



Herbert Wood Ockerman

January 16, 1932 - January 11, 2024

Herbert Wood Ockerman (91) passed away peacefully at home in Columbus, Ohio on Jan 11, 2024. Herb was born on Jan 16, 1932, in Chaplin, Kentucky. He was the son of Herbert and Addie Mae Ockerman. He graduated from Burlington High School in 1950, and from the University of Kentucky in 1954, where he met his wife, Frances. He then served in the United States Air Force. Following his service in USAF, he received a PhD from North Carolina State University. In 1961, he joined The Ohio State University as an Assistant Professor in the College of Food Agriculture and Environmental Science teaching biochemistry, microbiology, statistics and international studies. He retired as Professor in 2017, after serving for 56 years. He was preceded in death by his parents, Herbert and Addie Mae Ockerman and his wife, Frances Ockerman. Herb lived by his motto 'The World is your Classroom' and enjoyed travelling the world, visiting more than 50 countries. The awards and accolades he received from dozens of international universities and the lifelong friendships he made with his worldwide network of former students are a testament to his legacy and impact. For his many academic contributions Herb was awarded with honorary PhDs from Poland, Philippines and University of Kentucky. He established an endowment in his wife's name in 1988 to provide scholarships for graduate and undergraduate students in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at University of Kentucky. As part of his philanthropic initiative, Herb collected used textbooks from university libraries and local bookstores and donated them to schools and

colleges all over the world. For more than 20 years, he shipped forty thousand books annually to dozens of schools and colleges helping educate a whole generation of students who otherwise wouldn't have access to these books. He was a volunteer with the Honor Flight Columbus and was passionate about veteran causes, having served in the USAF himself. Herb is survived by his brothers, Don & Gwinn Ockerman, nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews and a worldwide fraternity of friends and students, the 'Ockerman Family'. Service will be held at 2 PM, Jan 19, 2024, at the Lexington Cemetery in Lexington, Kentucky. In lieu of flowers, donations would be appreciated towards the 'Frances J Ockerman International Scholarship Fund' (UK Philanthropy, William B. Sturgill Philanthropy Building, Lexington, KY 40506-0015 email: philanthropy@uky.edu). Condolences maybe made to the family at www.rutherfordfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Lexington Cemetery

833 W. Main St
Lexington, KY 40508

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JAN 19. 2:00 PM (ET)

Lexington Cemetery
833 W. Main St
Lexington, KY 40508

Tribute Wall

GR

“ *By far one of the Most interesting Professors I ever had at The Ohio State University. A man who has been well travelled and Books in the Garage from Wall to Ceiling. Of course the 60s Mustang and the Beige Victoria or Grand Marquis*

GREGORY - April 22, 2024 at 07:07 PM

TV

“ *I just heard of Dr. Ockerman's passing. He was my advisor prof when working on my masters in 1973-1975. He influenced my life in the meat and food industry. A true gentleman.*

Ted Vartorella - February 19, 2024 at 04:58 PM

“ Dear family members of Dr. Herber Ockerman,

I have been attending ICoMST meetings since 1972, and Dr. Ockerman had started before me. He attended his last, 50th meeting in 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand, I attended my 50th meeting in 2021.

When I first met Dr. Ockerman, I immediately got the feeling that he was special, radiating great charisma and kindness. Now that I have known him for decades, this feeling is much stronger: now I know his career and especially his excellent contribution to foreign students from abroad, especially from developing countries. His influence in this field is significant and has left an impact that will influence a new generation in the countries that have been involved. The delivery of teaching materials to developing countries has also been very impressive and useful.

At ICoMST 2015 in Clermont Ferrand, we visited the art gallery. I entered a room there and had a stunning moment. There was a large group of young researchers sitting on the floor or on chairs, and Dr Ockerman. I realised that these young scientists were his former students. I saw the great respect and love on their faces, and I saw how much they appreciated the supervision, guidance and friendship they had experienced in his group. The feeling was so genuine and strong, and you can see it in the attached pictures.

The fourth picture is him and me. I have tried to follow his example in guiding foreign students, but my efforts have been a pale imitation of his great international collaboration. He was one of the great personalities who have contributed to a better world for all.

My sincere condolences to you on your great loss, but perhaps we should also be proud and happy that we were able to live with him and learn what it is to experience true humanity and warm friendship!

Eero Puolanne
Professor Emeritus
University of Helsinki
Helsinki, Finland



Eero Puolanne - January 20, 2024 at 06:02 AM

RS

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Rehana Salim - January 19, 2024 at 07:48 AM

RS

“ We are deeply grieved to express our great sorrow and sympathy on the passing of (Dadaji), grandfather on 11th January, 2024. Although we are saddened by his loss, we are very proud to be part of his life. He was an extraordinary soul. During his time on earth he managed to create ripples of kindness, wisdom and love. Team Oasis will carry forward his legacy and forever inspire generations to come with his thoughts. May his service for education be a living tribute to his memory.

Dr. Rehana Salim, Director, Oasis Public School

Rehana Salim - January 19, 2024 at 07:34 AM

LB

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Lopa Basu - January 18, 2024 at 09:58 PM

JM

He was my advisor at the OSU in 1999, as a visiting scholar. A wonderful person and great professor. I owe him a lot. I will never forget him.

Juliana Matos from Brazil

Juliana Matos - November 06, 2025 at 07:42 AM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

January 18, 2024 at 09:41 PM

JC

“ As we celebrate the life of a wonderful hero and Heaven welcomes a precious new angel, Dr. Ockerman’s light, leadership and love will continue to live in the minds and hearts of thousands of lives he has touched around the world—including mine.

What an incredible man, leader, professor, veteran, advisor, mentor and friend.

Thank you Dr. Ockerman for your lifetime of service, the lives that are forever changed for the better because of your care and character and the blessing of calling you my advisor, mentor and honorary member of our family. You will be dearly missed and forever remembered. What a remarkable life and an incredible legacy of changed lives you leave behind!



Julie Carrier - January 18, 2024 at 09:36 PM

KA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Kai - January 18, 2024 at 08:34 PM



“ *Rose Impression Casket Spray was purchased for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.*



January 18, 2024 at 08:03 PM



“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Amit Kaul - January 18, 2024 at 05:45 PM

“ *My Homage to Prof. Ockerman*

Last night, when I heard the peaceful passing away of Prof. Ockerman in the arms of Amit and Lopa, I knew that it was his silent blessing to them for their care, love and affection.

My thoughts went back to that night in Shimla, when Professor and I sat in the open under a starry sky, chilled to the bones. Facing us were Amit and Lopa, the newly marrieds, in front of the Yagna fire, covered in a rug. The priest chanted hymns and I translated that they are now Shiva-Shakti, Consciousness and Power of Energy, praying for the welfare of everything that is created.

Professor was deeply moved, sat like a Buddha, eyes looking at the distant dark hills. I felt that he was thinking of the many thousands all over the globe for whom he had dedicated himself.

And suddenly, I recollected Isaiah 58:10,

'If you spend yourself in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness and your night will become like the noonday.'

Two thousand years later, Prof. Ockerman had taken a step forward. He worked untiringly, not merely for food and teaching, but offered nutrition for the body and mind. High-value food, libraries and scholarships for accessing knowledge were his offerings. He was noble soul.

We, the Basu's of Kolkata are especially grateful to him for providing our children a home away from home, a father they direly missed.

To those many thousands like our children, and to all his kins and relatives, I plead:

“Grieve, but do not lament; the ancient Seers of our land of the Vedas taught us that life is a continuum, and you all are part of that continuity. The dream that was Prof. Ockerman must not fade out. You are chosen to act as his flag-bearer. The world of today has millions who are under-nourished, who have no dream and hope. They all need Prof. Ockerman through you.

If you feel weak, recall what a great poet said:

He brought with himself the Immortal Soul

And at parting

He has left it as a gift to us.”

You are that gift. And you will not fail.

Prof.Ajoy Kumar Basu

Kolkata, January 18,2024

Dr. A. K. Basu - January 18, 2024 at 03:32 PM

GI

“ Gopa Basu, India planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Gopa Basu, India - January 18, 2024 at 11:25 AM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.



January 18, 2024 at 11:25 AM



“ The first time I met with Dr. Ockerman was when he visited my Dad's university in Taiwan. I was still an elementary school kid. He was a really nice gentleman with a warm smile on his face. It is my first impression, a friendly grandpa.

During my time at Ohio State, he would ask me to send him a weekly email or give him a call to check in. Whenever I saw him, I would remind him not to drink too much coke or eat too many burgers. No matter what I said, he was always with that same warm smile on his face. I still remember him taking my parents and me to visit the aviation museum in Dayton, enthusiastically pointing us to different types of airplanes. Or when he proudly showed us all the things he collected in his basement. It felt like I had a family in Ohio and I was not alone.

Dr. Ockerman, I am sorry that I didn't have a chance to greet you during new year. I am still feeling sad that I can no longer see your friendly face and warm smile. But I am happy that you are finally at peace and with your wife. I hope there are unlimited COKEs and burgers for you in the heaven and no one will be nagging you.

We are so fortunate to know you.

Huai-Chun - January 17, 2024 at 11:18 PM

LA

“ *A prayer for Dr. Ockerman*

Asatoma Sadgamaya

Asatoma Sad-Gamaya

Asatoma Sad-Gamaya

Tamaso Maa Jyotir-Gamaya

Mrytyor-Maa Amritam Gamaya

Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih (x7, all four lines)

Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih (x2)

Lead me from the untruth to the Truth.

Lead me from darkness to light.

Lead me from death to immortality

Om Peace Peace Peace.

Lopa Basu

Lopa and Amit - January 17, 2024 at 11:12 PM

LB

“ *3 files added to the tribute wall*



Lopa Basu - January 17, 2024 at 04:14 PM

LB

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Lopa Basu - January 17, 2024 at 04:07 PM

GI

“ Gita, S.P.M School, India planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Gita, S.P.M School, India - January 17, 2024 at 04:01 PM



“ With Distinction was purchased for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.



January 17, 2024 at 04:01 PM

DS

“ Dr. Rehana Salim and Oasis Public School planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Dr. Rehana Salim and Oasis Public School - January 17, 2024 at 01:46 PM



“ *Love's Journey was purchased for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.*



January 17, 2024 at 01:46 PM



“ *A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.*

January 17, 2024 at 09:02 AM



“ *May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,

May your memories of Herbert Wood Ockerman, give you peace, comfort and strength...

Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete. I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom. You will not be forgotten.
My thoughts
and prayers to the family of

US Air Force Veteran, Herbert Wood Ockerman, is “A True American Hero” God Bless†

† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13 †*

Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum - January 17, 2024 at 05:44 AM

MA

“ Maitreyee planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Maitreyee - January 17, 2024 at 02:57 AM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.



January 17, 2024 at 02:57 AM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.



January 17, 2024 at 02:46 AM

DK

“ Dr. and Mrs. Kaul planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Dr. and Mrs. Kaul - January 17, 2024 at 02:46 AM

BF

“ Basu Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Basu Family - January 16, 2024 at 06:31 PM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.



January 16, 2024 at 06:31 PM

TO

“ The Department of Animal Sciences, OSU purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.



The Department of Animal Sciences, OSU - January 16, 2024 at 01:10 PM

EY

“ Ebru Y. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Ebru Y. - January 16, 2024 at 11:19 AM

GY

“ Gulen Y. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Gulen Y. - January 16, 2024 at 03:59 AM

GT

“ In addition to his valuable scientific studies, Prof. Ockerman was an exemplary valuable scientist with his kind heart, warm interest and elegance that he offered to scientists and students from different countries of the world.
He showed us the importance of a scientist not only in his scientific work but also in humbly offering interest, support and kindness to people universally.
I had the opportunity to get to know Prof. Ockerman at the ICoMST congresses we attend every year. I feel lucky to have known him as one of the most valuable and kind-hearted scientists. I wish him to be in peace.

*Assoc.Prof.Dr. Gulen Yildiz Turp
Izmir-Turkiye*

Gulen Yildiz Turp - January 16, 2024 at 03:53 AM

KC

“ My dad is Herbert's first student at Ohio State University. Throughout the years, my parents shared numerous stories about Herbert with us—his attentive care during their early days in the United States, his remarkable contributions to book donations, and his deep affection for his wife. Over the past few decades, my dad and Herbert have been close friends, traveling together to various conferences.

I recall meeting him during my childhood in Taiwan. His embrace stands out vividly in my memory, and I distinctly remember feeling as though I had been hugged by Santa Claus.

He is selfless and is one of my favorite human beings. He also told great jokes! Even when he was unwell, his sense of humor remained remarkable. We will always love him.

Kai-Chun Chen - January 16, 2024 at 02:19 AM

DT

“ Dave Cheng, Taiwan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herbert Wood Ockerman.

Dave Cheng, Taiwan - January 16, 2024 at 12:54 AM

DT

“ Dave Cheng, Taiwan purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Herbert Wood Ockerman.



Dave Cheng, Taiwan - January 16, 2024 at 12:54 AM

RA

“*Herb (Prof. Ockerman) has had an outsized influence on my life. Writing about him is like holding a candle to the sun. I first met Herb, the day i landed in Columbus as an immigrant student from India. He was waiting for me with a smile at the airport and my first night in a new country was at his home with his warm hospitality making it a much easier transition than others who came the same route. He helped me with the basics of settling in - getting a bank account, visiting my professors and driving me around for job interviews and getting groceries. He introduced me so many new experiences including rural Ohio and Kentucky. My fondest memories with him were of him explaining football and its religion at the Ohio State University.*

Over the years, Herb has been a steady and stabilizing influence on my life. He has brought much joy and shared many of my sorrows. My children and my extended family have grown to love him as our shared 'Dadu' or grandfather.

We will surely miss your smile and your wit Herb. You lit up everywhere we were together.

Rana - January 15, 2024 at 05:57 PM