A photograph of a brown and white horse standing in a grassy field. In the background, there is a tall, light-colored building with many windows. The sky is clear and blue. The horse's fur is thick and shaggy, with a mix of brown and white patches. The building has a grid-like pattern of windows, and there are some trees in the distance.

‘Traditions are not born on the form of sudden revelation but rather as a gradually accelerating, expanding philosophical acceptance by all. And this tradition started in the most minute origin, and became nationwide, and it is a joy to me that it has happened.’

–George Comnas '35



# The First Lady of Aggieland

By Krista Smith '09

It was Aug. 30, the first home game for the Aggies. The eyes of the more than 80,000 in attendance turned to the end zone. Sitting there was a panting dog, bedecked in maroon and white finery.

“Look! It’s her!”

“There she is! The new one! Isn’t she gorgeous?”

And when her image flashed on the giant video screen a few seconds later, an all-out roar of applause and whoops erupted.

After Reveille VII’s retirement was announced in February, it took a lengthy process to find the new mascot. But Reveille VIII was finally home. She has been formally installed as First Lady of Aggieland and continues a fabled legacy rich with tradition.



Reveille I marked the start of many traditions, including that a cadet has to give up his bed if Reveille wants to rest on it.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CUSHING MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

## Your Dollars At Work

The Association of Former Students is proud to support the tradition of Reveille, providing assistance with transportation and lodging when Reveille and her handler travel to out-of-town football games.



### Rev I: An Accidental Beginning

She's arguably one of the most recognizable dogs in the country, but the origins of how Reveille came to call Texas A&M home are murky. More than 30 people lay claim to bringing the mutt to campus in the 1930s, but some tales are more believable than others.

There's Warren Collins '35, who said he picked up a puppy after hitting it with his Model T. There's Bob Norwood '35, who said he and a roommate found the dog in a ditch by Walton Hall. Then there are the members of the class of 1934 who swear they picked up the dog on a march to the Brazos River, as well as Asa Gibbs '37, who said he and a friend found the dog in a ditch near Northgate. And then there's Eddie Chew, an assistant groundskeeper for the athletic department, who swore that the pup in question was born on his property south of campus.

But there's one Reveille origin tale that carries more clout than the others. George Comnas '35 said in his 1980 campus Muster speech that he was responsible for finding and caring for Reveille I. In a series of letters written to University officials after the speech, Comnas discusses specifics on when, where and how Reveille I was found.

Comnas, then a sophomore, and some friends were hitchhiking from Navasota to Bryan during a midterm break in January 1932; they arrived at a highway gate on the south side of campus, across from a railroad station. Comnas said cadets were disembarking from the station as

he and his friends arrived. That's when Comnas, flanked by 25 to 30 cadets, noticed a whimpering puppy lying alongside the road, "apparently hit by a slow moving train and knocked into the ditch." Comnas picked up the puppy—which he described as a fox terrier and mongrel mix—and brought her to his dorm room in Leggett Hall, raiding Sbisa Dining Hall for meat and bread to feed her.

A&M enforced a strict no-pets policy, so the puppy lived in a box under Com-

nas' bed as his dorm neighbor, veterinary student Robert Anderson '35, monitored her health. In about four or five days, Comnas wrote, the puppy rebounded. Comnas said he named the spirited dog Reveille since he was forced to put her into hiding before the bugler blew Reveille and Assembly each morning. The name was one that stuck, as "on her first day of convalescence, she rushed out into the street when we fell out for reveille and calisthenics," prompting the cadets to say, "Here comes our Reveille."

*She began making trips out of town with her cadets and quickly became a regular part of campus life, especially since she loved to march with the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band, much to the delight of football fans.*

nas' bed as his dorm neighbor, veterinary student Robert Anderson '35, monitored her health. In about four or five days, Comnas wrote, the puppy rebounded.

Comnas said he named the spirited dog Reveille since he was forced to put her into hiding before the bugler blew Reveille and Assembly each morning. The name was one that stuck, as "on her first day of convalescence, she rushed out into the street when we fell out for reveille and calisthenics," prompting the cadets to say, "Here comes our Reveille."

Comnas is also the only finder of Reveille on record to pick apart each of the other origin stories. In another letter to the University, Comnas argues why his version is the truth by stating

back to campus," Kalmus said. "And then she just became theirs. The cadets took on mutual care for her, and everyone played a part in her life and was connected to her."

Reveille I, a black and white dog, roamed campus as she pleased and snuck into buildings, restaurants and dorm rooms. She began making trips out of town with her cadets and quickly became a regular part of campus life, especially since she loved to march with the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band, much to the delight of football fans. With World War II taking many Aggies overseas a few years later, the student body rallied to purchase Reveille's first official ranking as a general for \$100 in the K-9 unit of

the WAGS division of Dogs for Defense, an action that was open to dog owners in the United States to sponsor the war effort. Reveille I cemented her legacy after her role in the 1943 Aggie film *We've Never Been Licked* and was accepted as a tradition by A&M administrators.

But shortly after the film was released, Reveille I died in the A&M Veterinary Hospital, presumably of old age. Her casket, lined in maroon velvet, was purchased by H.S. Dan Boone '46 for \$15. With hundreds of people present, Reveille I, the campus queen, was laid to rest with full military honors on the north end of Kyle Field. And with that, a tradition that had grown to become a staple of the Aggie Spirit for more than a decade simply faded away.

### The Others

With Reveille I gone and World War II ending, any effort to find a new mascot was delayed. In June 1946, more than two years after Reveille I's death, Rusty, a 4-month old black mongrel puppy, was presented to the college by a student veteran. And so began an eight-year parade of different dogs as mascots, some endorsed by the student body, others simply adopted and loved by a single Corps unit. Rusty, who from all accounts was no fan of people and loud noise, lasted until November 1946, when Freckles, a cocker spaniel owned by Hal "Moon" Mullins '48, appeared at a football game. Because of the positive reaction of the mascot-deprived crowd to Freckles' boundless energy, *The Battalion* immediately launched a campaign to have the student body vote for Freckles as mascot—a vote that ended overwhelmingly in Freckles' favor.

Although Freckles had the same privileges as Reveille I, she was never noted as an official mascot by the college and after Mullins was commissioned in 1948, Freckles left campus with him. Tip and Tripod, a three-legged dog, appear in Corps history during this time, but each were cult figures only, as neither gained the acceptance

and love of the student body. Ranger I, Ranger II and Ranger III, the pet English bulldogs of former A&M President James Earl Rudder '32, were also popular campus figures, but were also never named official mascots. A Dalmatian named Spot came along after Freckles departed, but the accident-prone dog was remembered for falling off the top of Kyle Field (only one deck at the time) and breaking two paws. Shortly after recovering from these injuries, *The Battalion* reported in October 1950, Spot died after being hit by a car.

The student body finally had enough of the inconsistency. A&M needed a legitimate mascot, so in April 1951, the Corps of Cadets voted to find an official mascot who would be christened with the name Reveille. The student senate approved a motion to begin fundraising to procure a German shepherd, but was not able to raise sufficient funds to purchase the dog. That's when Arthur Weinert, Class of 1900, and his wife stepped in to help. The Weinerts presented Grady Smallwood '52, president of the senate, with a Shetland shepherd puppy in 1952. Reveille II had finally found her way to Aggieland.

### Rev II: A Dying Tradition Reborn

Reveille II was adopted by the cadets, and her original caretaker was the Aggie Band. However, today Reveille's needs are tended to by

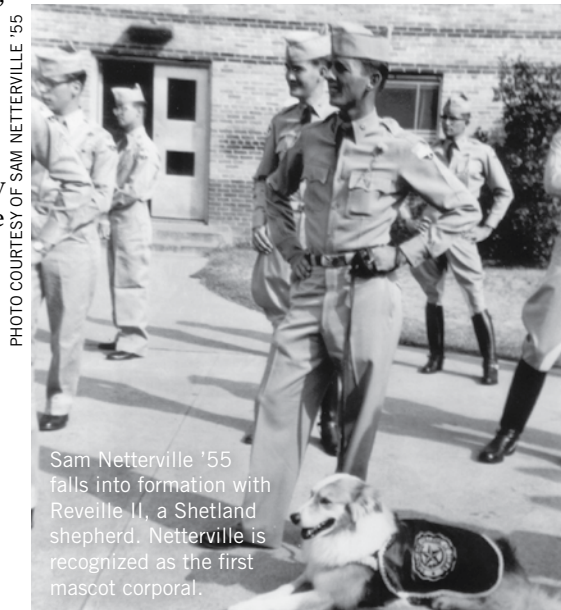


PHOTO COURTESY OF SAM NETTERVILLE '55

Sam Netterville '55 falls into formation with Reveille II, a Shetland shepherd. Netterville is recognized as the first mascot corporal.

1932-44



Reveille I

1952-66



Reveille II

1966-75



Reveille III

1975-84



Reveille IV

1984-93



Reveille V

1993-2001



Reveille VI

2001-08



Reveille VII

2008-



Reveille VIII

## The Truth About Miss Rev

### Q Do classes dismiss when she barks?

It depends. Some professors abide by this tradition; others don't. However, Sean Cook '10, mascot corporal for spring 2008, said he has heard of many a class getting dismissed by Reveille's bark. "It doesn't happen often," he said. "She's just like most college students when she goes to class—she hangs out for a little bit and then falls asleep."



PHOTO COURTESY OF CUSHING MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

### Q Does her name appear on the class roster?

No. Reveille's name is not listed on a course's roster. But, Cook said, the mascot corporals alert their professors prior to the semester starting to let them know that Reveille will be coming to class regularly. In nearly all circumstances, the professors are accepting of Reveille's presence unless the class is not dog-friendly.

### Q Does she really have her own credit card, cell phone and ID card?

Yes. Reveille did have a credit card, but now, Cook said, her finances are handled a bit differently, making the credit card no longer necessary. She also has a fully functioning cell phone provided by the University, which the mascot corporal carries with him at all times. The phone is used to verify Reveille's appearances with officials in the Memorial Student Center, Com-

mandant's Office and hosts. Reveille also has a student ID card, identical to the ones issued to all current students. The ID card is activated, allowing Reveille access to her dormitory; however, she does not have any meal plans or AggieBucks on her account.

Reveille also has her own iPod. Rev VII's white Nano was a present from the class of 2010 on her birthday in 2006. With the back inscribed "Happy birthday, Miss Reveille, ma'am," it was loaded with only Aggie music, including songs played by the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band and by country singer Granger Smith '02. And yes, Cook said, Reveille does listen to her iPod's music, as her handler frequently plugs it into a speaker system for her and the rest of E-2 to hear.

### Q If she falls asleep on a cadet's bed, does he have to let her sleep there?

Yes. Probably one of the oldest traditions linked to Reveille, as it dates back to Reveille I, a cadet has to accommodate Reveille if she rests on his bed. Though Reveille VII usually preferred a closet or floor to a bed, Cook said there were quite a few times when he had to surrender his bed to the First Lady of Aggieland, especially when the two were traveling together.

### Q Does Reveille accompany her mascot corporal on dates?

Yes. Reveille goes anywhere and everywhere her handler goes, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If that's a date, then she's with him. If it's at a home or away Aggie football game, she's with him. And even if he's at George W. Bush's inauguration, you can bet she's at his side. The only time the mascot corporal does not have Reveille in his possession is if another member of E-2 is caring for the mascot.

Company E-2.

"That transition isn't clear," Kalmus said. "We just know that it happened since E-2 cares for her now."

But Sam Netterville '55 said he knows.

It was the summer of 1954. Reveille II had been on campus for two years and had had a litter of 10 puppies—the only A&M mascot to do so. Netterville's friend Larry Hill '56 was passing by the Memorial Student Center one day and noticed Reveille II on the drill field. The dog was unattended, and appeared hungry and dirty. Hill fed Reveille II breakfast in the MSC and then took the dog to class with him. Netterville met Reveille II as she journeyed to his and Hill's hometown



PHOTO COURTESY OF SAM NETTERVILLE '55

of Beaumont throughout the summer. When the fall semester began, Netterville, a junior in A Company Quartermaster, kept the dog in his dorm room. A Company Quartermaster was renamed as Company E-2 when the Corps units were reassigned in 1959.

"She wasn't as prominent then as she is now," Netterville said. "I had to fight like hell to keep her in the spotlight because no one cared."

Netterville soon ran into the problem of affording Reveille II's upkeep. When he appealed to the dean of students, he was told Reveille II did not formally belong to the college or the state of Texas, making funding impossible. Netterville resorted to placing waste cans in Sbisa Dining Hall for cadets to throw their spare change into and accepting donations from his stepfather, C.N. Magee '34.

Unlike her namesake, Reveille II did not freely wander campus—she was kept on a leash and stayed at Netterville's side, though this activity was not endorsed by the college.

“She went to the movies, church, home with me, on dates,” he said. “She stayed in some of the finest hotels in Texas. I did all of this unofficially.”

And with this simple action, Sam Netterville spent the next two years unknowingly developing the modern tradition of Reveille.

Netterville escorted Reveille II to football games, where she would proudly march with the Aggie Band. She earned a reputation as a naughty girl, however, since she had a bad habit of relieving herself on the field. As a result, Aggies would place bets on which yard line Reveille II would choose each week. College officials ordered Netterville to keep the dog in her harness at a game vs. Rice in 1955 to avoid her usual restroom break, but with 70,000 Aggies yelling for their beloved mascot, Netterville let Reveille II ease out of her harness using a trick he had taught her.

“The crowd went wild,” he said. Reveille II did indeed take care of business, much to the delight of the crowd, and Netterville was able to talk himself out of punishment the following Monday.

Netterville was named commanding officer of A Company Quartermaster in fall 1955. Even though Reveille II still slept in Netterville’s room every night, he began delegating daily tasks of Reveille II’s care regiment to underclassmen because of his new responsibilities—another enduring tradition.

“Reveille II was recognized and adopted, but there wasn’t a university tie,” Kalmus said. “Sam Netterville codified the Reveille tradition and said, hey, this is how we’re taking care of her, this is whose responsibility it is.”

Netterville graduated in 1955, leaving Reveille II in the care of A Company Quartermaster, where she stayed until her death in 1966 from kidney failure and arthritis.

### Revs III Through VI: A Collie Affair

The reign of the collie was one that started out innocently enough. Reveille II was nearing the end of her life, and the University was looking for a replacement. Randy ’67 and Steve ’67 Andes knew they had the per-



Revs V and VI



Rev IV



Revs VII and VI

fect solution. The twin brothers called their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Husa of Fairbanks, Alaska, who had a litter of collie puppies on the way. And before Reveille III was even born, the student senate had already approved a measure to welcome the collie puppy as mascot.

But why the collie? The breed is known to be intelligent, obedient and good with children, making it a good fit for the new University. Another selling point was the breed’s recognition in pop culture, since the television show *Lassie* was in the middle of its near 20-year run.

“A&M was more recognized through academics and sports,” Kalmus said. “It brought about the need to set this standard image. That’s one of the reasons for sticking with the collie. She’s a recognizable, iconographic image.”

And so began the parade of collies: some slender and fine-boned, some with thicker coats, some with darker markings, but collies all the same.

“Reveilles III through VII have been the standard collie breed,” Kalmus said. “All of them had their own little quirks, but they weren’t that distinguishable from each other because physically they looked the same.”

No matter their nearly identical outward appearances, Reveilles III through VI each had unique personalities, preferences and distinctions. Reveille III, from all accounts, was loveable, but not the sharpest tool in the shed. Reveille IV was the first mascot to have her own expense account; before it was established, the mascot corporal and E-2 cadets paid for her upkeep. Reveille V had a habit of stealing erasers from the chalkboard or

Reveille VIII on her bed with her Bevo chew toy and 12th Man towel.



dry erase board as a professor lectured, delivering the stolen item to a student in the class. As for Reveille VI, she is known for one incident Aggies would like to forget—being stolen as a 4-month-old pup from the Dallas backyard of then-handler Jim Lively in 1993 by Neil Andrew Sheffield, a University of Texas at Austin student. A&M denied for nearly a week that Reveille VI had been stolen, but once the University admitted she had been dognapped, Sheffield tied her leash to a signpost at Lake Travis and tipped off authorities to her location. Slightly flea-infested, Reveille VI returned to College Station for a veterinarian examination and made a quick recovery to cheer on the Aggies at the 1994 Cotton Bowl.

All of the Reveilles have been laid to rest with full military honors surrounded by thousands of mourners at the north end of Kyle Field, with their noses and paws pointed toward the scoreboard. However, the Reveilles were exhumed in 1997 and moved to a temporary location in Cain Park for two years when the University expanded the north end of the stadium. When construction was complete in 1999, the Reveilles were returned to their new cemetery, which had been outfitted with a scoreboard since their original view was disturbed by the expansion.

After Reveille VI's early retirement in 2001 due to epilepsy and other ailments, Aggies met Reveille VII.

### Rev VII: A Cadet's Best Friend

A purebred hailing from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Reveille VII arrived in Aggieland in 2001. Coming to Texas A&M at the start of the new millennium piled more responsibilities on Reveille VII than any of her predecessors. She is the most traveled mascot in Texas A&M history.

A particularly spirited pup, Reveille VII made headlines when the decision was made to send her to obedience school because of her initial nervousness around crowds and loud noises. The dog—which her E-2 buddies don't hesitate to call the most beautiful that A&M had ever seen—also found her name in the papers when she bit then-mascot corporal Pierce Hunter '10 last fall when Hunter stepped on her tail during a run.

It wasn't the rumors of cadet-biting or

misbehavior that caused Dean Bresciani, then-vice president of student affairs, to announce in February that Aggieland's First Lady would be retiring. Rather, Bresciani said that University officials, E-2 cadets and veterinarians felt Reveille VII's high profile and busy lifestyle could speak for itself.

"There is no university mascot that is used as intensively as Reveille," Bresciani said. "She has earned this retirement."

Reveille VII may have lived a glamorous life on campus, but her retirement home in Bryan with caretakers Paul '66 and Tina Gardner is a welcome vacation, said Sean Cook '10, Reveille VII's last mascot corporal.

"You couldn't ask for two better people for her to be with," Cook said. "She's getting to calm down and lead the life of a dog. She can throw in the towel and say she had a good run."

## A Day In The Life Of Aggieland's First Lady

5:15 a.m.	Reveille and her handler wake up, get dressed and meet the rest of Company E-2 outside for a morning run.
6:30 a.m.	E-2 falls into formation after cleaning up following their run. Reveille waits and then leads the company into Duncan Dining Hall for breakfast.
7:15 a.m.	With breakfast over, Reveille and her handler return to his dorm room, where Reveille is served her own breakfast. Everything needed to properly care for Reveille—including food, brushes and toys—is kept in the mascot corporal's dorm room.
8 a.m.-4:15 p.m.	During the day, Reveille's schedule varies depending on her handler's classes and her social calendar. She accompanies the mascot corporal to his classes, plays outside on the Quad when she has a break and makes any appearances that have been scheduled for her.
4:30 p.m.	Reveille meets back up with all of her E-2 buddies, as the outfit prepares for an afternoon physical activity. If it's an intramural game, Reveille cheers her boys on; if it's another run, she runs along with them.
6 p.m.	E-2 falls back into formation, and Reveille leads them back to Duncan for dinner.
6:40 p.m.	Reveille and her handler return to his dorm room for the night. She is fed her dinner, and usually dozes while her handler works on homework.
10 p.m.	It's bedtime for Reveille and the mascot corporal. Both retire for the evening, ready to get a full night's sleep and start their routine all over again in the morning.



PHOTO BY MICKEY KEPLER '09  
TOP PHOTO BY JOHN BUSCH '11



Cook's experiences with Reveille VII are memories he will carry with him for the rest of his life. There was the time Cook returned to his dorm room to find Reveille sleeping in his closet with her head stuffed into one of his cowboy boots. Then there were all of the times Cook had to polish his shoes extra hard since Reveille had lovingly scratched their surface. Or there were countless times Cook took Reveille, who he described as a Frisbee enthusiast, outdoors for a game of fetch.

And there are more memories to come, as Cook regularly visits the Gardners' home to visit his former charge, who now lives with two other furry friends.

"It's hard to let go of her," he said. "She's definitely a man's best friend ... a cadet's best friend. She belongs to the Aggies, to A&M. She is the Aggie Spirit."

### Rev VIII: Not In Kansas Anymore

Julie Hinrichsen and Russell Dyke had every intention of keeping Tapestry Tenacious Juell, one of their prized collie puppies born May 23, 2006, at their Juell Collies kennel, as a show dog. In fact, the AKC-registered puppy, who Hinrichsen and Dyke called Kelly, had already adjusted to her life with the couple and their 11 other show dogs in Topeka, Kan.—she was even training with the couple's 14-year-old niece, Felicia Van Cleave. But that was before Hinrichsen and Dyke heard from friends at the Collie Club of America about Texas A&M's nationwide search for a new mascot.

The University's hunt for a mascot began in the spring, when a 16-mem-

ber committee was formed of students, former students, faculty, staff, as well as members of the Corps of Cadets, athletics and Federation of Texas A&M Mothers' Clubs. The committee had developed the following criteria that a candidate to become the future First Lady of Aggeland must meet: a medium to large size, healthy, outgoing personality, likes people and remains at ease in crowds, not fearful of noise, not highly reactive and positively motivated. The dog also needed to be female, at least a one-and-a-half years old and have a noble or collie-like appearance.

Hinrichsen and Dyke volunteered information to the University about 2-year-old Kelly, a sable and white dog who eventually wound up on the top of A&M's list of preferred mascot candidates, made up of six dogs from across the country. Still, Hinrichsen, Dyke and Van Cleave were hesitant to give her up until they took a trip to campus with Kelly in early August.

The couple had learned more about the Reveille tradition through Becky McClintock '98, a friend who had served as training director for the Texas Hearing and Service Dog Association, but it was the campus trip that convinced them Kelly would be perfect to fill Reveille VIII's shoes.

"We both knew of Reveille and thought, 'Wouldn't it be an honor to get involved in the tradition?' But we didn't truly grasp how big it was," Dyke said in a University press release. "If it doesn't hurt a little to give her up, Texas A&M is not getting a good enough collie for what the University deserves."

John Busch '11, the 2008-09 mascot corporal, knows he is experiencing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The Beaumont native said he is excited about transitioning Kelly into the role of Reveille VIII and introducing her to campus life.

"It's definitely a transition," Busch said. "We're getting close, developing this bond, something she'll remember."

Reveille VIII is calm and has a great temperament, Busch said. It's what initially attracted the University to her, he pointed out.

"No barking, no aggression," Busch said. "She's a very calm dog. She wants to sit on the couch and not the floor. She's a sweet girl, and she has the ability to obey and the ability to learn."

Reveille VIII will be kept on a tighter leash, so to speak, than her predecessor. She will not participate in any event that is not University-sanctioned, and she will only be allowed to participate in two to three events a week, depending on her mental and physical condition as assessed by her caretakers. All of these are precautions taken to ensure the health and quality care of A&M's newest five-star general, Busch said.

And the more he's gotten to know Reveille VIII over the last few months, the more Busch said he knows the University made the correct selection—a decision that will satisfy the Aggie family.

"She's a great fit," he said. "She's the right dog for Texas A&M." 🐾

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Reveille VIII

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAMU