It makes me feel special to know that one day, somewhere in the world, an Aggie will read my name and everyone gathered will answer here. We honor every student that attends here; that’s why Muster is my favorite tradition.”

While several students explained their favorite traditions to a roomful of the best and the brightest of Texas high schools in the Wehner Building last spring, I found myself drifting back through my own Muster experiences spanning three continents in less than a decade—from the vantage point of the stage at Reed Arena, to the grassy knolls of Hyde Park in London, from a restaurant in Kowloon, Hong Kong, and now back in College Station, where the classmates of my grandfather Col. Glenn Jones ’61 celebrated their 50th Reunion last year.

It was in his honor that I attended my first Muster in G. Rollie White, where we as a family were honored with the opportunity to share our grief with the extended Aggie family. While I don’t remember many specifics of that night, I will always remember the magnitude of thousands signifying their love and support.

In my grandfather’s absence, I escorted my grandmother Barbara Jones Cox this year and obtained a unique preview of the bonds between classmates that grow deeper with age. These gentlemen were ecstatic to see her and treated her like family, bestowing me with the highest compliment: “You look just like your grandfather.”

Their weary backs straightened as the Ross Volunteers saluted them entering the tunnel under Reed Arena. On the floor, the unison of their bellowing voices resonated through my body, bringing goosebumps with each call of ’61 as well as many of the names from neighboring years.

It’s certainly still true that nowhere is the hallowed Muster observance more powerful than right here in College Station at Reed Arena, where the silence of over 13,000 is truly deafening. In recent years, the intermittent flashes of hundreds of phones prematurely break the darkness in anticipation of the bursts of the 21-gun salute. As student body president, I spoke to scores of audiences and was quite comfortable in front of a crowd, but standing in front of the

Editor’s Note:
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on-campus Muster in 2004 was one of the most humbling and overpowering feelings I have ever experienced.

That same year, I participated via teleconference in the first Muster for our new branch campus in Doha, Qatar. After the brief ceremony, in which they read the names from Silver Taps and the three Aggie soldiers who were killed that year, one Qatari student said, “I am glad today to know and see that when I pass away that people all over the world will remember me, people from different countries, who even speak different languages and have a different religion.” What a powerful connection in an often closed region of the world!

Following graduation, I was shocked to discover that if the on-campus ceremony is a somber remembrance with the reverence of a funeral, the bulk of Aggie Musters around the world are more akin to a family reunion when the Aggie family gets larger with each incoming class, it’s more important than ever that we continue to Muster together.

As the Aggie family gets larger with each incoming class, it’s more important than ever that we continue to Muster together.

More than anything, Musters everywhere are a reminder that our time is limited and uncertain. It is our privilege to love and be loved, to give selflessly and receive graciously, to dream recklessly and reason deeply, to live with abandon and be the best that we can be. There is much that is more important than self and life is fuller when we recognize that fact. We truly are part of a larger family around the world—a family that both commemorates the brave souls from the 1942 Muster. The tradition kept by so many brave men over 70 years ago continues today.

As the Aggie family grows, it’s more important than ever that we continue to Muster together.

The roll call is just a beginning. For just as we have honored our fallen comrades in their deaths, we must also pass on their legacy of service in the way that we live our lives.