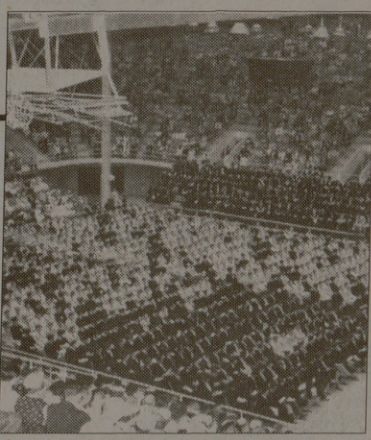


1954

G. Rollie White Coliseum was dedicated in September.



Graduation ceremonies were held in G. Rollie in 1954.

1958

In 1955, the first expansion of G. Rollie took place. The annex included wrestling, weight-training, social dance and judo rooms.

1962

## G. Rollie next generation after DeWare

By JEFF WEBB  
Assistant sports editor

When Walter Penberthy hired his friend Carl Tishler away from Ohio State to be the head of the Department of Physical Education at Texas A&M, he wanted a man who would spawn the growth of athletics at the small agricultural college. When Tishler arrived, he pushed for the construction of a building of his own design that would be the mainstay of Aggie collegiate athletics for years to come. In 1954, he got his facility.

Enter G. Rollie White Coliseum. DeWare Fieldhouse, built in 1924, served as the main home for physical education classes on campus and was also the site for Aggie basketball games. It had seating for 3,500, handball courts, showers, lockers, and dressing rooms. An auxiliary gym was added to DeWare in 1929. It only cost \$8,000 to construct and contained a basketball court, handball courts and a huge physical training room. However, even this measure could not hold up to the demand for high-quality facilities in the Texas A&M Physical Education Department.

Tishler stressed the need for an additional physical education facility to house the growing department. When the time came for Tishler's suggestions for the specific requirements needed for the building, little notice was given. Architect Richard Coke was hired to build the facility and it was Tishler's responsibility to outline the plan for the place. Tishler worked numerous all-nighters in order to come up with an outline for construction. Unfortunately, he did not get to see the floor plans before Coke began construction due to tight time constraints.

What resulted from the building efforts was a structure that many described as a "football stadium with a roof over it." The coliseum was dedicated on September 18, 1954 and was named after G. Rollie White, Class of 1895, who was a member of the Texas A&M Board of Directors for 30 years and served as president from 1944 to 1955. Tishler was pleased with the building, but felt it would never serve many other purposes other than athletic endeavors.

"The building is a good basketball facility, a fair physical education facility, but it is lacking as an auditorium due to acoustical problems," Tishler said.

The Physical Education Department moved into the offices on the first and second floors of the building, while the athletic department used the dressing rooms for basketball players, basketball coaches and a small room for game officials. The original southern end of the building was where the basketball scoreboard hangs now. The first expansion on G. Rollie only took a year to happen. In 1955, an annex was constructed on the south end of the Coliseum, housing weight-training, social dance and wrestling rooms.

The next G. Rollie expansion would not take place until 1967 when air conditioning was

installed in the facility. By 1972, the Coliseum was used to capacity and, with the addition of women to the University in 1963, G. Rollie would need growth once again.

In 1973, a women's locker room was added to the first floor. Lockers were installed in the men's dressing room and a lecture hall, a dance room and a storage room were all added.

In 1980, the "East Kyle" addition was completed adjacent to the Kyle Field stands. It was attached to the 1955 G. Rollie expansion. Men's staff lockers, constructed along with new showers. A tunnel was added for easier access to the Coliseum floor.

"Kyle" was rededicated in 1985 as the Reed Arena. The building would see its last renovation when a three-story addition to the south end of G. Rollie and a partial basement was constructed with new and improved landscaping. These renovations cost the University \$1,321,280 to complete.

Despite the changes, G. Rollie White Coliseum has remained one of the most intimate basketball venues in the nation. When Tishler first stepped upon the place, it embodied what he envisioned as a facility that would sufficiently house the activities of students in their athletic pursuits, and afford them the highest comfort when doing so. G. Rollie's time has passed. Blue-chip recruits demand the best facilities, and Reed is what awaits. Although the new arena will be accepted with open arms, students must not forget to appreciate the care that G. Rollie gave its inhabitants and the dream of Carl Tishler.

## A&M moves on to next arena with Aggie Muster in April

By AMANDA SMITH  
Staff writer

G. Rollie White Coliseum bid farewell to Texas A&M basketball, but not to the University, in the final game of the season against Baylor Saturday night.

G. Rollie opened as the home of Texas A&M basketball in 1954 and has since become the home of Texas A&M volleyball, Muster, graduation and a host of other ceremonies.

With the talk of the Reed Arena opening on April 21 for the Muster ceremony, G. Rollie has received a push into the pages of Texas A&M history. As much as the building is a part of the University's past, it is part of the future.

G. Rollie will still be the home of A&M's volleyball team for the 1998-99 season. Students will still meet for kinesiology classes and pick up their athletic tickets in G. Rollie after the season ends.

It is the opening of Reed Arena, rather than the closing of G. Rollie White, for Muster on April 21 and subsequent events that brings more dramatic change

to Texas A&M. Angela Wallace, the sub-chair of the Muster programs committee and a senior psychology major, said Reed Arena will provide a new home for the ceremony.

"I feel like Muster is finding a home in Reed Arena," Wallace said. "It's going to be a beautiful place for a beautiful ceremony."

Wallace said Muster has been held in locations all over campus, including the steps of the Texas A&M Administration Building, outside the Memorial Student Center, Kyle Field and most recently G. Rollie.

Brian Wood, the Muster chair for speaker selection and a senior biology major, said past crowds have faced lines and a filled G. Rollie on the night of Muster.

"In the past, students have had to get to G. Rollie at 4 p.m. to attend a 7 p.m. ceremony," Wood said. "In the past, we were limited by space. It's going to be special to have Muster in Reed. I think that (Reed Arena) will give students an opportunity to find out what the Muster ceremony is all about."

Reed Arena is a 12,500 seat-arena, a 5,000-seat increase over G. Rollie.

The \$550,000 renovations completed on G. Rollie during the 1993-94 basketball season cannot com-

pare with the new \$36 million arena, Reed Arena manager Stuart Taylor said.

"Reed Arena is absolutely beautiful and friendly," Taylor said. "You can't even compare G. Rollie to Reed Arena. You would be taking a 40-year-old building and putting it up against a modern facility."

The May 1998 graduation ceremonies on April 16 will be held in Reed Arena, instead of G. Rollie.

Don Gardner, the associate registrar of Administration and Records, said the opening will provide more seating than G. Rollie.

"They are going to issue 10 tickets instead of 100 tickets," Gardner said. "It has been hard on G. Rollie in the past because they were limited to 100 seats. I see the advantage that everyone will have with Reed. We are almost doubling the (seating) capacity of the new arena."

Reed Arena is unique to Texas A&M. Stuart Taylor said the arena has maroon theater-style seats provide comfort for special events.

"Reed Arena will house a number of special events," Stuart said. "The whole backstage, the electrical outlets and the concrete floors are catered for concerts. It is a state-of-the-art arena, and I think that it will become a part of the Texas A&M legacy."

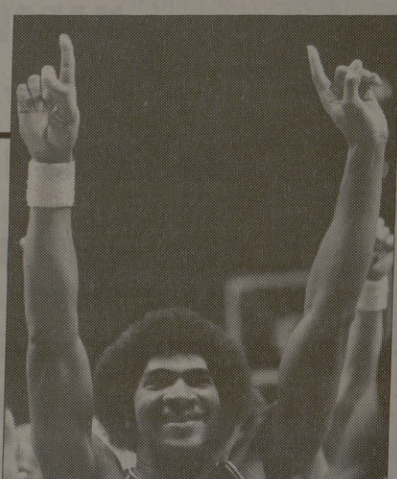
1976

A&M's centennial class graduated in 1976.



1980

"East Kyle" completed and attached to G. Rollie in 1980. A service tunnel was added for easy access to the coliseum floor.



The A&M basketball team won the SWC championship in 1980.

1984

In 1985, a three-story addition became a part of G. Rollie.

Bob Hope visited A&M in 1985.

