

A Letter About Family and Attending Hemlock Grade School by Bill Westley

Note that this email letter was written on 3/25/2002 by Bill Westley. It was edited and retyped on September 2021 by Dean Bones.

I am William "Bill" Leo Westley born 2/2/1940 in Tillamook, Oregon, to Leo Hollister Westley and Alice Badger Westley. I am 62 years of age. (Note this was written in 2002.) I attended Hemlock Grade School from approximately 1946 to its closing in the spring of 1954. My 8th grade class was in fact the last. There were 4 members in this 1954 class, myself, Bill Guthrie, Marion Passwaters and Joan Doering.

During this period from 1946 to 1951 my family lived on East Beaver Creek road on a small tributary about 1/2 mile below what was then called the Jack Holgate farm. I remember much about this period. From about 1951 1955 and beyond we lived on the Sandlake Road at 16800 Sandlake Road. I lived there until about 1961 when I moved to Portland, Oregon. I graduated from Nestucca Union High School in 1958 and attended Oregon State College and then Portland State College.

I was married in September 1961 to JoAnn Marie Thomas who also graduated from NUHS in 1958. We have four grown children. I have worked for Omark Industries, Oregon Cutting Systems in Milwaukie, Oregon, for 39 1/2 years with much of that tenure in the data processing and telecommunications until my retirement on January 31, 2002.

My father, Leo Hollister Westley (born February 26, 1908 in Wheatland, Oregon) and his brother Claude William Westley attended Wolf Creek School when they lived on Tony Creek near the end of the road above what is currently the Bob Cole farm. Their parents were Harry V. Jones and Georgia DeEtta (Fowler) Westley Jones. Step-sisters Janella and Bertha Jones later attended Nestucca High School. One of my father's teachers at Wolf Creek School was Leland Bester, a one-armed man who later was a scrap metal dealer in the 1950s east of Tillamook.

My father passed away April 5, 1991, and is buried in the Blaine Cemetery formally known as St. John's Cemetery.

My mother, Alice Badger Westley (born January 8, 1918, Elk Prairie, Clackamas County, Oregon) lived on a homestead above Blaine across the Nestucca River from the John & Emma Kostic Farm. My mother attended the Blaine Grade School through the 8th grade which should have been about 1926-1927. My mother attended Nestucca High for a period of time. She was married to Leo Westley June 1936, and they lived most of their life in the Nestucca Valley, Blaine, Tillamook, Woods, Oregon, above Beaver, East Beaver Creek, Hemlock, etc., areas. My father was a logger all his life in and around the Tillamook County area. My mother currently (2002) resides in Billings, Montana.

My older sister, Donna Joy Westley Heady attended Beaver Grade School, Oretown Grade School and Hemlock Grade School and graduated from Nestucca Union High School. My younger sister, Georgia Lee Westley Ligatich attended Hemlock Grade

A Letter About Family and Attending Hemlock Grade School by Bill Westley

School, Beaver Grade School and Nestucca Union High School. She graduated from a high school in San Diego.

I thoroughly enjoyed looking at the photo files at Nestucca Valley Middle School. The only one I recognized in any of the pictures was Quentin Borba in the Beaver Grade School pictures. This would have been about 1942 - 1943, I would guess. Quentin was one of the sons of John and Vi Borba who lived at the end of the now Borba Road. At one time (1944 - 1945) we lived just below them on what was referred to as the Goldenstein Place. Most of the pictures were quite a bit before my time.

Even with the Hemlock Grade School in 1954 just when the school was consolidated with Beaver there was still the original old Hemlock School building next to what we called the "play shed." The old school building was used as a basketball court. The existing building was much as it is today with two separate rooms, an upper four grade room and a lower four grade room. I have written a good deal on my experiences at this school during my eight primary years. More to follow.