

# HUXLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Website: [www.huxleyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.huxleyhistoricalsociety.org)**

VOLUME 14 ISSUE 1

Spring 2021

## 2021 Officers

**President - Delila Roberts \* Treasurer—Jolene Lettow \* Secretary—Nancy Neilsen  
Assist Sec. & Communications—Michele Kalsem \* VP & Historian—Nels Nord**

See Us on Facebook Or Email: [4huxleyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:4huxleyhistory@gmail.com)

See us in person “The Hub” museum is located at 515 N. Main in the 3C’s building.

Hours: M-F 8:30 -10:30 am or call Nels to set up a visit 515-231-9174

## The Night That a Part of Huxley Burned, November 19, 1919

This article was written by **Everett Ritland**. It was found in a box of history things from the Huxley Library and submitted and *\*noted*, by our Historian Nels Nord.

Whenever tragedy struck or whenever important news needed to be transmitted to the community, the only medium was the telephone. In such cases, there were five long rings on all party lines.

On the night of November 19, 1919, there was such a series of rings. There was the announcement that the east side of the Huxley main street was on fire and that all able bodied men should hurry to town to try to control the blaze. We Ritland boys jumped into the Studebaker as dad headed for town.

The night was chilly and the wind was brisk out of the Southwest. The crowd of men and boys that assembled were helpless. There was no firefighting equipment and the blaze had too much of a start. Total loss of the Elliot restaurant, Sydness and Hill Livery Stable, and two small businesses between were lost.

There was conjecture that the fire started in the livery stable where someone might have carelessly thrown a cigarette or cigar butt. There was considerable litter, mostly straw and chaff in the stable used for bedding down the horses. This is highly flammable material. The fact that fragments of materials were found three miles northeast of town testifies to the intensity of the fire.

The fire nearly delivered a death blow to Huxley. No businesses were rebuilt. In time the area was landscaped and used as a softball diamond. Eventually the field was lighted and used several nights a week for games.

*\*NOTE :The area that was destroyed by fire and transformed into a ball field is where Memorial Park is now on the East side of Main St.*

**MISSION STATEMENT :** *To engage the Community of Huxley, Iowa in the preservation, education, and celebration of our heritage and ancestry. To preserve for research and education, the artifacts, information, and verbal histories about the lives of the people of Huxley from its pioneer origins to the present day and into our future.*

## Ballard Cemetery update!!

The Historical Society has, since 2008, maintained the Ballard Cemetery. Many of us have wondered if we have the correct information for those resting there. David Ballard a direct descendant from Simeon has done substantial research and shared it with us. Moving forward we would like to do more research and possibly some sonar exploration to see if we can learn more. In addition to signage and possibly parking. The following, is an article that Michele Kalsem first wrote for the 2008 Annual meeting.

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### Huxley Historical Society cleans up Ballard Grove Cemetery

*Before and After photos show the work!*



The Huxley Historical Society (HHS) recently assumed the project of cleaning up and helping preserve the Ballard Grove Cemetery. The cemetery is located 0.7 miles east of the Huxley City Maintenance Building on Oak Boulevard and is the burial site of the first two European-American settlers in Story County. Simon Ballard who died around 1850 and Adam Ballard who died June 25, 1860. The Ballard Grove Cemetery had fallen into a state of disrepair with overgrowth and trees since the Ballard descendants had erected a memorial headstone at the site in 2003.



Information the Historical Society has, states in 1992 two pieces of grave markers were found by probing the area, neither had names but both had poetry, one said "a friend ever kind & true he exhibited all of the ----. In death his redeemed spirit returned to God who----." It is surmised that this poetry was from the marker of Adam Ballard and that the following was from the marker of his wife, "As a wife devoted, as a mother affectionate, as a friend ever kind & true." *cont. pg3*



**This stone reads** - March 9, 1848 brothers Dan and Morman Ballard settled near this site becoming the first white settlers of what was to become Story County. Their nephew, Elias Ballard, Adam Ballard's son was born near this location on November 15, 1848. Becoming the first white child born in Story County. Simeon, father of Dan, Morman and Adam passed away in 1850. He was the first white person buried in Story County.

Erected in 2003 by Ballard Descendants.



## The other side of the stone reads;

### Ballard Grove Cemetery

Simeon Ballard May 6, 1783-1850

Adam Ballard Jan 17, 1824 - (June 25, 1861)



**\*UPDATE: According to the Story Co. Courthouse Catherine swears her oath that Adam died on June 1, 1863 not June 25, 1861.)**

Unknown woman Age 54 Years Sept 23, 1868

son of L. T. & C. Fowler Sept 23, 1859

*The projects brainchild and Vice President of HHS, Don Duncan with the help of Ron Krull, Mike Orgler and Craig Henry mowed, and cleared, downed limbs and brush, both in the cemeteries enclosure and the pathway to it. **Loren Larson of Ames and a descendant of the Ballard's said about the project, "For the family, I want to thank all of you for the work already done."***



**This stone has been recovered and it's believed to read son of L.T. & C Fowler OR L.L. & C Fowler Died Sept 23, 1850 OR 1853. Simeon did have a daughter, Catherine but the only recorded marriage information we have for her currently is she married Isaac Thompson in Ill.**

Picture courtesy of Melissa Jacobs

**\*UPDATE:** It is documented that Catherine ADAM BALLARD'S wife married Moses Crowser on July 8, 1869 and changed her name to Crowser. Her minor children, however, were not adopted by Mr. Crowser and their surname remained Ballard (which may have led some to believe that Catherine died a Ballard). The court documents state that a guardian and trustee was appointed for the minors: Caroline, Mary, John and Adam Jr. Catherine then gave up her dower rights, Adam's land was sold and the money put into trust until each of the children were of age, at which point they withdrew their share.

Catherine (Ruby Ballard) Crowser is buried in Cambridge Cemetery (NOT Ballard's Grove) with her second husband Moses and her son "Addie" (Adam Jr.).

There is also a very old marker nearby that reads only: A.C.B. I have a feeling that this is the grave of Adam Jr. Ballard. Given the plat map information of the time and the deed on file, it would make more sense for him to be buried in Cambridge. Information courtesy of Melissa Jacobs

*Its generally believed that there were originally 5 persons buried at Ballard cemetery. Although the 5th person has not been identified by us.* End.

# ANNUAL MEETING!?

We really want to! But Covid...

So we are having a Zoom meeting—we will be sending an email to you all with a one click link to the meeting! We understand not everyone will be able to join us but we are most worried about everyone's health!

The annual meeting will be held Monday evening, April 26th, @ 6PM

We will also post the link to our meeting on the web site at

<http://www.huxleyhistoricalsociety.org/news/>

## Class Reunions *By Delila Roberts*

I remember those early class reunions, when our discussion centered on lifetime plans, bright beginnings, and hopeful starts. How apparent was our need to impress one another?

With the passage of years, the story of unmitigated progress became interspersed with those of restarts and postpartum beginnings, of temporary losses and direction changes as we continued to jockey for position in the unofficial "class standings."

Then the bragging of accomplishments began to give way to humble utterings of personal tragedy and heartache, the painful narration of insights gained through immeasurable mistakes, the revolution of dreams abandoned, the concession of wealth lost.

As time progressed the boasting of personal triumphs was often replaced with hopeful tales of offspring, of graphic accounts of illness and operations, and remembrances of classmates and others already gone to internal rest.

As reunions continue, the emphasis has gradually focused upon our common bond of survival. It took a lifetime of living for us to realize it's our humanity that unites us all – not the school we happen to attend.

*Ephesians 4:32*

*Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.*

### **Huxley High School Alumni Reunion.**

It is time for Nels Nord, Duane Finch, Marilyn Baldus, Diane Cronk, Jolene Wilhelm and Delila Roberts to plan the 2021 alumni reunion. As you all know we had to cancel last year's 2020 reunion which we all hated to do because of the pandemic. Details have not been determined yet. Please stay tuned for further information. ~

## Huxley and Ballard Teachers and Administrators

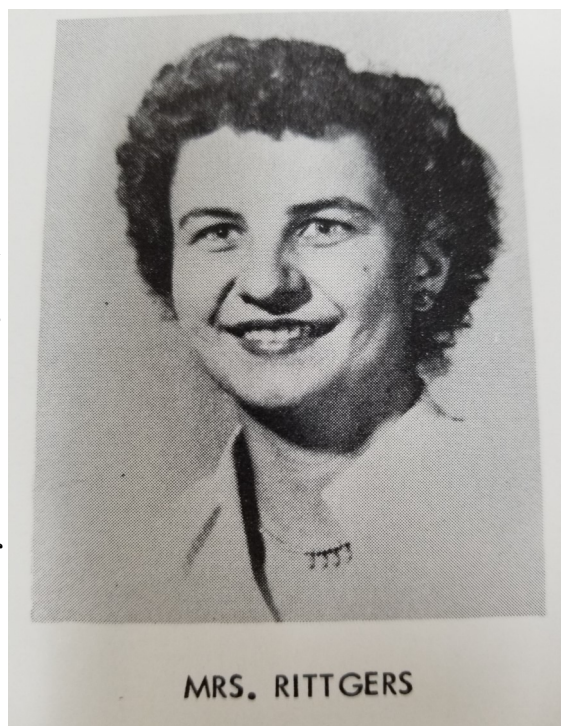
*Part 1 of a Series by Nels Nord*

### Delores Rittgers

Delores (Sheldahl) Rittgers was born and raised on a farm southeast of Huxley on April 13, 1929 to S. B. and Elizabeth (Saveraid) Sheldahl along with her sisters, Romona, Nancy and a brother, Bobby.

Delores Elaine Sheldahl was confirmed at the Palestine Lutheran Church on October 3, 1943. Delores graduated from Huxley High School in 1947.

Delores continued her education at Waldorf Junior College in Forest City, graduating in 1949 with a two year teaching certificate at Drake University.



Delores started teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade in 1949 at Jewell. She had to leave Jewell in 1952 as she was married to Harold Rittgers that year and Jewell board policy was to only hire single women teachers. Delores then taught for two years in Grimes before returning to the Huxley area. After the births of her two sons, Delores returned to teaching at Ballard where she taught 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade social studies for 27 ½ years, retiring in 1988.

During her teaching career, Delores cared deeply for her students. She sought out each student's individual talent and created ways to ensure that the student succeeded in her class. "My goal is to help each student one step along life's way, then be ready for the next step on their ladder in life," Delores said. "I am thrilled when my students succeed." Many of her students will remember completing booklets on countries and completing 50 state worksheets.

A lifetime resident of the Huxley area both of Delores' sons graduated from Ballard High School in 1976 and 1977. Delores was proud of her many grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was a lifelong member of Palestine Lutheran Church where she extended her teaching in Sunday School for many years. Delores passed away in Mesa, AZ on March 7, 2005. ~

### **\*SAD NEWS\***

Huxley High Attendees that have passed—our condolences to the families of each...

Gerald Paulson DOD 11/15/20 Class of 1951

Linda (Sydnes) Lantz 02/21 Class of 1966

Izzeta (Hill) Bennet DOD 3/5/21 Class of 1949

## Local Veteran's—Continuing series 2nd installment

### Captain Hally. *By Nels Nord*

Captain Lloyd George Hally was born in Slater, Iowa, on June 4, 1918. He was the son of George Hally and Agnes Hally. George Hally was the Milwaukee Railroad depot agent in Huxley for 29 years and his family lived above the depot until 1949. Mary Hally was a 1934 graduate of Huxley High. Lloyd graduated from Huxley High in 1935, Gene graduated from Huxley High in 1937 and John Hally graduated from Huxley High in 1939.

Lloyd Hally's father, George, was born in Quebec, Canada, to Scottish immigrant parents. Mr. Hally served 5 years in India with the British Army before becoming a depot agent with the Milwaukee Railroad in Coon Rapids, Iowa, and Slater, Iowa, before coming to Huxley in 1920.

Lloyd received a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering from Iowa State in 1939 and a commission as a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant in the Army Reserve in June 1940.

Lloyd went to work for the Glenn Martin Company of Baltimore, MD from July 1940 to May 29, 1941. He reported for active duty with the army at Fort Belvoir, VA. He then transferred to the Army Air Corps in August 1941 and received his pilot wings on July 3, 1942, at Craig Field, Selma, AL. He served as an instructor to advanced flying students at Craig Field and at Mariamar, FL until April 1944, when he joined to Eight Air Force in England as a pilot of a P-47. He was with the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force 353<sup>rd</sup> Gp, 351<sup>st</sup> FTUSquad.

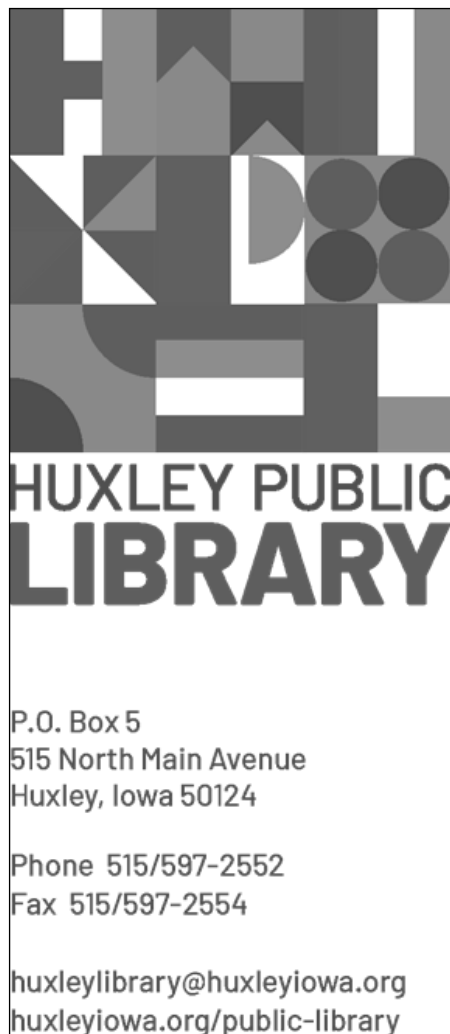
Lloyd flew with the first wave of fighters on Invasion Day, June 6, 1944, and was in combat duty until September 21, 1944, when he was reported missing in action over Arnhem, Holland. He had been awarded the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Purple Heart for wounds received in action on August 27, 1944. The war department officially announced a presumption date of death as of September 22, 1945.



His two brothers, Captain H. Gene Hally, Marine Air Corps, was stationed in the Pacific area and John Robert Hally AMM 1<sup>st</sup> Class, Lt. was stationed in San Diego, CA. Lloyd Hally was also survived by his parents, George and Agnes Hally, and a sister, Mary Isabel Hally.

Memorial services were held Monday, Oct. 22, 1945, at Saint Cecilia Church in Ames, IA, and he was buried at the Ames Municipal Cemetery. ~





For the Huxley Historical Society:

The Huxley Public Library would like to take this opportunity to thank the Huxley Historical Society for their donation towards the purchase of new computers in the library. As a result, we are proud to host the Historical Society's subscription for Ancestry.com and make it available to the community.

This is now a free service offered to library patrons and historical society members where they can do extensive genealogy research. The designated computer is also bookmarked for [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com), [myheritage.com](http://myheritage.com), [iowagenealogy.org](http://iowagenealogy.org), [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org), and [iowacultrue.gov](http://iowacultrue.gov). These additional sites can provide even more information as you do the research.

So, grab a notebook and pen, a family tree chart and visit the library to get started. It is fascinating to know where you come from and to learn what your forefathers accomplished!

*"Ancestry® helps you understand your genealogy.*

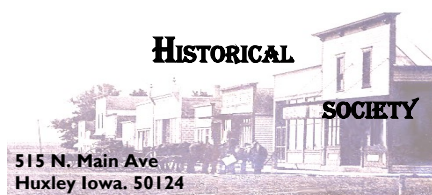
*A family tree takes you back generations—the world's largest collection of online family history records makes it possible."*

Cathy Van Maanen -Director of Library Services

## **Vote Today!!**

- Be sure and choose no more than 5
  - Fold and tape closed
  - Postmarked by April 15

**THANKS FOR BEING A PART OF OUR HISTORY!!!**

**HUXLEY**

## 2021 Membership Form—Clip or Copy and Mail

Please Renew by Jan 30, 2021

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

2021 Annual Membership \$ 20.00

Lifetime Membership \$ 500.00

HHS donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

The Fjord recipe booklet \$ 5.00

S&amp;H for booklet \$ 2.00

2nd ed. DVD / 1939-1955 events \$ 20.00

S&amp;H for DVD \$ 2.50

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check# \_\_\_\_\_ Date of check# \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: **HHS-515 N. Main Ave-Huxley Iowa. 50124**

Office use only: email \_\_\_\_\_ member list \_\_\_\_\_ label \_\_\_\_\_

If you have stories and photos you would like to share, please send them to the Huxley Historical Society.

You can either send them by email to [4huxleyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:4huxleyhistory@gmail.com) or by mail to HHS, 515 N Main St, Huxley, IA 50124

**Website: [www.huxleyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.huxleyhistoricalsociety.org)**