

# HUXLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 15 Issue 1

Spring 2022

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### **Online on Facebook**

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

**Call us:** 515-231-9174

**Email us:**

[4huxleyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:4huxleyhistory@gmail.com)

### **In Person**

“The Hub” Museum at 515 N. Main  
in the 3C’s Building  
Hours: M-F 8:30—10:30 AM  
OR call and make an appointment to  
visit the historical exhibits at the  
Nord Kalsem Community Shelter.

## **\*\*HHS Annual Meeting\*\***

Will be held

**APRIL 25, 2022 – 6 PM Via Zoom**  
Watch your email for the link and any  
other details.

## **\*\*HHS Annual Meeting\*\***

## *Huxley High School Alumni Banquet/Reunion*

June 11, 2022

Nord Kalsem Shelter House

Check-in Time: 3:30 pm

Dinner will be served at 6:00 pm

Further details regarding the reunion will be  
sent in a letter.

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**MISSION STATEMENT :** *To engage and support 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.*

## LOCAL VETERANS

*Written by Art Gumtau, Ballard Class of 1962*

*Part 6 in a series*

Ames Iowa, March 14, 1944, Mary Greeley Hospital. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gumtau of Huxley announced the birth a baby boy, 7 lbs 10 oz. The child was named Arthur after grandpa Gumtau and was the third son of Walter and Ruth Gumtau. He joins his brothers Richard and Raymond.



Home at this time was the first house east of the Fjeldberg Lutheran Church's cemetery at the corner of U.S. Hwy 69 and Hwy 210. I remember that in late 1948 or early 1949 we bought the house just south of the Maland home on the corner. As I grew up, I can remember we always played outside, summer or winter. In the early 50's, most of the streets were not named, numbered, or paved. Home phones and TV's were just starting to make their appearance. Residents did not lock their doors at night. Most Saturday nights were spent playing board games or listening to storytellers on the radio. Population of Huxley was around 400 residents.

In the mid to late 50's I had a paper route, the Ames Daily Tribune. This opened the opportunity for conversations and friendship. I babysat for one of my customers. In the summertime the area farmers would come to town to hire young kids to bale hay or walk bean and corn fields. One farmer even hired me to milk his cows. In the summer of 1959, I worked for Kenny Hermann for \$5 a day. He operated a portable feed mill grinder/hammer mill, and area farmers hired Kenny to grind feed for their livestock.

Growing up in Huxley helped me develop my character, taught me to value friendships, to be accountable for my actions, the ability to communicate (talking to each other person to person) and being able to work things out.



Cont. pg 3

In Sept 1958, my 9<sup>th</sup> grade class was the first freshman class in the new Ballard school system and in 1962 we were the first senior class to graduate from the new Ballard High School building.

After graduating Ballard class of 1962, I went to work driving a truck for George Wilson from Kelley Iowa. He had the contract with Borden Dairy in Des Moines to deliver their products to different towns in the state of Iowa.

From May 1965 to May 1968 I served in US Navy. Unknown to me at the time, this is where my road to Afghanistan started. Here is where I was trained as a Radar Controller and attained the rating of Radarman 2<sup>nd</sup> class in less than 2 years.

October 1968, I started my career with the FAA at Des Moines Airport as an Air Traffic Controller (ATC). In 1973 I was selected to a controller position at the new Kansas City International Airport. In 1974 I was selected to my first ATC supervisory position at Omaha ATC Tower, Omaha Nebraska.

In 1976 I was requested to transfer to Wichita ATC to help with employee issues. For my efforts, I was promoted to a second level operational supervisory position. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1981, the ATC's went on strike and President Reagan fired those that refused to return to work. The FAA lost somewhere around 15,300 of their 15,700 controllers.

In 1983 I transferred to Oklahoma City ATC Tower to a senior staff supervisory position and later was promoted to Assistant Manager of the facility.

Five years later, in 1988 found me in a Washington Headquarters Evaluations and Accident Investigator position working from Dallas Fort Worth Regional Airport. This position required me to travel Monday- Friday to one of the larger ATC facilities to perform a checklist driven evaluation of the facility. When not traveling I did reports at the DFW Airport. During this assignment I continued to live in Oklahoma City and stayed with my brother Richard in Arlington, Texas. When needed I supported the FAA's accident investigation folks.



Cont. pg 4

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### \*\*\*\* NOTE \*\*\*\*

Next newsletter will begin  
a multi section story  
entitled ***Blessed*** also  
written by Art about his  
life and adventures!



In the spring of 1990, I was selected to Assistant Manager, Philadelphia, Pa. ATC Tower. One of my first major issues that I had to deal with was the mid-air collision between a small aircraft and a helicopter. The U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania, Senator Heinz, was on the small plane. There were no survivors.

From the fall of 1992 to the fall of 1997, I was the Air Traffic Hub Manager of Anchorage Alaska ATC Tower. What an experience living and working in Alaska. I left Alaska for a regional office job in Boston Ma. I was selected as the Resource Branch Manager ANE-540 New England Region. Some of the more difficult events that I was involved with were :

- The reconstruction of TWA 800 that exploded shortly after taking off from JFK on July 17, 1996. The B747 was reconstructed in 1998 in a U.S. Coast Guard hanger in Bridgeport Ct.
- The July 16, 1999 crash of John Kennedy Jr's. plane off the coast of Martha's Vineyard, Ma.
- Two of the aircraft that were involved in the 9/11 terror attack on the U.S. departed from Boston Logan Airport.

I retired from the FAA in July 2002 and went to Afghanistan in Oct 2003. I was the Chief Controller at Bagram AF. After the Air Force looked at my resume, I was asked to move to Kabul and proceduralize the Afghan airspace.

My position was Site/Program ATC Manager, Kabul Afghanistan

I was charged with establishing and commissioning the Kabul Area Control Center, maintaining a focus on improving flight safety across the region. I managed the implementation of an updated ATC system, changing the Afghanistan Flight Information Region (FIR) from Visual Flight Rules (VFR) to a non-radar Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) system. I developed an Afghanistan IFR airway structure that met RNP 10 regulations, handled development of a new facility and managed a team of 26 ATCs and 19 maintenance employees in Kabul.

After returning to Oklahoma in 2006, I have continued to work for FAA contractors at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City.

My wife of 37 years went to be with the Lord on July 4, 2021. God Bless all who read this, and may you be Blessed as I have for the past 78 years. ~end~



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!**

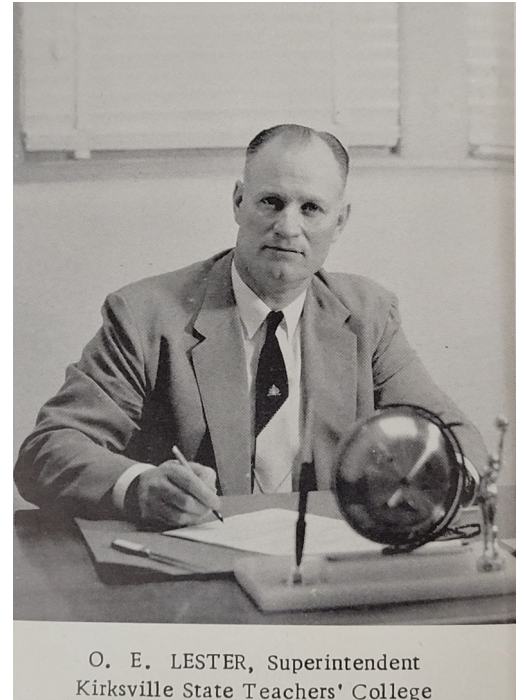
# Huxley High School And Ballard Community High School Teachers and Administrators—O.E. Lester – Superintendent

Part 5 of a Series by Nels A. Nord, HHS Treasurer And Historian

Omar Edgenton Lester, better known as O.E. Lester, came to Huxley as Superintendent of Huxley Consolidated School in the fall of 1956, from Oakland, Iowa School District .

Mr. Lester was an imposing man being 6 feet 3 inches and 240 pounds. Mr. Lester was born August 4, 1906, in Hale, Missouri to Edgar and Bertha Lester. He had two brothers and two sisters.

Mr. Lester attended Kirksville State Teacher's College in Kirksville, Missouri, and received a Masters' Degree from the University of Missouri in General Science and Physical Education. He started his career as Superintendent of Schools in Williamstown, Missouri, and his wife, Ruth was principal and English teacher in the early 1930s. He then went to VanMeter, Iowa, Hartley, Oakland and then Huxley from 1956-58, Ballard 1959-61. He was a superintendent of schools for a total of 32 years. He left Ballard for Anaheim, California where he taught for 10 years. NOTE: in 45 years of teaching and administration he never took one day of sick leave.



O. E. LESTER, Superintendent  
Kirksville State Teachers' College

When he moved to Huxley in 1956, he bought an 80-acre farm where George White Chevrolet and Menards are now located. He built a new home on that property.

Mr. Lester was an outstanding girls' basketball coach at Hillsboro, VanMeter, Hartley and Oakland. Mr. Lester's wife, Ruth, also taught English at Huxley and was the designer of girls uniforms worn for basketball teams O.E. coached. The innovative uniforms that Mrs. Lester designed for the 1946 Hartley team set the pace for girls' uniforms for the next decade. She was the person who designed the midriff outfit. The top of the uniform stopped short of the shorts and exposed several inches of skin. By the next year the midriff style caught on with other teams.

At Oakland in 1949, Mrs. Lester improved on the styling of the first midriff uniforms. The Oakland Jackettes wore white outfits that featured short, flashy white satin shorts and a brief top fastened by a tie front similar to a halter top. Oakland was beaten by Wellsburg in the championship game in 1949. During wartime, shorts and uniforms were made of satin because that was the most available fabric. Huxley High had flared and colorful white satin uniforms trimmed in black and orange.

Mr. Lester took several of his teams to the State Tournament and was elected to the

Cont. pg 6

A side note, Mr. Lester was Superintendent at VanMeter in 1936 when he was ordered to attend a hearing in Des Moines regarding the eligibility as a professional player, of Bob Feller, of VanMeter who was one of the greatest baseball pitchers of all time with the major league team, the Cleveland Indians.



Bob Feller had signed a contract with the Cleveland Indians his senior year of high school and the question was whether he would be ruled a professional and if so, would VanMeter have to forfeit all of their victories and championship trophies. The hearing resulted in a ruling that he was not a professional player because Feller had not received any money for signing with the Indians and had not played for them.

O.E. Lester passed away December 22, 1996, in Santee, California at the age of 89. Ruth Lester passed away at 74 in Chino, California after teaching for 37 years. ~ End ~



Honoree O.E. Lester was coach of the 1949 Oakland Yellow Jackets Girls Basketball Team, which was the first Oakland girls team to qualify for the state tournament.



# Interview with Rachael Anderson 1981

*According to an interview with Rachael Anderson, a long-time resident of Huxley:*

Rachel lived in the same house at 106 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Huxley, Iowa, all of her married life. This was one of the oldest houses in Huxley in 1881. Her late husband, George, was nine years old when he moved to the house. At that time there were very few houses. Their other home was located on South 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue where Marie and Valen (Kalsem) were born. That home was later moved to Highway 69 north of where the Huxley Creamery once stood. Rachael Bauge (Anderson) was born October 16, 1893, to Lars Bauge and Anna (Fjelland) Bauge, Norwegian immigrants. Rachael had three sisters: Alice, Alma, Aleda and six brothers: Nels, Arthur, Marion, Abner, Theodor and Albert.



George Helman Anderson was the son of Christopher and Volger Anderson, both Norwegian immigrants. George was born in 1886 in Kelley, Iowa, and had one sister, Martha.

George and Rachael had two sons: Raymond, 1922, Clarkson, 1924, and one daughter, Verna, 1926. Raymond and Clarkson graduated from Huxley High School in 1941.

When George moved to Huxley where the house was located on South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, his parents farmed the land surrounding the house and outlying area. Their house was across the street from the Lincoln Church on South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. They farmed the land with horses at the time.

Rachael lived in the country northeast of Huxley. She remembered walking to Sunday School at the Lincoln Church.

Rachael also recalled a coach drawn by horses stopping at Ballard Grove northeast of Huxley enroute from Ames to Des Moines picking up passengers.

The house George and Rachael lived in all those years was located in lot #10 in Block #4 which is part of the original Huxley plat that was purchased from the Milwaukee Land Company by Ole Hattenberg in 1883. Christopher A. Haugeland, who later changed his name to Christopher A. Anderson, purchased it from Hattenberg. A lot of Norwegian immigrants changed their names for some reason or another. The house that Christopher Anderson owned was built in 1890.

~end~

*This interview with Rachael was done in 1981 when she was 88 years old. Rachael died in February, 1982.*

**HUXLEY**

**HISTORICAL**

**SOCIETY**

515 N. Main Ave  
Huxley Iowa. 50124

**2022 Membership Form—Clip or Copy and Mail**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership \$ 20.00

Lifetime Membership \$ 500.00

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

The Fjord recipe booklet \$ 5.00

S&H for booklet \$ 2.50

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

S&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 \_\_\_\_\_

member card \_\_\_\_\_ tax letter \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*\*\* NOTICE\*\*\*\*\***

Effective immediately membership fees will be  
due in January of each year.

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)**