



The Historical Society of Orange Park

August 2021 Newsletter

Just as we were all starting to relax and pack away our face masks, Covid-19 decided to make a comeback. This round features the Delta variant that is much more transmissible than the original virus. Fortunately, the vaccines that were made available early this year provide a good measure of protection. Overall, the symptoms of those infected who are fully vaccinated are milder than those who are not vaccinated. Whether you have chosen to be vaccinated or not, please protect yourself and be considerate of others by wearing a mask in enclosed areas, washing your hands and being mindful of social distancing.

We are happy to report that work on the new playground at Clarke Park is substantially complete however, work around the playground still needs to be completed. The Town plans to construct a fence around the new playground and new sidewalks to connect the playground with the existing sidewalks. Clarke Park will remain closed until this ancillary work is completed. It is hoped that this work can be completed during the month of August. With the park remaining closed, there will be no open house tours of the Clarke House this month.

Upcoming Events

Although we are deep into the hot, humid, dog days of August we can take solace that we are now less than two months away from October and beautiful fall weather. This October, the Society will participate in the Town of Orange Park's Fall Festival, which will be held Saturday, October 16 and Sunday, October 17 at Town Hall Park. This festival draws thousands of visitors each year with its mix of food, entertainment, activities and crafts. It is a big event in the life of our town. The Society will be hosting a booth at the festival and volunteers will be needed to share information about the history of Orange Park and our Society. Please consider spending a few hours at the festival and support your Society at the same time.



Also, on Saturday, October 23, the Society will host Moonlight on Magnolia at Magnolia Cemetery. This event has always been popular and a fun, family event. Volunteers will be needed to lead tours, tell the stories of former residents of Orange Park and welcome visitors to Magnolia

Cemetery. Tours will start at 4 PM and the last tour will start at 6 PM. Please consider investing a few hours of your time at this event.



Veterans Day Ceremony 2021

The Historical Society of Orange Park would like to extend an invitation for you to join us for this year's Veterans Day Ceremony to be held at the Orange Park Veterans Memorial on November 11, 2021, at 11am. The Veterans Memorial is located just inside the gates of Magnolia Cemetery which is directly across from Clarke Park/Clarke House on Kingsley Avenue.



This year's ceremony is significant for several reasons. First, it will be exactly 10 years since the Groundbreaking Ceremony was held on November 11, 2011. Secondly, it will be the first full live ceremony to be held since 2019 as last year's live event was replaced by a streaming video due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. That 2020 Veterans Day video is still available for viewing on YouTube and the link to that video is posted at www.ophistory.org.

Most importantly, however, this ceremony is significant because it honors the Veteran. November 11th is a National Holiday and the day set aside each year to honor and thank the veterans of all the Armed Forces for their service.

This year's ceremony promises to be well attended so although there will be some limited seating available, it is recommended that you bring a folding chair. We will do our best to accommodate anyone with mobility issues. Parking for the ceremony will be at the First Baptist Church of Orange Park at 1140 Kingsley Avenue. The ceremony will begin promptly at 11 AM. At the conclusion of the ceremony all participants and guests are invited to join us at the historic Clarke House for light refreshments.

Veterans Memorial Engraved Pavers

As most of you know, one of the features of the Veterans Memorial at Magnolia Cemetery is the ability to honor a veteran with an engraved paver. Each year, orders are collected, and the new pavers are installed prior to Veterans Day. The process of paver procurement, engraving and installation can take several weeks. If you have been considering honoring a veteran with an engraved paver, please do so no later than September 1 to be included in this year's installation. Order forms are available on our website, www.ophistory.org.



Calling all Young Writers! Honor our Veterans!

The Historical Society of Orange Park, in recognition of Veterans Day, will, once again, sponsor an essay contest for students in Clay County. The purpose of the contest is to give young people the opportunity to explain the importance of celebrating veterans and Veterans Day. Students, using their own words and creativity, are invited to tell a personal story about how veterans have made an impact in their life, neighborhood, or town.

This year, instead of having three different topics for the contest, one winner will be chosen in each of the 3 grade levels (Elementary, Middle and High School) that addresses the topic: Why Do We Honor Veterans? Students should research Veterans Day and speak with veterans and family members about what our military veterans have done that deserves recognition.

Required paperwork for the contest will be made available on the website of the Historical Society of Orange Park, ophistory.org. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of entries received. Essays will be measured for: Expression of the theme (50%) Content of writing (25%) and Creativity of writing (25%). Judges will be members of the Historical Society of Orange Park. The contest is divided into the following categories:

<u>Grade level:</u>	<u>Word limit:</u>	<u>Prize Offered:</u>
4th –6 th	300 -500	\$50
7th –8 th	400-700	\$75
9th -12 th	500-1000	\$100

All essay entries must be received by September 30, 2021. These can be sent via electronic submission using the website info@ophistory.org or mailed to: The Historical Society of Orange Park, P. O. Box 08, Orange Park, Florida, 32073. The Grand Prize winners will be notified by October 22, 2021

In Memorium

Over the last few months, we have lost two dear friends who were a big part of our community and had a deep love of history, Mary Jo McTammany and Faye Irvin.

Mary Jo McTammany was a long-time resident of Orange Park. For years she contributed articles on local history to local newspapers. Mary Jo's style of writing was conversational. Reading one of Mary Jo's stories was like hearing it first-hand over the back fence. They always had a personal touch. Mary Jo's interests varied from individuals to families and events to industries. She always found interesting tidbits and aspects of local history to share with the rest of us.

Faye Irvin passed away last week. She was another long-time resident of Orange Park, a long-time member of the Woman's Club and an original member of our Society. Faye also loved to share stories about local history. She contributed many articles to our newsletter often highlighting people that made significant contributions to our community but had been forgotten in the passage of time. She also prepared a history of the Orange Park Woman's Club. Faye was always generous with her time in volunteering for Society events and was always willing to share the fruits of her research with others. She reminded us that we all have a role to play and something to contribute to our community.



Mary Jo McTammany



Faye Irvin

We are grateful for the lives of both women. They were involved in this community. In addition to their other activities, both served as Clay County History Fair judges and were members of our Society. They knew that one of the best ways to preserve history was to share it with others. Through their stories we came to know our town and our connection to it just a bit better. They both led by example and they both will be missed.

Town of Orange Park Historic Home Workshop

Do you have a historic home in need of a little work? Do you need expert advice?

The Town of Orange Park's Historic Home Workshop, originally scheduled for June, has now been rescheduled for mid-September. This will be a historic home how-to 101 experience. Topics range from crawl spaces to attics. A hand-on workshop on restoring historic windows is included.



More information will be available in the September newsletter. Angel Corrales, Chairman of Orange Park's Historic Preservation Board, will be among the presenters. He is setting any funds left over after expenses as donations to the preservation of the Clarke cottage affectionately known as "the Green House."

Orange Park Memories – Hurricane Dora

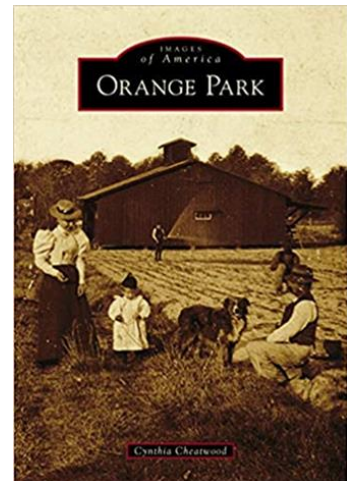
Where were you during Hurricane Dora? While this area has been impacted by a numerous hurricanes and tropical storms in years past, we have not taken a direct hit by a hurricane since September 1964 when Dora came ashore near St. Augustine. Fortunately, Dora was not a major hurricane, but it did leave behind its share of damage, flooding and power outages. If you were in the Orange Park area in 1964, we'd love to hear your story. Please send us your, or your family's, memories of how you were impacted by the storm. We'll share your recollections later this year's in the September issue of this newsletter. Your recollections can be submitted via email to info@ophistory.org or by mail to PO Box 8, Orange Park, FL 32067.

Images of America - Orange Park

Would you like to learn more about the history of Orange Park? If so, you should pick up a copy of Images of America – Orange Park. This book, written by Society President, Cynthia Cheatwood, shares the history of our town through archival photographs and stories collected from a variety of sources.

The Historical Society of Orange Park has copies for sale. Copies can be purchased through the Society for \$20 each (\$15 each for Society members). *This book is also available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble or various other outlets online.*

For more information, please email us at info@ophistory.org. All author royalties for the sale of this book will go toward historical preservation in Orange Park.



Green House Update

Funds are still being collected for this project. If you would like to help us save this piece of Florida history, please send a tax-deductible donation to the Historical Society of Orange Park, P. O. Box 08, Orange Park, FL 32073. Thanks!



Clarke House Tours



While the Clarke House is typically open for tours on the second Sunday of each month, there will be no tours in August due to the construction of a new playground in Clarke Park. We anticipate that tours will resume in September. Please check our September newsletter for information on our next open house.

Look For Us on Facebook

Look for the Historical Society of Orange Park the next time you visit Facebook. Check our page for updates on society activities and updates on the Veterans Memorial. Don't forget to click "Like" on our page.

Membership in the Historical Society of Orange Park

We are grateful for the support our members have provided over the years through membership and participation. We ask that you continue to support our mission to preserve the history of Orange Park and share that history with the community. Ask a friend to join us as well. You can visit our website, www.ophistory.org, to download a membership form there.

