



The Historical Society of Orange Park

September 2017 Newsletter

Monthly Meeting

Saturday, September 9, 2017

Clarke House

1039 Kingsley Avenue

Orange Park, FL 32073

"Steamboats of the St. Johns and Ocklawaha Rivers" presented by Larry Beaton

In the 19th century prior to the arrival of the railroads, the primary means of transportation for people and cargo was by water. Ships traveled from the ports along the east coast of the United States to the St. Johns River and later up the Ocklawaha River moving tourists, residents, their property, and supplies and products to communities and landings along the St. Johns River, its lakes and tributaries including the Ocklawaha.

Through a series of images of the ships and the areas they traveled, Larry Beaton will share their story. His presentation will also include a tribute to the memory of Edward A. Mueller, the undisputed dean of Florida maritime history.



Larry is a 5th generation Palatka resident and a charter member of the Putnam County Historical Society, currently serving as historian for the Society. As an avid local amateur historian, he continues to research and share presentations on topics related to the history of Palatka, Putnam County, and northeast Florida.

Recent Events

August Meeting



On August 12, the Society heard the story of the Orange Park Woman's Club presented by Faye Irvin. The Woman's Club was founded in 1910. The first recorded project was to clean up the local school. They painted, built fences and procured books for students. They even raised money to keep the school in operation due to shortfalls in County funding. The ladies did not stop there. They cleaned up town streets, placed waste baskets around the town and planted trees and shrubs to beautify the town. One of their more lasting projects was the creation of a local library. Books were procured through donations and fundraisers. The Woman's Club ran the library until after World War Two when the State of Florida assumed responsibility for the library system. As the organization continued to work and grow, a clubhouse was needed. With a donation of land from local realtor, Charles Brown, and donations from

philanthropists, Mrs. Caleb Johnson and Mrs. John Ferguson, a clubhouse was built and dedicated on Kingsley Avenue in 1930. The ladies of the Orange Park Woman's Club have continued to this day to work on numerous projects to help others and improve the quality of life for Orange Park's residents. Their vision and tenacity to identify and solve problems while building community has reaped many benefits and will do so for years to come. Our thanks to Faye for sharing their story.

Upcoming Events

Fall Festival

Fall is upon us and that means the Orange Park Fall Festival will soon be here. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Fall Festival. This year's event will be held Saturday and Sunday, October 21 and 22. The festival consistently draws huge crowds and the weather is usually outstanding. There is something for everyone in the family.

The Society will be hosting a booth to tell the community who we are and what we do. This year we will be located behind Town Hall across from the pavilion.



Fall Festival

Please stop by to see us. Volunteers will be needed. Please sign up at our next monthly meeting on September 9.

Moonlight on Magnolia Returns

October 28th from 4-6:30 PM we will once again offer guided history tours through Magnolia Cemetery. Helper are needed in various forms. We are asking our youth volunteers to act as guides this year in order to accommodate more people. For this reason we need adults to portray the characters featured in the cemetery. We will also need help coordinating groups, collecting donations and taking photographs.



New information is being research to spice up existing characters and there may be a few new ones added. If you would like to be part of the fun, contact Cindy Cheatwood at 9047070822 or ckcheatwood@hotmail.com.

Be sure to spread the word to friends and family. We will have paver forms for the Veterans Memorial and will take donations to be used for the society's projects including the repairs to the green cottage. Parking is at the First Baptist Church.

Veterans Day



Please remember that we will host the annual Veterans Day Ceremony on Saturday, November 11. Repairs to the memorial caused by storms earlier this year are underway and should be completed by November. This special event has grown every year and we look forward to another great event this year. Please join us as we honor our veterans for their dedication and service to our nation.

Hometown Holiday in the Park

On Friday, December 8 and Saturday, December 9, we will partner with the Town of Orange Park on Hometown Holiday in the Park at Clarke Park. This is a big family event and always a lot of fun. This year we will once again host tours of the Clarke House and tell the story of Orange Park to children through our PastPort activity. More on this event in the coming months.

Veterans Day Essay Contest

In conjunction with the Veterans Day Ceremony, the Society will conduct our annual Veterans Day Essay Contest. The contest is open to all Clay County students from 4th grade through 12th grade. The theme for the contest is to explain the importance of Veterans Day. Essay categories are broken down by grade as follows:

Grade	Word Limit	Topic
4 th -6 th	300-500	Why do we have a holiday called Veterans Day?
7 th -8 th	400-700	What does it mean to be a Veteran?
9 th -12 th	500-1,000	What does the phrase, "Duty, Honor, Country", mean to you and to military veterans?

All entries must be received by September 29th. Cash prizes will be awarded to each category winner. Please visit our website, www.ophistory.org, for additional information and to download an entry form.

Other News

In Memory of Evelyn Hall

It is with sadness that we note the passing of our friend, Evelyn Hall. Evelyn passed away peacefully last Wednesday morning, August 30 surrounded by four generations of her family. Evelyn was a consistent supporter and friend of our Society and its members. She and her husband, Art, were founding members of our organization. Evelyn was always willing to help wherever she could by making phone calls or participating in events where possible. Never one to get too excited, Evelyn took challenges in stride. Her long life had given her perspective and she knew that things would always work out when we worked together. An original California girl, Evelyn followed Art to his hometown of Orange Park upon retirement. A few years ago, Evelyn celebrated her 90th birthday. The turnout of family and friends that day was tremendous. It was easy to see that God had blessed her with a large, happy family and many friends but we were blessed with her friendship. We offer our condolences to Evelyn's family but cherish the memory of our shared times together.

Veterans Memorial

The Veterans Memorial Committee continues to receive orders for inscribed brick pavers to be installed at the site. We plan to order and install additional pavers by Veterans Day. Order forms for pavers are available at the memorial site, in the Orange Park Library or may be downloaded from the HSOP website www.ophistory.org. The cost of the pavers is \$50 each.

Another way to show your support is through the purchase of an ornament commemorating our Orange Park Veteran's Memorial. Cost



of these ornaments is \$10 each. Ornaments can be purchased at the Clarke House during regularly scheduled events.

Green House Committee Report



Repairs are beginning at Mrs. Clarke's cottage (aka Green House)! Eugene Nix, as general contractor, is perpetuating his father's legacy as a guardian of Orange Park history as the damaged floor supports are being removed and replaced. This first phase of work is aimed at stopping the deterioration caused by the water-damaged wood. Once this is achieved the way will be set for further renovation.

Each phase will be accomplished as the funding allow, so the fund-raising work continues. It is now important to secure contributions. The Town of Orange Park is matching the first \$2500 we raise in donations but we hope to go well beyond that to meet our goals of making the cottage a usable asset to the town. The little house within Clarke Park promises to offer non-profits a safe, comfortable option for meetings, programs, etc. As we continue we need the society's membership to reach out to whatever contacts they may feel could help with either cash or in-kind donations, all tax deductible. An account is established in the historical society and the town's accounts just for this project.

Please contact Cindy Cheatwood at ckcheatwood@hotmail.com or 9047070822 for information or questions.

Quilt Raffle

This year's quilt, a 60" x 52" Hopscotch pattern, was generously donated by Janice McGilton. The quilt will be raffled off and all donations will support the many community programs of the Society. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Tickets will be available at our general meetings.



Clarke House Tours

The Clarke House is open for public tours the second Sunday of each month from 2 PM to 4 PM. This a great opportunity to take a relaxed look around the house at your own pace.

Corporate Sponsor

Thank you to **Nix Construction Company**, our first Corporate Sponsor. We thank them for 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 encourage you to support our mission to preserve the history of Orange Park and share that history with the community by becoming a member of the Historical Society of Orange Park. We also ask your support and participation for the many community activities we undertake during the course of the year. You can visit our website, www.ophistory.org, to download a membership form.

