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EIGHTY YEARS AND YOUNGER

by

Paige W. Christiansen

Without students there can be no college. That is a fact; clear and concise. While all the other elements are essential, such as a highly trained faculty, buildings, libraries, and so on, the students are still the center around which a school builds. This year 1969, marks the 80th year since the founding of New Mexico Tech. It is perhaps well at this moment to recount in the student annual some of the facts, activities, and traditions of her many students.

Throughout most of its history, New Mexico Tech has been a school for men. Women did attend occasionally prior to the decade of the 1950s. In the very early days, while the preparatory department (high school) was still in existence, a few women received their high school education at the academy. Let the record show that the first young lady to receive a diploma from the School of Mines was Miss Effie Berry, who graduated from the academy in 1900. The first woman to be graduated from the College Division was Mrs. Irene Ryan who graduated in 1940, receiving her Bachelor of Science Degree in Geological Engineering. Since the mid-1950s the school has in reality become co-educational, and there has been an increasing number of women on campus—a fact that has had considerable impact upon the character and direction of campus life.

The academic interests of Tech students have varied widely over the history of the school. In all, Tech has graduated 1271 students since its founding in 1889. Of these 720 have received their degrees in some branch of engineering, the remainder, of 551, have been in one of the sciences or mathematics (201 of the 551 have graduated since 1963). This changing emphasis has had its impact on traditions and student activities alike. Those activities related to engineering, particularly mining engineering, have been de-emphasized, or altered to fit the new interests. It should be pointed out, however, that there has been and is a continuity with the past and student activities and traditions still reflect the early history of the school.

Several traditions have emerged at Tech which should be given special attention because of their age and persistence. The painting of the M on Socorro Mountain is the oldest tradition on the campus, dating back about 1910. In 1916 the painting of the M was officially recognized and the day set aside for painting became an academic holiday. The painting of the M has been faithfully followed over the years by the students, and has now become the property of the Fredianes. Since 1958, the painting of the M has been incorporated into a second tradition which has played an important role on the campus. The St. Pat's celebration dates back to 1924. Planned by the students, it was immediately given an official sanction by the president of the school, E. H. Wells. Wells was, in fact, the first person initiated into the Tech chapter of the Order of St. Pat's. The painting of the M have both been combined into a single series of events which fill the current spring academic holiday in March.

Perhaps the best known of Tech traditions, both among students and alumni, is the "49ers" celebration. It has had a stormy history. The first "49ers" was held in a very abbreviated format in 1921, and between then and 1924 it blossomed into its traditional form. The 1924 celebration marked the true beginning of a full-scale celebration and academic holiday. The 1924 senior class adopted the celebration as a method of raising money for its class gift. To the dance and carnival they added gambling and costumes. The principal gambling was twenty-one and roulette, the roulette wheel being rented from a local justice of the peace. Special paper money was printed for the occasion and sold for a small amount. The annual celebration continued panning this line for many years. Later a barbeque was added, as was a barbecue, but the celebration remained on campus, a school activity, until after World War II.

After the war the nature of the celebration was vastly changed. The dance and the barbecue remained on campus, but the rest of the activities were moved to the Socorro plaza. This ultimately destroyed it as a school function since there was no way for the school to supervise activities. The celebration was officially cancelled as a school event in 1960.

But traditions are difficult to kill. In 1967 the students at Tech brought "49ers" back. They built it into all of the excitement of the early days plus many innovations. Back is the Red Eye Saloon, the western town, the parade, the gambing, the costumes, and it again a respected, on-campus celebration, one that has the full support of students, alumni and the college administration.

One can easily overlook student contributions to the life of a college when evaluating such weighty considerations as budgets, curriculum, regents' meetings, faculty meetings, enrollment statistics and the like. But from time to time it is essential to drop the veil of officialism and recognize that students are vital to the health and vitality of any institution. The student body at New Mexico Tech has always built important traditions and made important contributions to the growth of the school.
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Christine Mathews  
Sophomore

LANGUAGES

MRS. RUTH GROSS  
Instructor

The Language Lab was added this year to aid students in speaking German, French, and Spanish.
DON TRIPP
Senior

Linda Kelly
Junior

Christine Mathews
Sophomore

LANGUAGES

MRS. RUTH GROSS
Instructor

The Language Lab was added this year to aid students in speaking German, French, and Spanish.
Brown Hall is the administration building.

Whew! I thought that class wasn't ever going to end!

Great things are discovered behind the doors of Cramer Hall, and little things, too.

Can't take it, Bill?

Dissecting a fetal pig always calls for assistance.
The library is used often for research.
"What ya lookin for, Dear?"

Boredom strikes again!

Mostly Physics and Mathematics are taught in Weir Hall.

"There is one thing to remember" states Mr. Dubbs.

Dr. Wilkening explains one of the many problems in Feynman Physics.

Addition and Multiplication are no longer a problem with the new Wang Calculator.

No one can be a real Tech student unless he's had a class in Weir 120.

What's the matter Eddie, it's not that easy, is it?
49er's
Athletics
ST. PAT'S
“SUFFERING ...  

IS OBSOLETE.”
ORGANIZATIONS
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Our biggest snow of the year!

Colgate's Fountain!
Aerial view of the campus.

The Capitol

What did you find, Jack?

A special dinner for St. Pat's.

A typical room in South hall.
SCHOOL LIFE
We work in a tiny little world.

(HELP)

RIBBIT!
REGISTRATION DAY

Class Rings were discussed at this Junior class meeting.

"Did you get that?"

Students are getting their physics tests back!
"BAREFOOT IN THE PARK"

GOODTIME SINGERS

Tryouts for the play
FLUNK & FORGET

Reading those dirty words again, Carol?
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