



# COUNTY COURIER

Official Publication  
of the  
Orange County  
Historical Society

www.orangecountyhistory.org

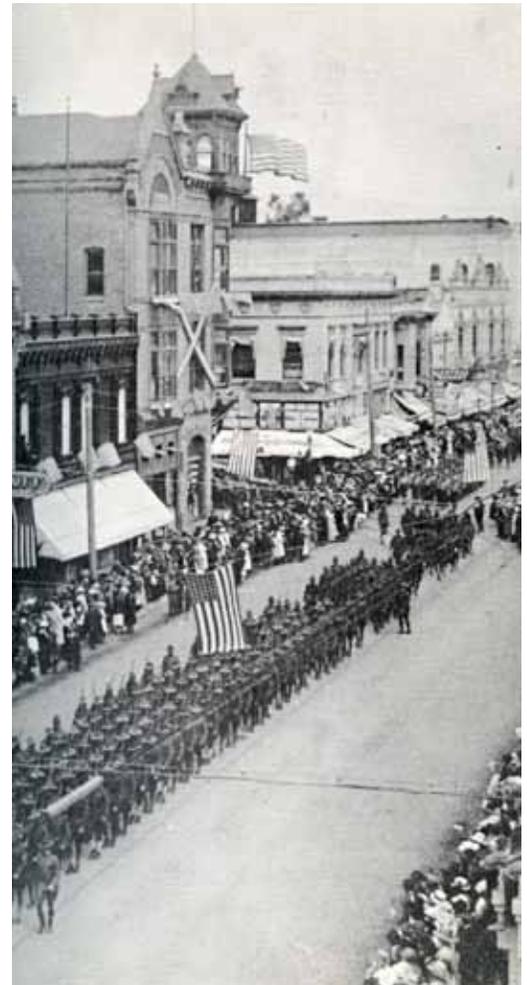
## Orange County's Armed Forces through the Years

This month's presentation, offered from a researcher/reporter's point of view, profiles Orange County's veterans and their legacy. How many Orange County soldiers have gone to war—and to which wars? Who are our Orange County soldiers and what has been the impact on the families—and collectively, the County—when their service has resulted in death. Learn how demographics and attitudes toward military members have changed -- dramatically -- and what it means for the future of the county which now lacks the two big touchstone bases it had in the past.

Moreover, Mr. Rowe will speak about how Orange County memorializes its war dead, the legacy of the Marine Corps as it lives on at the Great Park, why military

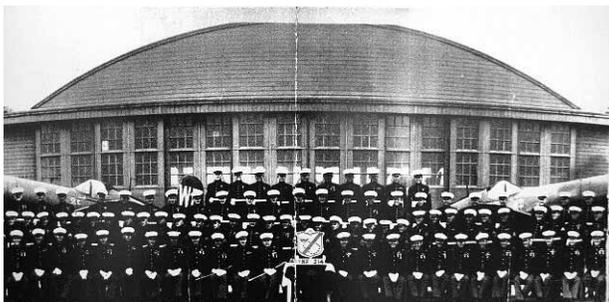
museums are tough to make profitable, and how the protesters of the 1960s and early 1970s transformed themselves into greeters and hosts for visiting soldiers today.

Jeff Rowe has been a reporter and writer for 35 years at the Wall Street Journal, Associated Press, and the Orange County Register; he was also news director at KDOC-TV. He currently teaches broadcast news writing at CSU Fullerton, basic reporting at Cypress College, and works with a team that develops the farmlands and related enterprises at the Orange County Great Park, and creates a weekly farm and market newsletter at the Park. He is a University of Hawaii graduate and was a tanker maintenance officer in the United States Air Force.



Homecoming for Company L 4th St. Santa Ana 1918

*OCHS photo*



El Toro Marine Corps Air Station  
Hanger 244 VMF-314 Bob's Cats  
squadron posing in front. 1945/46

Entrance to El Toro Marine Corps Air Station in 1955



### MEETING

**November 10**

**Trinity Episcopal  
Church**

**City of Orange**

**7:30**

**Orange County's  
Armed Forces**



*From the President*

## Smartitude and Local History

One of my favorite things about OCHS events is being surrounded by smart people. Whether any of it rubs off or not is debatable, but I do enjoy listening to people with interests beyond celebrity gossip and “reality TV.”

Intelligent people, of course, are curious about their world. Bright people living in the wilderness learn about the plants, animals and geology. Those in the city develop an interest in their “built environment” and the sea of people all around them.

But wherever they live, intelligent people are easily hooked on local history, because it addresses the kinds of questions they ask themselves: How did

our town end up with its unique personality? Who lived on this land before I did, and what were they like? How did this valley end up with such an odd name? How does something that happened here in the past affect me today?

As you find answers to questions like these, your seemingly ordinary surroundings become more colorful, meaningful, and interconnected, and your sense of community grows.

So if you have smart friends, bring them along to an OCHS event. Once they experiment with local history, they may be hooked for life. And as they say: “The first one is free!”

Chris Jepsen

### ORANGE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## Join OCHS History Hikes!

To help people connect with our fascinating history, the Orange County Historical Society is introducing the Orange County History Hikes. These hikes are at historical locations, so they allow history and hiking enthusiasts to mix things they like. The hikes will vary in distance and difficulty, but will be feasible for most reasonably fit people.

### Hiking 101

First up is the San Juan Hot Springs, part of Caspers Wilderness Park not usually open to the public. The hike will be led by Orange County naturalist and author Karin Klein and Orange County historian and author Phil Brigandi. *See details on pg. 5*



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## A History of the Orange County Historical Society

For nearly a century, the Orange County Historical Society (OCHS) has been a vital historical resource and an important part of the community. The Society was incorporated on May 28, 1919, “for the collection and preservation of all materials relating to the history of California, and in particular, Southern California and Orange County; also for the discussion of historical subjects and for the mutual improvement of all its members...”

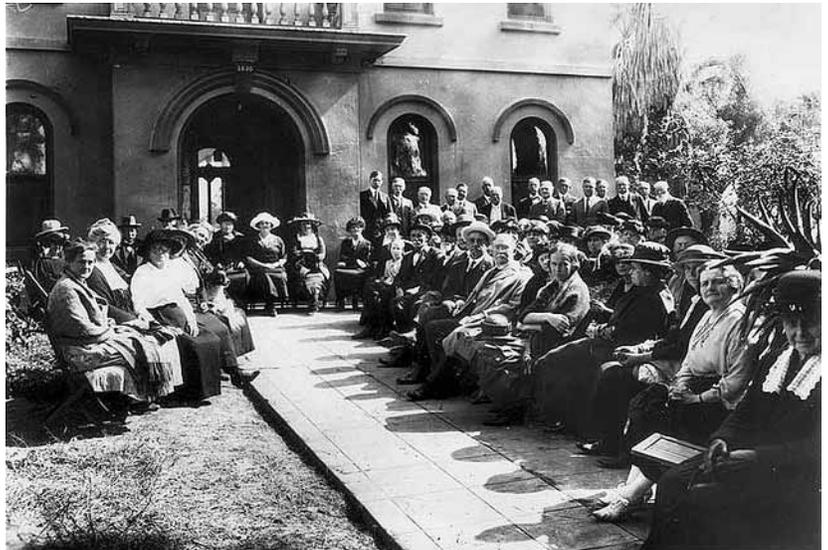
The first meeting was held a month later, on June 26, 1919. The original directors were prominent civic leaders of the young county: Samuel Armor, one of our first county supervisors; H. Clay Kellogg, civil engineer; Nellie P. Tedford, Santa Ana civic leader and library trustee; Charles C. Chapman, citrus pioneer and philanthropist; Samuel M. Davis, lawyer and former O.C. District Attorney; and Dr. John L. Dryer and Dr. Charles D. Ball, physicians. Dr. Ball was elected President, a position he held until 1934. Historians William McPherson and Terry E. Stephenson then traded the presidency until 1946.

The Society published several valuable volumes in those early years. The Orange County History Series contains some of the best papers presented to the society. The 1931 and 1932 editions were printed by the famed Fine Arts Press of the Santa Ana High School and Junior College. In 1939, a third volume appeared featuring additional original research.

In those early years, OCHS was called upon to assist with the interpretation of archaeological sites, the planning of rancho-style fiestas, the organization of parades, and all manner of activities that reflected local history. The Society even successfully petitioned the federal government to rename Sugarloaf Peak in the Santa Ana Mountains as Pleasants Peak, in honor of pioneer and Society member “Judge” J.E. Pleasants.

Speakers at the Society’s meetings included such luminaries as John P. Harrington, famed linguist and ethnologist; Fr. St. John O’Sullivan, who restored Mission San Juan Capistrano and led the way to the preservation of California’s Missions; Don Meadows, noted historian and biologist; Dr. F. W. Hodge, Director of the Southwest Museum; and Terry Stephenson, the editor of the Santa Ana Register and the eminent Orange County historian at the time.

The Society originally met at the Santa Ana Public Library and then at the Ebell Clubhouse. Often, they met at historic sites like the Modjeska home and the Great Stone Church at Mission San Juan Capistrano. But the hope, beginning with a failed attempt to buy the McFadden House in Santa Ana, was to find a permanent home for the organization.



OCHS Meeting 1922 at the McFadden home

*OCHS Photo*

That dream materialized when Society members Charles and Ada Bowers created a trust that left their home and their other assets to the City of Santa Ana to provide for a local museum. The trust stipulated that the Charles W. Bowers Memorial Museum was first and foremost to be a local history museum, that the Society should “be permitted to assist in the furnishing of displays, furniture and fixtures of the building,” and also that the Society be given “free use of the building for their meetings” in perpetuity. OCHS held their meeting at Bowers from October

*History continued on page 4*

1933 (two years before the museum publicly opened) until the early 2000s.

With the coming of World War II, few people had time for the Historical Society. Many of its early members had passed away. In 1946, the Orange County Historical Society became dormant.

The Orange County Historical Society was reestablished in 1961, with some of the original members joining with newer county residents to continue to explore and document the history of Orange County. Most meetings were still held at the Bowers Museum, with annual dinners often held at the Santa Ana Elk's Lodge. Since at least 1980, the Society's "Season Kick-Off" meetings have been held at Sherman Library & Gardens in Corona del Mar. Currently, most regular meetings are held at Trinity Episcopal Church in Orange.

Since its post-War revival, OCHS has hosted hundreds of speakers who have studied Orange County's history, and some who have lived it first-hand. These diverse personalities included the likes of Glen Dawson, Joan Irvine Smith, Rev. Maynard Geiger, pioneer aviator Eddie Martin, historian Mark Hall-Patton, County Supervisor John Moorlach, Jay Johnstone of the Anaheim Angels, and architect Dion Neutra.

The Society's roster of presidents during these same years has included such notable community figures as Judge Raymond Thompson, publisher J.J. Friis, County Recorder J. Wylie Carlyle, and eminent local historians like Jim Sleeper, Leo Friis and Esther Cramer.

Over the years, OCHS has sponsored history conferences in conjunction with California State University Fullerton and Chapman University, as well as workshops, tours of historic sites, Orange County Fair exhibits, banquets honoring local pioneers, and treks to historic destinations. The Society also established the Terry E. Stephenson Award, for outstanding work by historians, and the Friis-Pioneer Press Award, which recognizes the work of student historians. Publishing continued to be an important part of the



Pat Beck at OCHS booth at Santiago Oaks Park dedication in 1984

*OCHS Photo*

Society's mission and over the years many fine books appeared, including the landmark Centennial Bibliography of Orange County (1989), Don Meadows' *The House of Bernardo Yorba* (1963), Wayne Gibson's *The Olive Mill* (1975), and Virginia Carpenter's *Cañada de la Brea: Ghost Rancho* (1978).

In 1973, the Society launched *Orange Countiana*, a journal of local history featuring articles on a wide variety of topics. Five volumes were published between 1973 and 1992. In 2010 *Orange Countiana* was revived as an annual publication, issued each fall.

Over the decades, the Society has also built a collection of historic photographs, books, and other material documenting the rich history of Orange County. In 2010, OCHS undertook the creation of a Strategic Plan to define the Society's direction and goals up through its centennial year of 2019. The plan calls for maintaining current traditions, getting back in touch with some old ones, and growth in new directions that will keep the Society a relevant and vital part of Orange County's future.

Ultimately though, the future of the Society is up to the wishes and work of its members. We hope you'll be part of that.



## *Here Comes History*

### **Orange Countiana VII This Month**

The latest edition of the historical OCHS journal, the Orange Countiana (Volume VII) is coming off the presses this month. Members may pick up their complimentary copy at either of our meetings on November 10th or December 8th at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Orange.

The historic publication is chock-full of interesting articles about a diverse array of topics related to Orange County history. At our general meetings throughout the year, additional copies will be available for \$20 each. They also make a great Christmas gift for your favorite history buffs.

In addition, at the special December meeting the contributors to and authors of Orange Countiana VII will be on hand to talk about their articles as well as sign the books. After that, any members who did not pick up their copies will have one mailed to them as a copy is included in your membership.

*Continued from page 2*

### **OCHS History Hikes Information**

**Date/Time: 10 a.m. Sunday, November 20**  
(Check OCHS' Facebook for a rain cancelation)

**Location: San Juan Hot Springs, Caspers Wilderness Park**

**Distance: 1 mile round-trip**

**Elevation: 100 feet total elevation gain**

**Event Fee: None (but limited to 25 people)**

**Parking Fee: None (limited to 12 cars, so car-pooling of 2 or more is needed).**

**Meeting Spot: Hot Springs parking lot (see Directions).**



San Juan Hot Springs



**Special Instructions:** Must be at least 7 years old. No dogs allowed. Bring water, sunscreen, a hat and sturdy closed-toe shoes.

**Reservations are required** so contact Cindi Morgan at Caspers Park (949) 923-2207 or [cindi.morgan@ocparks.com](mailto:cindi.morgan@ocparks.com) to reserve a spot. Tell them you are going on the "historical society hike" as it is not a regular park event. You can bring a picnic lunch for after the hike as they have picnic tables and benches or you can bring your own chairs or blankets.

**Getting there:** Take the I-5 to San Juan Capistrano and exit at Ortega Highway (CA 74). Go east 7.6 miles to Caspers Wilderness Park. Go past the entrance another 5 miles to Hot Springs Canyon Road. The road is unsigned, but look to the left for a large Lazy W Ranch sign. Turn left just before the sign and drive 0.1 mile to the open gate on the left. If you get to the San Juan Fire Station, you went too far on Highway 74.

For any questions or suggestions contact Colleen Greene, OC History Hikes Committee Chair at [colleen.e.greene@gmail.com](mailto:colleen.e.greene@gmail.com). For a list of all events, check our website at [www.orangecountyhistory.org](http://www.orangecountyhistory.org)



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ORGANIZATION  
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Fullerton CA

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# OCHS MEMBERSHIP

OCHS MEMBERSHIP FORM Nov. 2011

Students ♦ with ID and Seniors*	\$20.00
Individuals	\$30.00
Family (at same address)	\$45.00
Institutions ♦	\$50.00
Sponsors	\$60.00
Patrons	\$100.00
Corporate/Companies ♦	\$200.00
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\* The senior category is new and may save you money if your membership was previously at the individual, family or sponsor rate.

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.Send meeting and special event notices to my e mail.

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