

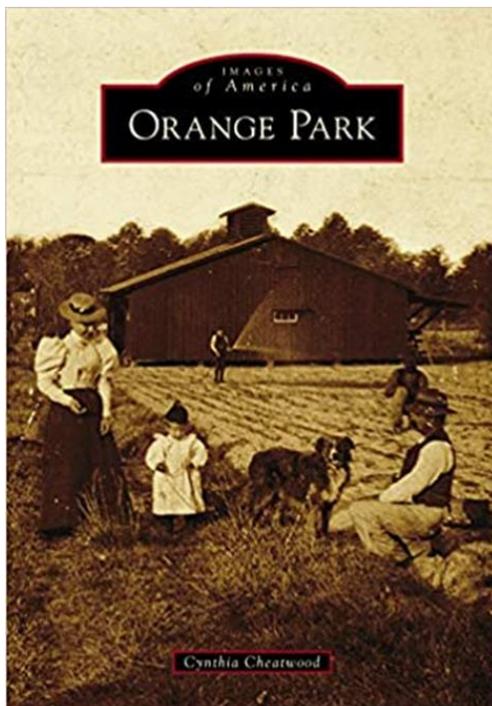


The Historical Society of Orange Park

September 2020 Newsletter

We are happy to report the resumption of monthly Clarke House tours in August went very well. The Clarke House will next be open to the public on Sunday, September 13, from 2 PM to 4 PM. We ask that anyone considering a visit to the Clarke House be mindful of their health and the health of others. Visitors will be required to wear face masks and follow social distancing guidelines while in the house. No more than 10 people can be in the house at any one time.

Regarding future activities, the lingering health concerns related to the coronavirus have impacted two of our popular fall events. First, we regret to inform you that Moonlight on Magnolia, which was scheduled for late October, has been cancelled. This is one of our favorite events and is always well-attended. We look forward to bringing Moonlight on Magnolia back to Magnolia Cemetery in 2021. The coronavirus has also impacted our annual Veterans Day Ceremony, held each November 11 at the Veterans Memorial. This event has always been generously supported by the community, both in attendance and participation. Fortunately, the nature of this ceremony has provided us an opportunity to take a different approach. We are working on a plan to continue this tradition remotely. More details will be available at a later date.



Images of America - Orange Park

The wait is over! Images of America – Orange Park has been published and is available for purchase. See below for details.

Orange Park, Florida, once known as Laurel Grove Plantation, was incorporated in 1879. Luring people with its healthy climate, therapeutic spring, and charming views of the St. Johns River, the town has played host to the rich and famous as well as the poor and humble. In early days, steamboats carried the likes of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Pres. Ulysses S. Grant, William Astor, and B.J. Johnson to the grand Hotel Marion for recreational or health benefits. Later, one of Florida's first integrated schools thrived just yards away. Important scientific studies were conducted at the town's "Monkey Farm" for 35 years. Orange Park, far

more than a bedroom community for Jacksonville, has all the charm of small-town America.

A new book, endorsed by the Historical Society of Orange Park, presents the town's history through images of its past. Using historical society records, decades of local newspaper columns, and published and unpublished histories of Clay County, Florida, local historian Cynthia Cheatwood has assembled a rich view of Orange Park's story. Many of this book's images, gathered from university archives, Clay County Historical Archives, the State Archives of Florida, and local collections, have seldom been shared.

Interested in the **history of Orange Park**?

The Historical Society of Orange Park has a limited number of copies for sale. Copies can be purchased through the Society for \$20 each (\$15 each for Society members). Books will also be available at the upcoming Farmers' and Arts Market at Town Hall Park, Sunday, September 6 and Sunday, September 20 from 10 AM to 3 PM each day.

This book is also available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble or various other outlets online.

Series: Images of America

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: Arcadia Pub (August 24, 2020)

\$21.99

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.

Veterans Day Essay Contest

As we mentioned earlier, we are planning a non-traditional approach to our Veterans Day Ceremony. As part of our recognition of Veterans Day, we are continuing our annual essay contest for Clay County students from grades 4 through 12. Contest winners will receive a cash prize and have the opportunity to present their essays for the Veterans Day Ceremony on November 11. The categories for this year's contest are:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Word Limit</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Prize Amount</u>
4 th – 6 th	300 - 500	Why do we celebrate Veterans Day?	\$50
7 th – 8 th	400 – 700	Why do we honor Veterans?	\$75
9 th – 12 th	500 – 1,000	What does it mean to be a Veteran?	\$100

All essays are due September 25. Please visit our website, www.ophistory.org, to download a copy of the contest rules and an entry form.

Other News

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

The Clarke House is once again open for tours on the second Sunday of each month. For those that have only visited the Clarke House during events such as Carrie Clarke Day and Hometown Holiday, our monthly open house tours provide an excellent opportunity to look around the house at a more liesurely pace. Built in 1912, the Clarke House features a large, open room on the first floor with many windows that provided ventilation in the days before air conditioning. The early 20th century furnishings and appliances provide a glimpse of home life in the early days of Orange Park. Visitors can also tour the two furnished, upstairs bedrooms. The next opportunity to visit the Clarke House will be Sunday, September 13 from 2 PM to 4 PM.



Additional History

For more information on local history, please visit the [Clarke House Park](#) website and the [Clay County Florida - History](#) Facebook page.

Corporate Sponsor **Nix Construction Company**

We appreciate their support!

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.

