A Tale/Tail of the Johnnie “Rat” Part 1
Original “Rat Pack” of Las Vegas/Hollywood fame, 1950s; undated Homecoming(?)
Button in SJU Archives
http://www.listal.com/viewimage/1013505; Button 4662 in SJU Archives
The Original "Rat": Francis Berres, '57

http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/33134/show/33127
Earliest mention of “Rat Section” indexed in St. John’s publications: The Record, March 7, 1958, p. 3
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/30856/show/30854
Several histories of the Rats exist
From ARC Rat Pack History folder
A 1984 History of the Rats
1984 Nov. 15 drawing by Tom Voller
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/36254/show/36248
A 2000 *Record* article (September 9)
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/34456/show/34450
Rat Pack

Group sparks school spirit at sports events

By Christine Jusken
The Record

What started with a messy room and cheering from the basketball sidelines has turned into a 53-year legacy that now reigns at Johnnie football games.

The history of the Johnnie Rat Pack can be traced back to Frank Berres, a 1957 graduate who calls himself the “Original Rat.”

Berres earned the nickname “The Rat” because of his messy room, but he was best-known for bringing commotion to basketball games, where he mimicked other teams and their fans.

He began by imitating Evelyn Young, the wife of former Gustavus Head Basketball Coach Gus Young, who would wave her fur coat around during games. From his antics, a cheering section developed and a tradition was born.

This tradition has not come without controversy. Over the years the Rats have interfered with referees, distracted the opposing teams' players, and in the mid-1960s their rowdy behavior at a NCAA playoff basketball game led to a ban that prohibited St. John's from hosting future games.

In the 1970s, they also met complaints over the exclusiveness of their group.

They had a no-outside, no-women policy.

Through the years the Rat Pack has changed and adapted with the university.

It moved with the Johnnie basketball team from the Old Gym to the Warner Palaestra in 1975, and has since moved its cheering section, now co-ed, from basketball to football.

The Rats' crazy antics and long-standing presence has won them recognition on Kare 11's sports feature "Perk-at-Play" and in 2002 they made it to the pages of Sports Illustrated.

Today, with a strong past behind them, the current Rat Pack waits for the next football season and the next chapter of the legacy.

Although no one can be sure of what this chapter will entail, it is sure to bring more of their chants, customs, and creative entrances into Clemens Stadium.

Past members of the Rat Pack gather to pump up the crowd of fans at a home football game.

Photo courtesy of St. John's Magazine

A 2006 history of the Rats in the Sesquicentennial edition of The Record
2006 April 6, p. 5 of the supplement on the SJU Sesquicentennial
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/32646/show/32644
1984 *Record* article includes the story of the Rat drawing
1984 Nov. 15 drawing by Tom Voller,
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/36254/show/36248
Kurt Kaiser SJU ‘67 is credited as the artist
1965-66 Student Directory; 1969-70 Student Directory (faculty section);
http://www.artprize.org/kurt-kaiser
Aquinas College (Grand Rapids, Michigan) Art Dept., 1997-
1978, 1979, 1980 and 1981 Homecoming Buttons in the SJU Archives
(4642, 4647, 4648, 4649 - O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Homecoming Buttons)
1990 & 1991 Homecoming Buttons in the SJU Archives
(4656, 4661 - O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Homecoming Buttons)
Johnny Rat maze - 1973 Sept. 28 p.2 The Record
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/35021/show/35018
1978 March 17 p. 6 The Record  “Johnnie Rat joins in the post game festivities.”
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/35266/show/35263
More renditions of the Rat from *The Record*
O:\Archives\SJUArchives\Images\Cartoons&caricatures\Johnnie Rat
2002 Oct. 23 Record Bobblehead
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/32009/show/31997
2009 Oct. 23 The Record p. 3
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/40423/show/40413 and
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/41314/show/41305
The Rat is a big marketing tool for the Bookstore
SJS Rat, csbsju.edu/SJU-Student-Senate.htm; photo from 2004 April 29 The Record supplement p.1
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/32224/show/32220
The Rat gets its (his?) own category on the Bookstore website
One of the best adaptations!