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# UNH Demeritt Hall Closing Its Doors

Debra JohnyBear

*College of Engineering and Physical Science*

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# UNH Demeritt Hall Closing Its Doors

Farewell Ceremony Saturday, May 5

Contact: [Debra JohnnyBear](#)

603-862-3102

College of Engineering and Physical Science

May 3, 2007

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DURHAM, N.H. – Chains and a padlock will signify the closing of the University of New Hampshire's DeMeritt Hall during a farewell ceremony Saturday, May 5, 1:30 – 4 p.m. Celebrating the historical and scholarly achievements that have taken place within the walls of DeMeritt Hall, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends are invited to gather and say farewell to DeMeritt Hall. May 5 is one of the last days DeMeritt Hall will be open for public use.

It will be one of those rare occasions when it is not only okay, but encouraged to literally leave your mark by writing on the walls of a university house of learning. Anyone with memories of DeMeritt Hall is welcome to participate. Physics alumnus Tom Crowther '54 reflected, "I remember Professor John Lockwood's 8:00 am nuclear physics class on the ground floor. I was often late and riding my bicycle would park it just outside the classroom and climb through the open classroom window during good weather! Then there was the time that the large water-filled canvas tank in which Professor Harry Hall was experimenting with solid state pressure transducers for the Navy sprung a major leak and flooded the ground floor. He used to have us students set off dynamite blasting caps to produce a shock wave, then monitor the transducer response on an oscilloscope." Before retirement Crowther was employed at MIT as an industrial hygiene engineer. He currently resides in Bedford, Mass., with his wife Susan, also a UNH alumnus. His and other such memories will fill designated hallways within the soon to be demolished DeMeritt Hall.

As exciting and memorable as it may be for those of us who would like to see an explosion to demolish the building, there are still finals which need to be administered. Logical safety concerns could also be considered a factor in not considering the possibility of such drama. Event planners however will provide attendees the opportunity to take part in a virtual demolition of DeMeritt via cake cutting and eating. "The building will be demolished by a large machine taking bites out of the building," says physics department chair Dawn Meredith. "So the cake-cutting and eating is appropriately symbolic." Additional activities for the day will include the coveted vintage voltmeter raffle, overviews of the new DeMeritt, reopening of the neutron monitor, public viewing at the UNH Observatory, sign-ups for a DeMeritt brick, a fondest memories contest, and of course the ceremonial locking of DeMeritt Hall doors.

DeMeritt Hall is named after Albert DeMeritt, the Durham representative to the N.H. legislature who organized the effort to secure state funding for the new building. The original building cost approximately \$80,000 to build and was completed in about a year. It originally housed the physics, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering departments. The building has been put to many uses over the years. It was a temporary dormitory when construction of Fairchild Hall was not quite complete at the beginning of the school year. It was home to the School of Architecture, and drawing classes were held there for some time.

DeMeritt Hall, which houses the UNH Physics Department, is one of the oldest unrenovated buildings on campus. Originally constructed in 1914, DeMeritt Hall is scheduled to be torn down and rebuilt on the same location; the construction project is expected to last from June 2007 to July 2008. This project is part of the NH KEEP project, with \$18.3 million funding from the state of New Hampshire. The University is committed to raising an additional \$2.5 million for this project.

For additional information on the Farewell to DeMeritt Hall or the Physics Department at the University of New Hampshire, go to [www.physics.unh.edu](http://www.physics.unh.edu).

High res graphics and captions:

[http://www.ceps.unh.edu/images/sidewalks\\_laid.tif](http://www.ceps.unh.edu/images/sidewalks_laid.tif)

Sidewalks being laid during original construction of UNH DeMeritt Hall in 1914.

[http://www.ceps.unh.edu/images/Physical\\_Lab\\_1904.tif](http://www.ceps.unh.edu/images/Physical_Lab_1904.tif)

UNH new Physical Lab in 1914.

<http://www.ceps.unh.edu/images/DeMeritt.jpg>

Soon to be demolished UNH DeMeritt Hall

