



# The Historical Society of Orange Park

## October 2021 Newsletter

Fall is here! The return of fall and cooler weather means the return of several community activities that mean so much to all of us. In addition to our monthly open house at the Clarke House, October brings the Town of Orange Park's 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Festival and the Historical Society's Moonlight on Magnolia. Information on both events can be found further along in this newsletter.

Also, in this newsletter you will find information on a meeting of the Middleburg Museum and an International Archaeology Day event.

Summer's heat is behind us and there are plenty of reasons to get out and about so take advantage of them if you can.

### Historical Society of Orange Park Calendar of Events

<b>Date</b>		<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
October 10, 2021		2 PM – 4 PM	Open House	Clarke House
October 16-17, 2021		10 AM – 5 PM	Orange Park Fall Festival	Town Hall Park
October 23, 2021		4 PM – 6 PM	Moonlight on Magnolia	Magnolia Cemetery
November 11, 2021		11 AM	Veterans Day Ceremony	Veterans Memorial at Magnolia Cemetery
November 14, 2021		2 PM – 4 PM	Open House	Clarke House
December 10-11, 2021		5 PM – 9 PM	Hometown Holiday	Clarke House Park

Additional information on these events can be found below.

## **Fall Festival**

On Saturday, October 16 and Sunday, October 17, the Town of Orange Park will host its 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Festival at Town Hall Park, located at the corner of Park and Kingsley Avenues. This event features two great days of music, entertainment, crafts, food and activities for children. The weather this time of year is usually about as good as it gets. The festival is a free event so bring the family and invite a friend. Parking is available at Moosehaven with a free shuttle running between Moosehaven and the festival both days.



The Historical Society is hosting a booth at the festival, which will be in our usual spot right behind Town Hall. 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. If you are unable to volunteer, try to stop by to say hello.

## **Moonlight on Magnolia**

Also in October, the Historical Society will host Moonlight on Magnolia at Magnolia Cemetery on Saturday, October 23 from 4 PM to 6 PM. This event has always been popular and a fun, family event. Visitors will be led on tours of Magnolia Cemetery where they will meet “former” residents of Orange Park and hear about their lives and times. What better way to learn about our town than from the people that came before. Tours will start at the entrance to the cemetery. They typically last around 45 minutes and will keep to the paved roadways within the cemetery. Tours will start at 4 PM and the last tour will start at 6 PM. Magnolia Cemetery is located at 2040 Kingsley Avenue, across from Clarke House Park. Parking will be available at First Baptist Church, a short walk to the west of the cemetery on Kingsley Avenue. Volunteers are needed so please let us know if you can help.



## **Veterans Day Ceremony 2021**

November 11, 2021, is the day America will celebrate Veterans Day this year with ceremonies stretching across our great country. The Historical Society of Orange Park, in cooperation with the Town of Orange Park, will once again host its Veterans Day Ceremony at the Veterans Memorial located inside the main gates at Magnolia Cemetery, located at 1040 Kingsley Avenue, directly across from Clarke Park. The ceremony will begin promptly at 11 AM.

This year's ceremony marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Memorial on November 11, 2011. It will be nice to gather again in person this year to celebrate our veterans.

Planning for this event is well underway. Please check our November newsletter or our website, [www.ophistory.org](http://www.ophistory.org), for more information.



## **Mary Helen Hoff Memorial Marker**

A ceremony was held on September 17, 2021, to unveil the “Mary Helen Hoff Memorial Marker” located in front of the Moody Community Park in Orange Park. Mary was the driving inspiration for the POW/MIA Flag

A resolution by the Clay County Board of Commissioners, read by Commissioner Jim Renninger, proclaimed the section of Moody Avenue extending from Peoria Road to Bus Loop Drive at Montclair Elementary School would be designated “Mary Helen Hoff Memorial Avenue”. This area is only blocks from the home where she lived and raised her family.





Mary's husband, Lt. Commander Michael G. Hoff, was stationed at Cecil Field when he deployed as an A7 Sidewinder pilot with Attack Squadron 86 to Southeast Asia. On January 7, 1970, he was flying from the USS Coral Sea on an armed reconnaissance mission over Laos when his A7 jet was shot down. He was declared Missing in Action and his remains have never been found.

Mrs. Hoff worked tirelessly to honor all those that served and who did not return. Mary formed the local chapter of the National League of POW/MIA Families and pushed for a symbol that would let everyone know that there were POWs and MIAs that needed to be remembered. The words on the POW/MIA flag are evidence of her completing her mission: YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN. It took many years but that symbol, by act of Congress, is now flown proudly throughout the country with the American flag.



Mary Hoff was largely responsible for the creation of one of the most recognizable symbols in America. 50 years later the community gathered to honor her accomplishments.



Members of the Society attended the dedication ceremony for the Mary Helen Hoff Memorial Roadway. Seated, L-R: Carolyn Day, Sheila Brammer, Standing, L-R: Cindy Cheatwood, Van Hogan, Don Brammer.

### **Middleburg Museum**

The Middleburg Museum will be hosting speaker programs for the remainder of 2021. These meetings will be held the first Thursday of the month, 6:30 PM, at the Middleburg Civic Association. 2102 Palmetto Street. This month's meeting will be Thursday, October 7. The featured speaker will be Dr. Cynthia Stone. The subject of her presentation will be, "What's in a Name?"

In addition to monthly meetings, the Middleburg Museum will host their annual Historic Festival on Saturday, November 6th from 11 AM -3 PM. Visit their Facebook Page for more information ([The Middleburg Museum - Home | Facebook](#)).

### **International Archaeology Day**

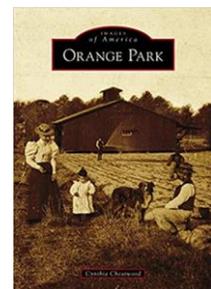
The Archaeological Institute of America—Jacksonville Society and the Beaches Museum are sponsoring the annual celebration of International Archaeology Day at the Museum (381 Beach Boulevard, Jacksonville Beach) on Saturday, Oct. 16. From 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. there will be demonstrations of pottery making and rope making, identification of artifacts by Dr. Keith Ashley, explanation of how Native Americans used plants by the Master Gardeners, and a simulated dig where children can pretend to be archaeologists.

At noon in the historic chapel at the Museum Dr. Kenneth Sassaman from the University of Florida will present a lecture titled "**Silver Glen Springs before *The Yearling*.**" He will discuss his research into a Native American metropolis that existed near the setting of Marjorie Keenan Rawlings' Pulitzer-winning novel, the backwoods of Florida in 1878 on Lake George. An anatomist from Harvard University in the late 1870s documented an archaeological landscape much different from the quiet, serene setting of Rawlings' story. Indeed, long before Europeans arrived to change the course of Florida's history, Silver Glen was more of a metropolis than it was a wilderness. Most above-ground traces of this past were erased by shell-mining operations in the 1920s. Since 2000, the St. Johns Archaeological Field School of the University of Florida has taken the opportunity to resurrect this lost past, which Dr. Sassaman will describe for the audience. All are welcome to join in the activities. This event is free and open to the public.

### **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](mailto:info@ophistory.org). All author royalties for the sale of this book will go toward historical preservation in Orange Park.

### **Clarke House Tours**



The Clarke House is once again open for tours on the second Sunday of each month. This month, the house will be open Sunday, October 10 from 2 PM to 4 PM. If you have not yet visited the house or, if it has just been a while, we invite you to stop by to look around. The slower pace of a Sunday afternoon provides an opportunity to tour the entire house, both upstairs and down. We hope to see you there.

### **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](http://www.ophistory.org), to download a membership form there.

