

## **Yosef's origins explained**

*The history behind the Appalachian State accidental mascot*

### **Elizabeth Storie**

*Associate Editor*

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It was in the spring quarter of 1942; Appalachian was not yet using the semester system. World War II had started in December of 1941, and several of the male students had already volunteered for military service and were no longer on campus. Jim Storie, editor of the annual, the Rhododendron, had volunteered and left for the Navy in early March.

Deadlines for the annual were to be met, and members of the staff were working long hours in order to meet these deadlines. On one such late night, arranging pages, were Associate Editor Elizabeth South, freshman Editor Lloyd Isaacs and the Observer Printing House Company representative Bill Mitchell.

Realizing there was an imbalance of arrangement on the last page of freshman pictures, a solution was sought with various suggestions being made by the three.

For years, the appellation of Mountaineer had been used for the teams of Appalachian State Teaching College (ASTC, before the days of ASU), with the campus book store, managed by Twin Cottrell having decals with an appropriate profile.

The Mountaineer had already been selected to grace the cover of the annual, but with an original updated version being used. It was suggested that the space on the freshman page be filled with a likeness of the Mountaineer, and Bill Mitchell thought his publishing company artists could render an appropriate sketch to agree with the annual's cover.

It was thought by the three that the name of the student should be such to apply to all the Mountaineer students of ASTC. Bantering back and forth, it was felt that Daniel Boone was the prototype of a mountaineer.

To emphasize that all the freshman students should embrace the loyalty and feeling for the Mountaineers, some name should indicate that this student represented them all. D. Boone, You, Yourself was settled upon as the choice. The You was dropped for conservation of space. However, the printer at the publishing company misunderstood the apostrophe used to shorten the name to Yosef as well as misspelling the self to Seff, which evolved from Yourself to Yoseff. In later years, even this spelling was changed.

Yosef has become a symbol of the ASU teams: strong, independent and full of enthusiastic school spirit. Sometimes he is ridiculously, cartoonishly and exaggeratedly portrayed, and at other times, he is portrayed with more appropriate demeanor, as a tall, slender, strong Mountaineer, representing all students of ASU.