

EPITAPH



Oak Grove Chapel - *Wake House*

One 2017 OGCS Project was the painting and repair of Oak Grove Chapel. The building was last painted in 2007 by the Colonial Dames XVII Century led by their then President Carolyn Nugent. Today Carolyn serves as Treasurer on OGCS Board of Directors.

Oak Grove Cemetery chapel is believed to have been built in the 1880s

In 2006 the Colonial Dames and Magnolia Garden Club restored the building.

Joy Craft discovered the original colors



New chapel doors were given in loving memory of Joy Craft

Sandy Colhard serves OGCS as Board Secretary. In July Sandy volunteered to supervise the chapel painting. It has been ten years since the chapel was last painted by the Colonial Dames. There were a few places where rotting or termite infested wood had to be replaced. When preparing the building for painting it was discovered the existing doors were falling apart. The old front doors were interior grade added by the City about twenty-five years ago. Sandy made the decision to sponsor the new doors for the project. These new *custom made* chapel doors are given in memorial to Sandy's mother, Joy Craft. Joy at rest in Oak Grove today, is credited with discovering these original chapel colors and assisted the chapel restoration . Joy and Sandy's father,

Ernest Craft, were ardent supporters for preserving historic Brunswick.

It is believed the chapel was constructed in the 1880's. As early as 1867 the City Commission minutes mention building a "rain house" in Oak Grove. Also, the chapel has been referred to as the "wake house" where one could lie in state the night before burial. Family and friends could come to the cemetery and celebrate the departed's life instead of at someone's home.

In celebration of life, the mortal remains of many in Oak Grove were carried in procession by horse and coach down the streets of Brunswick from church or

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home to their place of eternal rest. Music was often performed by the Brunswick Brass Band playing *When the Saints Go Marching In; Abide With Me tis Eventide....* amongst many other inspiring songs. The chapel, with a cypress shake roof, served as a place for graveside service out of the rain and inclement weather. A wall bench surrounds the interior on three and a half sides where family and friends sat. The casket was placed in the center. The Pastor stood at the head where a service was given and final good-byes were whispered. I have been told Sunday school has also been held there with Bible verses cut into the dark stained pine tongue and groove paneled walls and benches.

Today, the MOU between the City of Brunswick and OGCS, gives Oak Grove Chapel for the use of the charity. To date OGCS has used the chapel to host events that raised funds for the cemetery. In March 2016 OGCS hosted a Georgia Municipal Cemetery Association seminar. About forty municipal cemetery managers from three states attended. It was at this seminar Mary du Bignon's cross was restored as a demonstration. It is possible future chapel uses may include a cemetery museum, visitor center and a place to rent for weddings. All \$\$\$ generated from the chapel use, like all OGCS fundraising, goes to supporting the Master Plan Projects.

This 2017 Oak Grove Cemetery Society project of painting the chapel and new doors was made possible by numerous gifts : Sandy Colhard \$2,600 for the custom made 7' solid doors , new door jam and threshold; The Colonial Dames, \$560 donation contributed to the painting costs; ; Magnolia Garden Club \$400 donation contributed to purchasing the door hardware and \$800 donations from may OGCS members. In-kind donations were given from Central hardware cans of primer paint and Langs Hardware donation four boards of Colonial siding. Oak Grove Cemetery Society appreciates these generous donors. THANK YOU! *"A Community Effort for A Community Treasure."*

OGCS also gives a very grateful THANK YOU! to Sandy for her efforts and large donation that made this OGCS project happen.

email: cemeteryoakgrove@gmail.com to learn how you can help preserve Brunswick's place of history and heritage, Oak Grove Cemetery.
Together, we can make a difference!

President's Message



Together, we are improving the community by creating a safe, beautiful place for the public to visit and learn of Brunswick's history and heritage.

OGCS mission.... "is to support the City of Brunswick, the descendants of those at rest and the public with the protection, preservation, conservation and maintenance of Oak Grove Cemetery. That is OGCS only purpose.

In 2017 OGCS accomplished seven major projects from the Master Plan in addition to the cleaning and repair of many monuments, our greatest work. OGCS volunteers also raked and cleaned the grounds monthly during Second Saturday Clean-ups. All of these accomplishments were achieved due to volunteers, and generous donations from OGCS members and community businesses. Together, we are improving the community by creating a safe, beautiful place for the public to visit and learn of Brunswick's history and heritage. OGCS efforts are restoring *their* legacy.

In 2018 we look ahead at new projects that will improve and enhance Oak Grove; new events that will support the public. OGCS, an ALL volunteer

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charity, only receives funding from generous donors and grants. There are no \$
\$\$ from the City or other source. OGCS 2018 Operating Budget is only \$1,200.
All remaining \$\$\$ support the Master Plan Projects. Without your donations
none of this work is possible. 2018 Membership is now due. Your dues are
donations that help fund this work. Please choose a level of donation and mail
your check with a current membership form today.

Following is an end of the year update on the 2017 accomplishments of Oak
Grove Cemetery Society to improve and enhance the City's historic Oak Grove
Cemetery established May 7, 1838.

Project Signage- January 2017- Four signs were added at the four entrances of
Oak Grove Cemetery declaring this cemetery a local historic/ archaeological
site protected by the City of Brunswick Historic Preservation Board and also
explaining the relationship between the City of Brunswick and Oak Grove
Cemetery Society and contact information. A fifth sign was added in the north
flower bed explaining the work of Oak Grove Cemetery Society and contact
information.

Project Kiosk

February 2017 - At the cemetery's main entrance is a kiosk for visitors that
houses Oak Grove Walking Tour brochure; OGCS membership forms and
visitor sign in. This box is monitored and tells us an average of five to ten
guests visit weekly.

Project Water Infrastructure Phase 3

March 2017 - Under the direction of Jerry Spencer, a two inch trunk line was
added to the water main at Mansfield St running in an east / west direction to
the main entrance(north gate) where the line turns and runs in a north/ south
direction ending at the center circle of the cemetery. At this point a lateral line
runs about 100' eastward and ending with two faucets that delivers water to
this section only. This is now the only working water faucets in the entire
cemetery. This year's sewer repair at the corner of Mansfield St and MLK by
Joint Water and Sewer cut off the old water supply. The new trunk line also
delivers water to the newly restored "Center Circle" Victorian garden. This
irrigation is controlled from the timer station located behind the chapel. Any

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future update to the water infrastructure can easily be added to this new trunk line. This Project was sponsored by the Magnolia Garden Club.

Project Restoration of "Center Circle" Victorian Garden

April 2017 - Plantings from the Victorian era revitalize this "forgotten garden."

Plantings include antique daffodil bulbs and hurricane lilies for seasonal color. It is thought this garden may be original to the cemetery. Sponsored by the Magnolia Garden Club. Jerry Spencer designs and supervises all Oak Grove landscape projects.



May 2017 - Recognition by G.I.F.T. of what is believed to be the oldest live oak existing in Oak Grove Cemetery; 350 years. Now known as the Charlotte Plant Live Oak listed with the Louisiana Live Oak Society . The name is honoring the first known burial in Oak Grove, 1839, Charlotte Walker Plant who is at rest beneath.

May 2017 - An Antique Iron Cross memorial (reclaimed from salvage) was donated to OGCS. This program of placing those crosses was begun in the 1880's by the United Daughters of the Confederacy to those fallen; protecting their homeland. The cross was placed on an unmarked soldier's grave in Oak Grove by UDC at the 2017 Annual OGCS Membership meeting held in the cemetery.

Project Chapel Maintenance (two projects)

1. Repair; Prep; Paint

July - August 2017 - Prepared (scraped), replaced rotten wood, calked and painted the entire exterior of the chapel with the researched historic colors.

2. New Custom Made Double Doors with Period Hardware

September - December 2017

Custom manufactured from reclaimed antique wood from a cotton mill ; solid wooden doors and hardware that resemble the period of the chapel. The doors and hardware costs were \$3,000.

Memorial Plaques

OGCS designed and purchased two all bronze memorial plaques to honor:



1. The Magnolia Garden Club for sponsoring the "Center Circle" Victorian Garden Restoration. This bronze plaque is affixed to a granite key stone that came from the historic Bank of Brunswick downtown building once on Newcastle St.. The plaque on the stone pedestal, was placed just outside the garden circle cement coping.

2. Joy Craft, an early contributor to the restoration of Oak Grove Chapel, is honored by her family with the funding donation of the new double doors and hardware. This plaque will be affixed to an interior door panel.

Second Saturday Clean-up

In 2017 OGCS held, under the supervision of Ernest Jones, a monthly "Second Saturday" Clean-up. Members of the community, college students, Oak Grove descendants and new residents to Brunswick volunteered their help. The clean-up days included: raking, blowing leaves and removing debris to the outside gates for City pick-up; scrubbing monuments with D-2(a special chemical designed for cleaning soft stones) and basic repair of several monuments. Many thanks to Adam Jackson who attend every clean-up day!

Second Saturday Clean-up days will continue in 2018. Join in the fun

on the second Saturday
monthly at

9 am in Oak Grove
Cemetery 1500
Mansfield St.
Brunswick, GA
Questions? Call
(912) 574-9145

***Troup
Nightingale &
Ernest Jones
Cleaning
"Dart" Stones
Sponsors:***

Rebecca Lovett & Joan Scarborough, Thank You!



A Historic Site; A Fragile Site; A Protected Site Cleaning and Preserving the Stones Improper Cleaning Can Destroy

Over time the monuments become dirty from the elements and plant life takes root. If left to time, this process will begin to destroy the inscriptions, art work, and integrity of the funerary object. In the past it was thought to just pressure wash with bleach. Bleach and the powerful water will clean off the dirt and kill the plant life. However, this type of cleaning will also damage, eat away, at the finish of the stone over time. When the bleach is washed off it really isn't washed off and leaves soluble salts in the stone's pores, eating away at the finish and stone. The stone in time will become dull and more susceptible to the damaging elements. Improper cleaning can lead to accelerated deterioration or loss. Additionally, the power of the water can etch and destroy fragile inscriptions and artwork. This type of harmful cleaning is **not allowed in Oak Grove**. Stated on signs at the cemetery's four entrances:

Oak Grove Cemetery is a protected historic site by the City of Brunswick Historic Preservation Board and OGCS.

Guidelines for Historic Oak Grove Cemetery #10. state: Plot owners and/or proven descendants shall be required to maintain..... in accordance with the Standards for Preservation and Restoration of Historic Properties.... approved by Brunswick City Commission June 17, 2015.

Mildest, Least Abrasive Method of Cleaning

A chemical was developed, D-2, that will clean the stone without damaging it. Soft Brushes are used to gently scrub away the mark of time. If you would like to have your ancestor's fragile funerary object safely cleaned, you can ask OGCS to help you. For a small donation, OGCS volunteers will clean your stones. All donations received go to buying more D-2, brushes and supporting the Master Plan Projects. So, you are protecting your ancestor's monument and at the same time you are helping to create **a place of history, heritage and tranquility** for the community. Email: cementeryoakgrove@gmail.com to arrange a cleaning.

Volunteers Needed

Join the team

**Magnolia Garden Club
Planting Circle Garden**



THANK YOU!

Following hurricane Irma, OGCS worked with volunteers of "*Keep the Golden Isles Beautiful*", to remove downed limbs, Spanish moss and other debris from the cemetery. This help was greatly appreciated.



This year Lowes has donated flowers twice to cover the three graves of James Gallagher, infant William Higgins and Katherine Gallagher. These graves are next to the chapel terrace in the flower bed by the north fence. Common in Victorian cemeteries, the three are individually surrounded by cement coping, creating a place for a bed of flowers to blanket the grave. OGCS appreciates the generosity.

Improving the Community Restoring their Legacy

At the December 2017 OGCS Board of Directors meeting, the Board began looking at the Master Plan, discussing and choosing projects to fund in 2018. Greatest need is usually the criteria.

Tomb Restoration Georgia Brown Whitfield and Infant



28 September 1886 a healthy Georgia Brown Whitfield at the age of 28 years became ill and suddenly died.

Brunswick was experiencing a “great rain.” Oak Grove was flooded; a grave could not be dug. Quickly, an above ground tomb was erected to house her remains. Four days later on Friday, her infant of two months was laid to rest alongside her mother under a pile of bricks.

131 years later, the tomb is now crumbling. Cement has turned to sand allowing bricks to loosen and fall. The top has caved in and exposed the interior to the elements. Vines and weeds are

growing inside and have contributed to the falling bricks. Bricks covering the infant girl’s grave are in disarray. Local researcher, Amy Hedrick, helped OGCS conclude there are no living descendants. This tomb is now City property. Restoring the funerary objects in Oak Grove that have no living descendants is the charity’s, greatest work. After consulting with masons, a funerary artifact restorationist, and Archeologist, Bill Weeks, OGCS concluded the total cost of restoring the tomb is \$4,000. In December with the help of Derek Jackson, OGCS applied with a ten page application, for a 50% grant with the Daughters of the America Revolution. OGCS must have in reserves \$2,000 to qualify. In May the D.A.R. will notify OGCS if the \$2,000 grant will be awarded in July. OGCS is grateful for the \$1,000 donation given in December from Martha and

Horace Thom that will help greatly in making this restoration possible. The Thoms are strong OGCS supporters. This was the second year they have given \$1,000 to advance OGCS work. Many thanks to them and Derek Jackson.

Donations are still needed to support this tomb restoration and the restoration of many more funerary objects.

A donation of any amount will make a difference. Please send your tax deductible donation

today to: OGCS

P.O. Box 3029

Brunswick, GA 31521-3029

**The only \$\$\$ OGCS
receives is from
donations and
grants.**



How It Works



Master Plan

Fundraising

\$Donation\$

Improvements / Enhancements

Joy Craft A Glynn County Historian

Today, Joy is at rest in Oak Grove. She is survived by her husband, Ernest Craft, 92 of Brunswick, and her daughter, Sandra Colhard and son, Michael Craft. Also two grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Born in Atlanta, she received a Bachelors degree in Home Economics from UGA. She was married in 1950 to Ernest Craft.

They moved to Brunswick in 1959. In 1961 they moved to their Prince Street home in Old Town. Joy had a passion to preserve Brunswick's historical resources. She spent countless hours researching. Her work was thought lost in a fire, but was discovered unharmed in a box just six months ago.

Ernest and Joy were major contributors to the restoration of Old City Hall, the Glynn County Courthouse, and the Chapel at Oak Grove Cemetery.

Joy's passion of live oak trees earned her the designation of "the tree lady." This is inscribed on her foot stone in Oak Grove Cemetery.



2018 OGCS Membership Renewal Due

OGCS membership runs from January to December. It is now time to renew your membership and update your contact information. It is frustrating when I see emails returned because of inaccurate contact information. Please fill out a new membership form that is attached and mail with your check to:

OGCS
P.O. Box 3029
Brunswick, GA 31521-3029

**Your generous donations are creating for the community
A PUBLIC PLACE OF HISTORY, HERITAGE AND TRANQUILITY
OGCS Membership Roster is kept updated by Bonnie Roberts**

2018 OGCS Membership Meeting *Improving the Community* *Restoring Their Legacy*

March 10 at 1:00 pm
Oak GroveChapel
Celebrating Four Years!
Together, We Are Making a Difference

2017 OGCS Membership May Meeting Meredith Trawick Sang



Nan Marie O'Hara Recognizes The Charlotte Plant Live Oak



Uniting the Community for the restoration

"Won't Be Many Coming Home"

UDC Dedicates Iron Cross



And preservation of Brunswick's

To learn more about:

**Adopt A Plot
Memorial Bench
Programs**

Email: cemeteryoakgrove@gmail.com

Follow OGCS on facebook:

**[https://www.facebook.com/groups/
OakGroveCemeterySociety/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/OakGroveCemeterySociety/)**

**Oak Grove Cemetery Society
Board of Directors**

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Director of Landscape Projects, Jerry Spencer

Director of Grounds, Ernest Jones

Member at Large Bill Weeks, Archeologist

Photos by Troup Nightingale Southeastern Photography

*[http://www.southeasternphotography.com/History/
Historic-Cemeteries/Oak-Grove-Cemetery-Bunswick-GA](http://www.southeasternphotography.com/History/Historic-Cemeteries/Oak-Grove-Cemetery-Bunswick-GA)*

**Oak Grove Cemetery Society founded March 2014
IRS 501(c)(3) Charity**