The Dean Is At It Again: The Metamorphosis of Dutcher Hall

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The cornerstone for the gymnasium was laid on August 25, 1890. The building cost $10,385.00 with an additional $2000.00 worth of equipment. The gym was the first building separate from Old Main, and was built with the Victorian ideal of a healthy body and a healthy mind.
Football team ~ 1895

On the steps of the Gymnasium
Originally, the building had a track and balcony on the second floor and the basement even had a bowling alley. Although it was modern at the time, the gym still had a dirt floor, with a metal staircase leading from the basement to the first floor.
Men’s Basketball Team ~ 1901
Women’s Basketball team ~ 1908
• Lining the foyer walls on the second floor were gun racks of muskets and bayonets which were originally used by the Millersville Civil War Company. Later the guns were known to be used by the Student Armed Training Center during World War One.
Honor Society Dance ~ mid 1930s
The Gymnasium and the Ladies Dorm
After the new gym, Brooks Hall, was built, the Old Gym was converted into a student center. Dubbed “The Rat,” or “Rat Race” by the students, it became a place for day and dorm students to hang out. The lunch counter became known as “The Mouse.”

The Rat Race was used for dances and social functions, and in 1954, the upper balcony was floored in to become a men’s student lounge, with the basement converted in the latter half of the 1950s into a college store.
The Rat was renovated in the 1950s to house the Counseling Center on the ground floor. The third floor was eventually made into Rafters Theater, which began being used by the Citimard Players in the 1960s. By the early 1970s, the lunch counter moved out and Citimard took over for good.
The Mouse ~ 1964
In 1974, the Old Gym was renamed Dutcher Hall. It was dedicated to Dr. Dean Dutcher, professor emeriti of social sciences and chairman of the social studies department at Millersville. Dr. Dutcher served at Millersville from 1927 until 1952. After Dr. Dutcher passed away on February 26, 1974, the decision was made to rededicate the building to honor his twenty-five years of service to the University.
Dr. Dutcher
Rafter’s Theater ~ 1975
Renovations in 1977
Recently, the building underwent a major renovation. Thanks to Steven Strock, the Millersville University Project Manager in Capital Construction and Contracting and Design, painstaking effort was put into matching the color and craftsmanship of the brickwork, the slate on the roof, and the stone lintels.

The renovation and expansion included making the building more accessible through a new entrance, new stairs and an elevator that connects every floor, ADA compliant restrooms and an updated HVAC system. The interior of Dutcher has been updated through additions such as new carpets and paint, a new reception space and quiet air-conditioning.
Dutcher Hall ~ 2006
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**Sources**