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

‘57 Rat Pack member reminisces

Dear Editor,

St. John’s Homecoming 2007: It’s my 50 year reunion and the 150th (sesquicentennial) year for St. John’s. On the campus, the football game and seeing the Rat Pack members made it seem like it was just yesterday.

The first half of the game between two outstanding teams was most intense. At the half the Johnnies held the lead 17-16 over St. Olaf. Early in the third quarter the Oles scored on a field goal to make the score 19-17.

The Old Rat in me felt it was time to go to the North End Zone to help the “Rat Pack.” Walking down the steps the Johnnie crowd uttered some moans as the Oles forced a fumble off the Johnnie kickoff return. More gloom set in when the Oles scored again making it 26-17. Got to the Pack and told them they just had pizza, but had not done anything yet. Did my only thing asking them to give me a J-O-H-N-I-E-S. They were noisy.

Soon we scored to make it Oles 26 and Johnnies 24. Another “JOHNNIE” yell even noisiest. We go ahead 30-26. Soon the Oles hit a field goal. Now Johnnies 30-Oles 29. After the Oles kickoff decided it was time for a “JOHNNIE” yell. Told “Rat Pack” it would be my last one at the 8:29 mark because it was time for my medications. At age 72 leading cheers for 20 year old is not easy! Asked them to help the team hang on to the lead.

Got back to my seat for the last five minutes. What a finish as the Johnnies held on. Thanks, “RAT PACK MEMBERS,” and GO JOHNNIES!!!

Frank “Ratty” Berres,
The Original Rat

The Original Rat, Francis (Frank) Berres, SJU ‘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
Introducing this year’s ‘large crowd motivators’.

Some of you may not be familiar with the Rat Pack. One is most likely to run into this colorful bunch at Johnnie football games, but they are not limited to football alone. Clad in blue and red attire with faces painted in various designs, these guys make a statement for school spirit.

A 2000 Record article (September 9)
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/34456/show/34450
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)
One of the more creative expressions of criticism of the new Palaestra (1973)

Johnny Rat maze - 1973 Sept. 28 p.2 The Record
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/35021/show/35018
"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!