

If Walls Could Talk



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I've housed cattle and sheep, pigs and goats. I've been a place for students, faculty and the community to gather. I've heard church hymns and fight songs. I've seen victories and I've seen losses. And today I'm home to design and creativity. I am the Texas Tech University Agricultural Pavilion.

Nestled between the Southwest Collections Library and Ag Row, the Pavilion has been used for an array of activities since its construction in 1925.

Ever to be our pride

I was completed in the early 1920s. My eight-sided design and red tiled roof were the creation of noted Fort Worth architect, Wyatt C. Hedrick. I was designed with an agricultural focus and the first building at Texas Technological College (TTC), built for agricultural education. I watched as youth, with hopes of furthering their education, took entrance exams in late September 1925. By October, 914 students, both men and women, were enrolled as the first students.

In its early days, students took entrance exams to attend Texas Technological College, now Texas Tech University, in the Stock Judging Pavilion. Now known as the Agriculture Pavilion, this was one of only six buildings to establish the campus.

These other buildings included the Administration Building for the Liberal Arts and Science departments, the Home Economics Building, the Textile Engineering Building, a dairy barn, and the president's home.

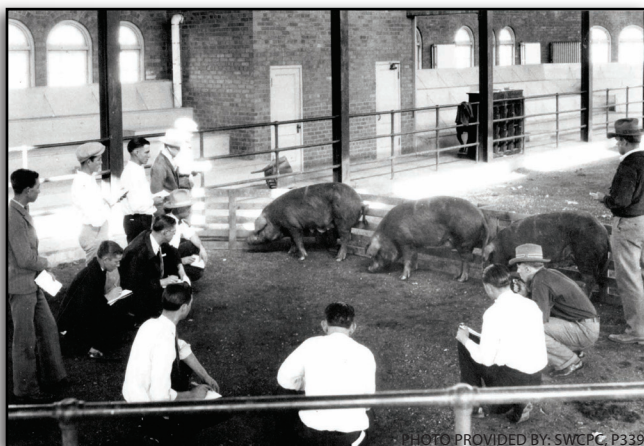
In 1925, I had the honor of hosting the first basketball game against Daniel Baker College (now consolidated with Howard Payne College), which ended in a loss of 37-25. Once the gym was built in 1927, the basketball team was only seen as they passed by on their way to classes.

Strive for honor evermore

Special events including the Annual Pig Roast, which is now held to honor scholarship donors and recipients, were once held under my roof. Originally, Pig Roast was held in honor of the judging team. Students and faculty would gather to roast the pig and then send the team off to Kansas City and Chicago for judging contests.

Through this time the Pavilion was used for classrooms, FFA judging contests, meetings for students and various other activities.

W.F. Bennett, retired professor of agronomy and Associate Dean, remembers cooking breakfast in the early morning hours to recognize the seniors each spring.



The livestock Judging Team looking over three pigs in 1927.

"At the breakfast, Dean Stangel would invite a senior, probably someone similar to the Ag Council president, to join him for a branding ceremony," Bennett explained. "The dean would place a double T branding iron, it wasn't hot of course, on his hip. This would brand every senior of the class as forever being a Texas Techsan."

Long live the Matadors!

I've had a few face lifts over the years, as all things do as they age, and my list of uses continues to grow. Texas Tech has grown to encompass 150 undergraduate, 100 masters and 50 doctoral programs. There are more than 30,000 students enrolled. I am now home to the Department of Landscape Architecture as a design studio to cultivate thoughts and creativity.

"The Pavilion always has such pretty natural light," said Cristina Talcott, senior in landscape architecture. "It helps to inspire me to think creatively."

Students are able to make their workspace home for the year.

"We have our big desk and on the walls you will see calendars or drawings or paintings that we love. We are able to bring it all in to inspire us and make it more of our own," she said.

Talcott explained that it is very cold in the winter and really hot in the summer, but the windows and atmosphere are worth it.

"It has been proven that to be with plants and be in the sun makes you healthier and it is really good for you," she

explained. "We have actual trees growing (in the Pavilion) so I think it's pretty neat."

It is said that if you walk by there late at night the lights will be on, music will be playing, pizza will have been ordered and students will be working away.

"That would happen every semester about three or four times," she said. "I've literally stayed there all night working on a project and gone home just to take a shower so that I can make it back to my 8 o'clock class."

Talcott is not the only member of her family with a history of using the Pavilion. Her father, Tom Talcott, animal science graduate from the class of 1971, attended meetings there. "I was in various ag organizations and that was where our meetings were held," he explained.

Change seems to be the only constant through the decades. Falling leaves will give way to winter snows but spring flowers are right around the corner. Students come and students go but one thing that will never change is the rich history I hold within my walls. **T**



Cristina Talcott finds the Pavilion to be a place of inspiration.

Kristen Odom | Wellington, Texas

