

History of Old Coaly

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History of Old Coaly – Penn State's First Mascot.

Before the fabled Nittany Lion of Penn State was dreamt up by Harrison Denning (H.D.) "Joe" Mason, Penn State's first "mascot" (a term used loosely) was an old mule by the name of Coaly. Coaly was originally purchased from the Lytle family who arrived in central Pennsylvania at the same time as the founding of The Farmers' High School, 1855.

Coaly worked in the central Pennsylvania area from 1857 until 1893, quite a long time for any mule to work long hours. Outside of working the typical farm job, he helped haul the original Limestone rock for the first Old Main in 1857. Old Coaly put in an outstanding amount of hours comparatively to any human work effort at the Farmers' High School; upon retirement, he became the campus pet.

Although Old Coaly has long since passed away, he has not been forgotten. While H.D. "Joe" Mason was in school, Old Coaly was on display in a wildlife museum in Old Main. After being in storage throughout the 30's and most of the 40's, a fund was established by Penn State's Coaly Society in 1951 to keep him on display permanently.

Old Coaly's bones have been relocated several times during his tenure at Penn State; however, he can be seen displayed proudly outside of the Hetzel Union Building's (HUB's) Auditorium on the 1st floor.

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