= Seeley G. Mudd Chemistry Building =

The Seeley G. Mudd Chemistry Building was a chemistry laboratory and classroom building on the campus of Vassar College in the town of Poughkeepsie , New York . The 42 @,@ 000 @-@ square @-@ foot (3 @,@ 900 m2) postmodern building stood on the north end of a cluster of other science buildings on the site of the school 's first chemistry laboratory . It was completed in 1984 at a cost of $ 7 @.@ 2 million after the college received money from a fund bequeathed to it in the will of California cardiologist and professor Seeley G. Mudd . The structure replaced Sanders Hall of Chemistry and included elements designed to be energy efficient , notably a large wall of glass blocks that designers hoped would passively heat the building . Reviews of the structure were positive when it opened with critics praising the way its form complemented nearby older buildings . By 2015 , many aspects of the building had been evaluated as being in Fair or Poor condition and the building was demolished in spring 2016 Science Center project , to be replaced by an open green space .

= = History = =

Vassar Brothers Laboratory was the first chemistry building on the campus of Vassar College in the town of Poughkeepsie , New York , built in 1880 , around 500 feet (150 m) from the college 's Main Building . The Laboratory , which was the first free @-@ standing chemistry structure at a women 's college , stood until 1938 , 29 years after the construction of its replacement , the Ewing & Chapelle @-@ designed Sanders Hall of Chemistry .

In 1981 , the Seeley G. Mudd Fund granted Vassar $ 1 @.@ 3 million for the construction of a new chemistry building . Mudd was a California @-@ based cardiologist , professor , and trustee with the University of Southern California 's School of Medicine as well as with a number of other West Coast schools . Over his lifetime , Mudd donated more than $ 10 million to higher education institutions and upon his death in 1968 , his will established a further $ 44 million for building construction at universities and colleges , with the stipulation that institutions requesting a grant provide at least half the funds for their projects and that his name be prominently displayed on any buildings receiving the funding . While the cost of the building was originally reported to be $ 4 @.@ 5 million , this estimate grew to $ 6 @.@ 5 million by 1984 and would ultimately come to $ 7 @.@ 2 million once the project was completed . The College planned to cover the costs not paid for by the Mudd Fund with a $ 100 million development fundraising program that spanned the entirety of the 1980s .

Ground was broken on the new building on October 8 , 1982 , in a ceremony presided over by Vassar president Virginia B. Smith . Smith had previously selected engineer Fred Dubin to aid the school in constructing a more environmentally friendly chemistry building . As design progressed , she identified the need to hire architects to design the building alongside Dubin , so Perry Dean Rogers Architects of Boston were selected . Named the Seeley G. Mudd Chemistry Building after its benefactor , the building was constructed on the site where Vassar Brothers Laboratory once stood . Dubin initially tried to have it placed on the south side of Sanders Physics Building , but that site was deemed unworkable in part because of its proximity to the school 's Shakespeare Gardens . The building was instead placed southwest of Sanders Hall of Chemistry , which would be renamed Sanders Classrooms , and completed a quadrangle consisting of both Sanders buildings and the New England Building . Though built across from Sanders Physics , Mudd was actually 3 feet (0 @.@ 91 m) out of alignment with it . Zaldastani Associates served as the project 's structural engineers and W. J. Barney Corporation served as its general contractor .

In 2007 , despite being Vassar 's youngest completed academic building , a report by Platt Byard Dovell White Architects report found that many components of Mudd 's structure were in either Fair or Poor condition . The structure was slated for demolition in spring 2016 as part of the college 's Science Center project , which also included the construction of the new Bridge for Laboratory Sciences building and the renovations of the New England Building , Sanders Physics , and Olmsted Hall . The chemistry department began its move to the Bridge for Laboratory Sciences in summer 2015 and Mudd 's demolition followed . Exterior facade elements , windows , and indoor

walls were cut away before the building 's frame was dismantled , concluding on April 22 , 2016 . Once cleared , the former site of Mudd will be an open green space .

= = Features = =

The Seeley G. Mudd Chemistry Building was designed in the postmodern style . The structure 's exterior walls were constructed from limestone and brick that surround regular glass blocks , each about 4 inches (10 cm) thick with side lengths ranging from 8 to 12 inches (20 to 30 cm) . The brick and limestone walls faced the west , north , and east , while the southern face was primarily glass , a feature designed for efficient energy use ; when sunlight hit the wall , air rose into the building and was heated , then pumped throughout where it aided in the operation of the structure 's 46 fume hoods . The north wall , meanwhile , wass designed to be resistant to cold air . The building was well insulated and its plain outer walls were as uninterrupted in material as possible to keep as much warm air inside the structure as possible in winters .

Containing 42 @,@ 000 square feet (3 @,@ 900 m2) , the Seeley G. Mudd Chemistry Building stood three stories tall . The second and first floors (the latter of which lies partially below ground) contained laboratory space while the third floor consisted of communal and teaching spaces like classrooms and offices . Other offices on the first floor were lit via skylights . The stairwells in Mudd were designed with the purpose of discouraging students from passing through lab spaces to get from one side of the building to the other . In spite of this , Michael J. Crosbie reported in Architecture in 1986 that students had taken to passing through the building as a shortcut instead of going around it . Furnishings and carpeting in the building were deep blue and rust @-@ colored .

The 2007 report by Platt Byard Dovell White Architects evaluating the condition and context for many of Vassar 's buildings found Mudd to be " by far Vassar 's most interesting and most important post @-@ Modern building . " A contemporary review in Architecture commented that Mudd " responds on a variety of levels to its context , but it does so without sacrificing its own unique and powerful identity . " Margaret Gaskie also praised the building 's placement and contextualization among its fellow structures in a 1986 issue of Architectural Record : " the scale of the structure beneath its outcroppings is sympathetic to the existing buildings in the quad , and its mass , though larger , [is] appropriate to its role as a gateway between them and the central campus " . She went on to positively comment on the building 's aesthetics , saying , " the eye can feast on the mingled sparkle and luminosity drawn from minimal outdoor exposures used to maximum effect . In more public areas , where crisp glass @-@ block and lucent glass ignite clear deep @-@ timbered tones and pretty pastels , the feast becomes a banquet . " Crosbie in Architecture noted " some instances of shoddy drywall work and sloppy painting " but otherwise praised the building 's " bare @-@ bones " and " nuts and bolts " interior as functional and environmentally friendly . The Platt Byard Dovell White report found that Mudd 's glass walls " seem to function particularly poorly " as a passive heat control system but otherwise noted that the structure 's expressive postmodernist ambitions marked it as " a strong , compact if busy building [that] makes it more than a bit of a tour de force . " Mudd was awarded first place in a 1988 competition run by Pittsburgh Corning for its design .