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The Bruin Nickname

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THE BRUIN NICKNAME

George Fox College is represented by the nickname and mascot "Bruin." But it's not always been so, even though it should have been.

The nickname comes from a real bear captured in 1887 just two years after Pacific Academy (the College's predecessor) was established. The small cub was captured in the coast range foothills west of Carlton when its mother was shot. The young cub was brought to campus by a student and later lived with a faculty member. When it grew to adulthood it was kept in a pit in what is now known as Hess Creek Canyon south of the campus. It escaped one too many times and was turned into steak for the dining table and the hide preserved on a frame and displayed in an early campus museum. When it deteriorated several years later, it was taken to a campus furnace room to be destroyed, but the framework proved a problem in dismantling, so it was left sitting in a corner. Students found the old Bruin skin later and began skirmishes over ownership, a tradition that continues 101 years later. "Bruin Junior," a replica, under a set of guidelines passed down for years, is fought over periodically in class competition, with the class able to physically drag the Bruin replica off campus declared the rightful owner until next "flashed."

Even with the Bruin tradition, somewhere along the line, the "Quaker" tag to athletic teams came into popularity with sportswriters because of the College's church affiliation, and that nickname was used, along with a mascot "Foxy George," a little fox with a Quaker hat. Both gained acceptance for a period in the 1950s and 1960s until a vote of faculty, students, and administration in 1970 reinstated the Bruin nickname to its rightful place.