

## The Hinman Deli

For most of its existence, one of the most popular hangouts in Hinman was the Hinman Deli. The Hinman Deli was located in the Hinman Commons across from the main room (the true commons) where the HLT/HPC plays were performed. For more recent Hinmanites, it was located where the mailboxes are presently located. The Hinman Deli was an alternative source of food for those who didn't like the selection at the dining hall. The deli served mostly fast food staples: burgers, fries, sandwiches, soda and other assorted snacks from 9:00 p.m. until 1:00 a.m.<sup>1</sup>

The Hinman Deli was not just a source of food. It also provided a good social atmosphere to get together with old friends and to meet new ones. During the early 1970's it was a place to talk about the issues of the day and to develop social activism. Great philosophical debates occurred there, some would say more than in any philosophy class at Binghamton. The Deli provided a place for students to come and just be themselves. It gave them the opportunity to get out of their rooms and share their thoughts and feelings on every conceivable topic under the sun, all over a soda and French fries. For the better part of three decades, the Hinman Deli offered this service to Hinmanites and generation after generation still sings its praises, drawing on their memories of the late nights either hanging out at the deli or picking up some of its greasy food to satisfy their grumbling stomachs.

The Hinman Deli would not last as it was. Like the transformation of HLT into HPC, the Hinman Deli would be reborn, albeit with a slightly different name and location. When the Hinman Dining Hall was renovated in the spring of 2003, the mailboxes, which had been located in the dining hall, essentially swapped places with the deli. The area where the deli once stood now houses the Hinman mail room with student mail boxes. In the lower part of the Hinman

Dining Hall a new deli was constructed, offering much of the same menu items and even an expanded selection of food and non-food items to purchase. The name was changed from the Hinman Deli to The Hinman Café, though most students call it simply the Nite Owl, which is what most of the other late night delis/cafes on campus are called. Sodexo, the company that runs campus dining services at Binghamton, also calls the Hinman Café a “C-Store” which is short for convenience store. Where the old Hinman Deli basically only offered a few short order food items, the Hinman Café or “C-Store” offers everything from candy, water, bread, milk, cereal, sushi, ice cream, chips, dips and even some non-food items like over-the-counter medications such as aspirin. This new Hinman Deli is more of a mini-mart than an actual deli. Regardless, of its location, or if they call it the Hinman Deli, Café, or Nite Owl, students from Hinman and elsewhere still flock to this most necessary of services. The lasting legacy of the Hinman Deli is that it and its successors gave literally thousands of Hinmanites from three different decades a forum to meet, eat and have fun with their friends in a relaxed atmosphere away from their rooms and the general stresses of college student life.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.