

Larry Gillespie - 1951-52

By David Kusel

From time to time I am contacted by children/grandchildren of someone who lived in Manning...they may have been a coach or teacher.

Most of the time when people contact me it is because they want to know why their parents would tell them stories about Manning and how they loved the community so much. Many times they'll tell me that Manning was their parents' favorite community, even after having lived in other towns - generally for longer periods of time.

Such is the case with this e-mail from the son of a former MHS teacher and coach.

E-mail January 27, 2016
David;

I came across your website and would like to get some more information. I would like to see if the Manning School History books are available and maybe the Manning Quasqui City History book as well.

My father coached and taught at Manning for one year during the 1951-52 school year. He was the head football, basketball, and baseball coach and had great seasons on all three sports. I believe the football team was 6-3 and the basketball team was 23-1 and undefeated until they were upset by Glenwood in the Sub-State finals.

Boone high school came after him with a huge offer, after that season he moved to Boone. He then went on to coach basketball at Tech High School in Des Moines for 15 years. He ended his career as an administrator in the Des Moines system in the late 80s.

He and my Mom always loved Manning and said it was their favorite place to live and coach. My Dad always talks of the Manning players and how dedicated the town was to basketball and to sports.

I know that a group of Manning citizens and board members came to Des Moines and tried to get him to come back to Manning in the late 50s and he said it was a decision he regretted by not coming back there.

I played for him at Tech High School and then went on to play basketball and baseball at Iowa State.

I'm putting together a book of photos and articles from the places he lived and coached and was looking for things from Manning in those years.

Appreciate your help and thank you,
Marty Gillespie
Basketball Director



Coach Gillespie on the old football field west of the city park

I immediately responded to Marty and offered to help him with pictures and information I have. I also told him I would attempt to reach some of his dad's students and players.

I started out by putting some information on my web page and then e-mailed some of coach's players. I also visited with several players here in Manning to get some of their memories for a feature in the Monitor and to give to Coach Gillespie.

So now we begin the journey back to 1951-52 and Coach Larry Gillespie

Message from Larry Gillespie February 4, 2016

"Manning was a very special place to Betty and me. We very much enjoyed living and coaching there. We had very successful teams there and I remember very well the special group of athletes we had. I would enjoy hearing from students or faculty members and anyone who was there at that time."



Betty & Larry Gillespie

As with life, there never seems to be enough time. As I was working on the Gillespie story and looking for pictures I noticed that Ray Walder was Larry's assistant coach. I asked around and found out that Ray married Faye Jensen, so I e-mailed Lonnie Jensen (Ken's son) to find out if Ray was still living and how I could get in contact with him. Lonnie responded back on February 1 to tell me that Ray had passed away a few days earlier - which really caught me off guard. HOW could I only be a few days late - why not several days earlier?



Left: Faye Jensen June 23, 1943 Children's Day

Next I reached out to some of the students who knew Ray Walder and here is a short and fun memory Claus Bunz sent me.

Ray Walder was Larry Gillespie's Assistant Coach. He was also an excellent coach. He was, if I recall correctly, about 5'8" tall and we were always amazed that he could jump up and touch the basketball rim from a standing position. Claus Bunz

Left: Faye Jensen June 23, 1943 Children's Day

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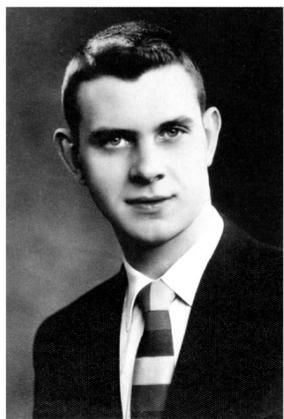
As I searched through my Manning Historical Computer Database I found a lot of Manning Monitor articles that feature Larry and his athletes and also a few pictures. Marty Gillespie also sent me a number of pictures which will be included in Larry's story. As you read along you will also find several memories sent to me by Larry's players.

Please consider that these memories are 65 years old and like all memories they will change some over time, but are still fun to read and provide us with some historical perspective by those individuals.

February 28, 1952 Manning Monitor

Manning Cagers on WHO Sports Show

Larry Gillespie and Ray Walder, together with the Manning cage squad were guests of WHO, Des Moines, Saturday afternoon when they appeared on Jim Zabel's sports broadcast at 5:45. The group also had dinner as guests of the radio station and Drake University entertained them at the St. Louis cage game Saturday.



Larry Kasperbauer remembers:

Coach Gillespie is one among few whom I came to know, respect and admire as a role model while I was a student and athlete at Manning Jr. and Senior High School.

As I now approach my 80th birthday I am really pleased to share that, other than my parents, coach has been one of the most influential individuals in my life.

To this end just two years ago coach and I were able to reestablish contact with each other by phone and Christmas greetings and messages.

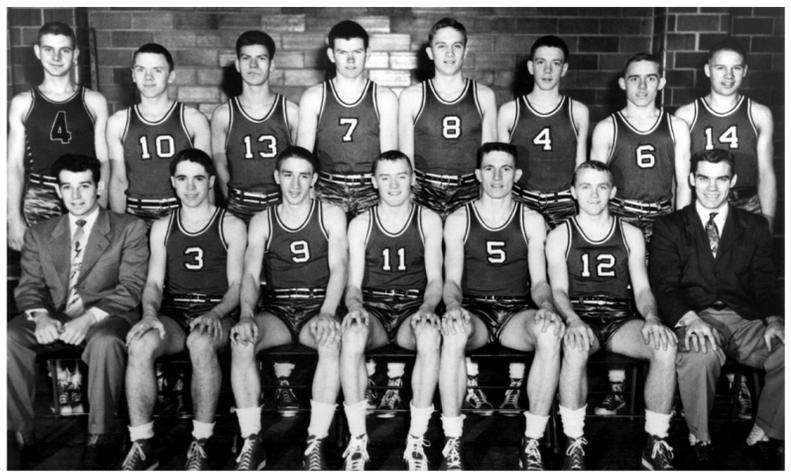
He has mentioned how good everyone in the Manning community was to him and his family and to this day has such fond memories of his life and coaching there.

I recall a time near the end of the school year when I was completing ninth grade at the Jr. High School. It was located near the Catholic Church. After completing K-8th grades at Ewoldt No. 3, a one-room country school, I was fortunate to be able to play both football and basketball with the Junior High teams. Near the end of that school year (ninth grade), Coach Gillespie along with his varsity Assistant Coach Walder came over from the high school and approached me and inquired if I had a basketball, backboard, and rim on the farm for playing with my brothers. The answer was no. To my surprise, he had a basketball, backboard, and rim delivered to me on the farm and ask that I spend the summer handling the ball and taking shots. Wow, that was almost like being recruited.

As sophomores, Lyle Frahm, Lowell Stribe, and I made the traveling team in basketball, while in football I was able to play end when Ken Graves unfortunately got injured. Playing at the other end was Gary Nady. That was the year we out scored Manilla by using a most unusual and creative slant defense. I certainly was most disappointed that after my sophomore year, coach accepted a coaching position at a larger school in the Des Moines area.

A good number of Coach Gillespie's Manning High players went on to play college basketball/football.

I would make the 8,000 mile trip from Guam to Manning if Coach Gillespie came for one of our all classes reunions.
Larry Kasperbauer, Class of 1954



1951-52 MHS basketball team - Back: Larry Kasperbauer, Claus Bunz, Richard Rix, Russell Spies, Ken Graves, Lyle Frahm, Roger Volstedt, Lowell Stribe; Front: Assistant coach Ray Walder, Richard Zerwas, Roger Nielsen, Gene Martens, Gary Nady, Deanes Rowedder, Head Coach Larry Gillespie

March 20, 1952 Manning Monitor
Glenwood Clamps Lid on Manning's Cage Year
Bigger Rams and Cold Night Give Bulldogs Trouble
Sparkling Rebound Efforts Key to Bulldog's Loss In Sub-State Finale 36-28

Manning came to the end of its basketball trail for the season at Atlantic Friday night, when a big, rugged, determined and surprising Glenwood quintet clamped the lid on the Bulldog's undefeated string at 23 and eliminated Coach Larry Gillespie's boys from further competition in state cage circles.

The Rams unraveled an unprecedented method of aggressiveness not shown in any of their previous games and held Manning helpless after overcoming the Bulldog's 10-4 lead early in the opening stanza. It was Manning's first loss in 24 games this season and the second defeat in 47 starts over a two-year period.

Shooting Below Par

Pressure of retaining an undefeated status, plus the realization of a possible role in state finals among the chosen 16, had a telling effect on the Bulldogs. Their offensive abilities dropped to a new low for the year when charity tosses were hit only 6 of 21 tries and their basket-shooting attempts from the field were stopped before they started by an alert Glenwood defense.

Followers of the Manning club through the year unanimously agreed that the lads were off form in all departments and didn't look like the same crew that racked up 23 straight wins this year over the top teams in this part of the state.

Manning ran up a 10-4 advantage in the opening period as fast baskets were poured in by Martens, Zerwas and Rowedder. Going into the second the margin was still 10-6 and that's when Glenwood's defense wizards took over and began working as specialists.

With Phil Edwards harassing Deanes Rowedder and Duane Brustle guarding Roger Nielsen, the Rams cut Manning off at seven points while adding 13. A long chance shot by Edwards boosted Glenwood into an 18-17 front post at the half. This lead was never relinquished.

Manning - 28

	FG	FT	PF
Roger Nielsen, f	1	3-7	5
Gene Martens, f	3	1-3	3
Lyle Frahm, f	1	0-2	1
Gary Nady, c	2	0-0	4
Dick Zerwas, g	2	0-0	2
Deanes Rowedder, g	2	2-9	1
	11	6-21	16

Glenwood - 36

Collier,	0	1-2	5
Bruistle, f	4	0-0	4
Filkins, f	0	0-0	1
Vrba, c	3	3-5	1
Davis, g	3	1-3	3
Edwards, g	3	2-2	5
Gregory, g	1	1-2	3
	14	9-14	24

Score by quarters:

Manning	10	7	2	9	28
Glenwood	2	12	13	5	36

Officials: Bill Ryan of Stuart, Bill Roederer of Des Moines; H.J. Fitzgerald of Elk Horn, bench official.

Sportsmanship begins with the parents and community, which continues through to the staff, teachers, coaches, and administration in our school.

This next article I found in the Manning Monitor archives is very interesting but NOT unique...I have seen a number of these types of comments/letters written about the sportsmanship of Manning students over the years and printed in Monitor articles.

GLIDDEN PRAISES MANNING CROWDS

Manning Monitor December 20, 1951

The following letter was received by Mr. David Littell from the Superintendent at Glidden, Iowa.

December 11, 1951.

Superintendent David R. Littell

Manning, Iowa

Dear Mr. Littell:

I am just a little tardy in writing this letter. However, I do wish to take this means of letting you know that, in our opinion, the Manning team and crowd (both adult and student) was tops in sportsmanship displayed at our game here last Friday night. The student behavior in the corridors between halves, etc., was commendable. We witness a great deal of difference with regard to these matters from game to game and it is the consensus of opinion here that the general behavior and sportsmanship of the Manning crowd and team was the best seen here for a long time.

Congratulations are in order. Best wishes for the continued success of your very fine ball club.
Sincerely yours, E.T. MOGCK.

Who is David Littell - some may ask...All I have to do is search in my historical database and I can show you with pictures and a Monitor article.

July 12, 1951 Manning Monitor

New Superintendent is Named for Local School

David R. Littell, 44, Comes Here From Year at Villisca Educator Has Several Years' Experience; To Succeed Kenneth B. Koch



A new superintendent of schools has been named for Manning with announcement that David R. Littell, 44, Villisca, had signed a contract to succeed Kenneth B. Koch to that post.

Superintendent Littell has been in the field of education since 1928, holding superintendencies and acting as teacher and band director in various Iowa schools. Last year he spent as head of the schools at Villisca.

Superintendent Littell received his Bachelor of Arts Degree at Upper Iowa University, Fayette, in 1928 and was granted a master's degree in education at Drake University in 1949.

Schools where the new Manning instructor has taught include high school courses and band at Jesup 1928-1930, then to Preston from 1930-1935. He was superintendent at Kimross from 1935 to 1937, moving to a similar post in Buffalo Center where he served from 1937 to 1944. From that fall to 1950 he acted as superintendent at Anita before going to Villisca where he served one year.

The new superintendent is married and has two children, Ann and Roger. They plan on moving here as soon as arrangements can be completed.

Superintendent Koch is completing his ninth year as school head in Manning this month and then goes to Denison where he succeeds Welch as superintendent.

One more clue about who David Littell is - below is his daughter, Ann Littell, who later married Thomas Grau.



Ann Littell MHS band 1953

TUESDAYS PEP MEETING
Manning Monitor December 6, 1951

Tuesday's pep meeting was in preparation for the first basketball game of the season. It started with two yells, Are We Going To Win?" and "Victory." The other yells given during the meeting were "Locomotive," "Fight, Team, Fight," and "Rah."

Ruth Wellendorf, a senior, played three numbers on the accordion. The songs Ruth played were, "Slow Poke," "Down Yonder," and "That Certain Party."

Gene Martens, Bob Hansen, and Coach Larry Gillespie each gave a speech telling the students what they were up against and encouraging them to win. Tuesday's skit was a humorous one. The characters in it were Shirley Watson as Pa, Phyllis Zerwas as Nell, Pete Petersen and Ronnie McKim as dummies, Barbara Knaack as the villain, and Cheral Andresen as the constable. The pep meeting came to a close with the singing of the "Loyalty." By Betty Remmes.

MANNING BEATS LAKE CITY

Manning chalked up its second win of the season Friday night, beating Lake City, 55-17. Deanes Rowedder, 15 points, Roger Nielsen, 12 points, and Gary Nady, 12 points, led Manning's scoring. The half-time score was 19-20 in favor of Manning. Top scorer of the evening was Lake City's Gary Chapman with 20 points. Manning's team won its first game of the season with a score of 47-21. The seconds lost their opener to Carroll. By Billie Jensen.

May 1, 1952 Manning Monitor
Coach Lists Boys To Carroll Relays

Coach Larry Gillespie will enter the following boys in the Carroll Relays at Carroll on Friday afternoon and evening: Gene Martens, Roger Nielsen, Gary Nady, Willis Kruse, Richard Rix, Richard Mullenmax, Jack Mohr, Lyle Frahm, Walter Kortman, Bob Hansen, Claus Bunz. He will also enter these freshmen Bill Stein, Gregory Schurer, Philip Zerwas, Burton Sander.