Hello! To many IC students, Friends, Textor, and Muller halls are daily destinations. Practically every student has had some kind of business to attend to in the academic row, be it a class or a meeting with a professor. These three buildings define campus life, and have always been at the center of academic activities. Come on a tour through history as we explore the past and present of three of the best-known buildings on campus, Friends, Textor, and Muller, the Academic Row. Welcome to another episode of Ithaca College: Then and Now.

Friends Hall began construction in summer, 1962, and opened for use in January 1963. Friends of Ithaca College provided the funds to construct the building, and the college expressed its gratitude by naming the new structure after them.

It was the very first academic building on campus. At the time, Friends was practically alone on campus. Today, the once-bare South Hill campus has filled in around it.

On the outside, Friends has remained close to its original appearance, though the area around the building has matured significantly. The biggest alteration to the building came when Textor Hall was built and a doorway was installed on Friends’ east side to allow entryway from the roof of Textor.

On the inside, Friends has seen several renovations. In the 1960s, before the library was built, Friends hosted a branch of the college library. Today, the building is almost exclusively devoted to classroom space.
The next building to open was the Muller Center, built during 1964 and opened in fall 1965, though the building didn’t receive a name or dedication until 1969.

Except for the replacement of the old, enclosed concrete spiral staircase on the building’s east side with a metal staircase, Muller has changed relatively little. However, when the college built Phillips Hall in the 1980s, Muller, already connected to Friends and Textor, was linked to the Campus Center, creating the famous “tunnel” that now stretches through to Dillingham.

Textor Hall followed shortly after Muller, entering construction in Fall 1964 and opening a little more than a year later. Like Muller, Textor waited until 1969 to receive its name and dedication.

The most important addition to Textor Hall occurred in Fall 1967, during Ithaca College’s seventy-fifth anniversary celebration. Students, faculty, and staff gathered to dedicate the South Hill Campus and unveil a new sculpture. This sculpture was the iconic Textor Disc, known to generations of IC students as the Fish. While the campus has changed around the Fish, it has remained mostly the same, an essential piece of IC identity and the source of several myths and stories among the student body.

The top of Textor Hall has always been a location for student gatherings and events. In the 1960s, the graduation procession always filed past the assembled faculty at Textor. In 1969, a group of students burned President Dillingham in effigy to protest what they saw as the college’s inaction in making the campus more diverse.
On the inside, Textor used to have gravel pits spaced along the walls. The college has since done away with the gravel in favor of an exclusively tiled surface. The custodians probably sighed in relief when that happened!

As the campus continues to grow and expand, one thing is certain: the Academic Row will continue to be an indelible part of the Ithaca College experience for generations to come.

If you have any stories or experiences you’d like to share about the Academic Row, please post them in the comments section below. Thanks for helping us remember Ithaca College, then and now. See you next time!