

History of Old Main 1857-1929

November 23, 2011

The Main Building on The Farmers' High School, now known as Old Main, was the first major building on campus. After being under constructed for six years, the building was finally completed in 1863 and looked very different from the Old Main we are all familiar with today.



The original Main Building was constructed with the Limestone rock that was quarried from right in front of the building, slightly to the Southwest. If you walk on Old Main Lawn nowadays, you can find a dedication plaque on a stone that indicates where it was originally taken from. Old Coaly, a handful of other mules, and students put in sweat equity to build the structure outside of class.

Hugh McAllister designed the building to be home to classrooms, laboratories, offices, residential spaces for the students and some faculty, and even a chapel. (Yes, there nowadays is building adjacent to Old Main that bears his name and is home to the Mathematics Department and the USPS Office) Hugh McAllister also happened to be a trustee of the school and a very famous lawyer from Bellefonte at the time he designed the building.

Upon completion in 1863 not much changed. However, the original Main Building was inspected by officials and deemed structurally unstable. This caused the building to be razed and rebuilt in 1930 with the existing building that we see today.



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