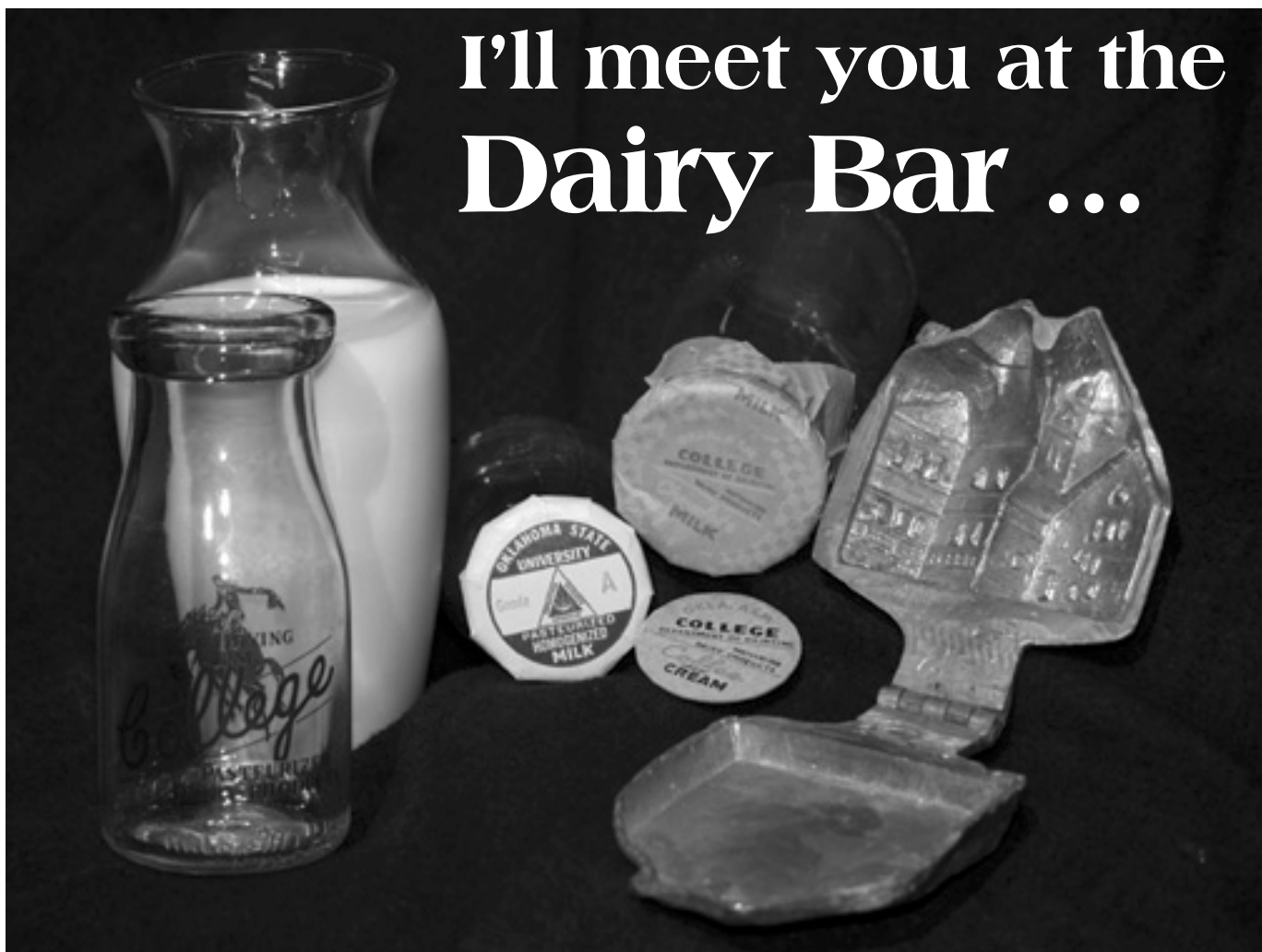


I'll meet you at the Dairy Bar ...



While still in operation, the dairy processing plant distributed milk in several different bottles and used ice cream molds for special holidays.

Mornings come early at the old Dairy Building, just like they have for more than 70 years.

While the hours have not changed much and the outside still looks the same, the former home of the dairy science department has changed from a dairy product processing plant and classroom into a main stay in Oklahoma State University's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

The building is the oldest within the college and has overcome time and technology to become a center of growth.

"The Dairy Building, at the time it was built, was on the fringe of campus. It has survived a long time," said Stanley Gilliland, food microbiologist formerly housed in the building.

The outside has not changed much since it was built in the 1920s. The three-story, rectangular building still has window-lined walls and some of the original landscaping. The east entrance still has the ornate scrollwork and name plaque above the door.

It almost gets lost in the surround-

ings of more modern buildings, but the Dairy Building maintains the sense of dignity it had in 1928 when the dairy science department moved in.

The pride of OSU's dairy department, the state-of-the-art facility housed work areas for dairy manufacturing, refrigeration equipment and laboratories.

The second floor held offices, teaching and research laboratories, and classrooms. The top floor was shared with the agricultural economics department and included an auditorium with motion picture and slide equipment.

"It was a pilot plant designed to provide service to the dairy industry," Gilliland said.

In the '20s and '30s, the dairy industry in Oklahoma was booming, despite financial trouble from the Depression, and Oklahoma A&M officials noticed a significant increase in dairy course enrollment.

Arthur C. Baer, head of the dairy department, found a way to incorporate the high number of students in the department and the need for hands-on

teaching and experience into the daily demands of a dairy.

Students could learn about and work in the production and processing areas of the dairy industry.

Experience and weekly pay were just a few of the benefits. They also enjoyed sampling new batches of milk and ice cream as they were finished.

"There were a lot of students who went through the department," said Gilliland, also a dairy science graduate.

Over the next 20 years, the Dairy Building became a staple in OSU society. When the new dairy barn was built west of campus, the dairy plant was able to increase the amount of milk processed. At one time it provided most of campus with fresh milk.

"For a long time, we sold it in half-pint bottles," said Curtis Richardson, retired dairy extension specialist. "We would gather them back up, wash them and use them again."

But milk was not the only product needed to satisfy student and staff appetites for fresh dairy products. Former

faculty members said ice cream was sold on the first floor for “next to nothing,” and during the summer, sometimes given away to keep it from spoiling.

“They had chocolate, strawberry and vanilla,” said Freddie Gant, retired departmental secretary.

As far as the rest of the building, classes were held on the second and third floors, and the dairy department had several offices there.

Not much changed in the Dairy Building until the current Animal Science Building was built in the '70s. The dairy science department was merged with several others to form a new animal science department.

According to former departmental staff, when the Animal Science Building was built, there was some concern about the future of the dairy product sales room.

The products were as popular as ever, and many OSU faculty and alumni were worried about it closing.

“The milk was wonderful, refreshing and only cost a dime,” Gant said.

The sales room stayed open for a few more years until the Student Union converted it into the snack bar which present students know as the Dairy Bar.

Today, the Dairy Building is home to part of the horticulture and landscape architecture department.

The second and third floors hold studios and graduate student offices that moved across the street a few years ago because of space problems in Agricultural Hall.

The layout of the rooms works well with the needs of the department and brightly colored models and diagrams can be seen through the windows.

Fire protection services and the geology department have equipment and records stored throughout the building.

Perhaps the most well-known element in today’s Dairy Building is the little snack bar.

Located in the southeast corner of the building, the Dairy Bar, as it has been affectionately named over the years, is run by Student Union Food Services.

Nelda Henry, manager of the snack bar, said OSU students and employees were asking for a place to eat on the western side of campus. She became manager of the Dairy Bar in the '80s and has been there since.

“This is the best kept secret on campus,” Henry said.

The faces behind the counter at the Dairy Bar are familiar and never anything but friendly. This may be part of the reason the customers are so loyal.

“We just about know what they drink when they walk in the door,” Henry said. The Dairy Bar has become a popular

place to eat, study and socialize during the breaks between classes.

Not only is there a continuous stream of students, but OSU faculty enjoy the Dairy Bar’s atmosphere as well.

Frequent visitors to the snack bar know all about the cinnamon rolls dripping with frosting and are always ready to tell you about Friday’s lunch special.

The Dairy Bar has breakfast and lunch five days a week, and the staff always serves with a smile.

“I enjoy going to the Dairy Bar. It is a good place to grab a bite to eat or to study,” said Jeff Weeks, agricultural education senior.

Weeks also likes to watch a game of cards every now and then.

The card games are popular in the Dairy Bar. It is rare to go in and not see students playing cards. Whether it is just one hand or the continuation of a tournament which started days ago, patrons can always find a card game in the dining area.

Now, biscuits and gravy and Frito chili pies have replaced fresh milk and ice cream. But students still flock to the Dairy Bar.

Whether they come to eat, to meet people or to read the O’Colly, they can’t help but feel at home in this friendly corner of OSU’s busy campus. *Eg*

*By Sarah Shaddox
Tecumseh, Okla.*



OSU’s dairy department made many breakthroughs in dairy products research.

In a field on the edge of campus when it was built, the dairy building is now surrounded by buildings and parking lots.

The cheese room is still in the Dairy Building and has not changed much since the '30s.

Student workers in the '50s and '60s learned how to operate dairy machinery as part of their course work in dairy science.



Courtesy of Stanley Gilliland