

Dennis Nett / The Post Standard

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LE MOYNE

SPIRIT. INQUIRY. LEADERSHIP. *JESUIT.*

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ARCHIVE *News*

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THE ARCHIVIST'S CREED:

Preserve the Past, Enrich the Present, Protect the Future



Recreation Center, Twentieth Anniversary

1989-2009

VOICE FROM THE PAST

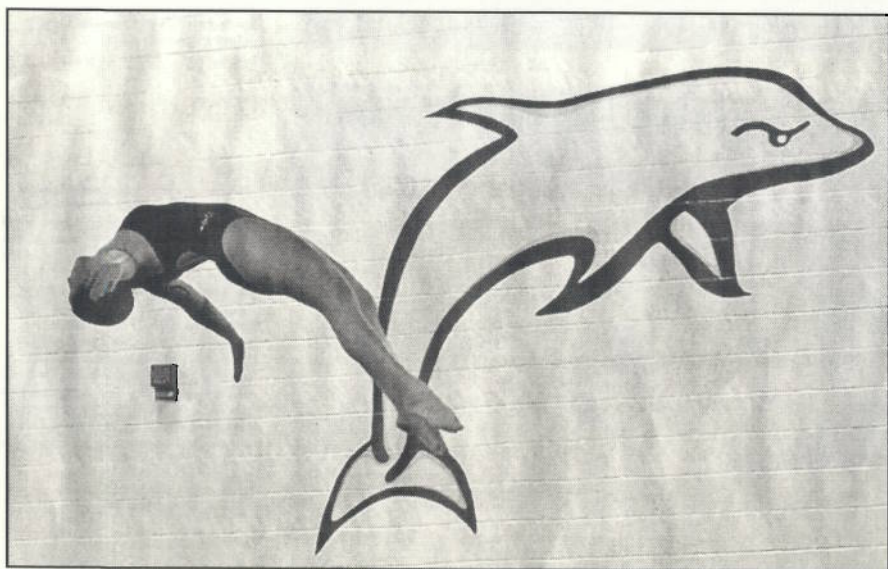
Dick Rockwell, former director of athletics, in an oral-history interview, tells us of some minor human aspects of the building of the Recreation Center.

William Bosch, S.J. (WB): You brought up the swimming pool; that Father Vinny Ryan and Tommy Niland were both against it.

Dick Rockwell (DR): They were both against it, because every place they visited, nobody was ever in the pool. They really did their homework. In that athletic building of '62 of course, it was a meet when you had four teams. How many teams do you have now? They did their homework. They never did anything without doing their homework. Whenever they would visit colleges with pools they had never seen anyone in the pool. And they didn't want varsity teams so they were dead against it. The president said, "You're going to have a pool!"

WB: Which one was that? (Father) O'Connell?

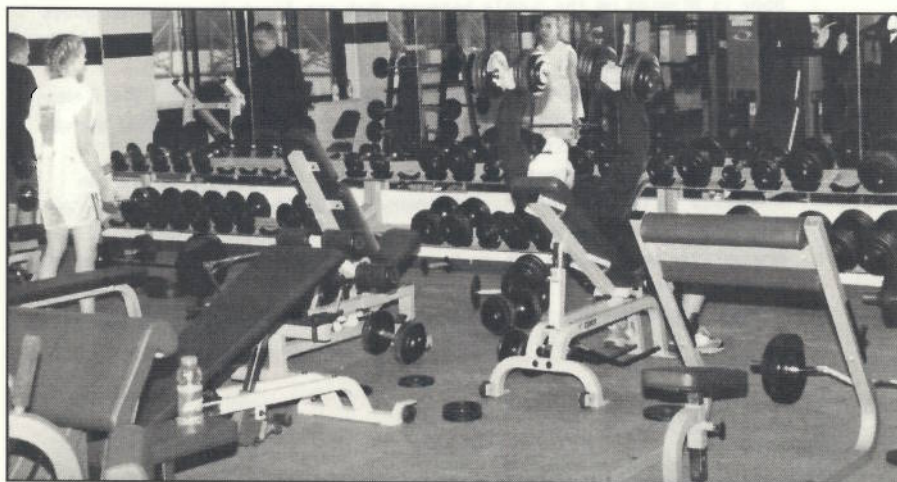
DR. I think it was (Father) O'Connell. The same thing with the racquetball courts. They didn't want glass doors. They wanted typical racquetball courts that you had to go through a little door. (Father) O'Connell said he wanted glass. They fought him on that and lost. You know he was right. He was right in both cases as it turned out.



general fitness center; and finally, in acquiescence to a long-requested facility, a pool. There is irony in the fact that Vincent Ryan, S.J., the special assistant to the director of athletics, who, along with Tommy Niland, was "dead against it" [cf. Voice from the Past], had the pool named after him.

John King, a subsequent director of the Recreation Center, told reporters that, "The varsity teams rarely come in here. This is predominantly for intramurals and student use. And it gets a lot of traffic. To be honest, one of the concerns we had when we built it was: How much use would it get? You know, should we put in a pool? ... From 2 in the afternoon to 10 at night, it is very, very busy."

Le Moyne broke ground for the Recreation Center construction in spring 1988; the center opened on April 17, 1989. One of the aims of Jesuit education is to educate the whole person, including body and soul in addition to the mind. It assumes that young minds work best when supported by a healthy body and spirit. The center was one of Le Moyne's giant steps toward achieving that aim. ■



LETTERS OF NOTE

The personal element is revealed as Le Moyne plans for the future Recreation Center.

March 9, 1987

MEMO TO: Michael W. Yost
FROM: Frank R. Haig, S. J.
SUBJECT: Planning for the Recreational Athletic Complex

On Friday, March 6, Brian Loucy saw me to present a proposal which might have some interest with respect to planning for the recreational athletic complex.

It was his feeling that we should now set up a new committee, a construction committee, that could go over many of the specific details of the building so that there would not have to be decisions made by the architect. The problem, however, was that someone was needed who could put almost full time into such a project. Brian suggested using some like Father Vincent Ryan as the chair of such a committee because he would have the time to do the work.

There are several difficulties with this suggestion. One is a worry as to whether Father Ryan has the health to do this kind of job. Another is whether we are getting into conflicts with the current committee that is planning for the center. Still another is whether we are getting into conflicts with Mike Falcone and his interaction with architects. It seem to me that I would like to talk to you before taking any particular action on this matter.

Father James Finlay
Office of the Academic Dean
Dear Jim:

January 16, 1986

Your comments upon the architect's survey for additional recreation space echo Tom Niland's and my own misgivings and uncertainties about the proposal in both the nature and size, to say nothing of haste. Somebody is blowing up the bubble because what was first described as quick and skimpy and stop-gap is what we first pursued. Later we were told to explore something less immediate and more substantial.

At stake is what precisely was the commission given to Dr. Yost? Meanwhile we in the athletics department have contributed to another survey primarily concerned with future activities' needs.

Additionally, the Development Office seems to be pursuing its own interests in the area of an anniversary capital funding campaign which seems to be directed toward raising monies for a building not fully conceptualized and perhaps not conformed in at least not as brochure-ized in what we really need.

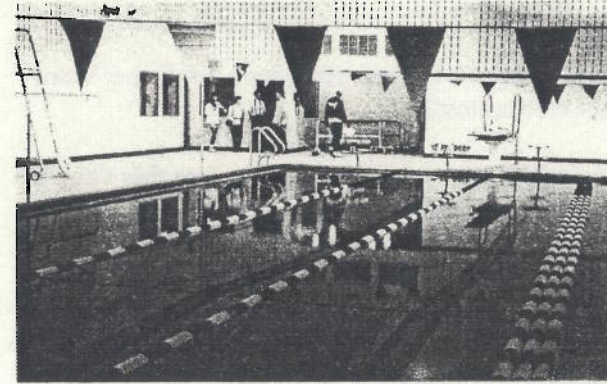
Lest the bubble turn out to be a blister, I think we need to synchronize on a time track and otherwise unify these diverse efforts.

Sincerely,

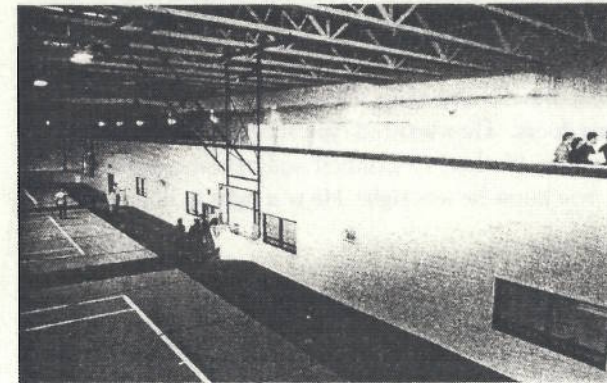
Vinny

Vincent B. Ryan, S. J.

Construction Update



◀ The competition-size swimming pool is inspected by members of the college community touring the Recreation Center. Along the back wall of the pool area (from left to right) is a glass-enclosed office, the whirlpool and two diving boards. Locker rooms are located behind the pool area, as well as the fitness and exercise room which is still being constructed. The Recreation Center also houses four racquetball courts and athletic offices. A corridor connects the new building to the Anthony A. Henning Athletic Center.



◀ The interior design of the Recreation Center provides a great deal of open space and several observation areas. The indoor track is located on the upper level of the Recreation Center, along the perimeter of the multipurpose gymnasium. The track overlooks the gymnasium, and the pool area can be viewed through the windows (center). Below the track is a corridor. Windows have been installed so that people can observe the action in the gymnasium while standing in the corridor. A court divider (left) is being lowered; the dividers can separate the multipurpose gymnasium into three playing areas without obstructing the view from court to court.



◀ Several members of the college community recently toured Le Moyne's new Recreation Center. Although some areas are still under construction, most of them are receiving the final touches before the building's dedication this fall. Dr. Michael W. Yost, vice president of student life (center), takes a shot on the middle court of the multipurpose gymnasium. Unlike most gyms, the floor is covered with a flexible, rubberized material instead of hard wood. The multipurpose gymnasium can accommodate all types of court sports. It is equipped with basketball nets, scoreboards and strong mesh dividers enabling three games to be played simultaneously.

HOME OF THE SWEATY DOLPHINS:

The 20th Anniversary of the Le Moyne College Recreation Center

Two decades ago, Le Moyne College opened the doors to its Recreation Center. The new building, adjoining the Henninger Athletic Center, ushered in a new era for the College—an era that not only reflected the growth of the campus, but helped facilitate the fulfillment of the Jesuit values of a sound mind, body and spirit.

In the early 1960s, when Le Moyne's rector-president requested permission to build dormitories, the Provincial, wiser than those on the scene, said "no." He insisted that, given the Syracuse weather, a recreational facility had to be Le Moyne's first priority. In 1962 the Henninger Athletic Center opened, providing an outlet for the campus population, primarily the collegiate athletes.

By 1989, 65 to 70 percent of the student body of 1,830 resided in the dormitories. Compare this with only 30 percent of Le Moyne students who lived on campus in the late 1960s, and the need for a new athletic facility becomes self-evident. While the concern in the 1962 construction centered on the desire for practice space and for home games on campus, the Recreation Center was a response to the ever-increasing number of students interested in fitness and sports.

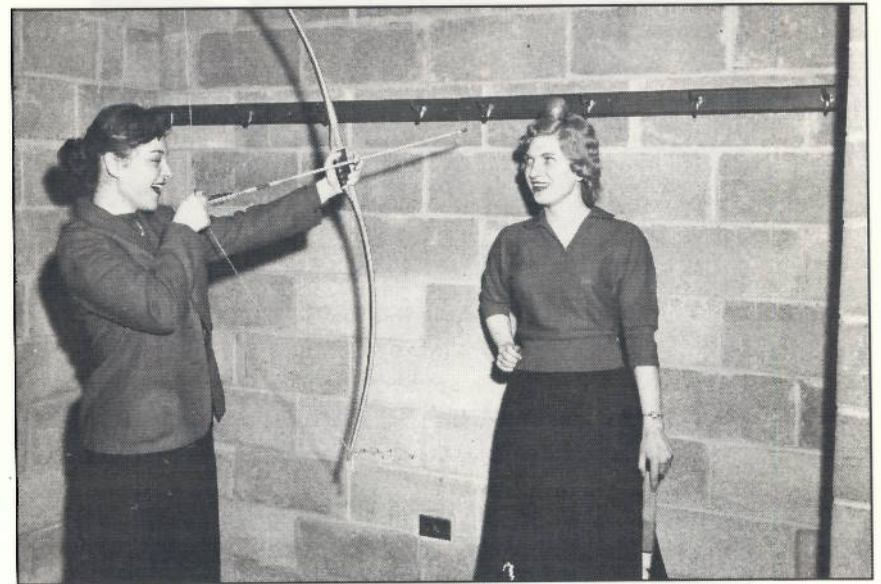
An added incentive was that for student recruitment, Le Moyne facilities needed to be competitive with other colleges. The result was a 47,000-square-foot complex costing \$4 million. The Kresge and Emerson foundations' matching grants and alumni generosity put the Recreation Center's campaign over the top.

Planning for the Recreation Center began in 1987 with the establishment of a number of committees. [cf. Letters of Note] According to the remarkable memory of Joseph McShane, S. J., a former Le Moyne religious studies professor who is now president of Fordham University, the members were divided on a basic idea of priority. Should the new building be primarily for varsity teams or for the general student body? Most faculty members favored students; most of the athletic department favored the teams.

The answer to this basic question of priorities had two major ramifications. First, where should the Recreation Center be located? Those who opted for students first wanted it built by the dining center so that it would be easily available to both residential and commuter students. They lost; the athletic facilities would be built at the existing Henninger Athletic Center. Second, would the facilities in the new building be primarily for the varsity teams or the students? This decision went to the pro-student view.

The Recreation Center would offer the following perks: a new gymnasium equipped with three basketball courts and an elevated track; racquetball courts; a

"DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN?"



Women's Athletic Association

Le Moyne College recognizes that in the pressures and tensions which develop in college life, the woman student is apt to neglect the king of physical activity, which is essential to relaxation and the maintenance of vigorous good health, unless she is given every encouragement to think of it as an integral part of her college experience. To meet this need, the Women's Athletic Association (W.A.A.) has been established

The program of the W.A.A. is based upon the expressed needs and interests of women students within the limits of present facilities and is under the direction of a professionally qualified woman advisor. At the present time, the following sports are offered: tennis, riding, golf and archery in the fall and spring; basketball, volleyball and badminton in the winter.

The Le Moyne W.A.A. is affiliated with the National Athletic Federation of College Women and adheres to the standards set up by the National Section on Girls' and Women's Sports, assuring the students of an up-to-date and sound program of intramural and intercollegiate sports.

Dolphin, Sept. 12, 1955, p.3