairie View did not come until Wilhelmina Delco, a Prairie View alumna, obtained access for Prairie View in 1984 to the oil-rich Permanent University Fund, which since the 1930s have financed extensive building programs at both Texas A&M University and the University of Texas.

It is practically impossible to ascribe differences in a building's design to the ethnicity of the architect; architectural students in the United States have pretty much the same education. Although Prairie View buildings appear, like those in College Station, requisitely institutional, they are used slightly differently from those at A&M. At Prairie View there is more of a communal sense in dorm lounges and a different sensibility about background music. Too, the colors are stronger. The landscape at Prairie View is also subtly altered. Outdoor plazas are used for Greek Step Shows, and fraternity members gather at specific painted trees, artistically individualized for their fraternity.

African-American architects may be more sensitive to these use patterns. Some points follow this logic, but they are contentious: Would Prairie View be a better environment if more buildings were designed by African-Americans? Rather than try to answer that question, my ideal solution here would be the same strategy proposed for the A&M main campus: more majority and minority firms should undertake projects as joint ventures.

Another, more obvious question is, Why not merge Prairie View and A&M? From A&M's viewpoint, a merger would be beneficial. Long-term demographic trends do not favor A&M. In the past, the typical A&M student has been a white male from a rural area or small town. Although some small towns are growing, most population growth in Texas is now in the suburbs of the larger cities. These suburban students are not quite the same as those from more homogeneous farm towns; they are a more diverse group, and they have different college expectations.

Current enrollments in Texas elementary and secondary schools show that minority college students will soon be the majority. Can A&M as it currently exists attract them? Probably not. In the 1990s other Texas universities are attracting higher percentages of minorities in their freshman classes than Texas A&M is.[1] Why? For one thing, compared to the Prairie View campus, the main A&M College Station campus seems cold and impersonal and does not provide a supportive network for an average African-American. A few individuals with strong constitutions can take it and make it, but evidence of African-American and even Latino culture is not visible on campus. Most, if not all, responsible officials at A&M genuinely want more minority students. But again, contradiction arises.

Administrators and many European-American students at A&M might have a hard time dealing with a large number of African-Americans. These students would make up a diverse group, but there would surely be an attempt to treat this group in a monolithic way, inevitably leading to awkward situations. Several scenarios are possible: African-American students would be spread all over the campus, negating the possibility of an effective support network. Or they would cluster, potentially creating a small ghetto or series of ghettoes. An ideal cluster might consist of African-Americans from rural areas and small towns, but that proportion of people is shrinking faster than the percentage of small-town European-Americans. Another cluster could consist of cultural nationalists, but problems associated with such a group are exemplified by what happened in Jester dormitory at the University of Texas, where a lounge was renamed the Malcolm X Lounge, and photos of radical and controversial African-American leaders lined the walls. Non-African-American students felt uncomfortable there. The most problematic cluster might be an enclave of hip hop, urban rap culture.

Conservative A&M now just barely tolerates such a cluster for its athletes, and this presents another contradiction. A predictable misunderstanding occurred at a January party sponsored by an African-American organization. The party got out of hand, and it was described as a "riot" in the campus newspaper.[2] The result of such an overreaction is that African-Americans vote with their feet and go to Prairie View, where such parties are routinely handled with much less fanfare. If Prairie View closed any time in the near future, African-American students, those both brilliant and marginal, would be the losers.

But is it possible for A&M's officials to devise another, more satisfactory scenario that will work? In the 1960s the A&M president, J. Earl Rudder, realized that A&M must change. He steered the university in a radically different direction, admitting women and making military studies optional. Enrollment grew, and new buildings rose. If Texas A&M today is compared to Virginia Military Institute or The Citadel, it is clear that Rudder helped A&M ease into the inevitable. A comparable caliber of leadership and vision is now needed to recruit and educate members of minority groups. It would be immensely helpful if a young African-American alumnus could be identified to serve as a role model for potential African-American students. Such a person would need to have a comfortable media presence and be able to work with politicians and state legislators to keep funds flowing.

Lastly, many people equate Aggieland with the whole Bryan-College Station area. But I do not. Aggieland is a conceptual space as well as a physical one that exists in the minds of students, faculty, staff, and community members. An indicator of where Aggieland really is can be found on business and shop signs. Near the campus, references to Aggies abound, but on the north side of Bryan, a predominantly African-American area, you see none of this. To a European-American student who stays mostly around campus, the north side of Bryan is pretty much invisible. Equally invisible are the African-American neighborhoods of Park Place and Eleanor Street in College Station.

Aggieland is physically awesome. But not everyone understands the diversity of ways in which this physical setting is perceived and used. Is that a problem? No, for the majority; yes, for the minority. There are no easy solutions for alternative modes of the social construction of space. Most residents of Aggieland probably do not want it to change and would actively resist rapid or extreme change. The ultimate contradiction is that Aggieland is changing anyway, but in seemingly gradual and unplanned ways. In reality, the changes are not so gradual and would be far more successful if managed. But who could manage fairly, and what mandates would new leadership need? Leaders must actively foster diversity and inclusion. Such a position is not politically popular at the moment, but the coaxing of public awareness should be a goal. Architects, via their architecture, have an opportunity and a responsibility to help bring about a more inclusive, less regional environment in which both Prairie View and Texas A&M can be considered world-class institutions. ■

1. Kim Schmidt, "Vandiver Unveils Minority Plan," *The Battalion*, January 20, 1983, and Courtney Walker, "Less Than Half of Accepted Minorities Enroll," *The Battalion*, October 4, 1996. See also "Minorities," vertical file, Texas A&M University Archives, Cushing Library.

2. Lyndsay Nantz, "Campus Disturbance Prompts Meeting," *The Battalion*, January 30, 1998. Robert Smith, "Task Force to Crack Down on Party Guidelines," *The Battalion*, February 2, 1998.

Main Avenue, Bryan.

DOWNTOWN BRYAN

Remaking the Past in Search of the Future

Historic storefronts on Main Avenue, Bryan. The First National Bank (1919) is at the right.

DAVID G. WOODCOCK

Bryan owes its existence to the Houston & Texas Central Railroad, whose surveyor, Theodore Kosse, platted a townsite on land donated by William Joel Bryan in 1859. The rectilinear layout of the town was typical of Kosse's plans for a series of towns on the route north from Houston. In Bryan, though, he elaborated on his usual layout, designing a park site around the proposed railroad station, a courthouse square, and sites for a school and a Methodist church.

Citizens of nearby Boonville, established during the period of the Republic of Texas (1836–45) as Brazos County's first county seat, recognized the importance of the rail connection and bought lots in the new town.[1] In Bryan, as in so much of Texas, history has been driven by a fierce individual entrepreneurial spirit. Businessmen chose building locations not necessarily according to a town plan but where they thought the most money was to be made.[2] Accordingly, the citizenry voted in 1866 to move the county seat from Boonville to Bryan, anticipating the first train, which arrived in August 1867 to a gala celebration.

Early photographs of downtown Bryan show it to be typical of many late-19th-century frontier towns: wide streets lined with single-story wooden structures housing livery stables, general mercantile stores, saloons (reputedly two on every block in Bryan), and Guy M. Bryan's money-lending institution, precursor to the First National Bank. As the new century approached, brick structures began to replace the original wooden buildings, often two-story with fine detailing, cast-iron elements, and sidewalk canopies.

A 1900 photograph shows telegraph lines and street lights suspended along the middle of Main Avenue. A Carnegie library was built in 1903, designed by E. E. Geisecke, an architect and faculty member at the Agricultural & Mechanical College of Texas. Bryanites had successfully lobbied for the new college to be built in Brazos County, promising both money and land. The school, established in 1871, was purposely located a prudent four and one-half miles south of Bryan so the young, all-male students (who first arrived in 1876) would not be tempted by the many opportunities available in the metropolis of Bryan.

Schulman Palace Theater Park, Main Avenue, Bryan, The Mathes Group with David G. Woodcock, architects, 1996. This open-air amphitheater was created from sections of the Palace Theater (1919), which collapsed in 1986.

The first two decades of the 20th century brought a flourishing economy, based on the successful and internationally prized Brazos cotton. New office and bank buildings appeared, as well as St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Temple Freda, and, in 1927, the eight-story La Salle Hotel. Neighborhoods filled with grand houses. In spite of the depressed national economy, the First State Bank and Trust Company constructed an Art Deco building on Main Street, and the City of Bryan completed a similarly styled municipal building for its city offices and fire department.

World War II added to the area's economic strength with the Bryan Air Base, where air crews by the hundreds were trained. Just prior to the beginning of the war, College Station changed from being the name of a post office to that of an incorporated city. Even with the post-war boom in enrollment at the college, there was little concern that Bryan would be overtaken by College Station as the commercial hub of the region.

As late as the early 1960s, downtown Bryan was full of shoppers. Drug stores with soda fountains and lunch counters abounded, and merchandise of all kinds could be selected from lively, competing establishments. The Palace, Queen, and Dixie theaters were all in operation, and on weekends downtown was as busy as it was at mid-week. Local residents were served by food stores of all kinds, including the legendary Humpty Dumpty Stoop-no-More Grocery, founded in 1924. Woolworth's modernized Main Street by demolishing several 19th-century buildings in the mid-1960s to make way for its new department store.

However, change was coming. The improved county road system and the post-war economy made the car ubiquitous. Businessmen, as their predecessors in Boonville had done, moved to ensure prosperity, choosing new locations for the convenience of the motor vehicle, not the pedestrian. New generations of the founding families led the charge to places like the Townshire Shopping Center on Texas Avenue, the new highway that linked Bryan and College Station and carried traffic from Houston toward Waco and Dallas. Banks, car dealerships, and stores moved to the wide and wider open spaces, and more and more strip shopping centers followed the growing economy to College Station, which underwent boom growth after 1963, when the Corps of Cadets was declared a voluntary organization and (horror of horrors) women were admitted. Texas A&M changed its name as well as its style and became a university. New residential areas grew up alongside a new east-side country club in Bryan, and the north end of Bryan became more overtly separate socially and economically. In short, the 1960s were not kind to downtown Bryan.

The elegant La Salle Hotel became a nursing home and then was abandoned. Bryan shops changed their clientele or closed altogether. Even though the courthouse (a 1950s CRS-designed replacement for the Second Empire confection of 1892 by Houston architect Eugene T. Heiner) remained in Bryan, along with the city offices and a new public library, it was on the wrong side of the tracks.

When College Station opened the 800,000-square-foot Post Oak Mall in 1982, the university exceeded 25,000 students with attendant growth in housing, entertainment centers, and even more strip shopping areas. By 1985 the fate of old commercial Bryan seemed hopeless. Yet the economic neglect and displacement that changed downtown Bryan also saved the essence of its physical fabric.

The 1976 Bicentennial of the United States reawakened a national interest in history. Government policy began to favor reuse of old buildings, and people grew hungry for the scale and humanity represented by older downtowns. While it may have been merely nostalgia, by the Texas Sesquicentennial in 1986, even Bryan was beginning to feel the change.

Merchants and business people who had remained downtown formed "Downtown Now" to dream up a future for the city. Its new young leaders approached the city for support, and by 1992 "Downtown Now" had segued into the Main Street Project, a program begun by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, with a dynamic director as a part of city government and with state support from the Texas Historical Commission. A quixotic newcomer, Reid Monroe, acquired property and began the process of renewal. He died tragically in a fall from the La Salle Hotel, but not before he had demonstrated that eating establishments, entertainment venues, and selective retail outlets could thrive in the charm of a rediscovered downtown Bryan.

The Bryan Main Street Project encouraged the city government to include the downtown area in its capital improvement plans, resulting in new "historic" street lighting, better utilities, and attention to old roads and sidewalks. The Historic Resources Survey prepared in 1985–86 by Marlene Elizabeth Heck helped place dozens of downtown buildings in the National Register of Historic Places and led to the designation of historic districts, although Bryan rejected zoning several times during this period.[3]

The Main Street Project and Bryan's Community Development Office aimed at the whole community with considerable success. Students, with cars, financial resources, and *esprit de zest*, have found the night life of downtown Bryan to their tastes. How ironic that the very students banished up the road to College Station for their moral protection are bringing about Bryan's rebirth.

The annual arts event, Festifall, attracts performers from all parts of the twin cities. In October, crowds of all ages and all walks of life throng sidewalks, and streets are barricaded for shopping, looking, eating, and listening. The old Palace Theater, whose roof collapsed one Sunday morning in 1986, is now a city-owned open-air theater with free Thursday lunchtime concerts during the spring, summer, and early fall. The Carnegie Library building is being restored and will become a community meeting place, city museum, and genealogy library. Bryan continues to work with developers and owners to provide tax credits, loan programs, and infrastructure support. A paint program supported by local merchants is giving direct assistance in return for compliance with approved color schemes and appropriate signage.[4]

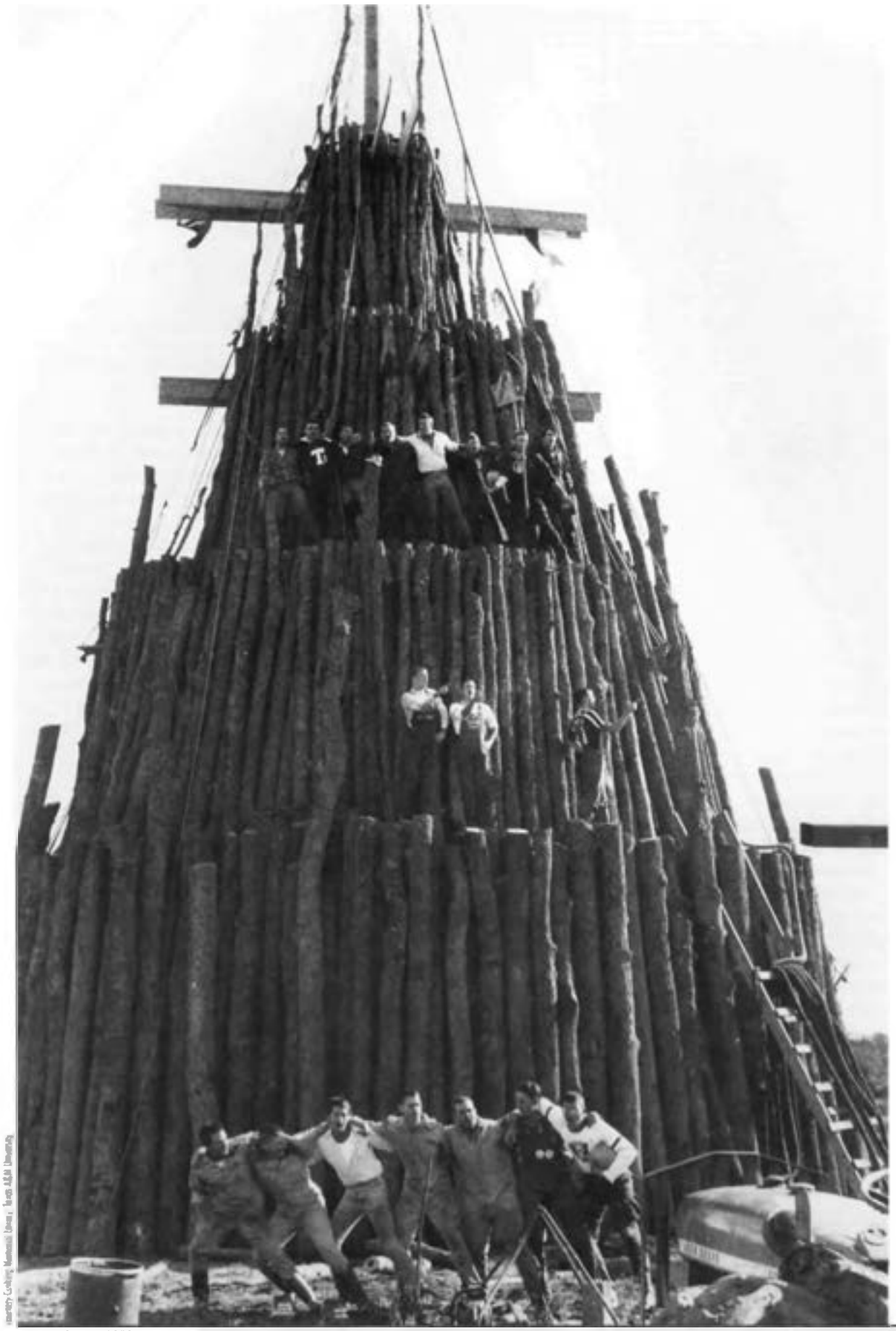
Kay Conlee, a younger member of an old Bryan family, has created a wonderworld of antique shopping in the old Central Texas Hardware Building, a mecca for household goods, farm equipment, and the odd nut and bolt until it fled to a strip mall and perished. Significantly, the La Salle Hotel, opposite the Carnegie Library, is in the initial stages of rehabilitation as a high-end hotel being developed by Houstonian Morgan Hill. A gala opening is planned for October 1998.

The vision for downtown Bryan is, however, incomplete. There remains a gap between the north end of Main Avenue (anchored by the 1912 Ice House and the Corbusier Chevrolet Building, now home to a local theater company) and the 12 blocks of the Downtown Historic District at the south end. Yet, here again, entrepreneurial spirit may prevail. The north end buildings are less dense, and that community is less affluent but thriving. The Downtown Merchants Association is alive and well, making money on the credit lines of Texas A&M students.

A drive for more parking ignores the fact that parking at Post Oak Mall, while extensive, is not adjacent to every storefront. It is activity, not open space for cars, that attracts people. The Bryan City Council sends a mixed message by supporting renewal programs while it is poised to tear down the 1930 Municipal Building, which simply needs time for a new use to emerge. The announced use of the site for parking belittles the value of that building and returns to the short-sighted internal-combustion-engine-asking era of city planning. As the Strand Historic District in Galveston proves, waiting out economic downturns may be profitable in the end. Certainly, the tide is turning for downtown Bryan. The just-opened Bush Library will bring thousands of new visitors to the region. A new and renewed mindset assumes that looking back is as interesting and exciting as looking forward.

I, for one, anticipate visits to downtown Bryan in the year 2000 that will be as exciting as they were during my first forays there in 1962. Its commercial emphasis will have changed, but its fabric will survive. Stewart Brand's recent book, *How Buildings Learn*, addresses the way buildings are inherently conservation-friendly and can easily adapt to new uses.[5] In Bryan the need will continue for leaders who will work to retain the best of the past, while keeping a vision of the future as dynamic and determined as those of the founding fathers of the city. There seems to be plenty of evidence that downtown Bryan will thrive. ■

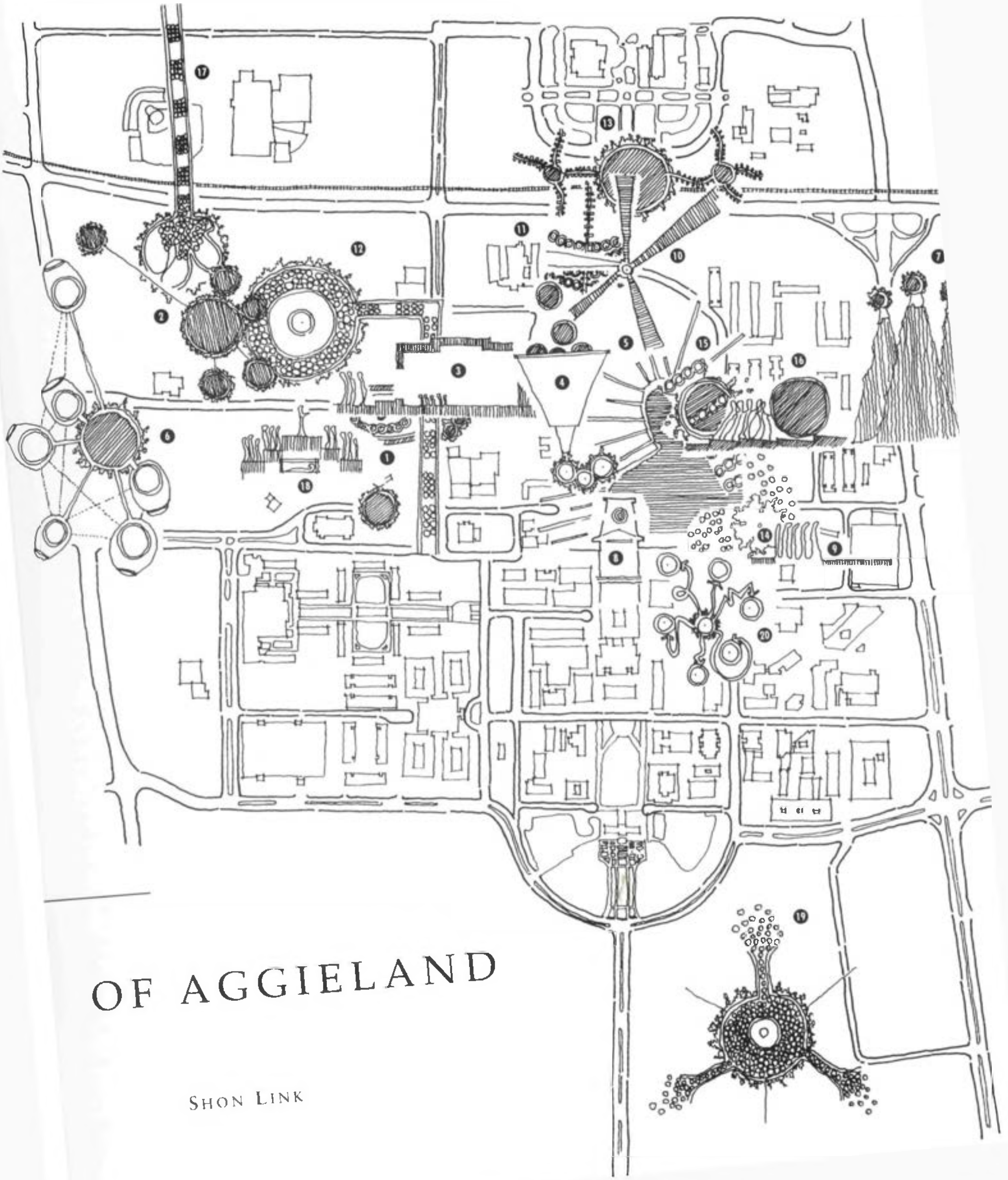
1. Margaret Lips van Bavel, *Birth and Death of Boonville* (Austin: Eakin Publications, 1986).
2. Glenna Foreman Brundidge, ed., *Brazos County History* (Bryan: Family History Foundation, 1986).
3. Hardy, Heck, and Moore, Inc., "Bryan Historic Resource Survey" (Austin, 1986).
4. Tom Nederauer, "Historic Preservation Plan for Bryan" (Dallas, Nederauer and Associates, 1989).
5. Stewart Brand, *How Buildings Learn* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1994).



Aggie Bonfire, ca. 1975.

This drawing is best understood as a cognitive map. Common maps, as society constructs them, select certain physical features of a locale — roads, buildings, streams — and record their spatial relationships in terms of linear distance, capturing a world by miniaturization and reduction. Such maps are suspect because they require selectivity about what gets included and what gets left out. Who decides? The mapped size, shape, and elements of Bryan-College Station are determined, no doubt, by agencies using accepted engineering practices. Such maps, however, ignore the three-dimensional qualitative knowledge by which Aggies guide themselves through their lifeworld. Cultural geographers make a distinction between the abstract knowledge of engineers (space) and the cognitive knowledge of residents (place). Shon Link's cognitive map attempts to represent the knowledge of the Texas A&M campus and College Station that is constructed in the process of becoming an Aggie. Link interviewed Texas A&M undergraduates and alumni and consulted several histories that document the relationship between events and places. The result is a map of shared experience. *Steven A. Moore*

THE SACRED PATHS AND PLACES

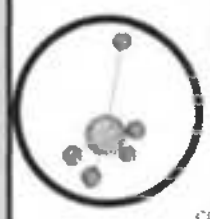


OF AGGIELAND

SHON LINK

1 All U Night: Freshmen at Texas A&M are called Fish. During the summer before their first year, Fish go to **Fish Camp** to meet each other and learn lore and yells. Fish Camp is held not on campus but at various Texas campsites and ranches. At the beginning of the fall semester, Fish assemble in the G. Rollie White Coliseum for All U Night. The football team is introduced, and yells are rehearsed. This is the on-campus introduction to Aggie tradition for freshmen, who arrive at the event as individuals and depart as members of the Texas Aggie Twelfth Man.

2 Kyle Field: Much of the Aggie experience is linked to Kyle Field, where A&M football games are played. For Aggies the game itself is far less important than the spirit, dedication, and tradition of the **Twelfth Man.** On January 2, 1922, during a Texas A&M football game, the Aggies suffered a series of injuries that left their ability to field a complete team in question. Aggie coach D. X. Bible remembered that he had one player in the stands. Coach Bible walked over and summoned E. King Gill to the sidelines. Gill never hesitated; he suited up and stood ready to play. This point in Aggie history defined the Aggie student body as the Twelfth Man. To this day, a member of the student body suits up wearing jersey number 12 and participates as a member of the Aggie kickoff coverage unit. More significantly, the student body stands throughout the football game, displaying the loyalty, respect, and readiness to support the team that E. King Gill did over 75 years ago.



The collective Twelfth Man does not cheer. Instead, Aggie alumni and friends yell according to scripted hand signals from the **Yell Leaders** (elsewhere called cheerleaders). Some yells require the Twelfth Man to **Hump It** (placing your hands on your knees, squatting, and vocalizing an Aggie yell). But nothing compares to the **Texas Aggie Fight Song.** At the crescendo of the song, Aggies join arms over shoulders and sway left-to-right while singing "Saw Varsity's Horns Off!"

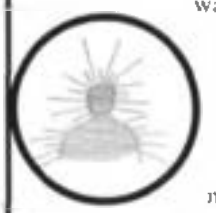
The night before home games, the Twelfth Man assembles at Kyle Field for **Midnight Yell Practice** (elsewhere, a pep rally). The lights at Kyle Field are turned off and, once the yells have been rehearsed, the Yell Leaders relate how the Aggies are going to beat the hell outta the next day's opponent.

The Midnight Yell Practice and Twelfth Man rituals are not confined, however, to Kyle Field. I remember my first Yell Practice; it was in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Aggies were in town to play Louisiana State University, and thousands of Aggies had assembled on the steps of the Louisiana State Capitol for Midnight Yell Practice. My stepfather, an Aggie, took me. At the time, I found a lot of humor in the body language and verbiage of the yells, but I was awed when we all locked arms and sang the Texas Aggie Fight Song. Even a child could recognize the collective spirit as extraordinary. Kyle Field is an associative mechanism that reminds Aggies of their A&M experiences. The steps of the Louisiana State Capitol hold an equal place in my memory. But few people in Baton Rouge accept their capital as a piece of Aggieland.

3 Memorial Student Center (MSC): Aggies are aware and respectful of the significant contribution that fellow Aggies have provided in serving this country. The Memorial Student Center was dedicated to the 918 Aggies who died in World War II. The MSC also houses a plaque honoring 104 Aggies who stood in defense of Bataan and Corregidor (December 8, 1941 to May 6, 1942). Now the MSC stands for all Aggie veterans. For Aggies, entering the MSC is like entering a sacred domain. Certain behaviors are enforced there as a matter of respect: no hats are worn, and the surrounding lawn is off limits. If either of these codes is broken, there is always someone around to correct the inappropriate behavior. The MSC remains a poignant symbol of the war experience and sacrifices of fellow Aggies.

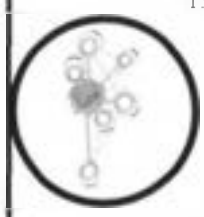
4 Final Review: Simpson Drill Field, the original football field, has become significant as the site of the Corps of Cadets Final Review. On the day of Final Review, just before graduation in the late spring, the Corps has two parades. The first includes all Corps members. During the second parade, the junior Corps of Cadets members ceremoniously take the place of the senior members. The Final Review is an emotional ritual, where the seniors bid farewell to the Corps and to Texas A&M.

5 Polishing Sully: The tenure of Sul Ross, former governor of Texas, as president of the university from 1891 to 1898 was a particularly significant time in the history of Texas A&M. Ross brought credibility and respectability to the university and successfully strengthened Texas A&M's position as a state university. A statue of "Sully" stands on the west side of the Academic Building. In 1933 two freshman cadets were ordered by upperclassmen to polish the statue with rags and brass cleaner. To this day, Corps underclassmen symbolically pay homage to "Sully" by polishing his statue.



6 The Aggie Ring: The Clayton Williams Alumni Center is where Aggies go to pick up their college rings. The Aggie Ring is an icon that reminds the wearer of personal and collective experiences at Texas A&M. The Aggie Ring is also a sign that allows Aggies to identify each other outside Aggieland.

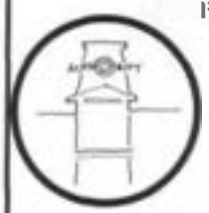
Individual parts of the ring provide distinct symbolic meanings. The shield on top represents the desire to uphold the reputation of the university. The 13 stripes represent the 13 original states and the intense patriotism of Aggies. The five stars in the shield refer to the five phases of student development: mind, body, spirit, emotional poise, and integrity. The eagle represents power and the ability to reach great heights. On the side of the ring, the seal of Texas shows loyalty to the state. The live oak represents the strength to fight. The star surrounded by olive leaves signifies a desire for peace. The crossed flags again represent allegiance to nation and state. The cannon, saber, and rifle signify a ready willingness to defend.



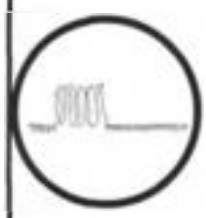
The traditional celebration of achieving an Aggie Ring occurs at **Ring Dance.** When one receives his or her Aggie Ring as a junior, it is placed on the finger with the class number facing the wearer. After graduation, the ring is turned so that the number faces outward, symbolizing the readiness of the graduate to face the world.

7 Ring Dunking: The Chicken and Duddley's are both bars in the Northgate Shopping Center. Some say more beer is consumed in The Chicken than in any bar in the world. Aggies go to these places to play dominoes (Aggies love dominoes) and to perform the Ring Dunking ritual. Once an Aggie has earned an Aggie Ring, it is traditional to place the ring in the bottom of a pitcher of beer and then consume the beer at a rapid pace — or Ring Dunk.

8 Prexy's Moon: Prexy is the nickname given to the president of the university, and Prexy's Moon is the light on the dome of the Academic Building. In a discontinued but not forgotten tradition, cadets used to regularly shoot out Prexy's Moon with their Corps rifles.



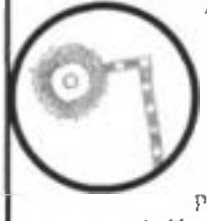
9 Silver Taps: The ceremony honoring deceased Aggies. On the first Tuesday of each month the names of those to be remembered at Silver Taps are placed at the base of the flagpole in front of the Academic Building. At 10 p.m. students gather at the flagpole with friends and relatives of those who have died recently. All lights are out, and the carillon in the Albritton Bell Tower plays. The Ross Firing Squad delivers three volleys, then buglers play *Silver Taps* from the dome of the Academic Building. All present leave silently as the firing squad marches in and gives a 21-gun salute, and *Silver Taps* is played once more.



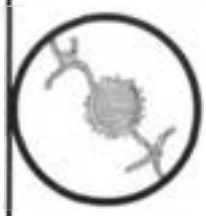
10 Albritton Chimes: Albritton Bell Tower marks the west gate entrance to the campus. The tower houses a 49-bell carillon. The bells ring distinct tunes for significant Aggie events such as Silver Taps, Commissioning, Military Review, and Graduation. All Aggies within earshot of the bell tower can identify the occasion by the melody of the chimes.

11 The Grove: The Grove is the outdoor theater brilliantly placed across from the railroad tracks. Performances are traditionally interrupted by Aggies shouting "Whoop!" as trains pass.

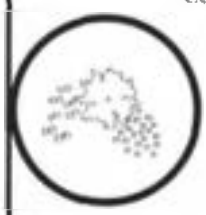
12 March In: This ceremonial parade, consisting of the Corps of Cadets and the Fightin' Texas Aggie Marching Band, begins at the Quad and ends at Kyle Field. March In precedes all home football games. The band, called "The Pulse of Aggieland," is a precision military marching band that Aggies claim has never been out-performed during a half-time show. Rice University's Marching Owl Band (The MOB) was once held at swordpoint by cadets for performing a satire of the Aggie Band at half-time in Houston. Wherever the Aggie Band plays, that location becomes Aggieland.



13 Train Rides: The railroad station originally labeled "College" was the stop on the primary source of transportation to and from the university in the early years. The experience of riding a train with hundreds of other Aggies must have been interesting. According to Amtrak, the last train stopped in College Station in November 1996.



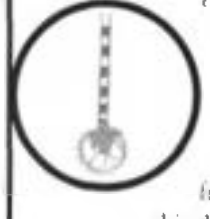
14 The Wedding Tree: The Wedding Tree, or Century Tree, is a giant, sprawling live oak near the Academic Building. It is Aggie tradition to propose marriage beneath the canopy of the Wedding Tree.



15 Fish Pond: Fish Pond is located across from Sbisa Dining Hall. After Aggie football victories, freshmen in the Corps of Cadets capture the Yell Leaders from the field, haul them over to the Fish Pond, and toss them in. It is also tradition for seniors to march through the Fish Pond during Elephant Walk (see below).

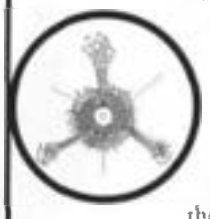
16 Yell Practice at the Y: After the Fish Pond dunking, the soaked Aggie Yell Leaders and their entourage hold a post-game Yell Practice on the steps of the YMCA Building.

17 March to the Brazos: A while back it was believed that a couple of Corps members were responsible for several explosions on campus. Corps superiors conducted an inquiry, but no one would admit responsibility. The suspected unit was ordered to march from campus towards the Brazos River until someone confessed. No one confessed, and to this day cadets annually march all the way to the Brazos River.

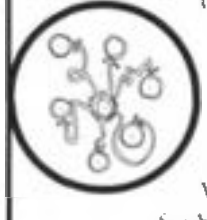


18 Muster: Every April 21 (the anniversary of Sam Houston's victory at San Jacinto over Santa Anna), Aggies, wherever they may be, gather to honor their fellows who have died during the past year. Muster begins with a roll call for the absent, during which a friend or family member answers "Here" when the name of their deceased Aggie is called. This signifies that the Aggie spirit endures, even after death. Candles are lit for each of the honored dead, and on campus, a firing squad gives a 21-gun salute, and buglers play *Silver Taps* three times.

19 Bonfire: Members of the student body spend three months building the Bonfire. The original fire stack was a relatively short pile of haphazardly assembled wood, but today Aggie students rise at dawn to cut logs of precise measurements. After the logs have been transported to the Bonfire field, students gather for the ceremonial raising of the Center Pole. Then they work around the clock carefully aligning and stacking logs as high as 60 feet off the ground. The Bonfire is finally prepared for the evening prior to the t. u. (University of Texas) football game. The ceremony begins as students march in behind the band. Around 60,000 Aggies assemble annually for Bonfire. Senior football players are introduced, the head coach makes a speech, and then the Yell Leaders conduct a Yell Practice. Finally, to the dramatic pulse of a drum brigade, select cadets march in with torches and circle the Bonfire stack. The cadets, evenly spaced around the stack, hurl their flaming torches onto fuel-soaked logs. The Yell Leaders and the crowd, yelling all the while, remain assembled until the center pole falls. Bonfire symbolizes a love of the university and a "burning desire" to defeat t. u.



20 Elephant Walk: A ritual performed by Aggie seniors during the week before the t. u. football game. After gathering in front of the flagpole on Military Walk, they wander around campus without direction, like elephants on the verge of death. During Elephant Walk the marchers go through the Fish Pond, down Military Walk, and eventually to Kyle Field for Yell Practice. This ritual recognizes the termination of the seniors as part of the Twelfth Man. ■



Polishing Sully.

The Twelfth Man.

Ring Dance, ca. 1960.

Ring Dance, ca. 1980.

There was a time, a long, long time ago, when there was little to be proud of at Texas A&M. When Texas's first venture into higher education began (a mere 15 years after President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Morrill Land Grant College Act of 1863), the first cadets enrolled into a college with only one building, no kitchen at all, primitive outhouses, and a remarkably undistinguished and tiny faculty. The school was equidistant from the three most populous centers in late-19th-century Texas (Galveston-Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio), a political decision guaranteed to make A&M forever feel like it was located in the middle of exactly nowhere.

In time, our time, Texas A&M would distinguish itself among modern American universities as a leader in research, as one of the top ten universities in number of National Merit Scholars, and also in the size of its endowment. It has provided its country with more than 200 individuals who achieved the rank of general or admiral, and now with more than 43,000 students, it is the seventh largest university in the United States. How it got from there to here is a story worth knowing.

Texas A&M began in the 1870s, the same decade that saw the start of the great Texas cattle drives, when trail-driving cowboys guided vast herds to market by way of the railheads in Kansas. They quickly captured the imagination of the entire country, and the cadets of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas profited immensely by the coincidence. Two great Texas myths began together.

From the beginning there was the Corps of Cadets, who wore uniforms and marched everywhere. But the Corps in itself was not enough to build a legendary university. For that, A&M needed a hero, and Lawrence Sullivan "Sul" Ross, more than anyone, fulfilled that role. He shaped the myth of Aggieland during his tenure as president.

Sul Ross came of age in Waco at the dawn of the Civil War, becoming one of the youngest brigadier generals in the Confederacy, and immediately thereafter he served as a second-generation Texas Ranger. From 1887 to 1891 Ross was an immensely popular governor of Texas, the only war-hero governor Texans had enjoyed since Sam Houston. The respect with which he was held was legendary.

Sul Ross accepted the presidency of the college immediately after his governorship, a decision that in itself signaled the emerging importance of Texas A&M. Fathers at the time spoke of sending their sons not to college but to Sul Ross. His seven-year tenure, which ended with his death in 1898, was as distinguished as he was. Texas had to take A&M seriously because Sul Ross did, and under his leadership the university grew and prospered as never before.

After Sul Ross, tradition at A&M continued to be molded by the Corps of Cadets, which became a single fraternity, encompassing all student life at the college. Its colorful traditions developed early in the 20th century: the large military-style precision Aggie Band; the Silver Taps ceremony in memory of students who died while enrolled; the Aggie Muster on April 21, when Aggies gather together, wherever they may be to remember their deceased comrades; Final Review, when the senior class passes authority to the junior class; the Bonfire, the largest in the world, on the eve of the football game with the University of Texas (t.u. in Aggie parlance); the Twelfth Man tradition, which goes back to a 1922 football game when student E. King Gill answered the half-time call of a desperately worried Aggie coach. Gill volunteered, then suited up for the second half. To this day Aggies at football games do not sit, but remain standing in honor of the Twelfth Man and his readiness to serve the institution.

The cult of Texas A&M was ultimately shaped by two forces: the spirit of the Corps and the Southern military code of honor, personified by Lawrence Sullivan Ross, an ideal model for success. This articulated sprit and code of honor drove a mediocre Southern military college to become one of this country's great universities. *Barry Moore*

THE MYSTIQUE OF AGGIELAND

A VIEW OF TRADITION

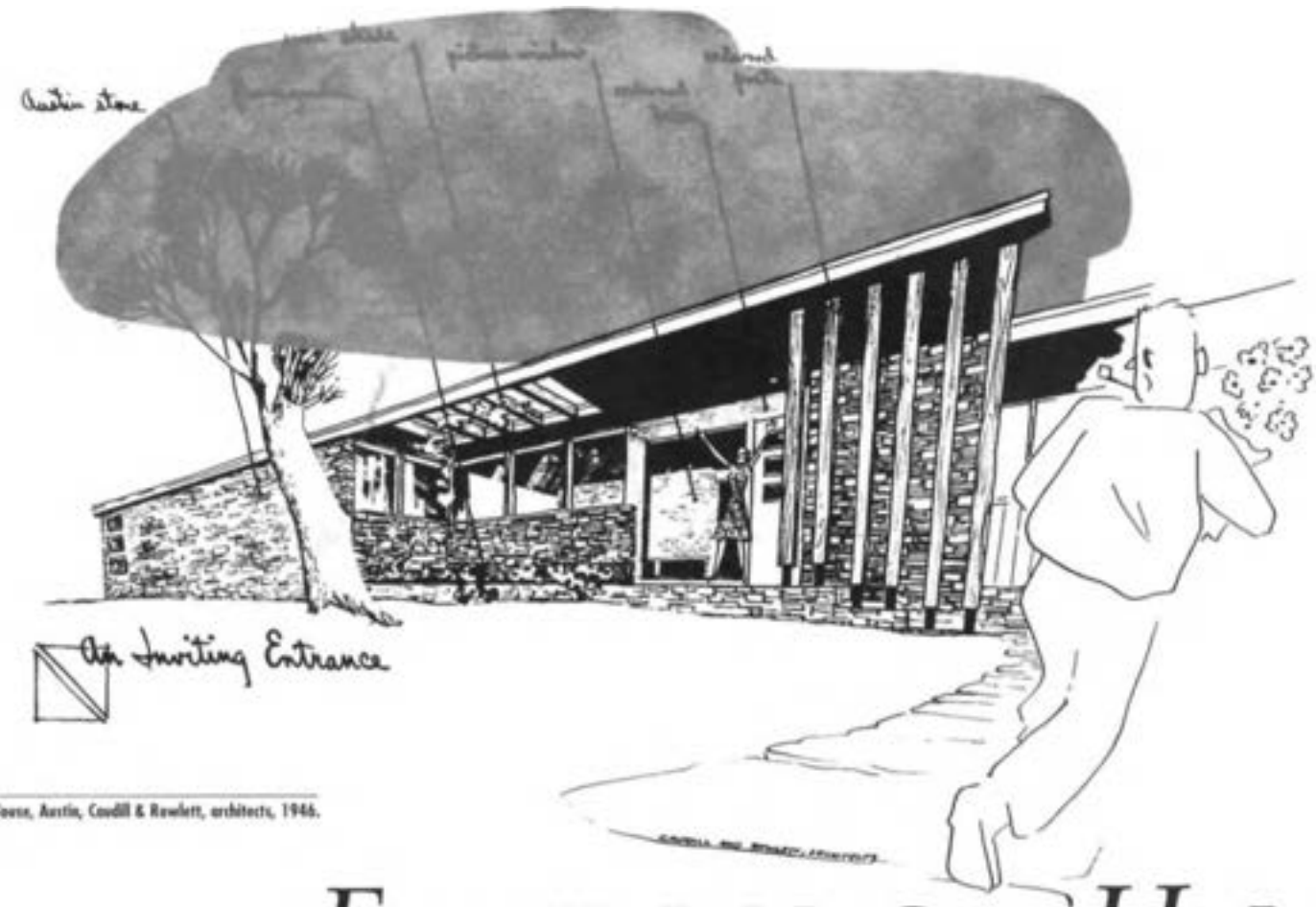
I first arrived in College Station in the spring of 1992 as a prospective graduate student from up north. Sean, an old friend from my undergraduate days who was living in College Station, offered to show me around. After the obligatory campus tour and cruising the north, south, and east gates in an Alamo rental car, I presumptuously said to Sean, "I've seen enough of this commercial strip stuff. Let's go downtown." Sean looked at me like a parent trying to find appropriate words to tell a child that there is no Easter Bunny and said, "Well, this *is* downtown." I exclaimed, "This isn't a town, this is a franchisescape!"

Now, six years later, I have become acculturated to the extent that I have learned enough Aggie lore to form an understanding of the complexities and contradictions between the physical presence of College Station and the intangible cultural construct (mythical image) that is Aggieland. For thousands of undergraduates and former students, Aggieland is the magical setting where the glorious rites of passage afforded by university life are played out. Aggieland should not be confused with new American suburbia, where the best coffee house in town is in a strip mall and has a drive-thru window. But there is an inauthenticity in the disparity between the symbolism of Aggie traditions and the experience afforded by the generic monotony of College Station's self-proliferating sprawl.

Historically, the majority of sacred places and paths of Aggieland have been a manifestation of inculcated doctrine rather than lived experience. Beginning with Fish Camp, undergraduates at Texas A&M have been brainwashed to believe in the superior significance of a plethora of monuments and rituals. While this conditioning has been applied to things such as the statue of Sul Ross, it could just as easily been directed to a rock in the parking lot of a nearby McDonald's. The point is not to belittle Aggie traditions but to illustrate that the mental attitude produced by them is not one of spontaneous, first-hand experience. Through official university rhetoric and corporate marketing practices, Aggieland has become Aggieworld, a kind of collegiate theme park crafted to capture the imaginations of undergraduates in the same way that Disneyland dazzles children with plastic elephants and robotic pirates. This phenomenon is illustrated by recent initiatives of the Old Main Society to create a replica of the original College Station train station, which would neither function as a train station nor occupy the original site.

Instead of creating the opportunity to authentically experience train travel, something that is now practically impossible in Texas, the College Station station would merely symbolize the Aggie rail heritage. This nostalgic disposition ignores the realities of a community that is overrun by automobiles and desperately needs transportation alternatives. It also treats local heritage, such as rail transportation, as a series of static vignettes instead of understanding that history as part of a dynamic process. Why not create a new rail network and station that is fast, efficient, and grounded in the contemporary, high-tech, research-driven processes of Texas A&M?

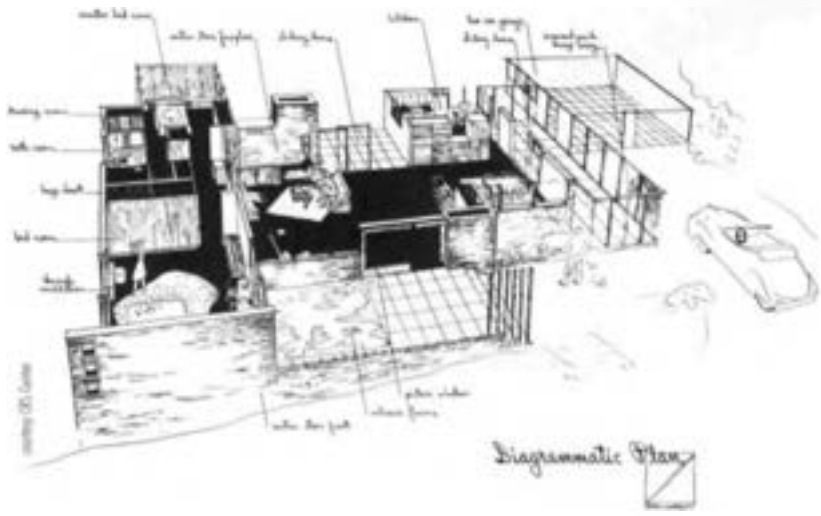
Both the citizens of College Station and the student body of Texas A&M are becoming more heterogeneous, and the days of the infamous two-per-center (slackers who give only 2 percent as opposed to real Aggies, who give 110 percent) are long gone. Thus, this budding urban center can no longer rely exclusively on the symbolism of Aggieworld to define its identity as we enter the third millennium. In order to become vital, the physical character of College Station as well as the rituals and traditions of Aggieland must be adapted to the challenges posed by this new era. Citizens of College Station need to be prompted to question the validity of a franchise-dominated landscape, and the Texas A&M student body needs to be educated to respect the university's heritage, while being encouraged to express the spirit of its time. *Timothy J. Cassidy*



Fred Fenton House, Austin, Coudill & Rowlett, architects, 1946.

FLYING HIGH

JAY BAKER AND BARRIE SCARDINO



Fenton House. The drawings Caudill & Rowlett produced in the 1940s had a graphic simplicity intended to make modern architecture more accessible.

In 1946, when William W. Caudill and John M. Rowlett returned to Texas from overseas duty in World War II, they pooled their mustering-out pay to form an architectural partnership. With the flip of a coin, the two decided whose name would come first. Bill Caudill won. And so was set the first name of the company that, as Caudill Rowlett Scott (CRS), would one day grow into the world's largest architectural firm.

Though CRS eventually settled in Houston, it was in Bryan-College Station that it took its first steps toward becoming a self-propelled machine devoted to client service, change, and growth. The home of Texas A&M offered CRS an incubator in which a 12-year period of invention and experimentation could occur. Such CRS legacies as architectural programming, squatters, diversification, and architecture by team began to develop in College Station. The young architects forged a convergence of modern and rural sensibilities, developed both individual and team capabilities, and produced ambitious designs using hard-nosed business practices. From the start and throughout its history, CRS investigated the limits of professional practice.

Bill Caudill received his B.Arch. from Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University) in Stillwater in 1937 and his M.Arch. from MIT in 1939. He began teaching at Texas A&M before entering the Naval Reserves in 1943. On his return to Texas in 1946, he resumed his teaching position in College Station. John Rowlett, who had taught with Caudill at A&M before the war, received his B.Arch. from the University of Texas in 1938. He moved to Austin in 1946 to live near his family and teach part-time at the University of Texas. The firm of Caudill & Rowlett used Rowlett's sister's Austin address until it obtained a post office box and, finally, an office at 1401 1/2 Lavaca Street in Austin.

Caudill & Rowlett's initial success was due in part to the optimism and expansion that followed World War II. Yet, more to the point, the two partners, having grown up during the Great Depression, equated hard work, energy, and self-reliance with survival, growth, and success. Years later, Caudill said, "In the beginning our motto was simple: to produce good architecture, to make some money, and to have some fun doing it."[1]

As they began their practice together, albeit in separate cities, the two men shared an interest in school architecture. Caudill's thesis at MIT had been a long-range plan for schools in Stillwater, Oklahoma. At Texas A&M he had assigned schools as research projects to his students, focusing on such issues as lighting, ventilation, and circulation. In so doing, Caudill discovered the poor condition of schools in Texas. His research culminated

William W. Caudill House, 2313 Truman Street, Bryan, Caudill & Rowlett, architects, 1946.

a n d FAST

The Genesis of CRS

in his first book, *Space for Teaching*.[2]

Caudill's interest in school architecture was complemented by Rowlett's double major in education and architecture. Without ever having designed a school, the pair garnered a reputation as innovators in school design. And even though they promoted their firm on the basis of producing schools, their first commissions were primarily residential.[3]

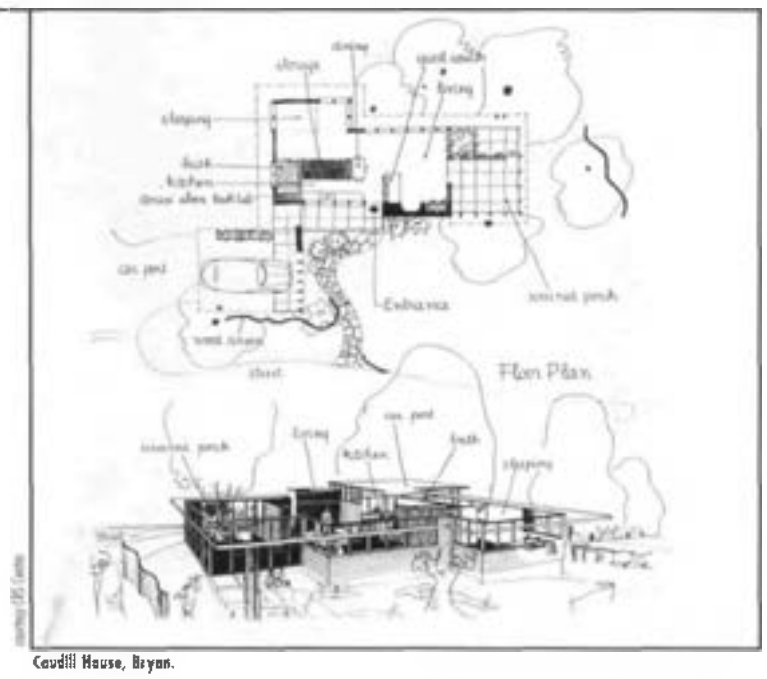
The work executed by Caudill & Rowlett during its Bryan-College Station period is decidedly modern and consistently rooted in the specifics of site and climate. At times the work also displays a rustic, rugged materiality. Despite a devotion to modernism, the firm's commitment to client service and architectural problem-solving formed the philosophical core of Caudill & Rowlett's practice. As Caudill responded to one complaint: "I told them that it would improve the air flow pattern and, if there was no water problem, to leave the windows installed upside down."[4]

Their first commission was a small house for Fred Fenton at the corner of Raleigh and Gilbert in Austin. This resulted from a chance meeting between Caudill and Fenton, a woodworker by trade. Rowlett followed up on the contact and wrote back to College Station regarding the firm's initial job. "We are laying a firm foundation that will pay off dividends in the future. I think a few houses to tie us over might be the answer to our problems."[5] From College Station Caudill sent plans and sketches to his partner, who supervised the construction.

The Fenton House, completed in late 1946, is a collage of opaque and transparent volumes, layered to separate living and sleeping areas. Abstract principles of modern design, including a flat roof and full-height windows, are evident. The Fenton House displays Caudill's knowledge of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian houses, but the house more closely resembles the small-scale residential work of Richard Neutra and Marcel Breuer in the 1940s.

During construction of the Fenton House, Bill Caudill built a house for his family at 2313 Truman Street in the Lakeview Addition of Bryan. This became Caudill & Rowlett's first project to be published in a national architectural journal.[6] Caudill, who called himself the "Public Relations Department," continually sent out letters urging publication of Caudill & Rowlett's work. Through the firm's many transformations, Caudill's preoccupation with publication, exhibition, and communication remained intense. He managed to get drawings of what were then Caudill & Rowlett's only projects, the unfinished Fenton and Caudill houses, included in an exhibition on contemporary architecture at the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts in October 1946.[7]

In early 1947, John Rowlett moved his



Caudill House, Bryan.

Philip G. Murdoch House, 748 South Rosemary, Bryan, Caudill Rowlett Scott & Associates, 1948–50.

Murdoch House interior with suspended stair and exterior view.

Fred Weick House, 1115 Langford, Bryan, Caudill Rowlett Scott & Associates, architects, 1948–50.

family and the firm's address to College Station. Caudill & Rowlett's first real architectural office was located above the Southside Food Market, which still stands across from Texas A&M at 340 George Bush Drive.

Domestic commissions continued to dominate the practice during 1947 and 1948, which gave Caudill & Rowlett an opportunity to refine their architectural ideas. With a house for A&M professor Philip G. Murdoch (1948–49) on South (now North) Rosemary in Bryan, Caudill & Rowlett attempted a more complicated composition. Oriented for view and breeze, the Murdoch House used vertical circulation as the hinge between public and private spaces. A transparent riserless stair, suspended over an interior planter next to a full-height glass wall, blurs the line between house and garden.

Also in 1948, Caudill & Rowlett designed a house at 1115 Langford in College Station for Fred Weick, an aeronautical engineer and pilot.[8] The Weick House is clad in stone and vertical board-and-batten and features a shallow-pitched gable roof. A description of the project by Caudill indicated his awareness of current trends: "The bi-nuclear plan is from Breuer, the structure from Drake, and the sliding walls from Neutra."[9] The use of stone from an old corral was described as "regional, not primitive," and the insertion of glass between beams resting on load-bearing stone walls was intended to look "discovered . . . not designed."[10]

The Weick House was the first of what would become the most characteristic type of modern house built in College Station and Bryan during the 1950s. C. Gale Cook, an A&M architecture student who worked for Caudill & Rowlett in 1948, described the glazed gable inserted above a planar wall and beneath the rake of a shallow, pitched roof as Wrightian, but Caudill & Rowlett's treatment of this formal pattern was, like Breuer's and Neutra's, consistently crisp, lightweight, and tectonic.[11]

In 1953, Caudill designed a new house for his family in the College Station neighborhood known as The Knoll, which had been laid out with Caudill's help in 1947. A number of houses designed either by CRS or by firm members for their own families were built on The Knoll, which was intended as a modern enclave. Some streets on The Knoll were named for A&M architects and engineers.[12]

Caudill's second house is the outstanding architectural accomplishment on The Knoll, and it was probably the best small-scale work produced by the firm in Bryan and College Station. This Caudill House is one large volume with living spaces divided by movable storage cabinets. The shallow-pitched gable roof is supported by a steel structure independent of its brick perimeter walls. Extensions into the landscape — a carport with brick garden walls, a brick-paved patio, and a wooden wall leading to a small brick studio-guest house — provide a counterpoint to the main volume of the house.

Other architect-designed houses built on The Knoll include the Frank Lawyer House (1955) at 1214 Orr Street, designed by Lawyer, who became one of CRS's most highly regarded designers. Dave Yarbrough, a production drawing specialist at CRS, built his house at 1213 Winding Road about 1958. The Yarbrough House was the only one of these houses designed for air conditioning. Theo K. Holleman and Ben H. Evans, two A&M architecture faculty members who worked on occasion for CRS, also built their houses on The Knoll. Most of The Knoll houses have suffered unsympathetic modifications.

While located in Bryan and College Station, CRS designed fewer than 20 houses there, but by 1955 the firm had designed almost 100 in other Texas and Oklahoma cities.[13] This client pattern was even more dramatic in terms of school commissions CRS received. Of more than 100 schools the firm completed from their Bryan-College Station offices, only the A&M Consolidated High School in College Station was a local project. After CRS moved to Houston in 1958, it grew rapidly, eventually receiving commissions all over the world, but as in Bryan-College Station, the firm was not busy at home. CRS partners sought a few large projects rather than many small ones. Consequently, the firm's promoters traveled in search of larger and larger commissions, both in terms of dollars and square footage.

CRS grew in this way because of another early decision. Bill Caudill and John Rowlett were not afraid to continually expand their staff, hiring young architects as soon as they could find a place for them to sit. They brought good assistants into the partnership and fostered a productive, democratic atmosphere in their practice, which eventually led to a policy of specialization and architecture by team. Recalling the beginnings of CRS, William M. Peña said, "None of us were geniuses, but we could have a

team of specialists, . . . [and by] pooling our talents together, we might be a genius."[14]

The first employees of Caudill & Rowlett were Jo Hans and John Zemanek, recent architecture graduates who worked for Rowlett in the Austin office, and Gordon McCutchan, an A&M graduate and architecture instructor who worked for Caudill in College Station.[15] McCutchan became a junior partner in 1946 for an investment of $250, then left to pursue an academic career at Texas Tech. Wallie E. Scott, Jr., became the third partner in 1948, and the firm name was changed to Caudill, Rowlett & Scott.[16]

In 1950, Willie Peña became the fourth partner, but he insisted that the firm's name expand no further. Ultimately, eight men, all of whom joined the firm during the 12-year Bryan-College Station days, would be known as the founders of CRS.

Al Martin, a structural engineer, became the next partner, but he left in 1955. Thomas A. Bullock, who began working for CRS part-time in 1948, was brought in as a partner in 1954. Bullock worked in the office in Oklahoma City that Rowlett opened in 1950 and eventually became the firm's managing partner. Al Martin was replaced by Ed Nye, another engineer and a longtime friend of Caudill's who graduated three years ahead of Caudill from Oklahoma A&M. Of the Bryan-College Station period at CRS, Tom Bullock said: "We heard about our new partner [Nye] by a phone call from Bill Caudill. We flew pretty high and fast in those days."[17]

Charles E. Lawrence, a particularly gifted designer, became the seventh partner, and C. Herbert Paseur, the last founding partner of CRS, began working for John Rowlett and Tom Bullock in Oklahoma City in 1955.

Many young architects who worked for CRS in College Station or Bryan went on to other local firms. Most well-known members of the Bryan-College Station architectural community from the 1950s, to the 1970s had some tie to CRS.[18]

As Caudill & Rowlett became successful, it also became the target of Bryan architects who saw competition from A&M faculty members as out of line. Caudill wrote Rowlett: "Yesterday the Dean of Engineering received a letter from the Dean of the College saying the Bryan architects had been complaining about Mr. Caudill's activities. . . . I think I am in the clear as the Board gave me permission to practice architecture, so I am calling their bluff and bringing this thing to a head once and for all. . . . The College is sending a reply to whoever wrote the letter to cite specific cases, dates, etc. so that we can really argue it out."[19] A complaint was also filed with the American Institute of Architects asserting that the firm got jobs by cutting fees and using student labor.[20] The firm did use paid students, but it did not cut its fees. Caudill sent Rowlett a suggested list of fees, saying, "Check them to see how they compare with architects in Austin. Let's not underbid anyone."[21]

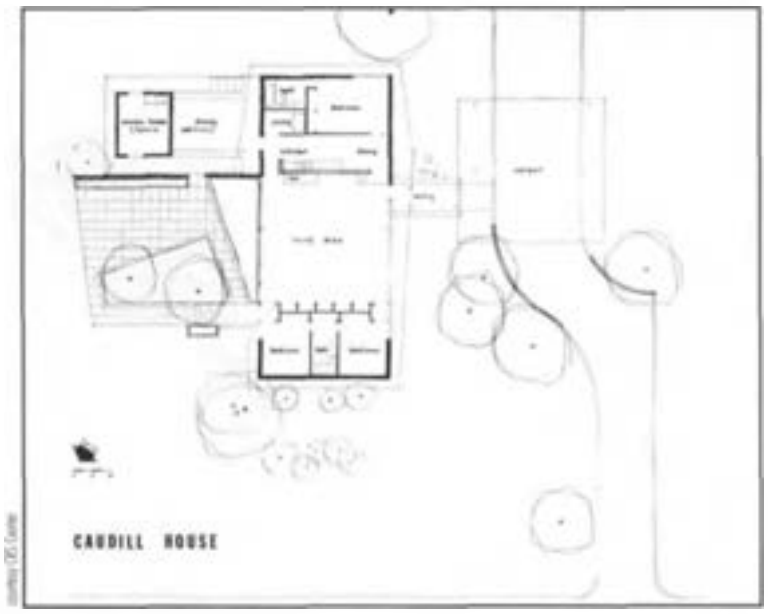
Caudill fought these issues because he was committed to practice and teaching. The complaints soon simmered down, sealing the relationship between teaching and practice not just for Caudill, but also for others who both practiced architecture and taught. Some 20 years later, as both director of the Rice University School of Architecture and leader of CRS, he would say, "I run my school like a firm, and my firm like a school."[22]

The relationship between CRS and Texas A&M's architecture school was strongly rooted. Of 26 early CRS employees who have been identified, eleven taught at A&M.[23] Caudill, a full professor, taught through 1949; Rowlett began teaching at A&M as an associate professor in 1948 and was promoted to professor the following year. Others who taught for a time were Tom Bullock, Frank Lawyer, James Lemmon, Ben Evans, Gordon McCutchan, Harry S. Ransom, Edward J. Romieniec, Theo R. Holleman, and Melton Harper.

CRS also had a policy, unusual at the time, of associating with local architects on out-of-town projects. This facilitated its access to the then lucrative school business, giving the firm a chance to execute some of the principles established in *Space for Teaching*, which questioned the rigid guidelines of the federal School Building Law of 1913 and showed what might be possible if progressive school architecture responded to progressive education. Caudill theorized that natural light, movable furniture, outdoor circulation, ventilation, and soundproofing were anchors around which flexible, low-cost schools could be produced.

In 1949, CRS received a commission for two elementary schools in Blackwell, Oklahoma. Similar in design, they were based on an inversion of a student project by Willie Peña. The Blackwell projects — Huston Elementary and Washington Elementary — provided tangible evidence of CRS's commitment to a new approach to

William W. Caudill House, 1206 Orr Street, College Station, Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates, 1953.



Left to right: Bill Caudill, John Rowlett, Wallie Scott, and Willie Peña, the first four partners of CRS, in their Bryan office, ca. 1954.

John Stuckert, photographer; courtesy CRS Center

Washington Elementary School, Blackwell, Oklahoma, CRS, architects, 1949–50.

Ulrich Meyer, photographer; courtesy CRS Center

Albany Elementary School, Albany, Texas, CRS, architects, ca. 1951.

courtesy CRS Center

A&M Consolidated High School, College Station, CRS, architects, 1952–54; partially demolished 1993. The domed auditorium at the right is extant.

What began as a coin toss

school architecture. They comprised 75 percent of the firm's fees in 1949. The success of these schools, which opened to an enthusiastic reception in April 1950, brought CRS an expanding list of school commissions.[24]

But not until 1952 was CRS offered an opportunity to produce a school at home. The most striking feature of the A&M Consolidated High School in College Station was a 600-seat mushroom-domed auditorium, the only component of the school still standing. The auditorium is supported by laminated timber buttresses spaced at regular intervals around a cylindrical base.[25]

In 1953 CRS received a particularly significant commission to design the Brazos County Courthouse and Jail in downtown Bryan. Altered in the 1980s, the complex originally consisted of a four-story block that housed jail, jury rooms, civil defense offices, and courtrooms. The building's program was visually diminished by breaking the structure into components and by raising part of the building on concrete piers. In 1957, *Architectural Record* recognized the CRS courthouse as a constructive change in the character of county courthouse designs: "Unfortunately, one is seldom able to visualize the typical county building — most likely 50 to 100 years old — as either attractive or convenient. The spaces behind its usually pompous façade are often ill-planned, poorly lighted, and depressing for the public and employees alike. Thus, when a new county building does provide a generous measure of both amenity and good looks, it assumes unusual significance. The Brazos County building so qualifies."[26] The interiors, furnished by Knoll Associates, were streamlined examples of modernism. As a result of this notable commission and its fast-growing school business, in 1954 CRS moved its offices from College Station to a considerably larger space on the edge of downtown Bryan at 425 South Main Street.

By 1958 CRS had 50 employees working in Bryan and Oklahoma City. Most of the partners had pilot's licenses, and the firm owned five airplanes. Realizing that CRS worked on a regional scale instead of relying on local opportunities, managing partner Tom Bullock and accountant John Stambaugh researched other Texas locations that might more adequately ensure stability and growth. Different partners preferred Austin, Dallas, San Antonio, or Houston. But Stambaugh, Caudill's childhood friend and lifelong financial adviser, stressed the need for a dynamic city with travel connections. (Stambaugh was wary of having busy CRS architects flying their own planes around the country.) Bullock enlisted planners to produce statistics on banking, competing firms, client base, and projected growth; Houston was the clear choice. Bullock took the proposal to Caudill and convinced him to agree.

Still, despite the move, CRS never really left Bryan-College Station. It continued its contributions to the development of the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University, established the CRS Center for Architectural Research at A&M in 1993, and, most recently, designed the George Bush Presidential Library.[27]

CRS brought post-war modernism to Bryan-College Station and fostered new ideas there both by building and by teaching. The firm's expansion into a regional and ultimately an international practice should not eclipse the legacy its partners left as teachers to the students of Texas A&M and mentors to the many young architects who worked for a time in the College Station and Bryan offices. It was in Bryan-College Station that CRS established its strongest and most lasting value: a conscious belief in the interdependence of the *idea* of designing and the *action* of building architecture. ■

BECAME A SELF-PROPELLED MACHINE

DEVOTED TO CLIENT SERVICE, CHANGE, AND GROWTH.

1. *CRSS Stories: Motion in Only One Direction — Forward.* Houston: CRSS, 1992.

2. William Wayne Caudill, *Space for Teaching* in *The Bulletin of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas*, 4th series, vol. 12, no. 9 (August 1, 1941). College Station: Texas Engineering Experiment Station series no. 59, 1941. *Space for Teaching* was positively reviewed in such magazines as *Architectural Forum* (May 1942) and the *RIBA Journal* (December 1942).

3. The partners took any work they could get, which, in the first year, consisted of houses, a chapter room for SAE (Caudill's fraternity) at OSU in Stillwater, and a small Methodist church in Taylor, Texas. In addition to the Caudill and Fenton houses, 1946 correspondence mentions the Walter Britten House (1946–47, 2310 South College Avenue,Bryan); the Walter Griffen House (1946, on South College Avenue, Bryan near the Caudill House); the Dr. T. O. Walton, Jr., House (1946, in North Oakwood); and the Morris J. Garber House (Bryan). CRS Center, School of Architecture, Texas A&M University.

4. Caudill to all partners, August 7, 1951, regarding Washington School in Stillwater, Oklahoma. CRS Center.

5. Rowlett to Caudill, April 8, 1946. CRS Center.

6. "House in Texas Provides Maximum Living in Two Major Rooms." *Architectural Forum* October 1946, p. 109.

7. Caudill to Rowlett, August 16, 1946. CRS Center.

8. Caudill to Fred Weick, April 17, 1969. Twenty-one years after the construction of this house, Caudill wrote Weick with his customary humor and energy: "You're the only genius I know and I am proud to know you. I must say, however, you were a hell of a client. You wanted that College Station house to fly, too." CRS Center.

9. Caudill, "Weick House – 1948," CRS promotional brochure, n.d. CRS Center.

10. Ibid.

11. C. Gale Cooke interview, May 13, 1997.

12. The South Knoll was laid out in 1954 based on a plan by architecture student Doyle Lowery, according to Frank Lawyer. Dr. I. B. Clark, A&M economics professor and developer of The Knoll and The South Knoll, named streets for Lawyer (Lowery's studio instructor) and Caudill in appreciation.

13. Other Bryan College Station area houses designed by CRS include the Robert L. Puerifory House (1950, 301 E. Brookside Drive, Bryan) and the Carleton G. "Spike" White House (1951, 702 South Thomas Street, College Station). Outside of Bryan-College Station, the firm designed houses in other small Texas and Oklahoma towns including 50 for the Mayfair Construction company and 80 for Warr Built Homes Co. in Oklahoma City (*Architectural Forum*, June 1949, pp. 100–101). CRS designed several plans and options for these spec houses.

14. Jonathan King, "An Oral History of CRS," 1997, manuscript, ch. 10, p. 2.

15. Caudill to Rowlett, May 28, 1946 (Hans); June 30, 1946 (Zemanek); and August 16, 1946 (McCutchan). CRS Center.

16. CRS has been known over the years by various combinations of the founders' names. The first three-name title was Caudill, Rowlett & Scott, then Caudill Rowlett, Scott & Associates, and later Caudill, Rowlett & Scott Architects. The engineering firm J. R. Sirrine Co. merged with CRS, creating CRSS in 1983, then the architectural division of CRSS was sold to HOK in 1994, and CRS was dropped from the firm's name all together.

17. King, ch. 1, p. 2.

18. In addition to Zemanek, McCutchan, and Willie Peña, early employees of CRS included Harry S. Ransom (1949–53), who worked later for William E. Nash (1953–57). Ransom designed the Peña House in Brownsville and the much publicized elementary school in Industry, Texas. Theo R. Holleman also worked for William E. Nash (1949–51). Other early CRS employees were Cleon C. Bellomy; Merton Harper (1955–64); F. Earl Merrill, Jr.; James H. Lemmon, Jr.; and Charles L. Estes, who designed the Bryan Fire Station and Drill Tower for CRS in 1952.

19. Caudill to Rowlett, September 4, 1946. On October 4, 1946, Caudill wrote: "Today I found who filed the complaint about me practicing. It wasn't Phil after all. It was Henry Mayfield. So far the administration is backing me up." CRS Center.

20. Students were an important part of CRSS research and production from the beginning. Caudill wrote in an undated letter to Rowlett in 1946: "I've been working on Fenton's house. A student is helping me." On July 17, 1946, he wrote again: "I am going to put one of our better students on our payroll." Harold Jordan, a fifth-year architecture student, was credited with helping in supervision of the first Caudill House in Bryan.

21. Caudill to Rowlett, n.d., ca. September 1946.

22. Tom Bullock interview, October 17, 1995.

23. Texas A&M catalogues, 1945–1955. Cushing Library, Texas A&M.

24. "Ultra, Ultra, Ultra," *Blackwell Daily Journal-Tribune*, April 23, 1950. CRS developed clusters of school work, sometimes based on the partners' personal connections. Because Wallie Scott was from Port Arthur, Texas, CRS was able to gain entree, collaborating with the Port Arthur architect J. Earle Neff on numerous schools there. Likewise, Willie Peña's hometown connections and long-term association with Laredo architect A.A. Leyendecker brought CRS school commissions in Laredo, Tyler in East Texas, Andrews in West Texas, and the Wharton-Bay City-Palacios-Edna area southwest of Houston are other locales where CRS's work was clustered in the 1950s.

25. "High School Without Doors," *Architectural Forum*, April 1955, pp. 128–32. The small, two-story classroom building of Texas A &M Consolidated High School was demolished in 1993, as 40 years of space needs, demographics, and educational patterns caught up with the progressive planning so valued in 1954.

26. *Architectural Record*, January, 1957.

27. CRSS was awarded the design contract for the Bush Presidential Library, but, before the plans were complete, CRSS was bought by HOK. However, the same team from CRSS continued to work for HOK, completing the project.

Brazos County Courthouse and Jail, 300 E. 26th Street, Bryan, CRS, architects, 1956.

THE GEORGE BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY *and* MUSEUM

1 Unilateral Disarmament: George Bush's Library

Joel Warren Barna

Has George Bush done any TV spots for Gallery Furniture yet? Having heard him on the radio earlier this year advertising jobs with the Houston police department and having seen just how disarming the new George Bush Presidential Library and Museum is, I can't shake the thought that he'll be popping up on late-night TV again, and very soon.

Doubt it? Visit the new $82 million presidential library complex on the campus of Texas A&M University in College Station. From the approach on George Bush Drive and the coiling entry road, the complex's three buildings loosely arranged around a courtyard are a welcome change from the many examples of third-rate brutalism found on the Texas A&M campus, but they are still a little surprising.

Veryl Goodnight, *The Day the Wall Came Down: A Monument to Freedom*, 1997.

Compared to the LBJ Library complex in Austin, with its scaleless wall of office and academic buildings and its travertine-clad central building, which seems to combine a pharaoh's tomb with the Ark of the Covenant, the Bush Library is quite modest. It looks less like a museum or an academic complex than like the headquarters of a prosperous mid-sized computer company.

CRSS (now part of HOK, Houston) designed the buildings and the landscaping. In addition to the 69,000-square-foot library building, there is the 33,000-square-foot International Center, which contains conference and banquet facilities. A third building, the Academic Building-West, houses Texas A&M's Departments of Economics and Political Science, along with the Center for Presidential Studies and the Bush School of Government and Public Service. The Academic Building has a separate parking area. Between the complex and the A&M campus, a parklike setting with trails is being developed.

The first thing that draws the eye as one walks up to the entry from the Bush Library's parking lot is the sculpture in the stone-paved courtyard. Created by the Santa Fe artist Veryl Goodnight, the piece is entitled *The Day the Wall Came Down: A Monument to Freedom*. It features five horses, cast in bronze at one-and-a-quarter life-size, leaping over what appears to be a chunk of the Berlin Wall signed by various political leaders from Brent Scowcroft to Helmut Kohl. The horses look skinless, with the striations of their muscles emphasized, and they seem to have nearly lidless eyes, which is more than a little surreal. And one wonders: Why horses? Nevertheless, the sculpture and the big limestone entry rotunda of the library building, where one is drawn next, announce the triumphalist tone that one expects in a presidential library.

Inside the rotunda, the most prominent feature is a high wall of donor names. Eleven of the 18 largest donors are American foundations or individuals; the rest include the Japanese government and the rulers of such Persian Gulf entities as Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait. Several Korean industrial conglomerates and one from Thailand appear on the list of other donors helpfully provided on a computer kiosk. It is, all in all, much more impressive than the horses outside. One expects a museumy hush from this point on, suitable for contact with history and big money.

But then, after the orientation-theater film, visitors come to the first display, in the "Changing Exhibit Gallery." This space is dominated by television monitors showing looped tapes of the newly-ex-president Bush being affectionately mocked by Dana Carvey and of Barbara Bush being sent by David Letterman into the street to buy a hot dog from a New York street vendor. As sweet as these aw-shucks glimpses of the Bushes stiffly having fun are, the clinching evidence that the former president's future lies in late-night commercials comes later, about three-fourths of the way through the rest of the exhibit on his career in public life, in the replica of the presidential office at Camp David.

In between are exhibits on Bush's childhood (just a regular guy with a Connecticut senator for a father); his service in World War II (with a replica of the TBM Avenger he flew and a little model of the submarine that rescued him); his years at Yale; his early marriage to Barbara and his start in the oil business; and his political career (called Public Service) as congressman, ambassador to the United Nations and envoy to China, director of the CIA, and chairman of the Republican National Committee during the Nixon years. There are countless displays of state gifts, another chunk of Berlin Wall, and sections on Barbara's volunteer work as well as an exhibit on George as an outdoorsman. There, the building's black-box breaks open to offer a glimpse of the trees and grass outside, a nice architectural feature. The display on domestic legislation that Bush enacted as president emphasizes the Clean Air Act and the Americans With Disabilities Act, two pieces of social engineering that LBJ might have been proud of.

The plan of the exhibits is interesting, twisting back and forth like a length of intestine, but the exhibits themselves, with a few exceptions, are static and aesthetically and emotionally flat. We have what purports to be glimpses of the private voices of Bush and his intimates at key points in his career and our history, but they reveal only a bland confidence that he was doing his always excellent best in sometimes trying circumstances. Compared with the lacerating displays at the LBJ museum in Austin (letters condemning his handling of the Vietnam War; photos of Johnson weeping as he listens to taped letters home from his son-in-law, Charles Robb, then in Vietnam; and the tense white plaster soldier who steps out of the glassed-in display of the Vietnamese landscape and into the visitors' space), the exhibits at the Bush library seem cool and superficial. It's the kind of display you would expect from a president who decides to invade Panama and calls it Operation Just Cause.

Then, one comes to the Camp David Office replica. Here, standing at a low railing, one is treated to a ghostly tour of the office's most significant contents, each one lit in turn by a mechanized spotlight, while Bush's disembodied voice describes his feelings about it. Sounding a little weepy, he tells of the emotion he feels on seeing the presidential flag that stands in the corner. Then the spotlight shifts, and Bush is talking about, of all things, the coffee warmer that sits on the desk, which he seems to love just about as much. "Everyone should have one," he says. He is also remarkably fond, it later emerges, of the office's automatic dog-food dispenser.

Listening to Bush's disquisition on the coffee warmer, one realizes, first, that he could really sell these things, and, second, that there is nothing like this level of intimacy in the presentation of his relationship with Ronald Reagan, or the events of the Cold War, or even of the Gulf War, that high point of his presidency. It's here that the Gallery Furniture vision begins to take shape: The question is not if, but when, we will see the former leader of the free world on late night TV, hawking low-priced sofa beds. Hey, good buys on home appliances are just as important to most people as the New World Order.

That sounds bad, but it's not, really. Like Lyndon Johnson, George Bush served a single term after the presidency of a world-changing, charismatic leader whom people still have trouble seeing in human terms, and he was followed in turn by a national disgrace. If he backs away from the emotional peaks and valleys of his career, it's because, one gathers, he feels a becoming modesty. He is reluctant to be seen as a braggart born into privilege and carried by it into participation in momentous events that he can no more claim to have caused than can we, the spectators at the tableau he has arranged for us.

Over time, this presentation may come to seem more nuanced, perhaps when scholars of various political stripes begin mining the archives next door for records and facts that the Bush museum leaves out, as they have begun doing at the LBJ and Kennedy archives. But in an odd way, I think these future scholars will only confirm the essential truth that emerges from the Bush museum now: that George Herbert Walker Bush is a decent person uncomfortable with responsibility for both the good things and the bad things he was involved in as president, willing to divert us with trivia and private banalities rather than stand in the spotlight of events that would dwarf him, as they would anyone.

By then, one hopes, his new career will have taken off. ■

Entrance rotunda, Bush Library and Museum.

Lawn leading away from the plaza to a pond; classroom building to the left.

2 Vision, Leadership, and More than a Few Aggies

Robin Abrams

On February 10, 1998, the annual Rowlett Lecture, "Vision & Leadership in the Creation of the George Bush Presidential Library Center," was one of the first symposia held in the new Presidential Conference Center at Texas A&M. Organized by the CRS Center for Leadership and Management in the Design and Construction Industry at Texas A&M, it focused on the conception, design, construction, and operation of the George Bush Presidential Library.

The speakers expressed great pride in having created a "highly successful" building complex reflective of President Bush's personality, delivered on budget and on time. Not coincidentally, the original proponents of the library were a tight bunch of A&M administrators, alumni, and CRSS (Caudill Rowlett Scott Sirrine) higher-ups who now work for Hellmuth Obata & Kassabaum, Inc. (HOK), the firm that mid-way through this project acquired the architectural division of CRSS, which had originally been awarded the project. The triumvirate of A&M administrators, alumni, and architects mounted a nine-year, full-court press, beginning their campaign while Bush was vice president, to get the library located at Texas A&M. This team stood strong in the face of fierce competition. When criticized for being too remote a location for a presidential library, College Station was defended on the grounds that it is the *de facto* "Connecticut of Houston" and therefore the perfect setting.

It was President Bush's desire that his library not be a personal monument. He wanted it to be modest in style and design, not cost too much, and have as its primary purpose the preservation of his portion of the national archives. We can assume the project is "highly successful" in this regard. The United States archivist responsible for the entire presidential library system left his Washington post to devote himself to maintaining the archives in the Bush Library. Several hints were dropped indicating that the other presidential library up the road was a big disappointment in this regard and presents a continual challenge to its archivists.

Modesty and decorum seemed to rule the design process. We were told by James Cicconi, former aide to President Bush, that Bush was completely sheltered from the fundraising process, and while in office was kept unaware of who gave and how much. It was interesting to note that while the Kennedy and LBJ libraries are associated with schools of public affairs, the Bush school avoids the "A" word altogether, offering degrees, instead, in public service.

Other programmatic elements added during the predesign phase that influenced the design of the complex were that the buildings should blend with the campus architecture, be multipurpose, and reflect the character of the president. Bush wanted the complex to be closely integrated with the life of the campus — a difficult feat, given that its 90-acre site is located on a distant corner of a very large campus.

The result is a three-building complex housing the library and museum, a conference center, and an academic building. Each building is quietly understated Federal-style-lite, higher quality than the typical campus building, but without opulence or obvious designerisms.

The buildings have clean lines and simple forms, and the interior spaces accommodate what grew to be a very complex program, which included archival space, auditoriums, galleries, an airplane, a presidential apartment, classrooms, libraries, and catering facilities. The design process included a huge programming component (the CRS trademark) rooted in an overriding desire to keep the clients happy, to eliminate surprises, and to keep the project on track, all of which the architects appear to have succeeded in beyond their wildest dreams.

Where the Bush Library design seems


Museum interior.

the least successful is in its cohesiveness as a complex, in the relationships between the buildings and their setting, and between the complex and the rest of the campus. Site design was performed in-house by CRSS/HOK, with some fairly heavy demands placed upon them by A&M guidelines and Secret Service security demands. The buildings are connected by a central plaza, where a dramatic (but restrained) sculpture of stallions galloping out of pieces of the Berlin Wall is located. A pastoral landscape surrounds the complex. All three buildings abut the central plaza, but only one of the three, the conference center, openly embraces the plaza. Rather than engaging each other in a dialogue across this dramatic space, the academic building and the library face away from the plaza in different directions, their energy spilling out into their parking lots.

The academic building overlooks a green slope terracing down to a small pond, but no direct access is provided to the water. Inside, the windows are placed too high to afford a view of this deliberate landscape, when one is seated. A seemingly logical route from the academic building to the conference center goes through a service yard. And the conference center turns a blind wall (with fire escape) to the grand axis entry of the library. The main entry drive to the Presidential Library, George Bush Drive, approached the library from the rear and winds through the parking lot before reaching the porticoed entrance.

The Bush Presidential Library anchors the southwest corner of the A&M campus, yet rather than facing toward the campus, it is oriented due west, as if in conversation with the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library 120 miles away in Austin. The other presidential edifice occupies a remote corner of its campus I as well, but it plays an important role in closing a significant axis on the University of Texas Campus in Austin. The LBJ Library is unresponsive to the Bush Library's call for corridor comraderie, but is engaged in a perpetual standoff with the U.T. tower. ■

3 A Visit to the Bush Library

Ernesto Maldonado

The design of the George Bush Library and Museum is a simple diagram: a museum rectangle and an archive rectangle connected by a cylindrical rotunda in an L-shaped plan. Clear, simple, and well executed, the complex looks like a cross between an office park and a museum.

One's initial experience of the exterior from the front (west) façade is appropriately governmental and bureaucratic, all granite and limestone, as if some of Washington's pomposity and scale should necessarily reside in a presidential archive. But once inside the exhibit hall, a black box with exposed steel bar-joist roof structure, the building comes off as an especially handsome Butler building (the prefabricated steel buildings manufactured in Bryan) with a higher than normal budget for cladding materials.

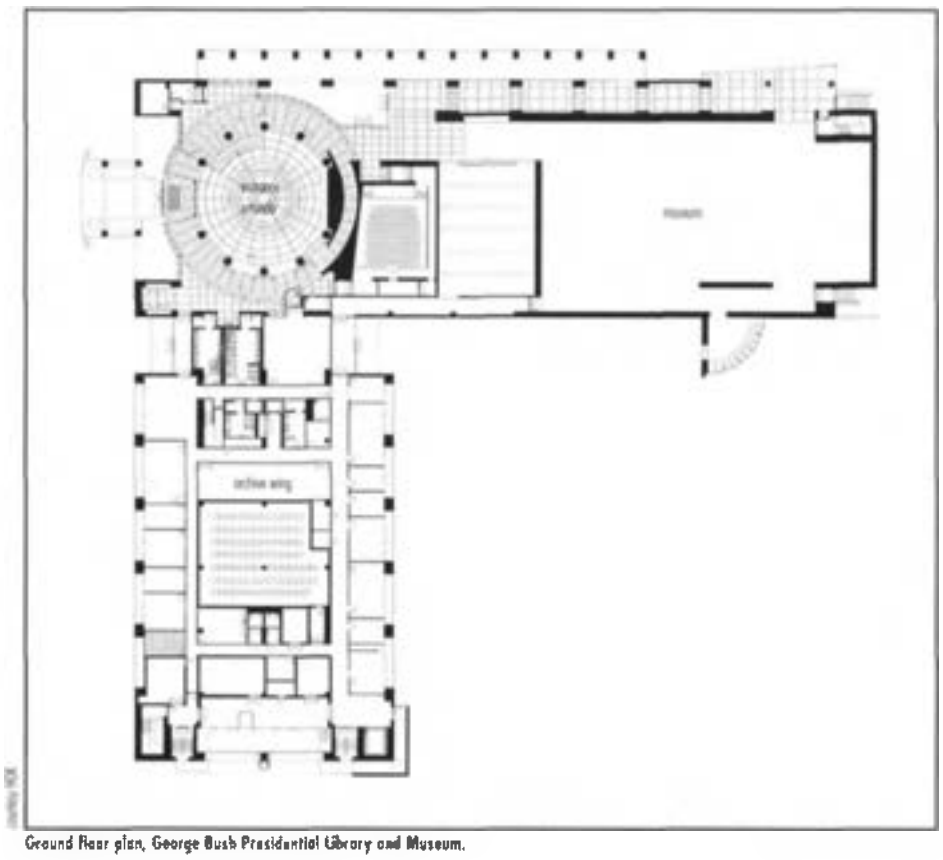
After walking through the permanent exhibit, designed to last ten years, one gets a view of the plaza around which the museum, library, and conference center huddle. The plaza and spaces between the buildings meet Secret Service requirements for being able to turn 180 degrees in a limousine in case of pursuit. The north side, as viewed from the plaza, is the most compelling of the façades. A glass-walled walkway hangs off the stone face as the plaza slopes down to a pond on the east. Perhaps it was the effect of the sloping, paved, (American Disabilities Act compliant) plaza that left me with an overall emotional memory of the plaza as akin to a de Chirico: a little out of kilter and deserted. One hopes the government students will enliven the space with clutter and chairs and bodies.

The archives have been stored. The circulation has been resolved. The university has acquired new lecture halls and classrooms. The program has been satisfied. The well-detailed stone is even robust at points, with steel beams jutting, performing gravity-defying tricks. This is *baukunst* at a very high level, but I felt a lack of *architektur*.

Perhaps time and use will bring the space to life. But the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum is a lost architectural opportunity for which the architects should not be held responsible. I blame a culture that does not want architectural memorials, even to its victories (the Gulf War and the Cold War). The shallowness of the building is, in the end, a shallowness of the expectations of our culture. We need not worry, as Mies and Kahn did in the 1950s, about how to build monumental architecture out of steel and concrete. Our culture doesn't require it. ■


Entrance drive, fountain (right), and entry portico of the Bush Library and Museum.


Site plan, Bush Library and Museum.


Ground floor plan, George Bush Presidential Library and Museum.

VINCENT B. CANIZARO

Apartment complex, College Station.

SAME AS IT EVER WAS

HOUSING AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

With no rhyme or reason, islands of dispersed apartment complexes sit loosely strung together by the roads and commercial strips that connect them. You know they are apartments by the familiar pattern of oddly shaped, monotonous buildings clustered amid parking lots. Stylistically diverse, most of them have some shallow ornament or cladding to give individual identity; others are reminiscent of ski condos or warehouses. These developer-built complexes form the student housing landscape of College Station. There is nothing special about this type of housing. It is the same sort of non-descript landscape one encounters in suburban tracts across the United States. As such, it is surprising to find in a college town, where one would expect an idyllic campus with gracious lawns and architecturally interesting residence halls. Because on-campus dormitory space is so limited, three-quarters of Texas A&M's 43,000 students live off campus.

However College Station may appear to the outsider, it cannot be fully understood unless one looks beyond statistics and infrastructure to what holds the community together. Living in College Station I experience this housing landscape on a continuing basis; it serves as the framework for my daily life. A distanced perspective is only useful for understanding the meaning of a place in a limited way. If we are interested in what a landscape means to those who inhabit it, we must look to its physical structure (buildings, roads, etc.) and to the mental framework we employ to make sense of it as that place. To get at this ephemeral sense of place, we must look beyond the physical to how a community defines itself and how people cope with their environment on a personal basis. I can live in a landscape that is monotonous to the outsider because my furnishings and personal attitudes provide texture and enrich that place for me. These personal strategies reflect the landscape of the mind and form an important part of the overall perception of a place.

In 1878 the United States Post Office began readdressing mail destined for Texas A&M campus residents by crossing out Bryan and inserting College Station.[1] Bryan, four and one-half miles north of College Station, changed rapidly in the next decades. But a burgeoning population did not begin to live on the periphery of the college campus until the 1930s. College Station can be thought of as a large residential area for Texas A&M, even though it has become an economic entity in its own right. Although A&M focuses its efforts and resources on campus, the university, as College Station's single industry, always has had an influence on the form of the town and its housing.[2]

Texas A&M does not have a master-planned campus. It was founded long after campuses like Thomas Jefferson's "academical village" at the University of Virginia (1817–26), which emerged from an early 19th-century desire to build a community for learning that would inspire students to become responsible citizens. A&M also developed before the early 20th-century City Beautiful movement, which affected planning on such later campuses as Rice University in Houston (1912). Professor Frederick E. Giesecke tried to instill a City Beautiful scheme of spatial reorganizations on the campus in 1911. But he had to contend with numerous existing inconsistencies.

A&M students and faculty once lived together on campus, but the university could not keep up with the increasing enrollment after 1963. Original faculty houses were moved to adjacent neighborhoods. Then some faculty members and developers began to construct houses in subdivisions at the north, south, and east gates of the campus. The incorporation of these areas as the town of College Station in 1938 gained support from the college because development of the town, including privately owned apartment houses,

Apartment complex, College Station.

> "College Station is like an old pair of shoes. It's ugly to look at, but it sure is comfortable."
>
> Lou Montoya, former Texas A&M student

Dormitories on the A&M campus from the 1960s (left) and the 1930s (right).

relieved the college of its obligation to provide student housing.[3] Since the 1960s A&M has used the town as a residential asset, exhibiting an attitude toward housing that could be called *laissez faire* paternalism. The college is in some ways obligated to ensure an adequate supply of housing, but its administrators, as free-marketeers, depend on profit-motivated developers for the supply, maintenance, quality, and location of that housing.

In the 1960s, then A&M president J. Earl Rudder stated that "the greatest immediate need for the school lay in the area of student housing off-campus" because dorm construction on campus was not a financial priority.[4] Further, Rudder feared that without independent development "Texas A&M would have been a cow college with about 6,000 students because there wasn't any place for anybody to live."[5]

Through the 1970s and 1980s housing starts proliferated, chasing increasing enrollment. As developers built rapidly to keep up with demand and built cheaply to hedge their investments, poor-quality construction resulted. Today the housing market in College Station is more competitive, and higher-quality complexes are being built, but the attitude and landscape of *laisse faire* paternalism remains firmly in place.

A different kind of paternalism was associated with late-19th-century company towns — regimented townscapes built in or near industrial sites by employers to maximize workers' commitment to their jobs. The campus ideal is associated with the belief that the university should stand *in loco parentis* to its students: parents who sent their children away to college expected the administrators to assume responsibility not only for the students' educations but their values and personal needs as well. Texas A&M seems ideologically aligned with the University of Virginia, but it has yielded a housing landscape more like that of the company town. The motive for rapid and poor quality construction in College Station's apartments connect them to the often bleak landscape of the company town. Both are the result of the maximization of profits, which logically reduces the quality of the environment.

Texas A&M did not consciously set out to encourage the present housing environment, but it has left student and faculty housing to be developed by others. This speaks of a subtle transformation of a regional attitude that values individuality (or minding one's own business) into an entrepreneurial attitude of maximizing personal accumulation — a deregulation of public space on behalf of private gain. Its adoption in the university setting allows the wider campus environment to suffer the same community dissolution experienced in suburbia. The dispersed, potentially dissociated student population is compelled to fend for itself.[6] But what of on-campus housing? Are things different there?

A&M's campus housing, directly under institutional control, serves less than one-quarter of the student population. Conditions are better than in most off-campus housing, but not to the degree one might expect. Some of the 1920s dormitories of my undergraduate days have been torn down and replaced by more modern units. But the new dormitories are more functional than beautiful. Furthermore, the dorms are not concentrated in a residential area of campus but are dispersed to the edges, separated by classroom and administrative buildings across pedestrian-unfriendly roads. This impedes community interaction in the same way as placing the Memorial Student Center away from the center of campus and remote from residential areas. Even so, living off campus is vastly different from living on campus, where everything is within walking distance.

It is interesting to compare Texas A&M with the University of Virginia. Jefferson's plan was based on long-standing models from Europe and earlier colleges in America such as Yale and Harvard. At Virginia all incoming freshman live in one of four residence halls. After their first year, students may live off-campus, but a mark of prestige for seniors is to be awarded a room in one of the pavilions on The Lawn. Other campus housing is grouped in two large clusters close to this historic center because of the administration's desire to retain "the intimacy that characterized the academical village."[7] In other words, the physical quality and layout of the housing is an important factor in realizing the University of Virginia's goals.[8] The school has kept enrollment low, a rare achievement these days, to maintain conditions that foster a democratic sense of community.

Texas A&M's state-mandated, ever-increasing enrollment and its reliance on off-campus housing has made achieving something like the University of Virginia experience difficult, if not impossible. Does A&M really have the same intentions for campus life as the idealized example at Virginia? Yes and no.[9] The emphasis on individuality and self-sufficiency in A&M's student handbook interprets the desire for community in its most mundane sense — a collection of individuals. To be a part of the Texas A&M community seems to be possible only through a do-it-yourself process of bootstrap placemaking through language that lacks the sentimental community-building concerns of the University of Virginia.

A&M's Department of Residence Life informs students of their rights — "to sleep and study without disturbance" — and their responsibilities — "to communicate with other residents" — as well as presenting a philosophy of diversity, individualized involvement in the community, the sharing of traditions, and accountability for your individual actions. What is significant is not the possibility that the underlying attitude of self-reliance might determine on-campus experiences (although not entirely) but how it is indicative of and consistent with *laissez faire* paternalism. So what does Texas A&M do to maintain such a strong and loyal student community? If the housing, both on- and off-campus, leaves so much to be desired in terms of amenities, design, and layout, what is it that binds students together?

It is Aggieland, that constructed virtual community of tradition, ritual, history, and sport. Through these forms Aggies relate to each other and derive meaning from their experience at Texas A&M. Aggieland is the mental landscape that gives College Station its sense of place, and this mindset constitutes an important coping strategy we all use to inhabit any place beyond its physical manifestation. It enables an A&M student to live miles away from the campus yet remain connected to the community.

The potential insidiousness of this ideological strategy should not be overlooked. It is a sort of "emperor's-new-clothes" idea, where the impoverishment of a physical landscape can be *virtually* overcome, through the construction of a rich mental landscape.[10] The university is responsible for much of the contour of this virtual world through football and the other extracurricular activities it supports, but a larger part of the virtual landscape is personally constructed by students as they individualize places and form social groups.

Some students complain of feeling nomadic because they rent by the semester, stay on campus only during the day, and go back to their hometowns on weekends and over breaks. Like living in a motel, this pattern allows students to be less critical of their College Station surroundings. Others practice personal placemaking by decorating with posters, mementos from home, or college-related memorabilia. Largely, they rely on the development and maintenance of an independent community of friends, social clubs, entertainment, bars, and parties to enrich their college experience. The landscape of friends and legends is real and brings life to ordinary apartment living, helping to mask the negative aspects of remote location and bad architecture. But such compensation works only up to a point.

The character, layout, and quality of student housing at the University of Virginia is intended to prepare its students for responsible and democratic citizenship. The physical landscape, quality of the architecture, and strong sense of place in Charlottesville contribute to the University of Virginia's institutional goals. Texas A&M's residential landscape, that of *laissez faire* paternalism, seems to have no such ideological intentions. Rather, it it is an unconscious landscape of profit. In this it resembles suburban America. If the University of Virginia is right, and the environment is an important aspect of acculturation, we should ask ourselves, "What are the students of Texas A&M being prepared for? ■

1. Deborah L. Parks, "The History of College Station, Texas 1938–1982" (master's thesis, Texas A&M University, 1984), p. 31.

2. Mary C. Fabishak, "Single Industry Boom Town: The Rise and Decline of a Dependency Relationship — College Station, Texas" (doctoral dissertation, Boston University, 1986), pp. 499-500. A 1975 comprehensive plan for College Station was reviewed in Fabishak's dissertation. Comments on housing included: "deterioration of existing housing stock"; "ubiquitous strip development"; and "dominance of the university." Most people would agree that College Station is a single-industry town, but it is informative that a city manager in 1983 considered it a company town and hoped it would remain so.

3. Ibid., p. 210.

4. Ibid., p. 294.

5. J. Earl Rudder, cited in Fabishak, p. 295.

6. In 1979 Off Campus Aggies, a registered student group offering activities and information to involve off-campus students in on-campus life, was founded.

7. Office of the Dean of Students, University of Virginia. This quotation is found on the university's web site: http://www.virginia.edu/~odos/rlo/general.html

8. David Orr, "Architecture as Pedagogy," in *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment and the Human Prospect* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1994), pp. 112-17.

9. Texas A&M, Department of Residence Life web site: http://reslife.tamu.edu/housing/studentguide/

10. William Gibson formulates a "cyberpunk" vision, where mass addiction to virtual reality results in the neglect and destruction of the physical world.

Rudder Plaza, Texas A&M University, 1973.

The Landscape of

AGGIELAND

NANCY VOLKMAN

Map of Brazos County, showing the distribution of woodlands (hatched areas) and prairies (white areas) in the 1830s before extensive settlement. Distributions are interpolated from data in original land grant surveys of the Texas General Land Office.

The landscape planning and design of the Texas A&M campus, the communities of College Station and Bryan, and Brazos County are manifestations of both the Aggie concept of tradition and the idea that the environment can be understood as a traditional Central Texas landscape.

This is not the traditional landscape considered from a romantic and nostalgic point of view, nor is it the townscape of neo-traditionalists. Rather, the landscape of Aggieland is a common landscape that reflects attachment to the land as a possession instead of a resource with intrinsic value, a landscape in which encroachment and development instead of stewardship and preservation are the traditional values to be protected and advanced.

When American settlers came to Central Texas in the 1820s, they found a natural landscape of two dominant physiographic and vegetative types: the grass-covered plains of the uplands and the forested areas found along the major rivers — the Brazos and the Navasota — and beside numerous creeks that drained the area. The county was literally settled from the bottoms up, with the earliest land claims along the two rivers. Settlement patterns reflected standard land use. In lowlands, rustic plantations, often owned by absentee landlords, had extensive cleared areas where cotton for commercial sale was grown, while in the uplands farms had smaller cleared tracts that served the subsistence needs of farm families. In this early period, several communities developed in Brazos County, including Boonville, the county seat, and

Oak-lined New Main Drive, Texas A&M campus, College Station.

New trees growing among prairie grasses, where uncontrolled fires once discouraged such forestation.

Brazos County pasture land.

Millican, which prior to the Civil War was one of the larger towns in Central Texas. These early townscapes followed simple, traditional grid plans and developed a diffuse pattern of lots that would become common in Central Texas towns.

Extension of the railroad through Brazos County after the Civil War brought the second wave of development to what would soon become Aggieland. In anticipation of the rails, the new town of Bryan was developed beginning in 1859 by the Houston & Texas Central Railroad. In 1866 Bryan became, and has remained, the county seat. When the new land grant college, the Agriculture and Mechanical College of Texas, opened four and one-half miles from downtown Bryan in 1876, the destiny of the county to become increasingly urbanized (or suburbanized, as became the case) was set. In spite of growth in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the county remained agricultural, with its prosperity tied to the economic cycles of world trade in cotton until after World War II.

The period from 1920 to 1940 proved to be the most progressive era in landscape planning in Bryan and College Station. It was during this time, as the university began to grow, that a number of subdivisions were constructed adjacent to the campus with plans that reflected, in a prosaic way, planning trends of that era (such as curving streets). The earliest of these subdivisions was College Park, south of the campus. The College Park Development Company commissioned Frederick W. Hensel, the first landscape designer known to have been associated with the university, to design the plat layout and landscaping. Progressive ideas reflected in his plan for College Park included designating a small tract with a pond (now Brison Park) for a community open space. Later such subdivisions as Oakwood and College Hills were added. In all cases their physical plans reflected what might be considered a vernacularization of high-style planning, like that of John Nolen. College Hills, in particular, represented an attempt to make a real town at College Station, which had just been incorporated in 1938. There the developer planned two curving shopping strips, known as East Gate, to flank the subdivision's main entrance opposite the university. By adapting contemporary planning ideas, College Station developers attempted to create a more cosmopolitan community. This effort, though, was short-lived.

In spite of this modernization of university-related subdivisions during the 1920s and 1930s, little decisive change occurred in Aggieland from the 1860s until the end of World War II, . But after World War II, building upon the progressive attitudes of the pre-war period, the school began to see itself as a real state university and College Station as a true city. In terms of landscape these changes significantly altered a rural county dotted with small towns into one dominated by the urban expansion of the university and College Station. The principal effects of this growth on the landscape were suburbanization, development of estates in rural areas, commercial realignment; revegetation of the countryside, and urbanization of the campus.

As late as the 1960s, Bryan retained a somewhat centralized character with an active downtown in its historic core around which new subdivisions, most with small lots, continued to be added. College Station, although already more dispersed in planned form, was still centered on the university. As new housing was added to both communities, subdivisions took on the character of city suburbs, filling in what had been farm land between Bryan and College Station.

As this trend continued, not only did subdivisions become larger, but lot sizes also increased. While some of these large-lot additions, such as the incongruously named Nantucket, retained a distinctive physical identity, some more dispersed estates were also built. These were small platted areas out in the county or individual plots purchased from farmers. In the 1990s, this practice has become so widespread that most of Brazos County has some form of dispersed housing.

A similar dispersion of commercial activity occurred after the war affecting both old and new shopping areas. In the 1960s, businesses began to leave downtown Bryan for strip developments, principally along Texas Avenue, the central artery which connects Bryan to College Station. For a time much of Bryan's historic area was deserted, except for shabby businesses selling low-priced goods. But eventually, in the 1980s, a new focus in specialty shopping emerged. Small, independent restaurants, nightclubs, and antique shops began to occupy empty storefronts. At the same time, in both Bryan and College Station, strip shopping center development accelerated. Texas Avenue became one uninterrupted strip running almost ten miles. While other cities have long strips, like Houston's Westheimer Road, the length of the Texas Avenue shopping district, in comparison to the population, is quite disproportionate.

Town expansion and the development of rural estate housing have not been the only modifications to the countryside. As a result of economic changes in agriculture, land has progressively been taken out of cultivation and replaced by grazing or become unused. As a result, with the exception of Brazos River valley lands still in cotton agriculture, much of the county has become revegetated with trees. New trees have even affected areas once filled with native prairie grasses because the mechanism that preserved the prairies, fire, has been largely suppressed.

Finally, on the campus itself, the rapid growth in student numbers since the 1960s has changed the formerly dispersed, low-density campus into an increasingly urbanized area whose former open spaces are regularly filled with buildings or paving. The change in character has been notable, particularly on the eastern, older half of the campus where extensive green spaces and live-oak-lined streets once predominated. While greater building density would be expected with the growing student body, an unanticipated result has been the way in which remaining open areas (at least those not devoted to parking) have been treated. In contrast to former design approaches that emphasized either a bucolic lawn with trees or a more formal approach in which geometric garden beds were principal features, recently designed areas have taken on the character of urban plazas with extensive paving and little planting. The Rudder Center Plaza, built in 1973 at the center of campus, was one of the first such urban plazas on campus.

The landscape of Aggieland, at least physically, is not unique. Bryan and College Station together might even be considered a quintessential mid-size city of the late 20th century, with typical urban fringe development out in Brazos County. This region also represents the traditional landscape of Central Texas, one that has rarely been given, but certainly deserves, serious study. This is a landscape that is not necessarily attractive or sustainable in ecological terms, but rather one in which the natural landscape has been inscribed with layers of cultural history representing a preference for satisfying immediate physical needs over beautification or environmental stewardship. In spite of designed landscaping and a lack of topographical drama, Aggieland has acquired special meaning to those who know it. This is a meaning associated with social traditions and a sense of belonging, not place character. If anything can be learned from observing the traditions of landscape design and planning in Brazos County, it is that placeness need not be tied to the character of the natural or constructed landscape. For Aggieland, in spite of its seemingly conventional image, remains identifiable as not just a place, but, for many, the best place. ■

Sign on exit gates at Easterwood Airport, College Station.

A Geographical Anatomy
BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION

JONATHAN M. SMITH

The anatomy of a place, like the anatomy of an organism, reveals the structure of the whole and the functions of its elements. An anatomy can be performed on anything divisible, including a place, which is a human creation and therefore complex. Places have three salient aspects: location, locale, and sense of place.

Bryan-College Station is a place with a specific location — a unique position on the earth's surface and consequently unique spatial relations to other places both near and far. More importantly, location connotes a set of political, economic, and social relations with other places. All of these relationships are subject to change. Spatial relations are changed by transportation improvements, such as the highway enlargement that recently made Bryan-College Station closer to Houston. Political relations also change, as when distant legislators in Washington, D. C., and Austin exercise less or more control over local life. The once vital ties that linked Bryan to the wharves of Liverpool and the mills of Manchester are now defunct, superseded in economic importance by speeding caravans of students that annually stream to and from the suburbs of Houston and Dallas. Social relations have also changed, in ways perhaps best known to those who sort mail at the local post office. The pioneers interred in the Boonville Cemetery had family back east in places like Mississippi or Tennessee — kinship networks were latitudinal and regional. Today these networks radiate in all directions, and span continents and oceans.

Relative changes in the location of Bryan-College Station have radically transformed what geographers call its locale, the second of the three salient aspects of place. Whereas location describes the external relationships of a place, locale considers the physical and social characteristics that have accumulated at that place as a result of its past and present locations. The built landscape is a part of the locale, but so are the people and their institutions. We sometimes speak of these landscapes and people using a geological metaphor that likens them to layers of sedimentary rock laid down in successive geological epochs. These metaphorical epochs are, of course, defined by fundamental shifts in location.

Most of the African-American families, and some of the white, settled here long ago, when cotton moved by train to Houston and Galveston, and the political pronounciamientos that issued from Washington, D.C., were faint and easily disregarded. Descendants of these people still live in the area, where a segregated, stratified society has left a physical legacy in the landscape of mansions and tenant houses that can still be seen in old Bryan. Late-19th-century links to Hamburg introduced new groups: Germans, who settled the prairies northeast of town; Bohemians and Moravians, who settled near Smetana and Luza Street; and Jews, who in 1912 built the charming but now sadly decayed Temple Freda beside the railroad tracks.

Bryan-College Station is no longer located in the resource-producing sphere of Europe, and it has been a long time since immigrants came from Galveston by train. Fine, wide highways now radiate in every direction, and most newcomers arrive, as I did, in rented trucks. I am a Yankee, one in a great tide of refugees escaping diminished opportunities in the deindustrialized Northeast. More numerous, although less conspicuous, are the fugitives from moribund corners of Louisiana, Oklahoma, and East Texas. Most conspicuous are Mexican-Americans and other Hispanics, whose numbers doubled in the 1980s. The spectacular growth of Texas A&M in the past 30 years has created unprecedented links to centers of learning on every continent, drawing to the locale contingents of many exotic peoples. A rough but serviceable Hindu temple now stands beside Highway 6 south of College Station, an expression, as Temple Freda once was, of new social links and new local societies.

Most significantly, Bryan-College Station in the last half of the 20th century has become a place increasingly unlike neighboring towns such as Navasota and Hearne. Fifty years ago, Bryan-College Station was certainly the largest of the three places, but its landscape was not qualitatively different. The main streets in all three were strikingly similar, as were the prepossessing mansions of the planter elite, the cottages and bungalows of the middle class, and the cabins and shotgun houses of laborers and minorities. Today, this similarity has vanished. Bryan-College Station is now a small but lustrous city that far more closely resembles suburban Houston than Hearne. At night the lights along its broad boulevards wink and shine, reflecting in the glossy paint of new cars and trucks. Sophisticated students and professionals, exiled to College Station from metropolitan fleshpots (for which they forever hanker), lament its provincial limitations; to inhabitants of what we may begin to call the outlying towns, it must appear as a glamorous and unsettling outpost of urban America. Deviation from regional patterns is further evidenced by a host of demographic statistics. The percentage of the population in Bryan-College Station with a four-year college degree is four times that of neighboring towns; the median family income is about one-third higher; and the native Texan population is about 25 percent lower.

These dramatic changes in the location and locale of Bryan-College Station have deeply altered its third aspect as a place — its sense of place. Sense of place exists in memories, conversations, magazines, books, and images. It includes the ways the people of a place imagine themselves; the ways they would like to be imagined by others; and the ways others do in fact imagine them. There are three major senses of this place that coexist uneasily, often in the mind of a single person.

Bryan-College Station's first sense of place is its image as a part of the Brazos Valley, a place that is fundamentally normal, a representative, if somewhat fortunate, Central Texas town. Strongholds of this view are the Texas Hall of Fame (a local dance hall) and the First Baptist Churches in Bryan and College Station. This image is cherished in modest housing tracts, where elephantine pickup trucks connote the discourse of a Southern rural tradition.

The second sense is of what can only be called Aggieland, a mythical place fully accessible only to college students and alumni. In this sense the place is imagined as extraordinary and unique. It is a place imbued with a "spirit," as they sing in their commencement hymn, "that can ne'er be told" — an esoteric *genius loci*. Monuments to this sense of place are Kyle Field and the Polo Field, where the annual bonfire ritual is performed. This spirit is even evident off-campus in the Aggie theme that runs through the landscape. Mailboxes, banners, businesses, and even rocks are decorated with the colors and logo of the university, connoting the discourse that is Aggieland.

The third sense is that this is a place of the future. Bryan hardly figures in this sense because it is increasingly understood as a troubled inner city with College Station as its suburb. Bryan residents buy lottery tickets at four times the rate of College Station residents, strong evidence of who views the future with hope, and who with fear. As a place of the future, College Station will be home to knowledge-based industries. Its people will be affluent, well educated, socially tolerant, physically fit, and mentally stable. It will be linked to the world by computers, four-lane highways, and jet airliners, and it will be covered with shopping malls, soccer fields, and jogging trails. This vision is epitomized in Research Park, west of campus, where young people jog or engage in nontraditional sports such as rollerblading and Frisbee golf. Proud highways bound the park on two sides, and overhead, airplanes descend to Easterwood Airport bearing home researchers, executives, and tired survivors of expensive vacations. Visible to the south is the stern pillbox of the George Bush Library, temple of the New World Order in which this place intends to take a profitable part.

Although a highly attractive viewpoint to many, this future sense of place will not be fully realized. This is because it is, like any sense of place, biased and therefore unmindful of the many factors by which it will be frustrated, foiled, and distracted. The sense of College Station as a place of the future is therefore an unreliable guide to the place it will become. The future of Bryan-College Station will be decided by its location in the larger circuits of government spending, private investment, and human migration. These will, as in the past, transform the locale, adding new layers to the population and landscape sediment, while these new peoples and landscapes, in ways both stark and subtle, shape future senses of this place. ■

John K. Williams Administration Building, Texas A & M University.

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The Rice Design Alliance
gratefully dedicates this guidebook to

SARA H. AND JOHN H. LINDSEY

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Managing editor
Barrie Scardino

Graphic design
Minor Design Group

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Hester + Hardaway

B R Y A N

The Bryan townsite was surveyed by Theodore Kosse, engineer for the Houston & Texas Central Railway, on a 640-acre tract in Brazos County that the Brazoria County planter, William J. Bryan, a nephew of Stephen F. Austin, had conveyed in 1860 for construction of the railroad line. The Houston & Texas Central was built to funnel the wealth of the Brazos River valley, the foremost cotton production area in Texas in the mid 19th century, through Houston. The outbreak of the Civil War halted railroad construction at Millican, in the southern part of Brazos County. The H&TC tracks did not reach Bryan until 1866–67. The railroad passed through the townsite in a north-south alignment and Kosse oriented Bryan's gridiron street plan accordingly. But he rotated the boundaries of the townsite 45 degrees off a north-south alignment, so that, in plan, the street grid appears to be inscribed in a diamond. There are shifts in the street grid on all sides of the original townsite, where it changes direction to conform to older boundary alignments. The grid inscribed in a diamond was a pattern that Kosse repeated for a number of the townsites he surveyed for the Houston & Texas Central between Houston and Dallas. These included Hearne, Calvert, Bremond, Kosse, Thornton, Groesbeck, Mexia, Rice, and Ennis.

Kosse adopted the Broad Street model for the Bryan town plan. Bryan's principal thoroughfare is the 100-foot wide Main Avenue. The blocks facing Main are only a half block deep. The Main Avenue storefronts back directly onto adjacent parallel streets — the main line of the H&TC on the east, and Bryan Avenue on the west — an attribute that reappears in Bremond and Calvert. Architectural historian John Garner's observation about 19th-century Calvert was equally true of Bryan: the railroad (and the cotton trade which occasioned its construction) was the constituent fact of urbanization in the Brazos River valley.

Exit the Highway 6 Bypass at Briarcrest Drive, head east, and after a right on Boonville, proceed to Copperfield Drive. This is where Bryan most resembles College Station. A left onto Copperfield leads past Sam Houston Elementary School to the gated Courtlandt Place subdivision. On axis, at the end of the entrance street, is the newest contender for Bryan's grandest house, an enormous **Highland Park style French chateau** by Dallas architect Richard Drummond Davis (1999).

Return on Boonville Road to William Joel Bryan Parkway, then turn right onto Boonville. At the Boonville-Ursuline-Osborn intersection is a vacant tract that has been the site of two of Bryan's most architecturally significant buildings. Both were destroyed by fire. The **Villa Maria Ursuline Academy** (1902), a girls' school established by the Ursuline sisters of Galveston, occupied a Victorian Gothic academic building designed by N. J. Clayton of Galveston. The academy closed in 1929. After the building burned, the property was acquired by William S. Howell, Jr., a grandson of the wholesale grocer Dr. J. W. Howell. Howell had been in the diplomatic service and was first secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Paris in the early 1930s when the chancery there was designed by the New York architects Delano & Aldrich. In 1938, Howell commissioned Delano & Aldrich to design his expansive country house on this site. The long, low **Howell House** faced Boonville, its gatehouse and driveway faced Osborn. The Howell House was the only building in Texas by Delano & Aldrich.

At 95 Allen Forest Lane, off Osborn, is the last in a series of houses built by several generations of the Allen family, who operated Bryan's best-known educational institution, Allen Academy. The last family member to administer the academy, **Nat B. Allen, Jr.**, built this ranch type house (1952). Its combination of materials marks it as the work of Bryan architects Norton & Mayfield. Farther west along Ursuline St. lie the **R. V. Armstrong House** (1911) at 1200 Ursuline and, next door, the **Rivers O. Allen House** (1911) at 1120, both set deeply back from the street. Across the street at 1113 Ursuline is the **Nat B. Allen House**. Ignominiously, the historic **Allen Academy** campus is now a Federal Prison Camp. At the Ursuline-E. 22nd intersection is the campus's only remaining historic building, the Spanish Mediterranean style **Memorial Hall** (1924), the work of A&M architecture professor Henry N. Jane.

Allen and Armstrong houses

Memorial Hall, Allen Academy

Robertson St. leads to E. 21st Street, then to Bradley St., then to E. Martin Luther King St. This is the neighborhood of **Candy Hill**, one of Bryan's historically African-American neighborhoods. Bryan's best-known contemporary writer, Sunny Nash, grew up at Bradley and Dansby in Candy Hill in the 1950s and '60s, at the end of the segregation era. She vividly describes this neighborhood in her memoir *Bigmama Didn't Shop at Woolworth's* (1996), and an adjoining neighborhood called **Graveyard Line**, closer to the Bryan City Cemetery, where residents set up tables in the streets for nightly domino games. Nash refers to her neighborhood's "awkward, small-town, urban-rural balance," an attribute that pertains not only to Candy Hill but much of old Bryan.

Endtime Evangelical Pentecostal Church

Galilee Baptist Church

Proceeding west on Martin Luther King leads one through Bryan's **Freedmen Town** neighborhood, where **Shiloh Baptist Church** (1986) at 500 E. Martin Luther King and N. Houston, the city's oldest African-American congregation, has occupied its site since 1870. The northern tier of Kosse's original town plan was the historically African-American, working class, and immigrant sector of Bryan. Twin towers and a geodesic dome give the **Endtime Evangelical Pentecostal Church** at 504 W. Martin Luther King an eschatological aspect. The **Galilee Baptist Church** (1972) at 808 N. Logan and W. 18th was designed by College Station architect David G. Woodcock; the steeple was the congregation's finishing touch. **Robert C. Neal Elementary School** (1998) at W. Martin Luther King and N. Randolph is one of a number of striking postmodern public schools by Bryan architects Patterson Associates. The complex has a strong civic presence, which is amplified by public recreational facilities in the city's Neal Park, also designed by Patterson Associates. Following W. Martin Luther King to

Robert C. Neal Elementary

its conclusion, past the ex-**Carver Elementary School** (1949, Norton & Mayfield) and the ex-**Kemp Senior High School** (1962, E. Earl Merrill), one finds that the "rural" of Sunny Nash's "urban-rural" balance asserts itself with surprising rapidity.

At 900 N. Parker Ave. and W. 18th is the **J. B. Leonard House** (c. 1875), a Victorian cottage with a kick roof over the inset veranda. Historian and preservationist Marlene Elizabeth Heck believes this may be one of the oldest buildings in Bryan. The cedar trees that surround the house give it the look of a rural homestead. Cedars seem to have been the preferred tree of 19th-century Bryan.


Leonard House

The Lawrence Shed of the **Bryan Compress and Warehouse Co. complex** in the 1000 block of N. Bryan Avenue (c. 1930s) is one of the most intact reminders of Bryan's identification with cotton and the railroad. The 6-bay, metal surfaced shed with its saw-toothed profiles is striking in its simplicity and repetition. Across the street are a row of wooden duplex cottages, a residential complement to the working landscape represented by the cotton sheds and the railroad tracks. Adjoining the sheds on the south are a pair of 1950s modern structures, the **Bryan Central Fire Station Drill Tower** at 802 N. Bryan Avenue and, across the street, the **Bryan Central Fire Station** at 801 N. Bryan Avenue (facing W. Martin Luther King). These were the only two public buildings that Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates designed for the City of Bryan (1953).


Bryan Compress & Warehouse Co.


Bryan Central Fire Station Drill Tower

Next door to the fire station is a railroad-era landmark, the **Bryan Ice Co. Building** (1912) at 800 N. Main Avenue and Martin Luther King. Built by the Houston Ice & Brewing Co., its distinctive scalloped gable and high-set sidewalk terminate the vista down Main Avenue. Across the street, at 725 N. Bryan, is the bowstring-truss roofed **Scardino Garage** (1945). The blocks of Main between 20th and 22nd were once part of the **G. S. Parker Lumber Co. complex** — the cotton gin operations on the west side and the lumber yard on the east. The **lumber yard sheds** survive, as does the **office building** (1911) at 419 N. Main and E. 22nd. Across the street, the entire west-side block front is filled with one-story brick buildings which represent the early 20th-century storefronts characteristic not only of Bryan but other Brazos Valley towns. It is such individually unexceptional buildings as these that give Main Ave. its strong-form urbanity, the *only* such space in Bryan or College Station. The buildings at 406-408 N. Main contain a cornerstone dated 1908, which identifies them as the **Allen Smith Buildings**.


Bryan Ice Co. Building

Main Avenue widens at 23rd Street, marking the transition from the blue-collar downtown sector to the middle-class uptown sector.

At 219 N. Main Ave. and E. 24th rises downtown Bryan's mini-skyscraper, the 7-story **Varisco Building** (1948). Built by Brazos A. Varisco, the most prosperous member of Brazos County's Sicilian community, it was designed by Bryan architects Philip G. Norton and S. C. P. Vosper. Sam Vosper's touch is visible in the building's modernistic terra cotta spandrel panels and crowning Greek frets. Despite its highrise aspirations, the Varisco Building is securely integrated into the small-town streetscape of Main Avenue.


Varisco Building

The crossroads of downtown Bryan are Main and 25th (now William Joel Bryan Parkway). In the early 20th century, Bryan's major financial institutions staked out this intersection. Dallas's foremost corporate architects of the pre-Depression era, Lang & Witchell, designed the Art Deco jewel of downtown Bryan, the limestone-clad ex-**First State Bank & Trust Co. Building** at 200 N. Main (1929). The insistent parapet decorations suggest that this was planned as the base of a multi-story building. Across Bryan Parkway at 120 N. Main Ave. lay the competition, the ex-**First National Bank Building** (1919), a small, beautifully detailed, limestone and brick-faced, neo-Renaissance strongbox, constructed by Bryan's oldest bank. First National was the Bryan


First National Bank Building

family bank, William J. Bryan's descendants are still connected with it. At 100 N. Main and W. 26th, the 4-story **E. H. Astin Building** (1915) housed Bryan's third bank, the City National Bank. Like the Varisco Building, the Astin Building fits into the downtown street scene, despite its height.

Hotel La Salle and the Queen Theater

The crown floating over the pylon of the **Queen Theater** at 110 S. Main (by Dallas movie theater architect Jack Corgan & Associates) is a downtown landmark. The 7-story **La Salle Hotel** at 120 S. Main and W. 27th (1928) was designed by Austin architect George L. Walling for businessman R. W. Howell across Main Ave. from the original site of the H&TC passenger station. Across W. 27th Street, the dark red brick **J. W. Howell Building** at 200 S. Main Ave. (1906) housed the wholesale grocery company founded by R. W. Howell's father. Both the La Salle and the Howell Building are due to be rehabilitated as a hotel and conference center by Houston developer Morgan Hill (1998, Michael Gaertner, architect).

The block on the east side of Main, running from E. 26th to E. 28th, is two blocks long. In Kosse's town plan, this double block was an open square that stretched east to Regent Street and was bisected by the H&TC tracks. In the 19th century, free-standing buildings were built on this unbounded square, which explains the unusual lack of block-front continuity. Bryan's Victorian city hall, which burned in 1909, stood near the 26th Street intersection. It was eventually replaced by the Palace Theater, which collapsed in 1986, leaving only the stage house intact. The Mathes Group of Houston, with David G. Woodcock of College Station, incorporated the stagehouse into **Schulman Palace Theater** park (1996), a walled, open-air amphitheater and urban park. Bryan's red brick-faced **Masonic Hall** at 107 S. Main Ave. (1910) and its red brick **Carnegie Public Library** at 111 S. Main Ave. (1903) were built as free-standing buildings. The library is the oldest remaining Carnegie library building in Texas. It is an early work of E. E. Giesecke, the first professor of architecture at Texas A&M and College Architect from the 1900s through the 1930s. The Masonic building was designed by the Dallas architects Flanders & Flanders and displays the impact of early 20th-century Chicago School progressivism on James E. Flanders. Two railroad-side hotels survive with alterations. J. Allen Myers built the **Hotel Charles** at 201 S. Main (1912), but it was his son Charles who had Atkinson & Sanders give it a streamlined refacing (1939). Although covered with porcelain enamel panels, the three-story **Hotel Bryan** at 211 S. Main (1911) by Dean & Giesecke exhibits an architectural kinship to the Masonic Hall in its red brick facing and hipped roof.

Masonic Hall and Carnegie Public Library

Note how the rear wall of the brick-built **Grand Lumber Company Building** at 202 S. Bryan Ave. (now Old Bryan Marketplace, Panabella's Grand Café, and the Childrens Museum of the Brazos Valley) curves along the alignment of the International & Great Northern Railroad track. The I&GN entered Bryan in 1900; its main line was routed along W. 27th before arcing to the south. On S. Bryan one is very aware of the backs of the business buildings that face Main. Sunny Nash recounts in *Bajamma Didn't Shop at Woolworth's* that there was a racial undertone to this spatial arrangement. African-Americans did their business from the Bryan Ave. rear of cafés and shops, rather than the Main Ave. fronts.

Presiding over the west edge of downtown is **St. Andrew's Episcopal Church** (1914) at 217 W. 26th Street and S. Parker, the oldest church building in Bryan. Its stout, brick, neo-Gothic tower is a local landmark. The church's Astin Memorial Parish House (1920) is by College Station architects LaRoche & Dunne. Across the street at 216 W. 26th, the **U.S. Post Office** (1915, Oscar Wenderoth, Supervising Architect of the Treasury) offers a classical complement, along with a basement-level courtyard. The live oak trees that begin to line W. 26th Street and adjacent streets identify the West Side has having once been one of Bryan's elite neighborhoods.

Astin House

The grandest house on Bryan's West Side is the **Roger Q. Astin House** at 508 W. 26th Street and N. Logan (1922), designed by Dallas's foremost eclectic architect, H. B. Thomson.

At 100 S. Congress Avenue and W. 26th is the imposing Colonial Revival-style **George W. Smith House** (1911). Across the high embank-

ment of the I&GN tracks, harking back to an earlier era, is the **Milton Parker House** of c. 1885 at 200 S. Congress and W. 27th, a suburban Victorian villa, its grounds enclosed with a cast iron fence. Parker was a cotton merchant, partner in the Parker-Astin Hardware Co., and one of a number of locally important businessmen who, in the late 1860s, moved with the advance of the H&TC from Millican to Bryan. Note the gate piers at W. 27th and S. Randolph and the line of cedar trees leading toward the Parker House. In the 100 block of S. Randolph, visible up the driveway behind the cottage at 608 W. 27th Street, is the corrugated, galvanized, sheet metal-surfaced **Tin House** that College Station architect and A&M professor Gerald Maffei built (1988). Whatever its pretensions might once have been, the West Side neighborhood now absorbs Maffei's low-tech vernacular as comfortably as H. B. Thomson's Swiss Avenue grand manner.

Milton Parker House

Tin House

Tucked within the curve of the I&GN track at 203 S. Parker Ave. is the tiny **Temple Freda** (1913), once home to Bryan's Reform Jewish congregation and a very early work of the Houston architect Joseph Finger and his partner L. S. Green. In the next block, at 306 S. Parker Ave., is the much more conspicuous **St. Anthony's Catholic Church** (1927), designed for Bryan's Sicilian parish by Houston architect Maurice J. Sullivan as a scaled-down version of the 12th-century church of San Michele, Pavia. Adjacent to the former site of St. Joseph's Hospital is the modernistic **Grant Clinic** (1939) at 308 W. 28th St. and S. Sterling, an early work of William E. Nash, now the dean of Bryan architects.

Temple Freda

St. Anthony's Catholic Church

Moving westward along W. 28th, one passes out of the original townsite at S. Congress, a transition made apparent by the grid shift. Only seven blocks from Main Avenue, one is suddenly on the outskirts of town. A left onto Commercial takes one past the **Tampico Café** at Commercial and 1011 Olive, an authentic slice of backwoods Bryan. Nearby at 1201 Ridgedale, in another neighborhood spun off the Kosse grid, is a modern landmark, **Ben Milam Elementary School** (1953), designed by William E. Nash with A&M architecture instructor Harry S. Ransom and Stone & Pitts of Beaumont. Although CRS made its reputation with modern school design in the 1950s, it never designed a public school in Bryan; Nash's Ben Milam is the town's representative school complex of this period. Harry Ransom worked as an occasional designer for CRS and Nash. Many of the young architecture faculty at A&M in the 1950s were part-time designers for CRS and other local firms.

George Samuel Parker House

Myers House

This distended territory reconnects with the Kosse grid at the end of S. Bryan Ave., the south tip of the original townsite. The Victorian style **George Samuel Parker House** (800 S. Bryan, 1898, remodeled as a one-story house following a fire in 1947) is located across Beck Street from the compact, manorial style **Charles S. Myers House** (800 Beck, c. 1932). Alice Myers Kyle (a subsequent owner of the Parker House with her husband, A&M dean Edwin J. Kyle) and Charles Myers were the siblings of Bryan (and subsequently Houston) landscape architect J. Allen Myers, Jr. Their father, the senior J. Allen Myers, had been one of the transplanted Millican merchants.

S. Bryan leads to W. 28th, which crosses Main and the H&TC tracks. At S. Tabor and 201 E. 27th St. is the ex-**Bryan Municipal Building** (1929), a modernistic, cast stone city hall and fire station by the Austin architects Giesecke & Harris; Bertram F. Giesecke was the son of Professor F. E. Giesecke. The corner of E. 27th and S. Regent is anchored by the ex-**Wilkerson Memorial Clinic** (1931) by Waco architect Cabe Lewis. The present **Bryan Public Library** (1969, E. Earl Merrell, Jr.) faces the Municipal Building at 200 E. 27th Street and S. Regent. It occupies what was once the H&TC Passenger Station block.

Bryan Municipal Building

At 300 E. 26th Street and S. Washington is the most architecturally significant building in down-

town Bryan, the extensively altered **Brazos County Courthouse and Jail** (1956, Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates). CRS abandoned the monumentality traditionally associated with Texas courthouses for a suburban scale and spatiality indebted to their schools of the period. This was the first important modernist county courthouse in Texas, and it is Bryan's most famous modern building. The 26th Street side of the courthouse, faced with hard red paving brick and polished travertine, is fairly intact, but the one-story, courtyard-centered wings on the Bryan Parkway side have been subsumed within an elephantine rear addition (Jack. W. Cumpton & Associates). Mirroring the scale of the CRS courthouse is the one-story **Bryan Utilities Building** (1967) at 300 S. Washington Ave and E. 28th, with its articulated concrete roof plate, by William E. Nash. Backing up to this spatially amorphous cluster of public buildings is the present **Bryan City Hall** (1988, Williamson Group) at 300 S. Texas Ave. and E. 29th. Assertively facing College Station, it exhibits an aggressive application of maroon-colored reflective glass.

Brazos County Courthouse and Jail

Bryan City Hall

Today **Texas Avenue** divides downtown from Bryan's east side neighborhoods as forcefully as the H&TC tracks once did. Originally called Dallas Ave., Texas was renamed College Ave. in the early 20th century. During the first half of the 20th century, the blocks of S. College between E. 27th and E. 31st streets were Bryan's residential grand avenue. In the mid-1960s, the connection between S. College Ave. and S. Texas Ave. was re-engineered so that Texas took priority and the name of this portion of the street was changed to reflect this. Its role also changed to that of an urban highway, the primary commercial strip of Bryan and College Station. The banks deserted Main Ave., moving three blocks east to Texas Ave. into free-standing pavilions surrounded by parking lots. In the 1980s, most of the banks moved again, away from downtown altogether.

Bryan's oldest Roman Catholic parish, **St. Joseph's Catholic Church** (1959) at 600 E. 26th Street and N. Preston, is Bryan architect W. R. Dede Matthews's tribute to MacKie & Kamrath's St. John The Divine in Houston. At 901 E. Bryan Parkway and N. Pierce, the point of grid break, lies **Travis Elementary School** (1929), designed by Giesecke & Harris in the linear Art Déco style that they employed for the Municipal Building downtown. From the last decade of the 19th century well into the 20th, one of Bryan's most prolific builders was the English-born Charles E. Jenkins, who built the **Edward J. Jenkins House** at 607 E. 27th St. (1895) for his brother, a pharmacist. Historian Margaret Culbertson has determined that this towered and shingled house was based on a design by the Knoxville architect and house-plan publisher George W. Barber. At 508 E. 28th St. and S. Houston Ave. is the **First Methodist Church** (1951, 1955) by Houston architect Edward Bodet, a streamlined neo-Gothic church faced with limestone, like St. Mary's. Note the figural carving perched near the top of its attenuated tower.

Jenkins House

Where the grid shifts direction on E. 29th, one enters the **East Side Historic District** in the **Phillips Addition**, a focus of historic preservation efforts in Bryan. Another imposing Colonial Revival house is that of **Mrs. James H. Astin** (1907), matriarch of the Astin family, by Waco architects Messer & Smith at 600 E. 29th St. and S. Hill. The **W. Olin Sanders House** (1910) at 610 E. 29th St. was the home of Bryan architect W. Olin Sanders, Jr., and is still owned by members of his family. The **Edward Hall House** at 611 E. 29th St. (1902) contributes to the significance of the district. Houston architect J. Rodney Tabor, a member of the first class to graduate in architecture from A&M, designed the **Allister M. Waldrop House** (1910) at 615 E. 29th St. and S. Baker. The popularity of progressive architecture in Bryan is attested by the **Dr. Seborn C. Richardson House** at 811 E. 29th. At the edge of the district at 307 S. Coulter Drive and E. 29th is the columned, neo-Georgian style **Robert B. Butler House** (c. 1947) by William E. Nash. The grandest house on the East Side, vying in size with the Astin House on the West Side, is the **Eugene Edge House** at 609 S. Ennis St., between 31st and 30th (c. 1920), built by a Main

Edge House

Ave. clothier and attributed to the Russell Brown Company of Houston. The **McMichael-Wilson House** at 712 E. 30th St. (1903) is a grandly scaled C. E. Jenkins-built house. The **William R. Cavitt House** (1876) at 713 E. 30th St. and S. Haswell is Bryan's most famous Victorian house and one of the oldest buildings in the city; it occupies a half-block site in the district. It is especially notable for the splendid allée of cedar trees framing the front walk. Both the Cavitt and McMichael-Wilson houses were rehabilitated by A&M Professor and Mrs. Paul Van Riper. William J. Bryan's grandson **Travis B. Bryan** occupied the house at 615 E. 30th St. and S. Hutchins. Members of the Bryan family still live in the Phillips Addition. Another notable house built by C. E. Jenkins is the first **Eugene Edge House** at 508 E. 30th St. and S. Hill (1902).

McMichael-Wilson House

Cavitt House

W. Olin Sanders, Jr., produced several houses on his home territory. The **Wilmer R. McCullough House** at 600 E. 32nd St. and S. Haswell is a one-story French provincial style house, while at 812 S. Ennis St. and E. 33rd is the picturesque manorial style **J. M. Jones House** (1931). Sanders and his partner J. B. Atkinson collaborated with Giesecke & Harris on the imposing **Stephen F. Austin High School** (1939) at 801 S. Ennis St. and E. 32nd. Austin anchors the intersection with its flamboyant angled corner entrance, a restatement of the Giesecke firm's Martin High School in Laredo. Near it, at 715 E. 31st St. and S. Ennis, is the Spanish style **Roy C. Stone House** (1925). One of the most imposing houses in the East Side district is the **Hudson-Harrison House** (1896) at 616 E. 31st and S. Haswell, moved to this site in 1984 and restored by Dr. and Mrs. J. Russell Bradley.

At E. 31st St. and 701 S. Texas Ave. is the **Searcy Clinic** (1950), a low-lying, Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired suburban professional building faced with limestone and designed by Bryan (later San Antonio) architect L. Brooks Martin. Next door to it at 705 S. Texas Ave. is the **J. H. Conway House**, the last of the old "College Avenue" grand avenue houses.

Stephen F. Austin High School

Searcy Clinic

Where Texas Ave. bends to the southeast, one enters the old "new" highway (the "old" highway was S. College—this is the curve that was re-engineered in Texas' favor in the 1960s). The headquarters of **Butler, Inc.**, the contractor and pre-engineered metal building manufacturer at 1504 S. Texas, is an early work of Bryan architect W. R. Dede Matthews (c. 1956). Carson St. connects Texas to S. College Ave.

At 2101-2105 S. College Ave. and Carson are the **Hillcrest Apartments** (c. 1951) by Norton & Mayfield, which are especially prized by A&M architecture staff and students. Downstream, at 1505 S. College, is the ex-**Norton & Mayfield architecture studio** (1949). Williamson St. leads into Lakeview Addition alongside a municipal golf course that was, in the 1940s and '50s, the Bryan Country Club. At 2313 Truman St. is the extensively altered **William W. Caudill House** (1946, Caudill & Rowlett), the first work of Bryan architecture to be published in a national architectural journal. On the south side of the golf course, at 3101 Green St. and W. Villa Maria Road, is the handsomely maintained **Edwin R. Olexa House** (1956), designed by architect and CRS employee E. R. Olexa and subsequently owned by architect, A&M instructor, and CRS partner Charles E. Lawrence. Green St. leads south to the parallel Ehlinger and Lynn drives in the **Munnerlyn Village** subdivision. At their west end is one of the most striking neighborhoods in Bryan, a collection of stationary mobile homes used as affordable housing. The trailers are faced with corrugated siding, which gives them a curiously vanguard look. The landscape improvements are, in some cases, quite imaginative.

Hillcrest Apartments

Caudill House

Olexa House

Munnerlyn Village

Villa Maria Road connects Bryan's south and north sides, arcing through what still remains in places

undeveloped territory on the southeast side of town. This is the post-highway suburban strip; it makes S. Texas and S. College seem spatially intimate by comparison. Off E. Villa Maria at 3300 Parkway Terrace is **Sul Ross Elementary School** (1961) by C. R. Watson Associates of Bryan, which is very CRS-like in character. At 3403 Parkway Terrace is the starkly modern **D. Brooks Cofer, Jr., House** (1964) by A&M architecture professor Theo R. Holleman. Near the intersection of Villa Maria and E. 29th are two major suburban institutional complexes of the 1960s. **St. Joseph's Hospital and Health Center** (1971) by Matthews & Associates at 2801 Franciscan Drive and the pyramid-roofed pavilions of **Crestview Home for Senior Citizens** (1964) at 2502 W. Villa Maria by E. Earl Merrell, Jr., with Thomas B. Thompson of San Antonio.

East 29th Street leads to Esther Boulevard, which intersects Wayside Drive in Cavitt's **Woodland Heights** Addition. Woodland Heights was planned in 1935 by landscape architect N. M. McGinnis for the W. E. Cavitt Estate along the new Highway 6 (now S. Texas), just as construction was nearing completion. It was the first of the highway-related subdivisions and Bryan's first garden subdivision. At 2111 Wayside Dr. is the beautifully detailed, limestone-faced **Earl C. Cunningham House** (1959) by Merrell & Vrooman, an especially notable work of A&M architecture professor Richard E. Vrooman. At 2601–2609 S. Texas, corner of Lawrence, is the trimly detailed **Mauro Building**, a strip office building with a continuous clerestory built by the father of Texas Land Commissioner Garry Mauro (1956, Henry D. Mayfield, Jr.). At 2800 S. Texas and Oak, the four-story, reinforced concrete ex-**Bryan Building & Loan Association Building** (1967), designed by Chartier C. Newton for the office of Matthews & Associates, stands out as one of the most architecturally distinctive buildings on Texas Ave. Next door at 2900 S. Texas and Dellwood is the ex-**Clayton's Restaurant** (1957) by E. Earl Merrell, Jr., of the Martin, Lemmon, Merrell & Vrooman partnership, a spirited example of designed roadside architecture, with its wide roof overhangs and angled window bays. Unfortunately, its owner, First Federal Bank, added a gratuitous mansard

Cunningham House

Bryan Building and Loan Bldg

BW Building

Medical Arts Clinic

roof in 1998. Partners A. M. Martin and James H. Lemmon, Jr., of the same firm were responsible for the **BW Building** across the street at 2909–2919 S. Texas Avenue (c. 1956), which also features a continuous clerestory.

At S. Texas and Mary Lake Lane, a pair of modern clinics confront each other. The ex-**Medical Arts Clinic** at 3501 S. Texas (1951, Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates) is faced with CRS's distinctive hard red brick and lit by a continuous clerestory band tucked beneath the low-pitched roof overhangs. The ex-**Dr. W. H. Ritchey Clinic** (c. 1953, William E. Nash with Harry S. Ransom) at 3500 S. Texas is more contained, with its flat roof, framed loggia, and walls of glass.

Down **Mary Lake Lane**, on both sides of the street between S. Texas and Holick, are several duplex houses in varying states of repair. These spill around the corner to 3419–17 Holick Lane. Built in 1953 by College Station builder, developer, and architect *manqué* William D. Fitch, this was the **architects' ghetto** in the 1950s. CRS partners Wallie Scott and William M. Peña lived here, as did A&M design faculty members Edward L. Romsenec, Frank Lawyer, Ed Olexa, Tiny Lawrence, and Dave Yarbrough. A&M landscape architecture professor Robert E. White designed a garden and swimming pool area (no longer extant) shared by the housing units. The integration of house and carport beneath a low-pitched, open gable roof represents the most pervasive modern house type in Bryan and College Station of the 1950s.

Off S. College Ave. at 100 W. Brookside Dr. is the ex-**W. R. Dede Matthews architecture studio** (1961), with its laminated wood beam roof deck. After CRS moved to Houston in 1958, Matthews's office became the talent pool of Bryan and College Station, especially when A&M faculty members Charles E. Estes, John Only Greer, Hal Moseley, Jr., Chartier C. Newton, and W. Cecil Steward, Jr. were associated with the firm in the 1960s.

At E. Brookside and S. College one enters **North Oakwood Addition**, laid out in 1938 by the College Station developer H. E. Burgess and

designed by Frederick W. Hensel, the first professor of landscape architecture at A&M. Bryan architect **Henry D. Mayfield, Jr.**, built his family's house at 100 E. Brookside (1946, altered); this was the childhood home of his son, Houston architect H. Davis Mayfield III. At 301 E. Brookside Dr. is an early work of Caudill Rowlett Scott & Associates, the **Professor R. L. Pueriloy House** (1950). Along E. Brookside, stands of dense, post oak woodland landscape alternate with the rolling suburban lawns of North Oakwood.


Varisco House

The combination of limestone, wood, and brick identifies the contemporary style **Brazos A. Varisco House** at 415 E. Brookside (c. 1952) as the work of Norton & Mayfield. Bryan's first modern house is the now slightly altered **Margaret Pearce House** (1941) at 303 Crescent Dr. by Houston architects MacKie & Kamrath. The most stunning modern house in North Oakwood is the **Clifton C. Carter House** at 411 Crescent Dr. (1956), designed by William E. Nash for Carter, an LBJ political operative, where the architecture accentuates the sloping site. At 500 Crescent Drive is the **Dr. R. P. Marsteller House** (1946), the most handsome traditional style house in North Oakwood. At 510 College View and Oakwood is the **Dr. William C. Banks House** (c. 1952), another work of Norton & Mayfield.


Pearce House


Carter House

On the east side of S. Texas Ave., Inwood Dr. leads to the intersection of Tanglewood Dr. and the **Andrew L. Ogg House** (c. 1954) at 801 Tanglewood by William E. Nash with Harry S. Ransom, which displays a sectionally activated profile.


Ogg House

Across S. Texas Ave. from North Oakwood is Bryan's poshest in-town neighborhood, **Beverley Estates**, designed in 1938 by landscape architect Fritz Hensel for developers William M. Sparks and Douglas W. Howell. As if to compensate for the


Albritton House

unassuming entrance (alongside a strip shopping center), Beverley Estates presents a line-up of big biggies on N. Rosemary Dr., of which the most notable is the **Ford D. Albritton, Jr., House** at 726 N. Rosemary (1965). This was designed by William E. Nash based on a preliminary design by Mrs. Albritton's brother, San Augustine architect Raiford W. Stripling. It is a grand-scaled, Palladianized version of the Greek Revival Ezekiel W. Cullen House in San Augustine. Several years after completion, Dallas architect John Astin Perkins made major additions to the rear of the house, including a domed classical bathhouse pavilion. Around the loop at 748 S. Rosemary is the **Professor Philip C. Murdoch House** (1950), a large modern house by Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates that has suffered unsympathetic alterations.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, the oldest state-supported institution of higher education in Texas, opened on this site in 1876. In 1871, a group of Bryan citizens offered the State of Texas 2,416 acres of land, 4½ miles south of the center of town and adjoining the Houston & Texas Central Railway line, as an inducement to locate its land-grant college in Brazos County. This offer determined the long-term future of Bryan and its eventual sibling College Station.

Architecture began to be taught at A&M in 1905 under the direction of Frederick E. Giesecke, an engineering graduate of the college. This was the first academic program of architectural instruction in Texas. Landscape architecture began to be taught as a discipline in 1923 under Frederick W. Hensel, also an A&M alumnus. From the 1900s through the 1930s, the senior architecture faculty were responsible for designing new campus buildings. Because of his long tenure, Giesecke's name appears with great frequency on university cornerstones. During the 1940s and 1950s, the College Architect (an appointment that tended to circulate among Bryan architects, all A&M alumni) designed most new buildings. As late as the mid-1960s, Dede Matthews of Bryan filled this role in a *de facto* capacity.

In 1931, following protracted negotiations with the University of Texas, Texas A&M got access to the state's oil-rich Permanent University Fund endowment, which financed a wave of ambitious new construction at both A&M and UT. While UT hired Paul Philippe Cret of Philadelphia to reshape its Austin campus, A&M turned once again to Professor Giesecke. Giesecke's design staff, led by the brilliant draftsman and ornamentalist S. C. P. Vosper, a professor of architecture from 1929 until 1933, produced the buildings that symbolize A&M. These adhered to the conservative typologies that had dominated the campus since the beginning of the 20th century. But they are enlivened by sparkling, inventive detail in tile, terra cotta, cast stone, and metals.

In 1963, Texas Agricultural & Mechanical College became Texas A&M University and women were admitted for the first time as regular students. Between the mid 1960s and the mid 1970s, the university's enrollment tripled. A building boom during the administrations of presidents J. Earl Rudder and Jack Williams met this increase in students and new academic programs. Since 1970, new buildings have been much bigger than pre-1970 buildings and tend to consist of aggressive shapes masked by brick or precast concrete cladding. When not constrained by the spatial order of the campus core, they tend to lose any sense of connection to a larger spatial whole. As a result, the outlying sectors of the central campus, especially the West Campus, lack a distinctive sense of architecturally defined place.

Beginning the fraying of the edges was the **U.S. Department of Agriculture Building** (1942, now Dulie Bell Hall) by Houston architect Alfred C. Finn at the corner of University Dr. and Wellborn Road. It is one of the few campus buildings not in alignment with the university's Academic Building. Finn had no A&M connection. But this building was financed with loans from the federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation, presided over by Finn's client, Houston entrepreneur Jesse H. Jones. Finn's involvement at A&M hinged on this connection. Adjoining are two Finn-designed dormitories: **Crocker** and **McInnis Halls** (1942). Visible from Wellborn are the backs of **Moses, Keathley,** and **Fowler Halls**, low-rise, balcony-accessed modern dormitories by Matthews & Associates (1964).

Marking the historic **West Gate** entrance from Wellborn Road (originally the entrance from the H&TC tracks and the College Station stop) is the **Albritton Bell Tower** (1984) by Morris*Aubry Architects of Houston, a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ford D. Albritton, Jr., which straddles Old Main Drive. As early as 1911 Professor Giesecke sought to reshape campus space more resolutely than it had been in the 19th century by enforcing axes of movement and view, to which Professor Hensel was to contribute with his planting of live oak trees. Thus the historic Simpson Drill Field, once disencumbered of the faculty housing and student dormitories built on and around it, became a monumental grass mall, establishing a grander sense of scale.

Memorial Student Center

On the south side of the Drill Field is the **Memorial Student Center** (1950, Carleton W. Adams, System Architect). Despite an obtrusive porte-cochère added in 1973, the MSC stands out as a classic 40s-modern version of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School architecture, with its emphatic horizontality and rich materials palette, including a base course of fossilated Texas limestone. The Los Angeles interior decorator Robert D. Harrell, who had just completed the interiors of the Shamrock Hotel in Houston, was responsible for the center's original interiors. Adams, a veteran San Antonio architect, had such architects as Wallie Scott, Brooks Martin, and Nikkie Holleman on his staff when the Memorial Center was designed. Glommed onto the east side of the building is the **J. Earl Rudder Center** (1973) by Jarvis Putty Jarvis of Dallas, an arts, performance, continuing education, and conference complex that includes a 12-story tower. The New York decorator William Pahlmann designed its interiors; his excesses—particularly his Flag Room—prompted campus protest.

All Faiths Chapel

On the north side of the Drill Field is **Henderson Hall** (1958), a dormitory by Carleton W. Adams that is a reprise of the Memorial Student Center. Next to it is one of the most modest and affecting buildings on campus, **All Faiths Chapel** (1957), by Richard E. Vrooman with Ernest Langford. Faced with fossilated limestone, the chapel is the campus's

only contribution to the modern architectural movement that was so important to College Station and Bryan in the 1950s. Vrooman's expansive, de-centered interior, indoor-outdoor vistas, anti-monumentality, and fine detailing make the chapel a moving place. Unfortunately, the grounds, originally designed by Robert F. White, are not as well maintained as the building.

Bookending the axis at the edge of the central campus are the **YMCA Building** (1914) by architecture professor S. J. Fountain and the **Richard Coke Building** (1951) by Houston architects Herbert S. Voelcker & Associates. They frame the domed **Academic Building** (1914) by F. E. Giesecke and Samuel E. Gideon. In 1912, Giesecke left A&M to start the architecture program at UT, taking his star design critic, Sam Gideon, with him. This defection was not held against Giesecke, who returned to A&M as professor of architecture and College Architect in 1927. Until 1964, the architecture department occupied the top floor of the Academic Building. A focus of ritual reverence is Pompeo Coppini's standing bronze figure of **Lawrence Sullivan Ross** (1919). Sul Ross was president of A&M College and governor of Texas. Flanking the Academic Building to the south and north are the nearly identical **Civil Engineering Building** (1909, now Nagle Hall) and **Electrical Engineering Building** (1912, now Bolton Hall), both by Giesecke. The Academic Building and the two engineering buildings are examples of the engineer's classicism that was Giesecke's *forte*. Their composition, scale, and brown brick facing are redolent of the county courthouses and high schools that A&M students would have known from their home towns, a connection that makes the central campus buildings archetypes of the landscape of early 20th-century Texas.

Academic Building

To the west of Nagle Hall is **Hart Hall** (1930), with its chamfered corners, a dormitory by F. E. Giesecke. According to Ernest Langford's invaluable document on the architectural history of the A&M campus, *Here We'll Build the College* (1963), all of the buildings produced during Giesecke's second tenure as College Architect were designed by S. C. P. Vosper. Hart Hall's chamfered corners play off the angled front of the **Extension Administration Building** (1924, now Military Sciences) by E. B. LaRoche, a professor of architecture who went on to become a partner of Herbert M. Greene and George L. Dahl of Dallas, architects for UT during the 1920s and 1930s. LaRoche's building in turn frames the classical portico of the **Research Administration Building** (1918, now Butler Hall), one of the few campus buildings between the 1900s and 1950s produced by an outside architect, in this case, William Ward Watkin of Houston and his partner George Endress of Austin. Watkin, professor of architecture at the Rice Institute, also designed the original campus buildings of Texas Technological College in Lubbock in the 1920s. Abutting the Military Sciences Building is the **Physics Building** (1921, now Psychology). It was designed

Butler Hall

*by architecture instructor W. Scott Dunne, best remembered as a Dallas architect who spe-*cialized in the design of movie theaters across Texas in the 1920s and 1930s. It mirrors the **Mechanical Engineering Building** (1920, now Fermier Hall) to the north of the Academic Building, by Rolland Adelsperger, a professor of architecture. A modern note is sounded by the concrete framed **Biological Sciences Building** (1966, now Biological Sciences West) by Matthews & Associates. The Matthews office adopted modern structural expression but fit the building to its context by respecting existing heights, alignments, and typologies.

The **Cushing Library** (1930, F. E. Giesecke) was designed and built before the Permanent University Fund monies became available. It has the scale and dignity, if not the ornamental exuberance, of Giesecke and Vosper's subsequent campus buildings. The quadrangle framed by the Cushing Library and the Academic Building is the heart of the old campus. The coloration and scale of the surrounding architecture, and especially the presence of the live oak trees planted by Fritz Hensel, make this collegiate space feel very much like those on the UT campus in Austin. This perception works best if one stands with one's back to the multistory **Harrington Education Center** (1974) by Bartlett Cocke & Associates of San Antonio, a behemoth that parodies the architecture of O'Neil Ford. The mercilessness of post-1970 architecture at A&M begins to be inescapably apparent here. The Cushing Library is now the tail of a vast library complex: the body is Jarvis Putty Jarvis's **Sterling C. Evans Library** (1968), the maw is the aggressive and ungainly **Sterling C. Evans Library Addition** (1980) by Preston M. Geren & Associates of Fort Worth, which consumed a landscaped plaza formerly located between the library and the classical **Agriculture Building** (1923, E. B. LaRoche). South of the Evans Library is another of Matthews & Associates' deferential modern buildings, the interestingly textured **Plant Sciences Building** (1962, now C. F. Peterson Building). Following the side street that Peterson faces leads, on axis, to the **Corps of Cadets Dormitory Group** (1939, Alfred C. Finn), a symmetrically organized complex of banded brick buildings forming a series of linked quadrangles built with RFC funding.

Plant Sciences Building

South of the Agriculture Building is the ex-**Animal Husbandry Pavilion** (1917, Rolland Adelsperger), now a student services center. North of the library is another classically detailed Endress & Watkin academic building, **Francis Hall** (1918). To the west is a cross-axial mall onto which Giesecke and Vosper's immense **Chemistry Building** (1929) faces. Colorful tile spandrel panels beneath its second- and third-floor windows exhibit chemical symbols. Turning east along the street that passes the Chemistry Building, one is especially aware of the line of cypress trees planted to complement Hensel's live oaks. Across the street is another of the extraordinary buildings that Giesecke and Vosper produced, the **Petroleum Engineering and Geology Building** (1932, now Halbouty Geosciences).

Petroleum Engineering and Geology Building

Veterinary Hospital Building

Its polychrome tile spandrel panels are especially captivating, as are its crisp cast stone sculptural details, another Vosper specialty. Halbouty has lost its marvelous Art Déco tower, which was twice as tall as the building and metamorphosed from a square in plan to an octagon at its summit with inset *muqarnas*. A multistory annex to the Chemistry Building is the **New Chemistry Building** (1984) by Pierce Goodwin Alexander of Houston. At the east end of the street is the **Veterinary Hospital Building** (1934, now Civil Engineering) by Giesecke and Vosper. Since the hospital was only two stories high rather than three, Vosper compensated by laying on the cast stone ornament.

Scoates Hall

Turning back, then heading south, one re-engages the main axis and an entire new quadrangle shaped as part of the east campus expansion of the early 1930s. Facing each other across the wide green lawn are Giesecke and Vosper's **Agricultural Engineering Building** (1932, now Scoates Hall) and the **Animal Industries Building** (1932). Scoates Hall stands out by virtue of its giant-scaled entrance portal, suffused with ornament in a variety of media. The tower-framed Animal Industries Building also possesses a bold entrance pavilion, where Vosper's iconography takes on a pronounced Texan flavor: cattle brands appear as cast metal ornament around the front door. Terminating the axis is the **John K. Williams Administration Building** (1932, F. E. Giesecke with S. C. P. Vosper and Raiford W. Stripling), a palace-like classical block faced with cast stone. Its visual impact from the east is even more dramatic. The site was graded so that the building appears to rise on a promontory on axis with New Main Drive, which Fritz Hensel framed with live oaks. Stairs descend from the Administration Building to a symmetrical parterre at the level of New Main Drive. The interior of the building is as exuberantly colored and ornamented as a 1920s movie palace.

Animal Industries Building

Flanking the Administration Building are the 12-story **Eller Oceanography and Meteorology Building** (1973, Preston M. Geren & Associates) and the **Langford Architecture Center**, home of the College of Environmental Design (1977, 1964, Harwood K. Smith & Partners). The most clever work of modern design in the east quadrangle is the undulating **berms** at its west end (1976, Myrick Newman Dahlberg, landscape architects), behind the Agricultural Building. These emphasize the flat sweep of the quadrangle lawn and ingeniously screen a parking lot that has held on at the center of the campus.

Kyle Field

Between existing buildings is the **Library, Computing, and Study Complex**, a huge but considerately scaled annex to the Evans Library by Austin architects Graeber, Simmons & Cowan (1998). **Kyle Field**,

the university's football stadium, is an extraordinary landmark. It incorporates, on its lowest tier, the original stadium built between 1927 and 1929 to the designs of architects Henry N. June and Ernest Langford and engineer C. E. Sandstedt. The highrise upper decks, served by projecting curved ramps (Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, 1980), raise the profile of Kyle Field and give it its commanding presence in the landscape.

Across Wellborn Road and the H&TC tracks from the central campus is A&M's **West Campus**, which has taken shape since the 1970s. It is not the architectural design of buildings that makes the West Campus problemmatic but the lack of a campus plan. Buildings appear to be sited at random, as though this were an architectural parking lot. The major buildings on the West Campus include: the **Recreational Sports Center and Natatorium** (1995) by Marmon Mok of San Antonio, the **Kleberg Center** by 3D/International of Houston, the **Heep Center for Soil and Crop Sciences and Entomology** (1977) by Omniplan of Dallas, the **Biochemistry/Biophysics Building** (1989) by Harper, Kemp, Clutts & Parker of Dallas, the **Horticulture/Forest Service Center Building** (1984) by Fisher & Spillman of Dallas, the **West Campus Library** (1994) by Ray Bailey Architects of Houston, the **E. L. Wehner Business Administration Building** (1994) by Harper, Kemp, Clutts & Parker, the **Reynolds Medical Building** (1983) by Page Southerland Page of Austin, and the **Medical Science Library** (1985) by Chumney, Jones & Kell of San Antonio. Across Stotzer Parkway, a continuation of University Drive, is the **Veterinary Medicine Small Animal Clinic** (1981), also by Chumney, Jones & Kell.

The architectural climax of the West Campus is the **George Bush Presidential Library and Museum** (1997), designed by CRSS of Houston and completed by Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum after it absorbed CRSS. Isolated in a landscape park, the museum and library seem to forecast the innocuous suburban future toward which College Station is striving.

George Bush Presidential Library and Museum

John K. Williams Administration Building and lawn

New Main Drive looking from the University Administration Building

C O L L E G E S T A T I O N

College Station was the name given to the H&TC train stop opposite the campus of Texas A&M College. Until the 1920s, faculty lived on the campus in an array of houses between the college station and the main building. The campus was in the open countryside and there was little surrounding settlement. In the early 1920s a group of faculty members developed a residential subdivision, College Park, south of the campus. It was joined by a second Southside subdivision in the early 1930s, a subdivision at East Gate and the new Highway 6 in the late 1930s, and institutional and commercial development at North Gate along N. College Main St. In 1938, College Station was incorporated as a city, inhabited almost entirely by A&M faculty members and staff. From 1942 until 1966, Ernest Langford, professor of architecture at A&M, head of the architecture department from 1929 until 1956, and general *éminence grise*, was mayor of College Station.

North Gate is the commercial and institutional area on University Drive opposite the A&M campus. In the 1920s, it was where different religious organizations began to build chapels ministering to students, some quite substantial in size.

The earliest of these chapels no longer exists: the Spanish style St. Mary's Catholic Chapel (1926), designed by the El Paso architects Trost & Trost at 607 University and N. Nagle. Immediately behind the site of the Trost chapel lies **St. Mary's Student Center** (1954) at 103 N. Nagle St. and N. Church Ave. Designed by William E. Nash with Harry S. Ransom, this unassuming modern building is house-like in scale. Closed on its street sides, it opens to a rear garden originally planned by Robert F. White. Its days may be numbered.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

The most architecturally sensational house of worship in North Gate is **Our Savior's Lutheran Church** (1956) at 309 Tauber St. and Cross by A&M architecture instructor and CRS partner-to-be Frank D. Lawyer, with Ernest Langford. Bravura structural and glazing details complement the sweep of its ascending roof. Note the CRS-like use of hard red paving brick. Much more subdued in treatment is the **University Lutheran Chapel** (1965) at 315 N. College Main St. and Cross by A&M instructor Rocky Thorpe. Tucked inconspicuously into the mixed landscape of North Gate is the **post oak woodland garden** at 314 Spruce and N. College Main, cultivated by Robert F. White (1964). Ernest Langford designed the sedate, classically detailed **A&M Church of Christ** (1933) at 301 N. College Main St. with Milton Foy Martin of Houston. At 203 N. College Main and N. Church is the **Baptist Student Center** (1950) by Norton & Mayfield, one of several Baptist student centers designed across Texas at that time by Henry O. Mayfield.

A&M Church of Christ

Unfortunately, the most architecturally distinctive commercial building on University, the streamlined ex-**Campus Theater** (c. 1941) at 217 University and N. Boyett, has been defaced. William M. Sparks's **Aggieland Pharmacy Building** (c. 1938) at 401-405 University and N. College Main has been a focus of the City of College Station's program in the late 1990s to rehabilitate North Gate. The block of College Main just off University was the first part of North Gate to be intensively commercialized. San Antonio architect Henry Steinbomer was responsible for the dignified neo-Gothic **A&M Methodist Church** (1946, 1951) at 417 University Dr. and Tauber.

Aggieland Pharmacy Building

The northernmost point in North Gate is **Hensel Park** off S. College. This 30 acre park, which belongs to Texas A&M, commemorates pioneer landscape architecture professor Fritz Hensel with a dense preserve of post oak woodland marking the boundary between College Station and Bryan.

East Gate lies on the side of the A&M campus bordering Texas Ave. This had been the back door to the college until the Texas Ave. highway opened in 1936. Walton Drive, a continuation of the imposing New Main Drive into the campus, leads to the subdivision of **College Hills Estates**, developed by John C. Culpepper beginning in 1938. Although its houses are not remarkable, College Hills features the generous **Thomas Park** esplanade between Puryear Drive and James Parkway. Reflecting his market base, Culpepper named many of the streets of College Hills for senior members of the A&M faculty, among them the dean of engineering and future college president Frank C. Bolton, father of Houston architect Preston M. Bolton. Backing up to College Hills Estates is the **College Station City Hall, Police, and Fire Building** (1970, C. R. Watson Associates; 1984, Russell Stogsdill) at 1101 Texas Ave. and Francis St.

Just south of the Texas-George Bush Drive intersection, Park Place South intersects Texas. Hidden on Park Place, behind the commercial strip along Texas, is one of College Station's small African American enclaves, which originated as a rural subdivision of the Kapchinski family farm. Off Anderson St. at Wolf Run Lane is the **Wolfpen Village** subdivision begun by Robert D. Martell in 1971. It is the townhouse enclave of College Station. Row houses, many designed by College Station architects J. W. Wood Associates, are faced with Mexican brick, the material of choice in College Station since the 1970s.

At George Bush Dr. and Holick, the one building that survives from **A&M Consolidated Senior High School** by Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates is visible: the 600-seat **Auditorium** (1954), its flying saucer-like roof supported on exposed laminated timber arches. Also gone are all components of the original **Consolidated School** (1940) by Clarence J. Finney and Ernest Langford at George Bush and Timber. Like the High School, the Consolidated School was published in the national architectural press; it was one of the earliest schools in Texas planned according to modernist principles.

Auditorium


Giesecke House

Timber Lane leads through another Bill Fitch-built subdivision. The east side of the 300 and 400 blocks are lined with Fitch's variations on the favored Bryan-College Station '50s modern house type. Park Place S. leads to the **Southside** subdivision of **Oakwood Addition** (1932), developed by H. E. Burgess. Clearly predating the 1930s is the **Giesecke House** (1891) at 1102 Park Place S. and Lee, the second oldest building in College Station and once home to architect F. E. Giesecke. After the A&M administration decided to remove all houses from the campus in 1939, many of the wooden cottages that had lined the perimeter of Simpson Drill Field and the zone where the Memorial Student Center was built were moved into Oakwood Addition and the neighboring College Park. (Professor and Mrs. Paul Van Riper have been able to identify 41 of these houses in College Station, Bryan, and Brazos County.) This house, which originally stood on the site of the Memorial Student Center, has been rehabilitated by architect Gerald Maffei. Its grounds have been brilliantly landscaped by artist Joan Maffei.

Newton. Adjoining is **Canterbury House** (1975) by David G. Woodcock with M. O. Lawrence. St. Thomas Chapel was subsequently joined on the Southside by the **B'nai Brith Hillel Foundation** (1958) at 800 George Bush Dr. and E. Dexter Drive, designed by Houston architects Lenard Gabert & W. Jackson Wisdom.

The oldest neighborhood in College Station is **College Park**, developed in 1923 by Floyd B. Clark, professor of economics at A&M, and his associates in the Southside Development Company: Charles W. Burchard, professor of chemistry; Daniel Scoates, professor of agricultural engineering; and M. M. Daugherty. The centerpiece of College Park is the picturesque **Brison Park**, bounded by East and West Dexter Drives and named for F. R. Brison, professor of horticulture. This was planned by landscape architect Fritz Hensel, who also designed the subdivision. Among the house sites that slope toward the park are those of **Professor Clark** at 305 E. Dexter (1924), **Professor Brison** at 600 W. Dexter, and the first


Brison Park


Warner House


Couch House

At 300 Lee Ave. formerly stood the first work of modern architecture in College Station, the small **Clarence J. Finney House** (1936), which A&M architecture professor Jack Finney designed and built for himself. Influenced by the Usonian houses of Frank Lloyd Wright, Finney planned his flat-roofed wood house for maximum penetration by the prevailing southeast breeze. Similar considerations are visible in the **C. E. Warner House** at 211 Lee (c. 1936), with its south-side screened porch. Developer **Hershel E. Burgess** lived at 112 Lee in a restrained neo-Georgian house designed by Ernest Langford (1935). At 202 Pershing and Suffolk is the most striking house in Oakwood, the Monterey style **J. R. Couch House** (1940). Professor Langford was also architect for the suburban-rustic **St. Thomas Chapel** (1938), the Episcopal student chapel, at 906 George Bush Dr. between Pershing and Newton, which is now attached to the larger **St. Thomas Episcopal Church** (1995) by Austin architect Chartier C.


Schamber House

Ernest Langford House (1929) at 602 W. Dexter. At 606 Jersey Drive, on the north side of the park, is the compact modern **Richard E. Vrooman House** (1955) by architecture professor Dik Vrooman. There are two other small modern houses of note in College Park: the **Vick E. Schember House** (c. 1953) at 511 Ayrshire St. and Bell by William E. Nash with Harry S. Ransom and the **L. Brooks Martin House** (1950) at 504 Park Place S. and Walsh by L. Brooks Martin. Note that on the west side of Brison Park, the streets are named for different breeds of cattle. College Park launched Professor Clark on a long career as one of College Station's foremost residential real estate developers.


Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship

At 305 Wellborn Rd. is the ex-**A&M Christian Church** (now the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship, c. 1949) by A&M architecture professor Ben H. Evans, which is sited in a shady grove. Its angled louvered wings (1981) are by College

Station architect Rodney C. Hill. Around the corner, above Rother's Bookstore in the **Southside Community Center** at 340 George Bush Dr. and Montclair (c. 1938), is the second-floor office space where Bill Caudill and John M. Rowlett set up what would become Caudill Rowlett Scott in 1947.


Caudill House

Following E. Dexter south to Holleman Drive, then east to Winding Road, brings one to **The Knoll**. This was developed by F. B. Clark in 1947. The Knoll was conceived as the modern architecture enclave of College Station. Although it never quite attained the design stature envisioned for it, The Knoll is a showcase of College Station modernism of the 1950s. Its single, loop street descends at 1206 Orr Dr. where the architectural highlight of the neighborhood, the second **William W. Caudill House** (1953, Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates), is located. Turned on its site to open to the downward slope, the brick and glass Caudill House and its companion rear studio building communicate the enthusiasm for going modern that was so appealing in the 1950s. The **Frank D. Lawyer House** (1954) at 1214 Orr by architect Lawyer is closed on its long street side by a wall of cement panels and high-set clerestory windows. Note how stands of post oak woodland landscaping separate the house sites on The Knoll.


Lawyer House


Evans House

Around the corner at 1104 Langford St., as the loop road begins to rise, is a corrugated cement paneled house designed by **Ben H. Evans** for his family (c. 1957). The Evans House has suffered from extensive additions, but the spatial counterpoint between the house and its open carport is still apparent. **Theo R. Holleman** designed his family's house (1961) at 1110 Langford. At 1115 Langford and Winding Road is the **Fred Weick House** (1949) by Caudill, Rowlett, Scott & Associates. Faced with limestone, it is an expansive version of the College Station modern house type. The second **Ernest Langford House** (1957) is at 1200 Langford; it has been altered. The **David D. Yarbrough House** (c. 1960) at 1213 Winding Road was designed by A&M architecture instructor and former CRS employee Yarbrough with paneled walls of black glazed brick. At 1211 Winding Road is the **Dean W. W. Armistead House** (c. 1955). L. Brooks Martin designed the altered, split-level **Professor Arthur G. Edmonds House** (1949) at 1205 Winding Road. Professor Clark named several of the streets on The Knoll and its extension, The South Knoll, for architects who built their houses on The Knoll: Langford, Caudill, and Franklin Lawyer. Langford St. leads past the **Longley House** at 1215 (c. 1970), an unexpected bit of old Santa Fe. At 1220 Boswell St. is E. Earl Merrill's **South Knoll Elementary School** (1967), a testament to his apprenticeship with CRS.


Weick House


Yarbrough House


Armistead House

Southside developed in spatial layers: the interwar layer between George Bush and Holleman Dr. was followed by the postwar layer between Holleman and Southwest Parkway. The 1960s and '70s layer is between Southwest Parkway and West Loop 2818. Along 2818, churches stand out as the most visible works of architecture in the exploded landscape of sprawl, especially **Peace Lutheran Church** (1981) by Rodney C. Hill at 2201 Rio Grande Blvd. and West Loop 2818 and the flamboyantly post-modern **Friends United Church of Christ** (1984) by Clovis Heimsath Associates of Austin at 1300 West Loop 2818.


St. Francis Episcopal Church

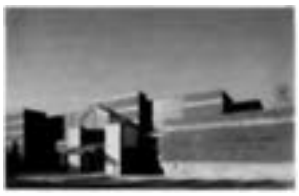
New College Station lies south of Deacon Drive. Along Rock Prairie Road, **St. Francis Episcopal Church** at 1101 (1987, Holster & Associates) and the **College Station Medical**

Zweig House

Center Hospital (1987, Page Southerland Page) at 1604 Rock Prairie are the architectural stand outs. On the east side of the East Bypass, Rock Prairie leads to Stonebrook Dr. and to Wilshire Court. At 1307 Wilshire Court is the **Julius M. Gribou House** (1997) by A&M architecture department head Julius Gribou. The northbound frontage road leads to Sebesta, Foxfire, Frost, and eventually to 2509 Fitzgerald Circle, where the dramatic, triangular **Peter J. Zweig House** (1977), designed as an environmentally responsive house by Houston architect Zweig while teaching at A&M, is located. At 2541 East Bypass is **St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church** (1989), with its spatially remarkable interior, by College Station architects Holstar & Associates with A&M architecture professor David C. Ekroth. An homage to Gerry Maffei's Tin House is the Galvalume-surfaced, shed-like **Tin House** at 2504 Raintree Dr. (1997), designed and built by A&M architecture students Charley Hatfield and Matthew De Wolf.

Tin House

Foley's



Scott & White Clinic

Since opening in the late 1970s, the Highway 6 Bypass has stimulated sprawling suburban development. College Station's shopping mall, Post Oak Mall, was built at the Harvey Road intersection (1982); its primary architectural component is **Foley's** by Houston architects Lloyd Jones Brewer & Associates. At 1602 University Dr. E. and the Bypass is the College Station branch of the **Scott & White Clinic** of Temple (1996) Page Southerland Page.

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Linda L. Sylvan, executive director
Texas A&M University
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Julius M. Gribou, department head
College of Architecture Technical Reference Center
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