

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with E. Lee Lassiter

PERSON

Lassiter, E. Lee, 1936-

**Alternative Names:** E. Lee Lassiter; Lassiter, E. Lee

**Life Dates:** July 11, 1936-

**Place of Birth:** Carpenter, North Carolina, USA

**Residence:** Gwynn Oak, MD

**Occupations:** Journalism Professor; Newspaper  
Columnist

## Biographical Note

Newspaper columnist and journalism professor E. Lee Lassiter was born on July 11, 1936, in Carpenter, North Carolina. His father, Narvie Lassiter, was a tenant farmer while his mother, Margie Upchurch Lassiter, was a housewife and sold cosmetics. Lassiter's parents made a pact that all of their children would graduate from high school and, unlike most tenant farmers, insisted they attend school every day. Lassiter attended the segregated Apex Elementary

School in Apex, North Carolina and Barry O'Kelly High School in Method, North Carolina, graduating in 1954. He worked his way through college at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in, receiving his B.A. degree in secondary education in 1959. He earned his M.A. degree in journalism from Boston University in 1963 and his Ed.D. degree from Morgan State University in 1993.

While a student at Tuskegee, Lassiter joined the Reserve Officers Training Corps. In 1961, he served in the Adjutant General's Corps of the Army as a correspondence officer and technical writer and remained in the Army Reserves for another ten years. Near the close of 1961, he joined the editorial staff at the Baltimore Afro-American newspaper before moving, in 1965, to the Baltimore News-American, where he remained until the newspaper ceased operations in 1986. During his time at the Baltimore News-American, Lassiter wrote editorials and worked in various positions in the editing department. In 1974, he became a regular columnist at the newspaper, with syndicated columns in newspapers around the nation. After the paper closed, Lassiter accepted a position as an associate professor of English at Coppin State University. He retired from teaching in 1999, and began working as a public relations associate for the University. In 2003, he retired from that position, but accepted a contract to work in the same capacity online from his home.

Lassiter is an active member of numerous associations, including the NAACP, the Baltimore Tuskegee Alumni Association and the Black Writers' Guild of Maryland. He has been a member of Mount Ararat Baptist Church in Baltimore for forty-four years. Active in community service for almost forty years, among his numerous awards are the Tuskegee University Presidential Associate Award, African Methodist Episcopal Church Christian Service Award and the Council for Cultural Progress Public Service Award. In 1981, he was honored with a Giant in Journalism

trophy. Lassiter lives in Baltimore with his wife,  
Hannah Louise Lassiter.

E. Lee Lassiter was interviewed by The HistoryMakers  
on July 16, 2010.

## Related Entries

**Apex Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Berry O'Kelly High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**diploma**

**Tuskegee University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**Boston University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**Morgan State University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Ed.D.**

[EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1961 to 1961]

[EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1960 to 1961]

[EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1986 to 1993]

**Boston University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1960 to 1960]

## **Public Relations**

**United States Army** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1961 to ?]

**Correspondence Officer and Technical Writer**

**Afro-American Newspapers** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1961 to 1965]

**Reporter**

**Baltimore News-American** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1965 to 1986]

**Columnist**

**Coppin State University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1986 to 2003]

**Associate Professor**

**Boy Scouts of America (BSA)** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**District Commissioner**

**Community College of Baltimore Hospitality**

**Management Steering Committee** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)**

[MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Continental, The** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Directors**

**Big Brothers Big Sisters** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Community College of Baltimore Nursing School  
Steering Committee** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Baltimore City Schools Media Advisory Committee**  
[MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Baltimore City Schools Gifted and Talented Advisory  
Committee** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Mount Ararat Baptist Church** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Directors**

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored  
People (NAACP)** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Black Writers Guild of Maryland** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Baltimore Tuskegee Alumni Association** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**National Association of English Teachers** [MEMBEROF]

[from 1992 to ?]

**Member**

**American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)** [MEMBEROF]

[from 1984 to 1985]

**Board of Directors**

**Jazz Heritage Foundation** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1986 to 1986]

**Board of Directors**